

SOLOMON

Wisdom ✦ Instruction ✦ Warning

Lessons and Devotions from the Life of Solomon



Because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge. Yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find acceptable words, and what was written was upright—words of truth.

Ecclesiastes 12:9-10



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Lessons and Devotions from the Life of Solomon

Other books in this series:

Jesus Christ: The Only Begotten Son
David: A Man After God's Own Heart

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**Scriptures in the heading of each excerpt are in the
New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.
Excerpts have been taken from the writings of
C. T. Russell, author of *Zion's Watchtower* and other works.
Reprint numbers or references are included after each entry.**



*May these writings serve as a source of personal reflection and devotion,
as a reminder, an encouragement and an inspiration to the reader. While
the words were written over a century ago, they still hold true today more
than ever as the establishment of Christ's Kingdom approaches very near.*

SOLOMON

Solomon's wonderful reign was not an unmixed blessing: in it we see much of divine providence and guidance, such as Solomon had requested at the beginning of his reign, but in it also we see many marks of human imperfection and unwisdom. In so far as Solomon respected God, and sought to exercise his kingly office in harmony with the principles of the divine law, his reign was a success; but in so far as he followed his own judgment and sought to be cosmopolitan and to fashion his kingdom after worldly ideals, it was comparatively a failure from the divine standpoint, although this made it the more renowned from the worldly standpoint.

Solomon was a man of broad ideas, and like other men of similar good mold in this respect, he was the more susceptible to the temptation to think the Lord's ways and methods narrow; and to seek to be more broad and liberal than the Almighty. His error along this line is particularly shown in his recognition of foreign religions, which, according to God's law, had no right to be recognized in any sense or degree, in Israel.

From a worldly standpoint Solomon's reign was a marvel of success. At the time of his death he dominated and collected tribute from a territory nearly seven times the size of Palestine; his capital city had become enormously wealthy, so that the war shields of some of his soldiers were made of gold, while the record is that—"the king made silver in Jerusalem to be as stones for abundance." (1 Kings 10:27.) While he lived, his wisdom and fame and the glitter of his success held the entire nation loyally to him, notwithstanding the fact that his methods, by which these brilliant results were achieved, were in a considerable measure oppressive to the people. This was especially the case with those of his people who resided at a distance from the capital city, and who did not so particularly share in the wealth there accumulated, but more particularly shared the general burdens of taxation and conscription of service, by which the wealth was amassed. Consequently, at Solomon's death, when the glitter faded, his kingdom, established not upon the loving loyalty of the people, but upon his own magnetic power and wisdom, was ready to disintegrate. R. 2323



KING SOLOMON

The Visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon by Edward Poynter



*All the earth sought the presence of Solomon to
hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.
1 Kings 10:24*

Solomon Anointed King

So she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. Now the LORD loved him, and He sent word by the hand of Nathan the prophet: so he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

– 2 Samuel 12:24-25 –

Solomon was the second son of David by Bathsheba. His name signifies “the peaceful,” thus commemorating the promise of God concerning him. The additional name Jedediah (the beloved of Jehovah) seems to have been given by Nathan the prophet as a sign of David’s forgiveness and restoration to the divine favor (2 Sam. 12:25), as the special love thus expressed before the child could know or choose good or evil could not have been for his own merit, and therefore must have been for his father David’s sake, whom God had loved and chosen, and of whose posterity was to come the long promised Messiah—King of the antitypical Kingdom of God. Hence the names, Solomon (the peaceful) and Jedediah (the beloved of the Lord) indicated that David was still the beloved, that he was fully restored to the divine favor, and that the promises of God made to him and his posterity still held good.

Solomon was born at a period when King David’s activities as a warrior had very nearly closed and when the great double sin of King David’s life and his repentance from it had, we believe, wonderfully moderated and chastened him. His loyalty to God in this serious matter, his earnest prayer for forgiveness and his realization of peace from God, apparently had made a new man of King David. Even though before this he had been loyal to God, he apparently was now still more devoted. The peace which he craved, and which was a mark of Divine forgiveness, may have had something to do with the gentle and thoughtful character of King Solomon, and something also perhaps to do with his name. It may have been given him as signifying that his birth marked peace with God on the part of his parents. R. 2045 and R. 5701

Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. His name shall be Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.

1 Chronicles 22:9-10

My beloved is white and ruddy, chief among ten thousand. His head is like the finest gold. His locks are wavy, and black as a raven.

– Song of Solomon 5:10-11 –

Apparently [Solomon] inherited certain natural traits which were much to his advantage, and under special divine blessing gave him properly the title, “the wise man.” A writer says of him: — “His parental inheritance was remarkably strong in several directions. His father David was in the maturity of his age; his mother was the grand-daughter of the Prince Ahithophel, whose advice ‘was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God.’ He thus inherited from his mother sagacity, quickness of judgment, judicial insight and perhaps some sensual weakness; from his father, thoughtfulness, literary taste, the skill of ruling and an interest in religion. His bodily form and countenance must have borne the graceful characteristics of all David’s children; and, if we may follow the description given in the Canticles, he was fair, with bushy locks, dark as the raven’s wing, yet not without a golden glow, tall and imposing.”

In Solomon we perceive a different character from that manifested by any of his brethren whose histories are recorded. He partook of his father David’s religious disposition more than the others. He was thus highly favored, and really probably more gifted. Another thing favorable to Solomon would appear to have been the fact that his mother was not of a heathen family, but an Israelite, and therefore more in sympathy with the Divine arrangement, Law, worship, etc., than others of David’s wives. R. 4268 and R. 5701

David had now accomplished nearly all of his earthly mission. He found the dominion small, and now it was much extended. He found it in disorder, and left it thoroughly organized. He found religion at a low ebb, and he had succeeded in greatly reviving and energizing religious devotion and zeal. He found powerful enemies on every side, threatening the destruction of the nation, but he had subdued all the enemies and led the nation to a condition of peace and introduced them to a season of unparalleled prosperity. And not only so, but he had laid the foundation for the more permanent establishment of the service of God and the religious health of the nation in his preparations for the building and service of the temple which God had promised that his son and successor should build, and in the religious zeal and enthusiasm he had aroused on the part of the whole people, so that as one man they were at the service of Solomon in the great work. His life had been an eventful and a troubled one, not without its grave mistakes, but it had accomplished great things in bringing order out of confusion and establishing peace and prosperity on a permanent footing. R. 2030

After the general confusion into which Absalom had plunged the nation, again from [David's] own household came the notes of discord, and the experiences with Absalom seemed likely to be repeated in the rebellion of another son, Absalom's younger brother Adonijah, who had laid his plans and skillfully prepared to seize the throne and thus establish himself as David's successor. (See 1 Kings 1:1-53.) This attempt at usurpation and self-appointment led to the immediate anointing and proclamation of Solomon, whom God had indicated as his choice among the sons of David to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord. (1 Chron. 22:9,10; 28:5-7.) R. 2030

And Nathan said, "My lord, O king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne'?"

"For he has gone down today, and has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, and the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest, and look! They are eating and drinking before him, and they say, 'Long live King Adonijah!'"

"But he has not invited me---me your servant---nor Zadok the priest, nor Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon.

"Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not told your servant who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

Then King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. 1 Kings 1:24-28

And the king took an oath and said, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, just as I swore to you by the LORD God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day."

– 1 Kings 1:29-30 –

[Solomon's] father, King David, was about seventy years old and quite feeble, and it was manifest to all that a successor to the throne must soon be found. David's eldest son, Amnon, was murdered by Absalom, who was next in years, and the latter was slain in the battle of his rebellion. The next in age, "the heir apparent," was Adonijah, who evidently understood that his father, the king, premeditated that Solomon should be his successor, and this purpose he sought to thwart by himself seizing the kingdom on the pretext that his father was now too old to administer its affairs.

The Record seems to show that King David, having in mind a successor to his throne, and perhaps by that time having realized that he had not done his full duty by his other children in allowing them to grow up under the adverse influences of the court, rectified the matter in the case of Solomon while he was still young, leaving him partly in his mother's care, and appointing him as the ward and pupil of the Prophet Nathan. This excellent start in life doubtless had much to do with Solomon's career.

That Solomon was the Lord's choice among David's sons to succeed him upon the throne of Israel is clear. R. 4286, R. 5701, R. 2045

And King David said, “Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.” So they came before the king. The king also said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon.” 1 Kings 1:32-33

There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel.

– 1 Kings 1:34 –

God’s people of today should be on the alert to discern in all of life’s affairs, the will of the Lord. We surely should know that the Lord’s wisdom and power are with the interests of Spiritual Israel in all of their affairs, in such a manner and to such a degree that human conspiracies and oppositions can work only harm to those who foment them. Though the Lord may permit these to go to great lengths and to have apparent success, as in the case of the conspiracy of the high priests and Scribes and Judas against our Lord, or in the case of Absalom and his coadjutors against King David; but the assurance given to all who have the faith to receive it is that “all things must work together for good to them who love God, who are the called ones according to his purpose,” and that it must always be true in the case of all the Lord’s people; as Jesus said to Pilate, “Thou couldst have no power at all except it were permitted thee of my Father.” The Father will permit nothing which would interfere with his glorious plans.



In due time, Divine providence drew the attention of King David to Adonijah’s conspiracy—in proper time for him to take the necessary steps to accomplish the Divine will. [Scripture] tells of how David called another priest, Nathan the Prophet, and Benaiah, another general, and sent them with his son Solomon to the valley just outside the city gate and near the very place where Jesus later rode on the ass. Solomon was directed to ride on King David’s own white mule, an act which would of itself proclaim him David’s appointed successor. With this special envoy went the two companies of the king’s special bodyguard, the Cherethites and the Pelethites. R. 4286

Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah.

1 Kings 1:35

Then Zadok the priest took a horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. And they blew the horn, and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!”

– 1 Kings 1:39 –



Presently, the anointing performed, the trumpet was blown announcing Solomon king, and the people unanimously confirmed this with great shouts and rejoicing. Thus was Solomon brought in state to the palace, where he reigned jointly with his father David for some six months until the death of the latter. R. 4286

And all the people went up after him, and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth seemed to split with their sound.

1 Kings 1:40

Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful. Praise the LORD with the harp. Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song. Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

– Psalm 33:1-3 –

Indeed, the writings of David, and all the prophets and apostles as well, abound in fervent expressions of praise and thanksgiving to God. They not only praise the Lord themselves, lovingly and gratefully recounting all his mercies, but, with impassioned eloquence and holy enthusiasm, they call upon all the sons of men, and every thing that hath breath, and even inanimate nature, to laud and magnify his holy name. The worshippers are also bidden to bring with them to the concert of praise every musical instrument of human device; and grateful reverence exclaims, — “Blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen!” —Psa. 33:2,3; 50:1-6; 72:19. See also Exod. 15:1-21. R. 2031

Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his kingdom was firmly established.

– 1 Kings 2:12 –

The king was a very young man for the heavy responsibilities devolving upon him, and the moderation displayed shows him to have been not merely well-balanced but well-trained. Solomon was born when his father was in his 53rd year, and at a time, doubtless, when he had learned from experience that he had been too indulgent to the remainder of his family. David had not brought them up with sufficient strictness. He had not realized sufficiently the need of training them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Great affairs of state had claimed his attention and the children had been left too much to the care of others not so reverential as the king. Himself religious from his youth, he seems to have supposed that his children would possess similar qualities of heart and mind. Evidently he had not sufficiently realized the demoralizing influence of wealth and earthly honors; that these do not make for godliness but, to the contrary, cultivate pride, worldliness, godlessness.

It was doubtless due to David's increasing reverence for the Lord, and his realization of the mistakes made in the training of his other children, and his desire that his successor to the throne should honor the Lord and carry forward the interests of religion—these things doubtless led the king to put his son Solomon under the special care of the Prophet Nathan, with the view to his preparation to serve the Lord and his kingdom righteously, and to build the temple of the Lord which David had purposed to build but was not allowed. The Prophet Nathan knew of the temple project and of God's promise that it should be built by David's heir, and that Solomon was the chosen of the Lord and of the king. We can imagine the Prophet's faithfulness in the training of Prince Solomon for the duties of the position he was intended to fill. R. 4286

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.

– 1 Peter 5:6 –

Our Father is the Great King and he has promised that the Christ shall sit upon his throne, and we have been invited to become parts of the Christ, the Anointed, the Messiah. Shall we wonder that we need training for this important position; shall we be surprised if disciplines are imposed and requirements made of us more than are imposed upon those not intended for this high position! Surely the arrangements of our Father, the Great King, are wise and righteous altogether. Therefore, those who are in full sympathy and accord with him will be anxious to learn the lessons and to make the preparations necessary for the Kingdom honors. These must not wonder if they are excluded from the companionship and feastings of the Absalom and Adonijah types. They may be disesteemed by their ambitious brethren and may be evil spoken of, from the Head down to the last member of the Body, but if they have the Divine favor, theirs shall be not only the anointing but also the acceptance to the throne. "Have patience, brethren, the hour of your deliverance draweth nigh"; "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." R. 4287

Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

– 1 Kings 3:3 –

It was not long, however, until the seductive influences of position, power, wealth and general prosperity bore down with telling effect upon the character of this favored young man whose future was all aglow with promise. His character had never been developed in the school of experience, for he was reared in luxury from his youth up; nor were his principles put to the test. His principles were not fixed and firm. Though he loved God because of what he had seen and heard of his goodness to his people and to David his father, and because God loved him and had chosen him to be king, yet his heart was not anchored in God. He had not learned to love God for his inherent goodness—because he is the embodiment and glorious exemplification of righteousness and truth. And it is only those who love righteousness, and who therefore love God, because he is righteous, who are truly anchored in God, and who, consequently, have any stability of character. That Solomon was sadly lacking in such love to God and the consequent stability of character, his subsequent course soon began to show.

Yet, though God knew the end and all the intervening steps of his career from the beginning, though he foresaw his moral decline and its baneful influence upon the nation, still in his own wise purpose he chose Solomon to be king over Israel; and the purpose of God in choosing him was admirably accomplished. R. 2045

Solomon came to the throne at an early age, probably at about nineteen or twenty. Of his personal qualifications at this time we know but little except from 1 Kings 3:3, —“And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed [unto the Lord] and burnt incense in high places.” This was prohibited by the Mosaic law (Deut. 12:13-14), but was accepted of God until the Temple was built. —See 1 Sam. 9:12; 1 Kings 3:2. R. 2045

Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see, but in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

Deuteronomy 12:13-14

They made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him before the LORD to be the leader, and Zadok to be priest. Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered. And all Israel obeyed him.

– 1 Chronicles 29:22-23 –

Solomon Becomes King by R. G. Jones



This second anointing was like the grand Amen! of the whole nation to the first anointing (1 Kings 1:38-40), which was, comparatively speaking, done in a very quiet way. R. 2031

So the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

1 Chronicles 29:25

The Words of David to Israel and to Solomon

Not content with his own appreciation of Solomon as the most suitable heir to the throne and the one approved by the Lord, the King gathered a great assembly of the chief men of the nation to, so to speak, ratify Solomon's appointment and anointing. These princes represented (1) the heads of the families, in the twelve tribes; (2) the captains of industry and their subordinate officers; (3) in a word he gathered all the influential representatives of the nation, civil, military, and commercial. This was evidently a wise course, and points a lesson to the Lord's people of the Church of this Gospel age. It is not sufficient that those who serve the Lord's flock shall be sure that they understand the divine will in respect to the general interests of his work; it is expedient that they seek the cooperation of the entire congregation either directly or through their chosen representatives. David's assurance that God had chosen Solomon was a guarantee to him that the Lord would so overrule and influence the nation that they would gladly accept the divine choice. At the same time, the course would have been the wisest one in any event, because it is an element of human nature to prefer to be considered rather than to be ignored. R. 3276

Now David assembled at Jerusalem all the leaders of Israel: the officers of the tribes and the captains of the divisions who served the king, the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possessions of the king and of his sons, with the officials, the valiant men, and all the mighty men of valor.

1 Chronicles 28:1

Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brethren and my people: I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it."

– 1 Chronicles 28:2 –

Notwithstanding the King's age and decrepitude, and the fact that it was usual to sit in such assemblages, he stood upon his feet as implying the importance of the matters to be dealt with. His salutation to the officers and representatives of the realm was a gracious one: "Hear me, my brethren, and my people!" King David was not evidently of the dictator class, and all noble men and women will appreciate him all the more because of this. Notwithstanding his greatness, his success as a soldier in establishing and enlarging the kingdom, and his eminence as a poet, and his evident favor with God, he was not by any or all of these things made haughty, domineering, tyrannical, but even in speech was a faithful, humble shepherd to the people over whom God appointed him. No wonder his name is revered to this day not only by the Jews, his countrymen, but by all who love the Lord and the principles of righteousness. R. 3276

God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, because you have been a man of war and have shed blood.' However the LORD God of Israel chose me above all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever, for He has chosen Judah to be the ruler. And of the house of Judah, the house of my father, and among the sons of my father, He was pleased with me to make me king over all Israel.

1 Chronicles 28:3-4

Of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.

– 1 Chronicles 28:5 –

With full candor the King related to his princes his own desires for the glory of God and the nation in connection with the building of the Temple, and with equal candor he explained why the Lord rejected the work at his hands—because he had been a man of war and had shed blood.

David called attention to the fact that the Lord had chosen him to be their King; that he had decreed that he should be their King forever—that is, that the kingship should be in the line of his posterity. He called their attention to the fact that the tribe of Judah was the tribe of royalty by divine appointment, and that in the tribe of Judah the house of Jesse had been chosen by divine direction through the Prophet Samuel, and that in the family

[David] was a man of experience in fighting enemies of the Lord, and his people should serve to typify the battling of Christ and the Church while in the flesh. Solomon's kingdom of glory and riches and honor and peace would serve to illustrate better the Millennial Kingdom of the Christ in glory. R. 4261

of Jesse, above all of his sons, the Lord had chosen David to be King over all Israel. In this speech the King was not attempting to defend his position on the throne, for that was conceded by all the tribes; but he did wish that the people should recognize the matter in a still higher light—that it was God who was their real King, and that God had taken the supervision of the affairs of the nation and had ordered and directed matters up to that juncture.

It is well that spiritual Israelites should refresh their memories similarly; that they should call to mind that God, who was the King of typical Israel, is specially the King of spiritual Israel, and that being our King the affairs of his Church are not left to chance or haphazard, but are, in their largest interests at least, under divine supervision and care. The Apostle points this out in respect to our Lord, the great High Priest, saying, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God." So our Lord Jesus called not himself to a position of headship in the Church, but was evidently appointed to that position by the Father, as the Apostle declares, "God hath given him to be the head over the Church, which is his body" —Eph. 1:22-23. R. 3276

**No man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God.
Hebrews 5:4**

Now He said to me, ‘It is your son Solomon who shall build My house and My courts, for I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his Father.’

– 1 Chronicles 28:6 –

David had no doubt whatever respecting the Lord’s choice for his successor. How he knew the mind of the Lord on the subject we are not informed, but evidently he had assured Bathsheba years before that her son Solomon should fill the throne, and now he probably announced the matter, declaring that God had given him assurance that Solomon should build the great temple which King David had not been permitted to build, but for which he had accumulated great stores of gold, silver, iron, marble, precious wood, etc. The word of the Lord, “I have chosen him to be my son and will be his Father,” we are not to understand as meaning that Solomon was lifted up from the house of servants, of which Moses was the head, and made a member of the house of sons, of which Christ is the head—“Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence of our rejoicing firm unto the end.” According to the Scriptural record, the first opportunity for any members of the house of servants to become sons of God was granted at the time of our Lord’s first advent, and in view of the fact that he had already made consecration of his life as man’s redemption price. (John 1:12-13.) Solomon was God’s son in a typical sense—he typified God’s great Son, the Christ. R. 3276

Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Hebrews 3:5-6

‘Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, if he is steadfast to observe My commandments and My judgments, as it is this day.’

– 1 Chronicles 28:7 –

That Solomon was a model young man at the time of his induction into the kingdom, is evidenced from the statement of verse 7: “If he be constant to do my commands and my judgments as **at this day**, I will establish his kingdom forever.” Here again, however, we see how the Lord, while making certain definite promises sure to be fulfilled, attaches them to certain individuals only upon conditions of their loyalty to him. As a matter of fact we know that Solomon did not continue in divine favor, but was led astray by the dangers of his lofty position and forfeited for his posterity their share in the Levitic promise. Hence it is that our Lord is not of Solomon’s line, but a descendant of another son of David, Nathan. —See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. V. —pp.145-150. R. 3277

Throughout the Gospel age we may be sure that the affairs of God’s Church have not been overlooked by him—that at all times during this age he has had the care of the interests of his people, and has raised up for them such helps and teachers as he saw best. Similarly, we may know that he still has the supervision of Zion’s interests, as the Apostle declares, “God hath set in the body the various members as it hath pleased him.” (1 Cor. 12:18.) R. 3277

Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land, and leave it as an inheritance for your children after you forever.

– 1 Chronicles 28:8 –

Having thus set forth the reasons guiding him to the anointing of Solomon as his successor in the kingdom, the King charges responsibility upon the chief men of the nation—that they should maintain their relationship to the Lord and his arrangements faithfully; that they should not only observe the commandments of the Lord as already understood by them, but that they should continually seek to know the divine will in all things. He points out that as a nation this would be necessary to them if they would continue to possess the goodly land of Palestine. We know that they did not continue faithful to King David’s exhortation, and that as a result the goodly land was lost, first by ten of the twelve tribes going into captivity, and subsequently by the two tribes being transported to a foreign land as prisoners. Nevertheless, God’s promise to David still stands sure, and, like the promise made to Abraham, can have its fulfillment only when the greater than Isaac, greater than David, greater than Solomon, the antitype of these, shall take the throne and inaugurate the Millennial reign.

R. 3277

God’s Covenant With David— 1 Chronicles 17:7-14

7 “Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel.

8 And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a name like the name of the great men who are on the earth.

9 Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more, nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously,

10 since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel. Also I will subdue all your enemies. Furthermore I tell you that the LORD will build you a house.

11 And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons, and I will establish his kingdom.

12 He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever.

13 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son, and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him who was before you.

14 And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.” ’ ”

As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

– 1 Chronicles 28:9 –

Turning to Solomon his newly appointed successor, the King exhorted his son, “Know thou the God of thy father and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind.” Here knowledge is given its proper place. First, it is only in proportion as we come to know God that we can properly trust him or faithfully serve him, and the Christian’s course should be a progressive one in these respects. To the first knowledge of God and the first faith on that small knowledge and first obedience following, come in God’s order increased knowledge, increased faith and increased obedience. We are to remember, however, that the range of knowledge and faith is limited to natural things until the full consecration of heart is made and the begetting of the holy Spirit received, because “the natural man receiveth not the things of God neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” God hath revealed them unto us [begotten of the Spirit] by his Spirit, which searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.

Solomon is exhorted to remember that God not only knows the outward things which man can see and of which they can imperfectly judge, but that he knows also the heart, the intents, the thoughts. The antitypical children of God need continually to have this in mind, for we walk by faith and not by sight. To us, too, the exhortation applies that we are to keep continually seeking the Lord if we would be continually finding him more and more precious, and that if we forsake him and break our covenant with him he will cast us off forever. R. 3277

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

– John 4:24 –

Outward service is not sufficient in our dealing with the Lord. “He seeketh such to worship, as worship him in spirit and in truth.” Solomon’s excellent start in his high office and the favor of God which then came upon him had been preceded by years of study. Under the Prophet’s direction and under his father’s suggestions he was enabled to enter into the spirit of his father’s plan respecting the erection of the great temple at Jerusalem which would put religion, the true religion and worship of God, in the most prominent position before the nation of Israel.

So we see, as we seek the Lord with all our hearts as “dear children,” and with willing minds, that he makes known to us his great plans and purposes respecting the future. He makes known to us his purpose to have a temple, and preparations already made there for, and how and when it will be built and its object: the blessing of all the families of the earth. At each step of the way, as we the more fully enter into sympathy with God’s great plan of the ages, it serves to develop us the more and to prepare us for the share in that Temple and Kingdom. R. 4287

Consider now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong, and do it.

– 1 Chronicles 28:10 –

The [tenth verse here] refers to the typical Temple which Solomon did build as God's sanctuary. He was strengthened in wisdom and in power and did accomplish that work. The antitype of Solomon, the Christ, has been strengthened, has been faithful, has been an overcomer, has been approved of the Father. He already has nearly prepared all the living stones which will constitute the living Temple of God for the coming age, through which the divine blessing will be administered for the restoration of the groaning creation. The building of the house, the growing together of the living stones, is already in progress; soon the capstone will be brought on with shoutings of grace, grace, unto it! R. 3277

This counsel to Solomon may also with equal propriety be accepted by every Christian in the service of the Lord, – "Be strong and of good courage." Both strength and courage are necessary to faithful service and to success in the good fight of faith; and both are developed by patient endurance and faith in God under the various trials to which the Christian is exposed. The counsel of the Apostle Paul to the Church also tallies with that of David to Solomon, when he says, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;" and again, – "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." —Eph. 6:10; 1 Cor. 16:13. R. 2031

**David blessed the LORD before all the assembly, and David said:
"Blessed are You, LORD God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours,
O LORD, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the
majesty. For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours. Yours is the
kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head over all."**

1 Chronicles 29:10-11

**Give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and
Your testimonies and Your statutes, to do all these things, and to build
the temple for which I have made provision.**

– 1 Chronicles 29:19 –

The prayer and thanksgiving of David to God, recorded in 1 Chron. 29:10-19, ascribing praise to him for the privilege of collecting the materials for his temple and humbly acknowledging that all their gifts were only returning to God that which was his own, expressing his joy in the freewill offerings of the people and praying that their hearts might ever incline to him, and that he would give unto Solomon a perfect heart, is full of touching pathos, reverence, meekness and holy enthusiasm. Read it and underscore its touching phrases, that again and again you may be refreshed and instructed by it. Then mark (vs. 20) how he led all the people to fervently bless the Lord. R. 2031

**Then David said to all the assembly, "Now bless the LORD your God." So
all the assembly blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed their
heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king.**

1 Chronicles 29:20

Psalm 72: A Psalm for Solomon

1 Give the king Your judgments, O God, and Your righteousness to the king's Son.

2 He will judge Your people with righteousness, and Your poor with justice.

3 The mountains will bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

4 He will bring justice to the poor of the people. He will save the children of the needy, and will break in pieces the oppressor.

5 They shall fear You as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

6 He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, like showers that water the earth.

7 In His days the righteous shall flourish, and abundance of peace, until the moon is no more.

8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

9 Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, and His enemies will lick the dust.

10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles will bring presents. The kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts.

11 Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him. All nations shall serve Him.

12 For He will deliver the needy when he cries, the poor also, and him who has no helper.

13 He will spare the poor and needy, and will save the souls of the needy.

14 He will redeem their life from oppression and violence, and precious shall be their blood in His sight.

15 And He shall live, and the gold of Sheba will be given to Him. Prayer also will be made for Him continually, and daily He shall be praised.

16 There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, on the top of the mountains. Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon, and those of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

17 His name shall endure forever. His name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him. All nations shall call Him blessed.

18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things!

19 And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

Psalm 72

is one of those blessed prophecies which tells us of the glorious reign of the risen and “highly exalted” Son of God, whose coming presence shall be “like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth” — “times of refreshing,” truly.

How wide shall be his dominion? Oh, says the Psalmist, “He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” (Verse 8) Yes, “As truly as I live,” saith the Lord, “the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” [Mark! this earth: it is not heaven that is here spoken of, though the heavens too, are, and shall be yet more, filled with his glory.]

It is written (verse 2), “He shall judge for thy people with righteousness, and for thy afflicted with justice;” (verse 3), “The mountains [new ruling powers of Christ’s kingdom] shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills [—the tributary powers under the main government —shall also be agencies of blessing and peace] through righteousness.”

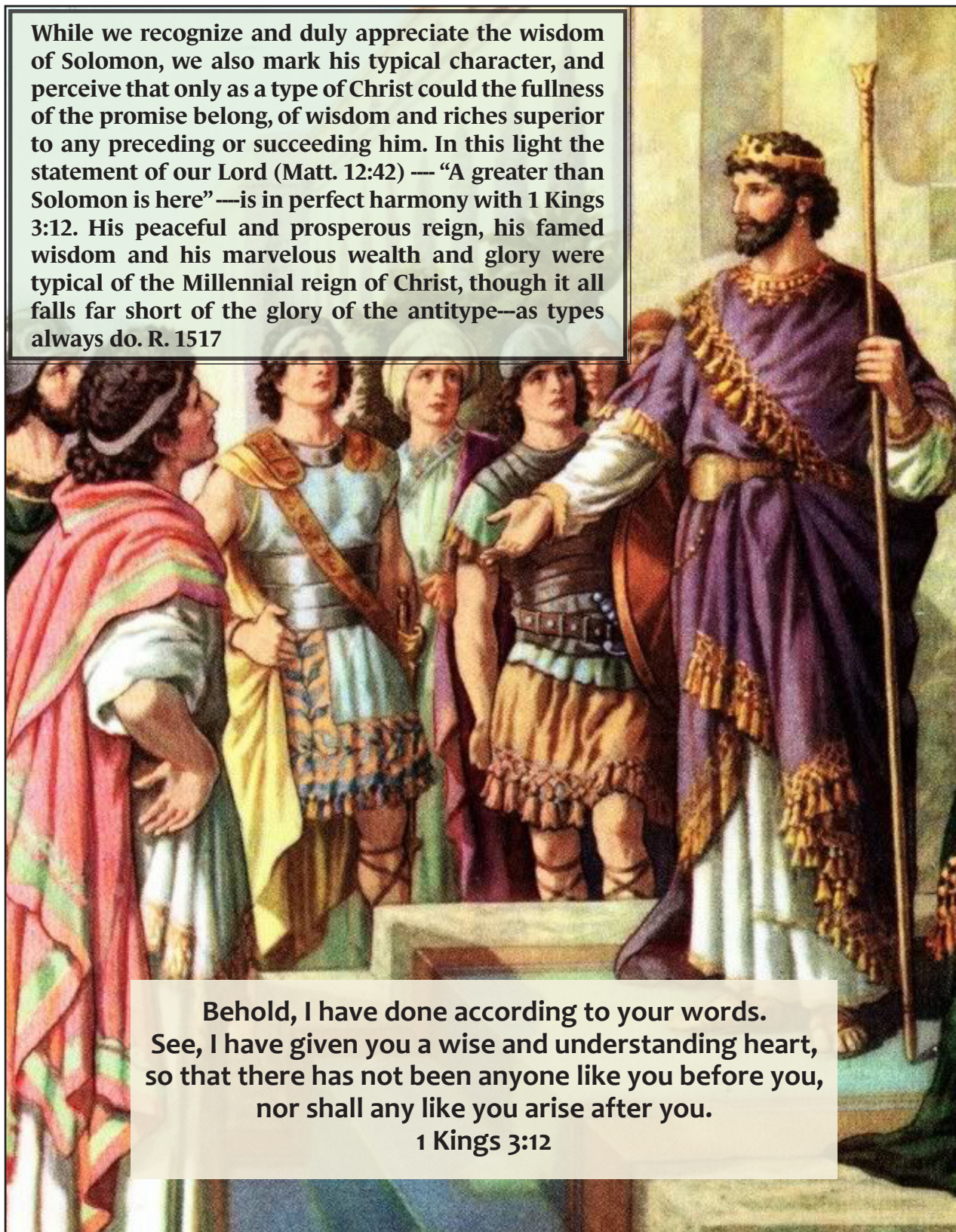
As a result of this blessed reign of righteousness, not only will justice and peace be established in the earth, but a great abundance of blessings from the King shall follow as the rewards of righteousness, as it is written (verse 16): “There shall be an abundance of corn in the land; upon the top of the mountains [as a blessing from the King] its fruit shall shake like [the trees of] Lebanon: and they of the city [the subjects of this government—a city being a symbol of a government] shall flourish like grass of the earth.”

When men come to realize these blessings and to recognize the righteous authority by which they are secured to them, what wonder if many of their hearts are won, and their loyalty evinced by hearty cooperation, as indicated by verses 10,11,17! Truly, in view of all that the prophets have to say of the blessed times of refreshing under the reign of Christ, we see the force of the Psalmist’s joyful expression: “He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth.” —Verse 6. “His name shall be as of a son continuing his father’s name forever; it shall increase as the sun [as the sun’s brightness increases to full noon-day glory, so shall the honor of Messiah grow brighter and brighter as the mists and gloom of sin are driven away].

The general blessed results of the Millennial age are portrayed in this prophecy—those who shall “lick the dust” being treated as exceptions. And surely the grand outcome of God’s plan, when Christ shall have put all enemies under his feet and shall have fully restored all the willing and obedient, is cause enough for every one who realizes it to join with the Prophet in the glad shout with which he closes this prophecy in verses 18,19, “Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, who alone doeth wondrous things [whose wisdom alone deviseth the wondrous plan, and none hath been his counselor]; and blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.” And in view of the glorious character and record of him whom Jehovah hath appointed to be king over all the earth in that day (Zech. 14:9), we, with the Psalmist, would express our recognition of his wisdom and grace, and say (verse 1), “Give the king [this king whom thou hast appointed] thy judgments and thy righteousness unto the King’s [Jehovah’s] son” —Entrust him with the execution of the grand designs: we have full confidence in his ability and in his willingness to bring forth judgment unto victory and to fill the world with thy peace and thy praise. R. 1415

The Wisdom of Solomon

While we recognize and duly appreciate the wisdom of Solomon, we also mark his typical character, and perceive that only as a type of Christ could the fullness of the promise belong, of wisdom and riches superior to any preceding or succeeding him. In this light the statement of our Lord (Matt. 12:42) — “A greater than Solomon is here” — is in perfect harmony with 1 Kings 3:12. His peaceful and prosperous reign, his famed wisdom and his marvelous wealth and glory were typical of the Millennial reign of Christ, though it all falls far short of the glory of the antitype—as types always do. R. 1517



Behold, I have done according to your words.
See, I have given you a wise and understanding heart,
so that there has not been anyone like you before you,
nor shall any like you arise after you.

1 Kings 3:12

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask! What shall I give you?”

– 1 Kings 3:5 –

It was while Solomon’s mind was active in religious matters at Gibeon that the Lord appeared to him in a dream and asked him to choose what he would of any gift. We are not from this to infer that all dreams are of the Lord, but simply to understand that God is able to use dreams when he so chooses to convey lessons and instructions to his people. Many illustrations of this might be sighted—for instance, Joseph’s dream Nebuchadnezzar’s, Daniel’s, Paul’s, Peter’s. We have the best of inspired assurance that these were really messages from the Lord, and hence are justified in attaching importance to them, believing in their fulfillment, etc.

The declaration is that his dream or vision was from the Lord. Even then we see that the Lord was not operating contrary to the freedom of Solomon’s will, because had the young King’s mind been full of ambition for power, for victories over his enemies or for great riches, undoubtedly in the dream he would have responded by asking the things uppermost in his heart. R. 3277

Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

– Matthew 7:7-8 –

All the consecrated followers of Jesus are to be free to come in his name to the Throne of grace to make request for the things which they need—the things promised in the Word of God to the faithful. We are to seek for them and we shall find them. Knocking, we shall have Divine blessings unlocked before us.

Consider how this principle prevails, even amongst fallen humanity. Any father asked for a fish, would he give instead a serpent? If asked for bread, would he give a stone? Surely not! And if so, what shall we say in respect to our Heavenly Father? Would he not be all the more willing to give to his children who ask him? He has indeed given us many blessings without the asking, but some of the chiefest of his favors he withholds from us until we make requests—because thus he would draw us nearer to himself and prepare us the more for the blessings he is willing to bestow.

Elsewhere the Master tells us that the good thing which the Father is specially pleased to bestow is his holy Spirit. This is the all-important thing, for only as we become possessors thereof, only as we attain to the mind, the disposition of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall we be fit for a place in the glorious Millennial Kingdom to which we have been invited. His holy Spirit is manifested in us by meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness—love. R. 4567

•••••
• **And Solomon said: “You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my**
• **father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in**
• **uprightness of heart with You. You have continued this great kindness for him,**
• **and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. Now,**
• **O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David,**
• **but I am a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. And Your**
• **servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a**
• **great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted.”**

1 Kings 3:6-8

Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?

– 1 Kings 3:9 –

[Solomon’s] reply shows us that he was full of appreciation of the great work which God had committed to his care, that he recognized that his father’s success had been of the Lord and not of his own power, and that whatever others thought of his father’s real sentiments. Solomon recognized his loyalty to God, to truth, to righteousness, to uprightness of heart. In acknowledging the Lord’s kindness in raising him to the throne he was acknowledging that God was the real King, that he merely sat upon “the throne of the kingdom of the Lord.” This is further evidenced by the words, “God, thou hast made thy servant King instead of David my father.” What a strength it gave this young man to realize that he was in God’s hands; that it was not merely to his father’s foresight and wisdom that he came to the throne, nor by the superior prestige of his father’s influence over the army and the majority of the people, but of the Lord’s providences.

The humility of the king is beautifully indicated by his declaration, “I am but a little child and know not how to order my course in life, my outgoings and incomings,” and yet he was in the midst of the Lord’s people, the center or head of the nation—though he felt himself incapable of the proper management of these high and responsible duties. He did not say “my people,” but “thy people which thou hast chosen.” We feel like suggesting a lesson here to some of the elders of the Lord’s flock, who, after the manner of the Babylonians, are inclined to speak of the congregations to whom they minister, as “my people,” “my flock,” “my church.” They probably do not realize how inappropriate are such expressions; that if natural Israel was the Lord’s people, whom he had chosen, how much more the antitypical Israel should be thought of and spoken of as the Lord’s people, the Lord’s flock. The very fact that any one would speak of the congregation of the Lord’s people as his own indicates a dangerous condition of mind and a tendency to be heady, high-minded, injurious, detrimental to the interests of spiritual Zion.

With this preamble as showing his estimate of his own incapacity and of the greatness of the work, and that the people were the Lord’s people, and that he himself was the Lord’s appointment to be the King, Solomon now comes to the expression of his choice, namely, “an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?” Solomon recognized that the most necessary thing for the welfare of the nation was righteous judgment of the various questions pertaining to the nation’s welfare as well as those affecting individual matters. Doubtless he had come to realize, as his subsequent written proverbs clearly indicate, that selfishness is a foe to justice, and that the very wisest and best of governments need to be carefully guarded lest the selfish interests of some should work injury to others—to many.

R. 3278

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting.

– James 1:5-6 –

This wisdom seems to be especially necessary to us as the servants of God, that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable in the sight of the Lord. —Psa. 19:14.

“Wisdom is the principal thing:” “With all thy getting get understanding,” thus wrote the wise man, Solomon, and so we all agree: wisdom is necessary at the very beginning of any matter that would result favorably. Wisdom is craved by the whole world of mankind, and the majority, even while going in divers directions, would claim to be seeking to walk in wisdom’s ways. How important, then, that we discriminate as between the true wisdom and that which is so frequently misnamed wisdom, which is really folly!

The worldly-wise today are not to be found among the open scoffers and infidels, for worldly wisdom dictates to them a different course; they are to be found rather in the most respectable and aristocratic congregations of professed Christians. Many of them are too honorable to be open hypocrites, and therefore rarely take part in meetings or say anything respecting their inmost convictions, —their inmost thoughts or doubts respecting the creed of their own church and the creeds of all other churches; nevertheless they feel that it is wise to support Christianity, because of its moral influence on their families, their employees and their neighbors; besides even the doctrines which they at heart repudiate have, they believe, a restraining influence upon the “lower classes:” hence their wisdom, worldly-wisdom, guides them into the support of Christianity, but forbids them to go to any extreme, such as annunciation of faith in Christ or full consecration to his service.

For the humble, however, God has provided true wisdom in Christ. His words no less than his example show us that we are sinners and that “no man cometh unto the Father” except by him. He tells us of the Father’s pity, and of the redemption

.....
**Of Him you are in Christ Jesus,
who became for us wisdom from God.
1 Corinthians 1:30**
.....

provided through his own blood, and of our privilege to accept of divine grace unto full forgiveness and reconciliation, and of our need of the heavenly wisdom for every step of the journey, if we would walk the narrow way, which leads to the glory of the Kingdom and life everlasting. And all who accept this “call” accept the great Mediator’s instruction and guidance, as the very essence of divine wisdom. With varying degrees of promptness and after varying degrees of wandering from this good Shepherd, and being sought and found by him, the faithful eventually reach the position where they put no confidence in themselves and their own wisdom, but all confidence in the wisdom of him whom God hath appointed to be our wisdom— “who of God is made unto us wisdom.” When this degree of progress has been attained, a measure of rest and contentment takes possession of the true sheep, which permits them to look up to God with confidence in every matter and at every time—especially in seasons of distress and grief and trial. They learn not to trust to their own wisdom any longer; but to trust implicitly to the wisdom and goodness of the great Shepherd.

Let us, dearly beloved, as children of God, more and more fully accept Christ as our wisdom, for all of the affairs of life—little as well as great, temporal as well as spiritual. Let us seek to be more and more filled with the spirit of true wisdom that cometh from above, whose ultimate teaching is holiness to the Lord. R. 5202 and R. 2262

**The speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing.
– 1 Kings 3:10 –**

The Lord was pleased with Solomon's choice; he could not have chosen better. Some have suggested that he might have chosen spiritual things, and thus have made a still wiser, better choice; but such forget that the spiritual things were not open to be understood or to be chosen or to be acquired in Solomon's day, nor until the great atonement for sin had been made—until the call went forth inviting believers who had fled from sin and who had laid hold on the hopes set before them in Christ to become self-sacrificers with him, joint-participators with him in the holy Spirit of adoption and ultimately to be joint-heirs with him in the kingdom. Solomon, therefore, chose as wisely as was possible for him to choose of the things that were known to him and attainable in his day. R. 3278

Then God said to him: “Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words. See, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.”

– 1 Kings 3:11-12 –

[Solomon started] with unusually bright prospects—with a future all aglow with the promises of God, if he would faithfully walk uprightly before him, with the counsel, instruction and assistance of his father David and of the prophet Nathan, early placed upon the throne of Israel and in favor with all the people, amply provided with abundant treasure for the great work of building the temple and commissioned of God to do it. R. 2046

And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days.

– 1 Kings 3:13 –

It was just like our heavenly Father to give Solomon the riches and honors which he had not asked as a reward of his appreciation of wisdom. Indeed it is Solomon himself who expresses the thought that riches and honors are in the right hand of wisdom as her reward. It is thus implied that the Lord in giving to anyone wisdom, grants also the rewards which wisdom brings—namely, riches and honor.

Some one then may inquire, How comes it that those who now seek the wisdom from above, the highest of all wisdom, first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated and full of mercy and good fruits—how is it that such very rarely get earthly riches and honors? We reply, that in Solomon's time the Lord was dealing with natural fleshly Israel, and his promises were along natural fleshly lines, but that during this Gospel dispensation he is dealing with spiritual Israel and his promises and

blessings are along spiritual lines. The wisdom that his people are to seek and to enjoy, the wisdom that cometh from above, is not the wisdom of this world, as the Apostle clearly points out that the riches and honors which are in the hands of this heavenly wisdom, which comes to the Lord's consecrated Church, are spiritual riches and spiritual honors which the world sees not and appreciates not in this present time—which, like the wisdom itself, can be appreciated only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened and who can and do thus discern the riches of God's grace toward his elect Church, which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of [the] natural man, but which God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit."—1 Cor. 2:9-10. R. 3278

If we would ask civilized humanity in general what is the one great need of the world, the answer unquestionably would be, We need to have righteousness established between nations, between individuals, and we need wisdom to discern the right from the wrong, the false from the true, the pure from the evil. Many of the wisest people of the world, although realizing the needs of the present time, have reached the conclusion that it is useless to attempt to secure evenhanded justice in all particulars, amongst all classes. They realize that earthly beings are all more or less fallen, more or less selfish, and that a crying need of the world today is for a perfect government, backed up by full power to enact, and to execute as well, laws of righteousness which shall control the whole world, subduing evil, exalting good. The antitype of Solomon, the Prince of Peace, Messiah, is to accomplish this in the world in the Father's good time, in the Millennial age. R. 3278

So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.

– 1 Kings 3:14 –

The riches and honors which came to Solomon incidentally with his wisdom are world-renowned, and the blessing of long life which was made conditional was partly fulfilled. Solomon lived to be sixty, whereas, we believe, under this promise he would have lived until eighty had he been more obedient to the divine will, but with him as with many others, prosperity was much more difficult to stand than adversity.

When Solomon awoke and realized that these things had been a dream, a visitation of the lord, he returned to Jerusalem, the Capital city where the ark was located, and presented himself as a sacrificer, offering burnt offerings and peace offerings and making a feast for his servants, and realizing that the Lord was prospering him in the matter to which he had called him, he evidently was full of joy and satisfaction and peace. So it should be with all the Lord's people who have been called to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, for "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept through faith and by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." They, too, should realize that the proper way to show their appreciation of the Lord's promised blessings is by a manifestation of faith in him, confidently trusting and rejoicing in these. R. 3278

Then Solomon awoke, and indeed it had been a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

1 Kings 3:15

1 Kings 3:16-28

16 Now two women who were harlots came to the king, and stood before him.

17 And one woman said, “O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house, and I gave birth while she was in the house.

18 Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we were together. No one was with us in the house, except the two of us in the house.

19 And this woman’s son died in the night, because she lay on him.

20 So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

21 And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne.”

22 Then the other woman said, “No! But the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son.” And the first woman said, “No! But the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son.” Thus they spoke before the king.

23 And the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son, who lives, and your son is the dead one’, and the other says, ‘No! But your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.’ “

24 Then the king said, “Bring me a sword.” So they brought a sword before the king.

25 And the king said, “Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other.”

26 Then the woman whose son was living spoke to the king, for she yearned with compassion for her son, and she said, “O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!” But the other said, “Let him be neither mine nor yours, but divide him.”

27 So the king answered and said, “Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother.”



And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered, and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

1 Kings 3:28

The Judgment of Solomon by Nikolai Nikolaievich Ge, 1854

**For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.
– 1 Corinthians 2:10 –**

The one who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit is spiritually-minded. He sees things from the new standpoint which God specially brings to the attention of the spirit begotten. As the Apostle John says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it." (1 John 2:20.) Whoever receives this begetting of the Holy Spirit, this anointing, has an understanding of heart and of mind which is different from that which any natural man would have, a quality that will progress with him. He has the privilege of growing in grace and in knowledge and in the appreciation of the deep things of God; and he should grow.

It is very important to observe the sharp outlines and distinctions which the Scriptures establish. According to these outlines, the Holy Spirit is given only in a very special manner, during a very special Age, for a very special purpose. The distinction is absolute and positive in every sense of the word. Only those begotten of the Father have His Spirit, which is the Spirit of the Son; and those alone who have that Spirit are begotten to the new nature.

Not until we have received this Heavenly illumination can we discern spiritual things. Nor do we at first discern them in the way of appreciating them fully. Spiritual discernment grows from a small beginning. "Old things have passed away and all things have become new." These old things pass away, not instantly, but gradually; and the starting point is marked by this expression, "begotten of God." R. 4968, R. 5133, R. 5742

We have been surprised at times to find that some who have apparently considerable understanding of spiritual things, in the sense of being able to tell about them, do not always give the best evidence in their lives that they really have the Spirit of the Lord. Sometimes in their private lives there is that which is quite contradictory. This condition surprises us; causes us to wonder how it is that those who apparently understand the Truth should be without the power, or manifestation of the power of the Truth in their daily lives. We should bear in mind that whoever speaks the words of the Lord with his mouth, should uphold it in his every act, word, thought, in private life as well as in public. R. 4968

**For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
1 Corinthians 2:11-14**

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

– Colossians 2:7-8 –

It was because of this importance of faith, and of recognition of it as the motive power, either for good or for evil, that the Apostle Paul was so solicitous for the continuance of his converts in the faith. (See 1 Thes. 3:2,5,6,7,10.) He urged all to examine and prove themselves, whether they were in the faith, grounded and settled, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel, but rooted and built up in Christ and **established** in the faith; and to beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (Col. 1:23; 2:7,8.) He was deeply solicitous, too, that the faith of the Church should not stand in the wisdom (the vain philosophies) of men, but in the power of God. And, therefore, in his preaching, he did not launch out into foolish speculations or follow his own or any other men's reasonings, and so pander to the popular craving for something new; but he confined himself to the expounding of the sacred Scriptures and to exhortations, inspired, as they were, by the revelations made to himself—a prophet, as well as an apostle. —1 Cor. 2:4,13; 2 Cor. 12:1-7; Gal. 1:11,12; 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:15,16.

Let us see, then, that we have the faith of Christ—the faith well founded in the Word of God, a faith examined and proved, deeply rooted in the heart as well as in the head, and therefore **established** as the motive power of life. Such a faith is not nervously looking about for something new, and always probing the vain philosophies of men to see how skillfully they can withstand the Word of the Lord; for those who do so show plainly that their faith is not of sufficient influence to be the moving power in them, impelling them onward to full and complete victory over the world. R. 1719

Faith, to be a conquering power in us, must go deeper than the head: it must go into the heart, and thus permeate and energize the whole being, bringing not only the outward conduct but every thought into subjection to Christ. Then indeed will faith impel to action, to works which clearly manifest it; for “faith without works is dead.” A mere intellectual assent to the truth of God, which does not lead to activity in his service, is not faith, and can never overcome the world nor secure the prize of our high calling. But this is the conquering power that overcometh the world, even our faith. Let us examine ourselves and see that we have it pure and simple, and deeply inwrought in the fiber of our character, and that as an energizing principle it is moving us to faithful and persevering activity. Let it be the governor and inspiration of our lives—a living faith which purges and purifies and strengthens to diligence and patience to the end of the narrow way to life. R. 1719

However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew, for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

– 1 Corinthians 2:6-8 –

“However, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect [developed; we are not to cast our pearls before swine]; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes [the popular leaders and teachers] of this world, that come to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God, which was hidden in a mystery, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew.... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit [or mind of God in us, is so anxious to know his truth, that it] searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God.”

The princes of this world do know something of astronomy and geology, and have their ideas of the shape of the earth, etc., but they have not known this hidden wisdom of the divine plan, which maps out a destiny so glorious to the faithful saints who will constitute the royalty of the age to come. Let the world speculate as it may about its own themes of interest, but let us devote ourselves to the one thing in hand, avoiding foolish questions and genealogies and contentions, ...for they are unprofitable and vain. (Titus 3:9.) Let us be faithful to our commission to preach this gospel to the meek who are ready to hear it. (Isa. 61:1.) Let the bride of Christ be diligent in making herself ready (Rev. 19:7), for the marriage of the Lamb is the event of the very near future. R. 3200

**But as it is written: “EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD,
NOR HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN THE THINGS
WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.”**

**But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the
Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.**

1 Corinthians 2:9-10

David Charges Solomon to Build The Temple

Now David said, “Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all countries. I will now make preparation for it.” So David made abundant preparations before his death.

– 1 Chronicles 22:5 –

It was to be a building into every fiber of which should be worked the religious devotion and zeal of the whole nation, and which should therefore stand as a monument of such devotion and zeal, and a testimony to coming generations which should awaken and preserve the same in them. Thus viewed, the work was indeed a great work; and, since all the people were to be interested and active in it, it was necessary that it should be undertaken only in a time of peace, when the attention of the people was not absorbed in wars and their attendant perplexities and calamities. It is manifestly appropriate, too, that the Lord’s anointed king, in preference to any other individual, should have been charged with this important business, since it was a national enterprise, and he stood as the representative and head of the nation.

In this view, as well as in view of its divinely ordained typical significance, it is also manifestly appropriate that its beauty, its costliness and all its adornments should represent the labor and care and sacrifices of the loving hearts and active hands of a people devoted to God. So David expressed it, when he said, “The house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries.” —1 Chron. 22:5. R. 2030

6 Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel.

7 And David said to Solomon: “My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house to the name of the LORD my God,

8 but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and have made great wars. You shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight.

9 Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. His name shall be Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days.

10 He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.’

1 Chronicles 22:6-10

Now, my son, may the LORD be with you. And may you prosper, and build the house of the LORD your God, as He has said to you.

1 Chronicles 22:11

To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven---things which angels desire to look into.

– 1 Peter 1:12 –

The Tabernacle which God commanded Israel to construct in the Wilderness of Sin, in connection with which all their religious services and ceremonies were instituted, was, Paul assures us, a shadow of good things to come. (Heb. 8:5; 10:1; Col. 2:17.) In fact the whole nation of Israel, with their laws and their religious services and ceremonies, were typical. This being true, our understanding of the plan and work of salvation now in progress, as well as their future development, cannot fail to be greatly enlightened by a careful study of that Jewish shadow which they repeated year by year continually until the Gospel age, for the edification of the saints. —1 Pet. 1:12.

Realizing God's care in making the "shadow" should not only give us confidence in its correctness, that not one jot or tittle of it shall fail until all shall be fulfilled (Matt. 5:18), but it should also awaken in us so great an interest in God's plan as would lead us to examine closely, and search carefully, for the meaning of those shadows. And this, with God's promised blessing, we now propose to do, assured that among those who are truly God's consecrated ones—children begotten of the Spirit—"he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." R. 1237

It required the two reigns of David and Solomon to represent the great work of the Lord's Anointed. David's reign represented the work of the church in the flesh, while Solomon's reign represented the work of the church glorified and at rest from all her enemies.

Beyond the veil of the flesh this same anointed company (all the faithful overcomers of this age) will enter into the glorious reign prefigured by the reign of Solomon-- "They shall rest from their labors, and their works follow with them." (Rev. 14:13.) And the temple of God shall rise and shine in its beauty, and in it shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, which blessing was typified by the abundant blessing, peace and prosperity of Israel during the reign of Solomon. R. 1901

Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat, and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things, also for the division of the priests and the Levites, for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the articles of service in the house of the LORD.

– 1 Chronicles 28:11-13 –

Under the Prophet's direction and under his father's suggestions [Solomon] was enabled to enter into the spirit of his father's plan respecting the erection of the great temple at Jerusalem which would put religion, the true religion and worship of God, in the most prominent position before the nation of Israel. He got, sympathetically, the spirit of his father which discerned that the whole nation of Israel would be specially blessed in putting God and his worship in advance of every other thing and interest. He was informed respecting the stores of material and wealth gathered by his father for the temple purposes and consecrated to that service. In these things Solomon found abundant opportunity for the exercise of his intelligence and his ambitions along proper and helpful lines, which drew him nearer to the Lord and taught him how better to serve the Lord and his people Israel as his father's successor.

So we see, as we seek the Lord with all our hearts as "dear children," and with willing minds, that he makes known to us his great plans and purposes respecting the future. He makes known to us his purpose to have a temple, and preparations already made there for, and how and when it will be built and its object: the blessing of all the families of the earth. At each step of the way, as we the more fully enter into sympathy with God's great plan of the ages, it serves to develop us the more and to prepare us for the share in that Temple and Kingdom. R. 4287

"All this," said David, "the LORD made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans."

– 1 Chronicles 28:19 –

To some who think of the building of the Jewish temple as a mere mechanical service, like the building of any other temple, heathen or Christian, it may seem that there was much unnecessary ado about it. How strange, they mentally say, that it should be considered necessary for the whole nation to be at peace before the building could be undertaken! Why could not some be building while others were out fighting the battles? and why should the king be charged with the business? Were there not in all Israel plenty of architects and workmen and men suited to oversee the work, without burdening the king with it?

The sacred edifice was not one of human designing: the plans and specifications were given to David by the spirit of the Lord: — "All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."

Thus it was to be a building into every fiber of which should be worked the religious devotion and

zeal of the whole nation, and which should therefore stand as a monument of such devotion and zeal, and a testimony to coming generations which should awaken and preserve the same in them. Thus viewed, the work was indeed a great work; and, since all the people were to be interested and active in it, it was necessary that it should be undertaken only in a time of peace, when the attention of the people was not absorbed in wars and their attendant perplexities and calamities. It is manifestly appropriate, too, that the Lord's anointed king, in preference to any other individual, should have been charged with this important business, since it was a national enterprise, and he stood as the representative and head of the nation. R. 2030

And David said to his son Solomon, “Be strong and of good courage, and do it. Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God—my God—will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.”

– 1 Chronicles 28:20 –

Now, over every other ambition, David's zeal for God predominates, and his chief desire for Solomon is that he may prove true and faithful to God and zealous in his service and that so he might abide in the divine favor. Then he bade him be strong and of good courage in the great work before him, assuring him of abundant prosperity and divine favor if he would only continue to heed and fulfill the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel. R. 2030

Furthermore King David said to all the assembly: “My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great, because the temple is not for man but for the LORD God.”

– 1 Chronicles 29:1 –

Let us not forget that the building of the Jewish temple was not a mere mechanical service, the putting together of so much stone and mortar and wood, etc., but let us view it from the standpoint of David, who, in charging the congregation of Israel to diligently cooperate with Solomon in the work, said, “Solomon, my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great; **for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.**” (1 Chron. 29:1.) R. 2030

Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver.

– 1 Chronicles 29:3 –

While David was not permitted to build the temple of God, he was permitted to gather together and prepare the materials for the building. So the church in the flesh makes ready the materials for the temple of God which in the dawn of the Millennium will come together noiselessly as did Solomon's temple, without the sound of a hammer. David's warfare, then, was a type of the warfare of the whole church, Head and body, while in the flesh, against the principalities and powers of darkness on every side that oppose her to the very end of her earthly course, so that, though she is anointed for the kingly office, she is never established in power, peace and security to the day of her death. Her work on this side the veil is to war a good warfare, and to industriously gather the materials and prepare the living stones for the glorious temple which shall by and by call all the world to worship.
R. 1901

The people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the LORD, and King David also rejoiced greatly.

1 Chronicles 29:9



Now, my son, may the LORD be with you, and may you prosper, and build the house of the LORD your God, as He has said to you. Only may the LORD give you wisdom and understanding, and give you charge concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God. Therefore arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy articles of God into the house that is to be built for the name of the LORD.

1 Chronicles 22:11-12,19

Solomon's Temple



Alone and isolated in its grandeur stood the temple mount. Terrace upon terrace its courts rose till, high above the city, within the enclosures of marble cloisters, the temple itself stood out, a mass of snowy marble and of glorious glittering in the sunlight, against the half-encircling green background of Olivet....Nor has there been in ancient or modern times a sacred building equal to the temple, whether for situation or magnificence. R. 4296

Now Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

– 2 Chronicles 3:1 –

It may be well to mention, for those who are little familiar with the different names of this ancient city, that before Jerusalem became a place of residence, its sacred hill was called “**Moriah**” (2 Chron. 3:1), northeast of the hill Zion, and was early hallowed by God’s trial of Abraham’s faith. (Gen. 22:1-19.) Its most ancient name was “**Salem**.” (Gen. 14:18; Psa. 76:2; Heb. 7:2.) Afterwards it was called “**Jebus**,” as belonging to the Jebusites. (Jdg. 19:10-11.) Several other significant names were given it: “**Ariel**” (Isa. 29:1-2; Isa. 29:7); “**The Holy City**” (Neh. 11:1; Matt. 4:5; 27:53); “**The City of David**” (2 Sam. 5:7); and “**The City of the Great King**.” —Psa. 48:2; Matt. 5:35.

Jerusalem is situated on elevated ground, south of the centre of the Holy Land, about thirty-three miles from the Mediterranean sea, and about nineteen miles from the river Jordan. From the time it was called “The City of David,” according to 2 Sam. 5:6-9 (where the storming of its fortress by David is given), it also became the religious and political centre of the **typical** Kingdom by the divine, great King Jehovah’s appointment. (1 Kings 11:36.) After the division of the tribes, “The City of David” continued for a time to be the capital of the kingdom of Judah, though several times plundered, until at length it was made “desolate” at the Babylonian captivity. —2 Chron. 12:9; 21:16; 25:23; 36:3,10,17-20; 2 Kings 14:13.

After seventy years of desolation, on the return of the Israelites from captivity (536 B.C.) it was rebuilt the second time (Ezra 5:2); but it did not remain long, for only a century later it was conquered by the Romans under Pompey, and plundered by Crassus, B.C. 54. The third time it was rebuilt by Herod the Great, commencing in B.C. 20; and the city and its grand temple remained until they were taken by the Roman Titus, and totally destroyed, A.D. 70. This ancient city Jerusalem suffered in all thirty-two wars, was stormed and taken seven times, and was twice totally despoiled. Thus it has remained until recently—a “desolate” city—as Jesus, the Great Prophet, predicted: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate;” and “Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” —Matt. 23:38; 24:2. R. 1296—J. A. Weimar

In Salem also is His tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion.

Psalms 76:2

**I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.
– Psalm 2:6 –**

The name “Zion” was anciently applied to a prominent hill of Jerusalem, generally regarded as the south-western and highest of those on which the city was built. It included the most ancient part of the city with the citadel; and, being first occupied for a palace, it was called “the city of David.” (2 Chron. 5:2.) It was also called the “holy hill,” or “hill of the sanctuary.” (Psa. 2:6), being the original site of the tabernacle, pitched by David for the reception of the ark.

By the prophets the name was often put for Jerusalem itself, and also for its inhabitants, sometimes called sons or daughters of Zion. It was also used in a wider sense, as was Jerusalem also, to signify the entire nation of Israel. And since fleshly Israel was typical of spiritual Israel, the Gospel Church, the symbolism applies with still deeper significance to the Gospel Church, which term, throughout the Gospel age, included the entire body of professed Christians, all of whom are on probation for full membership in the Church triumphant—the true Church, the Zion of the future, and the true Zion of the present age, the elect “little flock” to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the Kingdom. R. 1648



**Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is
Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.
Psalm 48:2**

Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon,
because he heard that they had anointed him king in place of
his father, for Hiram had always loved David.

1 Kings 5:1

2 Then Solomon sent to Hiram, saying:

3 You know how my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the wars which were fought against him on every side, until the LORD put his foes under the soles of his feet.

4 But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor evil occurrence.

1 Kings 5:2-4

And behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spoke to my father David, saying, “Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name.”

– 1 Kings 5:5 –

It was not the part of the divine program that David should build the tabernacle, but that his son Solomon should do so. David and Solomon and their surroundings were to constitute types of glorious things to come later pertaining to the antitypical David and his Kingdom. In 1 Chronicles 22:8 and 28:3 a reason is given why David should not be the builder of the temple. He was a man of experience in fighting enemies of the Lord, and his people should serve to typify the battling of Christ and the Church while in the flesh. Solomon's kingdom of glory and riches and honor and peace would serve to illustrate better the Millennial Kingdom of the Christ in glory. R. 4260

So it was, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly and said, Blessed be the LORD this day, for He has given David a wise son over this great people!

1 Kings 5:7

**Solomon determined to build a temple for the name of the LORD, and a royal house for himself.
2 Chronicles 2:1**

*2 Solomon selected seventy thousand men to bear burdens, eighty thousand to quarry stone in the mountains, and three thousand six hundred to oversee them.
3 Then Solomon sent to Hiram king of Tyre, saying: As you have dealt with David my father, and sent him cedars to build himself a house to dwell in, so deal with me.
4 Behold, I am building a temple for the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to Him, to burn before Him sweet incense, for the continual showbread, for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths, on the New Moons, and on the set feasts of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance forever to Israel.
2 Chronicles 2:2-4*



**And the temple which I build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods.
2 Chronicles 2:5**

So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him, and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty together.

– 1 Kings 5:12 –

The context shows that King Hiram of Phoenicia not only contributed largely to the Temple as a friendly gift, but also supplied skilled workmen under Solomon's pay, who in various ways assisted in the preparation of the brazen columns for the porch, utensils for the court, etc. etc. Thirty thousand Israelites were drafted to serve in the Temple construction one month out of each quarter. Besides these there would appear to have been 150,000 laborers, apparently foreigners, hired from outside (1 Kings 5:13-16; 9:21,22), or they may have been aliens residing in the land of Palestine—Canaanites. The overseers would appear to have been 550 chiefs and 3,300 subordinates, of whom 250 were Israelites, and 3,600 Canaanites. (2 Chron. 2:17; 8:10.) This preponderance of the Canaanites amongst the overseers seems to imply that the laborers were Canaanites, and also reminds us that "the Canaanite was still in the land." The fact that the Canaanites, strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel, were the chief laborers in the construction of the great Temple, seems to have been typical of the fact that aliens, strangers, foreigners, and enemies of the Truth have the larger share in the work of preparing the antitypical Temple. Their hammering, their chiseling, their melting and casting, under divine providence, serve to make ready the living stones and the glorious pillars for the spiritual house. Verily they know not what they do. Their work is greater, better, than they comprehend, as the glories of eternity will demonstrate. R. 3282

Then King Solomon raised up a labor force out of all Israel, and the labor force was thirty-thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten-thousand a month in shifts: they were one month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the labor force. Solomon had seventy-thousand who carried burdens, and eighty-thousand who quarried stone in the mountains, besides three-thousand three-hundred from the chiefs of Solomon's deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work. And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, and hewn stones, to lay the foundation of the temple. So Solomon's builders, Hiram's builders, and the Gebalites quarried them, and they prepared timber and stones to build the temple.

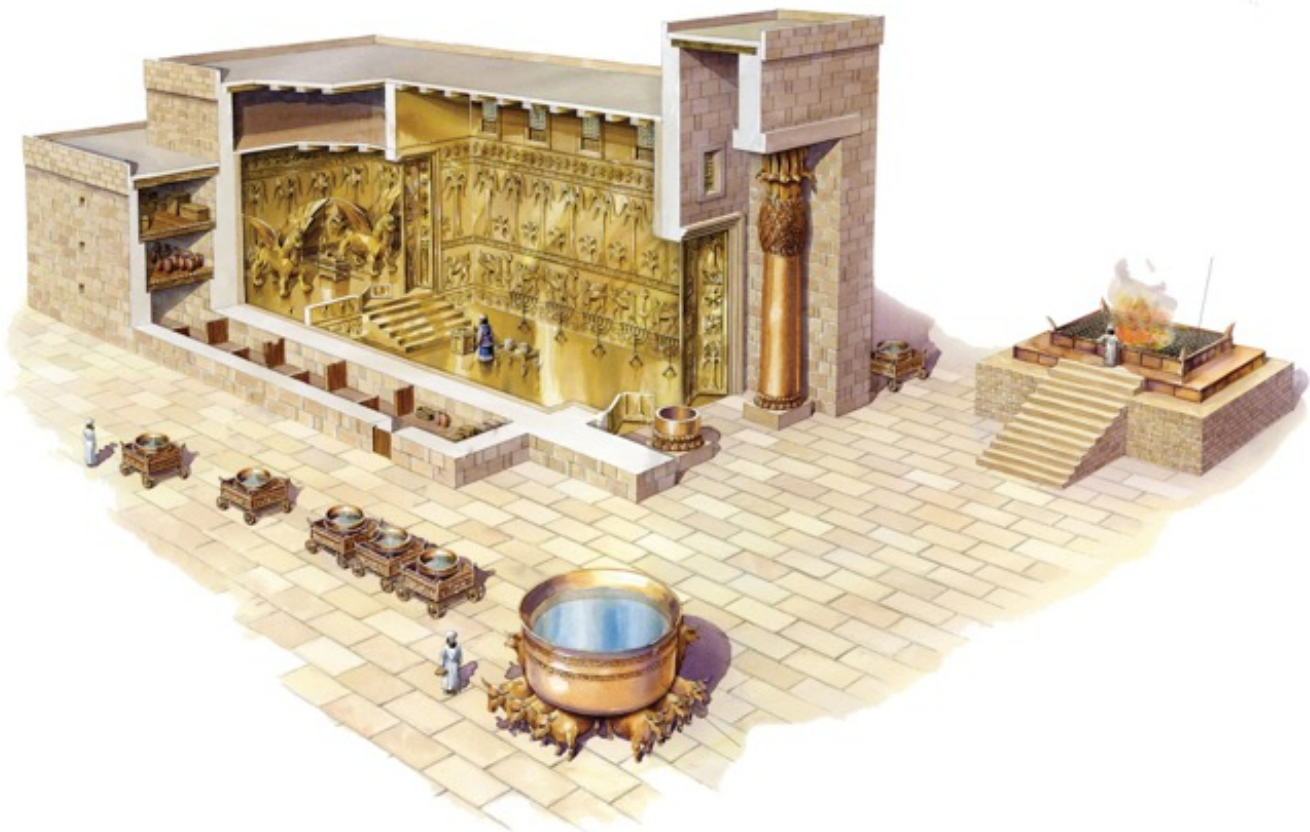
1 Kings 5:13-18

It came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

1 Kings 6:1

Solomon did not weigh all the articles, because there were so many. The weight of the bronze was not determined. Thus Solomon had all the furnishings made for the house of the LORD: the altar of gold, and the table of gold on which was the showbread, the lampstands of pure gold, five on the right side and five on the left in front of the inner sanctuary, with the flowers and the lamps and the wick-trimmers of gold, the basins, the trimmers, the bowls, the ladles, and the censers of pure gold, and the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner room (the Most Holy Place) and for the doors of the main hall of the temple.

1 Kings 7:48-50



The vessels of the Temple were of solid metals. (1 Kings 7:47-50) These two metals, gold and copper, were used, we think, to represent two different natures—copper representing the human nature in its perfection, a little lower than the angelic nature; and gold representing the divine nature, far above angels, principalities and powers. As gold and copper are much alike in their appearance, yet different in quality, so the human nature is an image and likeness of the divine, adapted to earthly conditions. T18

In the Most Holy Place he made two cherubim, fashioned by carving, and overlaid them with gold.

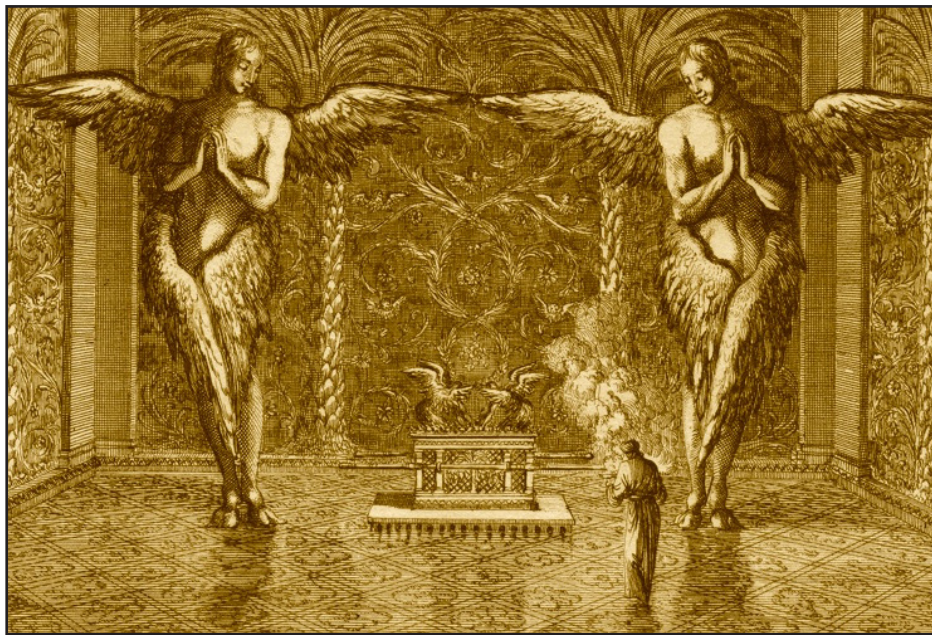
– 2 Chronicles 3:10 –

In the temple, which represents the church in the Millennial age, two new and very large cherubim were made. [Probably nearly twenty-one feet high.] They are represented as standing on each side of the ark, their outer wings touching either wall, and their inner wings touching each other, thus filling the whole expanse. (2 Chron. 3:10.)

These two new cherubim would seem to represent the other two attributes that had been so obscure before, but are now made glorious by the additional light of the new dispensation. [There was one lampstand in the tabernacle and ten in the temple.] The chief work of the Millennial age will apparently be to show that these two glorious attributes—love and justice—are not lame or impotent; they stand upon their own feet; they are independent, yet in perfect harmony, and that they are “of one measure and of one size.” (1 Kings 6:25.)

We cannot in this follow minutely the description of the cherubim as seen by Isaiah and Ezekiel, neither have we sufficient light as yet, but we will notice a few points that are easily seen. These two prophets seem, like John, to represent the living saints. To them “the heavens were opened.”

(Eze. 1:1; Rev. 4:1.) They see “visions of God,” and Jehovah sitting upon a throne.” (Isa. 6:1.) They see the cherubim around and under the throne. They hear them rest not from crying, “Holy, holy, holy,” etc. That is, we now see that all of God’s attributes are in perfect harmony, and that in ceaseless chorus they are sounding forth his praise, and revealing the fact that “the whole earth is full of his glory,”—to those who have their eyes opened. R. 530



The wings of the cherubim were twenty cubits in overall length: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, touching the wall of the room, and the other wing was five cubits, touching the wing of the other cherub. One wing of the other cherub was five cubits, touching the wall of the room, and the other wing also was five cubits, touching the wing of the other cherub. The wings of these cherubim spanned twenty cubits overall. They stood on their feet, and they faced inward.

2 Chronicles 3:11-13

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock, You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!

– Psalm 80:1 –

The Mercy Seat—a slab of solid gold, on the two ends of which, and of the same piece of metal, were formed two cherubim, with wings uplifted as if ready to fly, their faces looking inward toward the center of the plate on which they stood. Between the cherubim, on the “Mercy Seat,” a bright light represented Jehovah’s presence.

As the Ark represented the Christ, so the “Mercy Seat,” Glory-light and Cherubim together represented Jehovah God— “the Head of Christ is God.” (1 Cor. 11:3) As with Christ, so with Jehovah, he is here represented by things which illustrate attributes of his character. The light, called the “Shekinah glory,” represented Jehovah himself as the Light of the universe, as Christ is the Light of the world. This is abundantly testified by many scriptures. “Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth.” Psa. 80:1; 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; Isa. 37:16

**O LORD of hosts, God of Israel,
the One who dwells between the
cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all
the kingdoms of the earth.
Isaiah 37:16**

Humanity cannot enter Jehovah’s presence: hence the royal priest, Head and Body, represented by Aaron, must become **new** creatures, “partakers of the **divine nature**” (having crucified and buried the human), before they can appear in the presence of that excellent glory.

The slab of gold called the “MERCY SEAT” (or more properly the Propitiatory*, because on it the Priest offered the blood of the sacrifices which propitiated or **satisfied** the demands of divine justice) represented the underlying principle of Jehovah’s character—**justice**. God’s throne is based or established upon Justice. “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne.” Psa. 89:14; Job 36:17; 37:23; Isa. 56:1; Rev. 15:3

The Apostle Paul uses the Greek word for Mercy Seat or Propitiatory (hilasterion) when referring to our Lord Jesus, saying— “Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiatory [or Mercy Seat]...to declare his righteousness...that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Rom. 3:25,26) The thought here is in accord with the foregoing presentation. The Justice, the Wisdom, the Love and the Power are God’s own as well as the plan by which all these cooperate in human salvation: but it pleased God that in his well beloved Son, our Lord Jesus, all of his own fullness should dwell, and be represented to mankind. Thus in the type the High Priest, coming forth from the Most Holy, was the living representative of Jehovah’s Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power to men—the living representative of divine mercy, forgiveness, appeasement. Although the divine being is veiled, hidden from human sight, his divine attributes are to be displayed to all men by our great High Priest, who, as the living Mercy Seat, will at the close of this age draw nigh to mankind and make all to understand the riches of divine grace.

The Two Cherubim represented two other elements of Jehovah’s character, as revealed in his Word, viz., divine Love and divine Power. These attributes, Justice, the foundation principle, and Love and Power of the same quality or essence, and lifted up out of it, are in perfect harmony. They are all made of one piece: they are thoroughly one. Neither Love nor Power can be exercised until Justice is fully satisfied. Then they fly to help, to lift up and to bless. They were on the wing, ready, but waiting; looking inward toward the “Mercy Seat,” toward Justice, to know when to move. T124/125

*By some means the translators of the Common Version Bible mistranslated *hilasterion* “propitiation.” The word *hilasmos*, signifying *satisfaction*, is properly translated “propitiation” in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10.

1 Kings 6:15-38

15 And he built the inside walls of the temple with cedar boards, from the floor of the temple to the ceiling he paneled the inside with wood, and he covered the floor of the temple with planks of cypress.

16 Then he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards. He built it inside as the inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy Place.

17 And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits long.

18 The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All was cedar. There was no stone to be seen.

19 And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there.

20 The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid the altar of cedar.

21 So Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold. He stretched gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold.

22 The whole temple he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the temple. Also he overlaid with gold the entire altar that was by the inner sanctuary.

23 Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high.

24 One wing of the cherub was five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other.

25 And the other cherub was ten cubits. Both cherubim were of the same size and shape.

26 The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other cherub.

27 Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room, and they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room.

28 Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

29 Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer sanctuaries, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers.

30 And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer sanctuaries.

31 For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood. The lintel and doorposts were one-fifth of the wall.

32 The two doors were of olive wood, and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

33 So for the door of the sanctuary he also made doorposts of olive wood, one-fourth of the wall.

34 And the two doors were of cypress wood. Two panels comprised one folding door, and two panels comprised the other folding door.

35 Then he carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers on them, and overlaid them with gold applied evenly on the carved work.

36 And he built the inner court with three rows of hewn stone and a row of cedar beams.

37 In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv.

38 And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

The temple built by Solomon did not cover the largest area of ground, nor was it the most lofty and massive structure of ancient times. Many of the ancient temples were superior in these respects; yet this temple was probably richer in its ornamentation and more costly than any of the others, because of the large amount of gold used in its construction. The building itself was of white limestone, which in the sunlight would very strongly resemble white marble. The stone necessary for its construction abounds in the vicinity of the temple itself; indeed, under the city of Jerusalem are large caverns known as "Solomon's Quarries," from which it is supposed that the stones for the temple were quarried. Some very large stones, more or less imperfect, and possibly for that reason not used, are still to be seen in these quarries. The beams, inner walls, doors and roof of the temple were constructed of cedar and red sandalwood. These were all (roof included) completely overlaid with gold—not merely gilded with gold leaf, such as is now used, but covered with plates of gold about an eighth of an inch thick, which were fastened on with gold nails and bestudded with precious stones of various kinds.

The fact that some of the stones bear Phoenecian marks has led some to suppose that part of the stone for the temple was imported; but we think it more probable that Phoenecian workmen were employed in quarrying, stonedressing, etc., and used such marks as they were in the habit of using in their own country. So far as the record shows, only the timber, including "fir" for scaffolding, was imported; the cedar coming from Lebanon. The country of Palestine did not afford such timber as was necessary. R. 2054

So Solomon built the temple and finished it.
1 Kings 6:14

The Temple of God



***Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God,
who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.
2 Corinthians 5:5***

Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 16:16-17

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church.

– Matthew 16:18 –

The Lord did not propose to build his Church upon Peter, but upon the great truth which the Father had laid as a foundation for his plan and had revealed to Peter and which Peter had so nobly expressed. According to the Greek, our Lord replied to Peter, “Thou art a stone, and upon this rock will I build my Church.” The rock upon which the Church is built is this confession which St. Peter made. St. Peter himself was not the rock, but he was one of the living stones built by faith upon the rock of truth. It was this same Apostle who so beautifully explained the whole matter, assuring us that all consecrated believers are “living stones” in the temple of God, whose foundation and capstone is Christ, in whom we are builded together through the operation of the holy Spirit.

—1 Pet. 2:4-7. R. 2656 and R. 4645

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

– 1 Corinthians 3:11 –

In the light of the teachings of the apostles we see that the antitype of that temple was the one true Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven (1 Cor. 3:16,17; Luke 10:20)—that it is a spiritual temple built up with living stones, of which Jesus Christ is himself the chief corner stone, the sure foundation. He became the foundation of this spiritual house when he gave his life a ransom for many, and thus made possible the building up of other living stones upon this foundation until the wonderful structure shall reach its glorious completeness. —1 Pet. 2:4-7.

When this foundation of the spiritual temple was laid, all who came to a realization of the importance of the great work thereby accomplished rejoiced and praised the Lord. And this rejoicing in the strength and security of the foundation of our hopes never ceases. Praise the Lord! wells up from every heart that realizes the redemption accomplished by the precious blood of Christ, shed for many for the remission of sins. Upon this sure foundation the temple structure has been gradually and steadily progressing. The living stones are taken out of the quarry (the world), and, by the experiences and discipline of the present life, they are shaped and chiseled and polished and thus fitted for their places in the temple. R. 1484

It is also contained in the Scripture, “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHIEF CORNERSTONE, ELECT, PRECIOUS, AND HE WHO BELIEVES ON HIM WILL BY NO MEANS BE PUT TO SHAME.”

– 1 Peter 2:6 –

The fact of the chief corner stone being also the foundation stone of this building, as well as the “head-stone,” the crowning glory of it, as suggested by the prophets (Zech. 4:7; Psa. 118:22), calls to mind the form of the Great Pyramid whose top stone is the chief corner stone, and whose internal structure corresponds so perfectly with the Tabernacle and its symbolism. And further, if Christ be the chief corner stone, the top stone and also the foundation, as he surely is (1 Cor. 3:11), the manifest suggestion is that the foundation of this building of God is laid in the heavens, not on earth, and that all the other living stones built upon this foundation are drawn and cemented to it by heavenly and not earthly attractions. Yes, “ye are God’s building”—“ye,” both individually and collectively, consecrated sons of God who have become the habitation of God through the spirit, ye are the temple of God. R. 1981

**The stone which the builders rejected has
become the chief cornerstone.**

Psalm 118:22

Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the ‘STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED BY YOU BUILDERS, WHICH HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

– Acts 4:10-12 –

Peter allowed the fact that God raised up Jesus from the dead to stand as the proof that they had erred in their condemnation of him; and, without parleying the question, he proceeded to assure his hearers that this one, Jesus, whom they despised and rejected, had nevertheless been owned of God as the “chief corner stone” of the great Temple which God purposes to build. He thus referred their minds directly to a Messianic Psalm (118:22) familiar to them, pointing out its fulfillment in Christ, and declares, “Neither is the salvation in any other.” This expression, “the salvation,” to his hearers would have the sense of, The salvation for which we Jews, as a nation, have been waiting and longing, —a national salvation, and an individual salvation in the Kingdom of God.

Let us mark well also the inspired utterance of the Apostle, “There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” This would be a difficult lesson for his hearers to receive. It would mean a total revolution of their theories, hopes, aims, plans and projects. It would mean that they had been wrong, utterly wrong, in all their expectations for some time. It would mean that they had, as teachers, been misrepresenting the divine plan and misleading the people. The Apostle’s course, however, was plain. It was proper that he should state the matter clearly, without peradventure, that his hearers might have a full testimony respecting the truth. R. 2940

As it is written: “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STUMBLING STONE AND ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND WHOEVER BELIEVES ON HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.”

– Romans 9:33 –

That stumbling-stone is the doctrine of redemption through the precious blood of Christ. At that stone the fleshly Zion stumbled, and so now the nominal spiritual Zion is stumbling at the same stone; for it was to be “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel”—the fleshly and the spiritual. The elect little flock of overcomers do not so stumble, but recognize this as the chief corner-stone of the true Zion, remembering the words of the Prophet, “Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe [in Christ as your Redeemer, who bought you with his precious blood] he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient,...the same is made ...a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed” (1 Pet. 2:6-8); for God does not propose to deliver his Kingdom unto any of the disobedient. They need the fiery trial of the coming tribulation to bring them into a proper attitude before God; and hence must come up through the great tribulation. R. 1649

He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 8:14

God is not averse to manifesting his wrath, his indignation, against sin and sinners, after the manner he has indicated in his law, the penalty of which is death (not eternal torment). Nevertheless, while having this willingness to execute his law, he has endured or permitted a continuance of sin and sinners in apparent contradiction to his law, thus manifesting much long-suffering toward those who were properly subjects of destruction. The Lord has done this at various times, but particularly in connection with the nation of Israel, which came under the Law Covenant at Sinai, and which proved itself unworthy of continued favors by repeated falling into idolatry. But he kept that nation together, the evil as well as the good, the sham Israelites as well as the “Israelites indeed,” up to a certain time—the time when, according to his purpose, the true Israelites would be called out from the chaffy ones, to be the nucleus of the Gospel Church. These were the vessels of mercy, upon whom the Pentecostal blessings came, and who were accepted of the Lord out of the house of servants into the house of sons. (John 1:11,12.) Forthwith, as soon as all of the worthy had been selected, destruction came upon Israel’s polity; as the Apostle expresses it, “Wrath to the uttermost against this people;” and the vessels fitted for destruction met with their destruction—the chaff was consumed in that fire. (Matt. 3:10-12.) Not all of the individuals were destroyed, but their existence as a nation was blotted out. Henceforth divine mercy, ignoring the natural Israelites who were not Israelites indeed, has been blessing with mercy those whom the Lord is calling out—Gentiles as well as Jews. R. 3433

**The temple of God is holy, which temple you are.
– 1 Corinthians 3:17 –**

Naturally and properly our chief interest centers in the antitypical Temple, the antitypical Solomon, the antitypical priests and antitypical people. There is a sense in which every member of the New Creation may be said to be individually a temple of the holy Spirit now, a sense in which every individual should build up his own faith and character from the divine promises and by compliance with the divine requirements, but this is not the larger antitypical view of the Temple. In its antitypical sense Solomon's Temple certainly represented the glorified Christ, head and body, built up of living stones, as the Apostle Peter explains. Under the supervision of the anointed the work of gathering the various stones for the Temple has been in progress throughout the Gospel age. As not any and every stone was taken for Solomon's Temple, but only those of specific dimensions and peculiar pattern, in accordance with the plan, so it is with the antitypical, the living, stones. Only a certain class are approached at all, and only those which being cut out are first roughly quarried out and found suitable in character and dimensions are tooled at all, and only those which under the tool yield proper results and become conformed to the intended pattern will ultimately find their place in the glorious Temple which our Lord as the great master-builder is constructing.

The tabernacle and temple of God, built by divine direction and under the divine supervision, and thus honored with the visible, typical manifestations of the divine presence and glory, were only types of that grander tabernacle, not made with hands, of which fleshly Israel could have no conception, and of that holy temple which should by and by eclipse the grandeur of the earthly temple with all the gold and precious stones that adorned it. Let us, then, look away from, or, rather, let us look through, the typical temple of God to its antitype. The Apostles tell us that the Gospel Church, both individually and collectively, constitute the antitypical temple: — "For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." R. 3283, R. 1981

How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD. My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

– Psalm 84:1-2 –

"How lovely are thy dwelling-places, O Jehovah of hosts. My soul desireth, yea, it longeth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." Thus every soul that hungers and thirsts after righteousness longs to be separated from the evil of this present time and to enter that felicitous state where under God's promised kingdom all things in heaven and in earth will praise him and have his communion, as Adam enjoyed it before his disobedience and fall from favor. Not only so, but, under the provisions of the New Covenant (sealed and made operative by the death of our Lord and Redeemer, by "the blood of the New Covenant"), his people, accepted as sons (John 1:12), become his tabernacles, his dwelling places. As it is written, "I will dwell in them and walk in them," and "Ye are the temple of the living God." (2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Cor. 3:16.) And all such temples indwelt by the spirit of the truth become beautiful, lovely, amiable, in the eyes of all who have the same spirit; and thus God's children may now have fellowship with him through each other. R. 1401

You are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM. I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.”

–2 Corinthians 6:18 –

Such are not only temples or tabernacles, individually, but the Church of Christ as a whole is made up of living stones in the one great Temple of the future—Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone—the top-stone. These “living stones” are now being developed, fitted, polished, proved and selected for positions in the future glorious Temple of God. These glorious courts or dwelling places of God will be transcendently grand; and for a place among those “overcomers,” in the immediate presence of God and with our Redeemer—where he is and like him—these are indeed the things for which our hearts and our flesh cry out.

Very different are these views of the dwelling places of God from those generally entertained by Christian people, who, as they read these verses, will think of the ornate temples of wood and brick and stone in which they worship as the houses of God. But the Apostle declares not only that the truly consecrated saints are the living stones of God’s great future temple, and each a miniature temple, but also that

R. 1402

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The Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands.
Acts 7:48
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You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.

– Romans 8:9 –

How precious is the thought, how great the condescension of our God in thus honoring his chosen ones who believe and trust in him and are fully consecrated to his will and service. “Ye are the temple of the living God”; and “ye are not in the flesh [in the old carnal condition], but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you.” (Rom. 8:9.) And if the spirit of God dwell in us, it is to sanctify and glorify these temples of his, that even now we should show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. R. 1981

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

– 1 Corinthians 3:16 –

It is in this view of our relationship to God that Paul would impress upon our minds the sanctity of these temples of the holy spirit, saying, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroy the temple of God, him will God destroy.” That is, if, after he has been made a partaker of the holy spirit, and consequently, through the enlightening and guiding influences of that spirit, has tasted the good word of God and the powers [privileges of divine instruction, etc.] of the coming age, he should stifle all these blessed influences, refusing to be further led of the spirit of God, and turn again, either suddenly or gradually, to the spirit of the world, such a one is destroying his spiritual life—destroying the temple of God, which was holy and consecrated to God. And if such a one should hope thereby to have his portion in the coming age with the restitution class, let him quickly undeceive himself, for the judgment against all such is, “Him will God destroy.” The Lord has “no pleasure” in any who “draw back” from such high privileges. “But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation....We are not of them who draw back unto destruction, but of them which believe to the saving of the soul.” — Heb. 6:4-9; 10:38,39.

It was in allusion to this same thing that our Lord, addressing his disciples, said, “Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life, shall preserve it”; and that Paul also said, “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Luke 17:33; Rom. 8:13) It is to those who appreciate the sanctity of these temples of God that all the blessings of divine grace belong; for God shall dwell in them and walk in them, and his glory shall be manifested in them and to them. It is their blessed privilege, in reverent humility, to realize the condescending favor of God in recognizing them as his temples, and making his abode with them, and to profit by all the hallowed influences of his presence and favor. And if indeed these bodies of ours be the temple of the holy spirit, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godlikeness? and how ought these mortal bodies to be quickened by his spirit that dwelleth in us? —quickened into active and diligent service and to the bringing forth of all the fruits of holiness. —2 Pet. 3:11; Rom. 8:11. R. 1981

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

– 1 Peter 2:4-5 –

While the saints are thus individually the temples of God, they also collectively constitute the great temple in which Peter likens each individual to a living stone, and Christ to the chief or foundation corner stone, “To whom coming, as unto a living stone,...ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 2:5.) Paul also refers to this same thought, saying, “Ye are...of the house of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets [the foundation of hope in which they trusted, and which they pointed out to us], Jesus Christ, [he] being a foundation corner stone of it; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple for the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the spirit.” —Eph. 2:20-22. R. 1982

**He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God.
– Revelation 3:12 –**

That Divine light shows us the temple at Jerusalem as more than a house of worship for its time, as a type of a greater Temple to be built by a greater than Solomon. That greater Temple, the New Testament assures us, is the Church, the Body of Christ, of which he is the Head. This is the Temple of which St. Peter declares that himself and all of the Lord's thoroughly consecrated followers are antitypical, the living stones or members. This is the Temple of which our Lord declares, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God." This is the Temple of which our Lord again said, "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will rear it up"; he spake of the Temple of his Body, not of his own flesh, for that was but a tabernacle and was not reared up by our Lord. The Father raised him from the dead, but in a new body, a spiritual one. R. 4296



**Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole
building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in
the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a
dwelling place of God in the Spirit.
Ephesians 2:20-22**

Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” He was speaking of the temple of His body.

– John 2:19,21 –

Of the Temple, the Body of Christ, the Church, he declares, “I will raise him up at the last day.” The last day, the seventh day, the Great Millennium, is the third day referred to by our Lord. He was living in the fifth thousand-year day, there following the sixth, and the seventh has just begun, and with it, we believe, the raising up, the “change” to glory of the “Church, which is his Body.”

That glorious Temple, The Christ, in the power of the First Resurrection will share in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature; and through it during the Millennium, the heavenly Father will communicate his blessings to the world of mankind for their uplifting out of sin and death. Thus, as the High Priest in his robes of glory and beauty represented The Christ, the Messiah, Jesus the Head and the Church his Body, so the temple in which he served likewise symbolizes the same Redeemer and the same Church. The one illustration discloses one relationship or communication between God and men. The other represents another feature of the same ministry of reconciliation, as it will ultimately reach the world of mankind.

From this standpoint we can readily see that God’s temple, built by Solomon, represented so glorious a class and such rich blessings of God to men that it was very appropriate that the type of these riches of grace should be costly, ornate, beautiful in the highest degree. R. 4296

The Pharisees Question Jesus by James Tissot



The temple, when it was being built, was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built.

– 1 Kings 6:7 –

The record tells us that the stones and timbers of the temple were brought to the spot all prepared, shaped and marked for their several positions, so that the actual construction was a quiet one. We read that, “The parts came together without the sound of an hammer.” The antitype of this is that the chiseling and polishing and preparing of God’s saints in the present life and the marking of them for their several places, by which God sets the various members in the Body as it hath pleased him, will leave the work of the First Resurrection a very quiet one, so quiet that the world is not aware that it is now in progress. Thank God it is not yet finished, and there is yet hope and opportunity for some of the consecrated now living to “make our calling and election sure,” and by the final “change from glory to glory” to be placed in the great spiritual Temple, in the particular niche or position for which under Divine providence we shall have been prepared. This resurrection “change” will make us all glorious and like unto our Lord and Redeemer, who is the express image of the Father’s person.
R. 4296

Each of the Lord’s followers is symbolically a “living stone,” now being chiseled, fitted, polished, prepared, for a place in the glorious Temple, whose construction was delayed until the end of the age, when, as typified by Solomon’s Temple, each part will come together with exactness, “without the sound of a hammer,” --without the slightest need of trimming or altering any of those perfected ones, all of whom together will constitute the glorious Temple of God, which will be filled with his presence in the fullest and most complete sense, and constitute the center of his blessing and instruction to all the families of the earth during the Millennium;— “the New Jerusalem, which cometh down from God out of heaven.” ---1 Pet. 2:4-7; Rev. 21:27; Rev. 21:10; 1 Kings 6:7. R. 2987

1 Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep.

2 And he said to me, “What do you see?” So I said, “I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps.

3 “Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left.”

4 So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, “What are these, my lord?”

5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

6 So he answered and said to me: “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.

7 ‘Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!” ’ ’

8 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

9 “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple. His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.

10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.”

– Zechariah 4:1-10 –

This vision was doubtless intended to encourage the Israelites living at the time it was given; but, its chief lesson belonged not to them, but to us. —1 Pet. 1:12.

The golden candlestick (literally, lamp) with seven branches (or burners) is the same as that which, in the typical Tabernacle and Temple, shed the only light of “The Holy.” The same **seven lamps** in one are brought to our attention in the Book of Revelation (1:20), and there explained to symbolize the Church of Christ during the present time. The seven represents perfection or completeness; hence as a whole the **lamp-stand** represents all the true saints or light-bearers in all the various phases of the Nominal Church development. —Rev. 2:1,5.

The oil represents the holy spirit which, burning in the true believers, causes the illumination of the sanctified in Christ Jesus.

The two olive trees from which the olive oil proceeds to the seven lamps we understand to be typical of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments—God’s two witnesses. The holy spirit is “the spirit of the truth;” and God’s Word is truth! God explained this to Zerubbabel (verse 6), saying, “Not by an army nor by force but by my spirit [the spirit of the Truth—the spirit or influence of God given through his exceeding great and precious promises, etc.—the olive trees—(2 Pet. 1:4) the Word], saith Jehovah of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain before Zerubbabel? Thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring on the headstone with shoutings of, Grace, grace unto it.”

A mountain symbolizes a kingdom; and the one here represented as an obstruction before Zerubbabel typifies Satan’s kingdom—the dominion of evil under the Prince of this world. **Zerubbabel** typifies Christ. His name signifies “a shoot [or sprout] out of Babylon.” Literally, he was a son or shoot out of David and Jesse (as our Lord also is called), and secondly, as a sprout out of Babylon [confusion], he was a further type of Christ, who was out of, and yet separate from, sin and all mixture of evil. Undoubtedly the people of that day understood Zerubbabel to be the branch or shoot mentioned in the vision of Chapter 3:8, not realizing that Zerubbabel and Joshua were but types of Christ, in whom the two offices of King and Priest would be combined.

Verses 9 and 10 blend the type and the antitype. Zerubbabel had begun the rebuilding of the literal Temple, and the people understood that it would be completed by him. They might not then despise the humble beginning of the work, but rejoice to see it progress under his direction —realizing that the **seven eyes** (i.e., the perfect wisdom of God which holds survey of all the earth) were superintending the work. R. 1491

The real application of these verses is to Christ, who began the construction of the true Temple of God—“which temple ye are.” His earthly ministry and the work of his followers have all along seemed small and weak, and far from what might be expected by any respecting so great a Temple for so grand a purpose. But those who realize the situation from God’s standpoint can rejoice in the outcome, realizing the Lord’s promise that “the day of small things,” the day of suffering, the day of trials, will soon give place to the Millennial Day of joy, perfection and blessing. The despised “little flock,” whom the world knows not, even as it knew not its Master, will soon be glorified with him, and share his Kingdom. The poor, rich in faith, and those that are nought, and that are despised, and that are foolish according to the wisdom of this world, are soon to be gloriously manifested as the Sons of God, the body of Christ and the embodiment of divine wisdom and power and love, that as his Kingdom they, with Christ their Lord and Head, may, as the “Sun of Righteousness,” shine forth in blessing and life to the groaning creation—already redeemed by the precious blood. R. 1491

**Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in
the kingdom of their Father.**

– Matthew 13:43 –

Though the Church, like a tabernacle in the wilderness, is now a habitation of God, owned by him, and blessed by his presence, and filled with a large measure of his glory, yet enveloped, as it generally is, by clouds of trouble, etc., which hide the glory from others, except as occasionally manifested, it is not always to be a moving tent with its glory concealed. By and by her glory will be manifested without the enveloping cloud; --“She shall shine forth as the sun.” (Matt. 13:43.) The prophet Isaiah joyfully anticipates that blessed time when the finished temple of God shall displace the present tabernacle, saying, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,...and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” --Isa. 60:1-3.

What a hope is thus set before the faithful ones, who, as living stones, come to Christ to be built upon this foundation! From the eloquent imagery of prophets and apostles we catch the inspiration of that holy joy which shall be fully realized when all the living stones of the glorious spiritual temple of God shall noiselessly come together without the sound of a hammer--in the first resurrection, and when the headstone shall crown this glorious building of God, amid shoutings of “Grace, grace, unto it” (Zech. 4:7.) What tongue can tell or pen portray the glory to be revealed in the saints by and by, when the sacrifices of this day of atonement (the Gospel age) are all over? and what plummet can sound or line measure the wealth of blessing that will flow to redeemed humanity from the glorified temple of God? R.1982

**Arise, shine, for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is
risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and
deep darkness the people, but the LORD will arise over you, and His
glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and
kings to the brightness of your rising.**

Isaiah 60:1-3

Solomon's Prayer and Dedication of the Temple

THE DEDICATION SERVICES DESCRIBED

Prof. W. J. Beecher, after studying the account, offers the following suggestions respecting the order of ceremonies observed. We think it not unreasonable and quote as follows: —

- 1 “Then spake Solomon, the Lord said that he would dwell in thick darkness”; the declaration of 1 Kings 8:12,13; 2 Chron. 6:1,2.
- 2 King Solomon then turned and blessed the standing congregation. —1 Kings 8:1; 2 Chron. 6:3.
- 3 King Solomon then delivered an address to the standing multitude. —1 Kings 15:21; 2 Chron. 6:4-11.
- 4 King Solomon then offered a dedicatory prayer, the multitude kneeling. —1 Kings 8:23-53; 2 Chron. 6:14-40,54; 6:3.
- 5 Psalm 132 was then chanted: “Arise, O God”! Then fire from the cloudy pillar descended upon the Mercy Seat, the Shekinah, and the glory of the Lord filled the house and the multitude outside prostrated themselves. —2 Chron. 6:41; 7:1-3.
- 6 The Congregation then said, “For his mercy endureth forever.” —2 Chron. 7:3.
- 7 King Solomon closed the ceremony with an address and benediction, the multitude standing. —1 Kings 8:54-61. R. 4297

There I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory. So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will also consecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests. I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God.

– Exodus 29:43-45 –

The usual Hebrew term applied to the Jewish temple was **heykal**, which signifies a royal residence. It was also often qualified by the term **kodesh**, sanctuary, to indicate its sacredness as the visible dwelling place of Jehovah among his people. The same significance also attached to the movable tent or sanctuary of Israel, the tabernacle in the wilderness. The idea thus visibly expressed was that God was in the midst of his people, as he said, “And there will I meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest’s office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.” —Exod. 29:43-45.

In fulfillment of this promise, as soon as the tabernacle was finished, the glory of the Lord filled it, as we read: — “So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle....The cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys” —Exod. 40:33-38.

So also at the dedication of Solomon’s temple there was the same divine recognition of this more permanent structure: — “So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the Lord. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated, even the silver and the gold and the vessels did he put among the treasures of the house of the Lord....And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.” —1 Kings 7:51; 8:10,11.

The idea conveyed by the several accounts of this glory of the Lord, as it appeared in the Tabernacle, in the Temple, on Mount Sinai, and as it guided and protected Israel in coming out of Egypt, is that of exceeding brightness, enveloped, and usually concealed, by a thick cloud, from which, on special occasions, it shone forth. Thus we read, “And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days....And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.” —Exod. 24:16,17. See also 19:9,18,19; 40:34,35; 1 Kings 8:10,11. R. 1981

The tabernacle and temple of God, built by divine direction and under the divine supervision, and thus honored with the visible, typical manifestations of the divine presence and glory, were only types of that grander tabernacle, not made with hands, of which fleshly Israel could have no conception, and of that holy temple which should by and by eclipse the grandeur of the earthly temple with all the gold and precious stones that adorned it. Let us, then, look away from, or, rather, let us look through, the typical temple of God to its antitype. The Apostles tell us that the Gospel Church, both individually and collectively, constitute the antitypical temple: — “For the temple of God is holy, *which temple ye are.*” R. 1981

Then Solomon spoke: “The LORD said He would dwell in the dark cloud. I have surely built You an exalted house, and a place for You to dwell in forever.”

– 1 Kings 8:12-13 –

The King explained to the people the significance of the Temple, that it was the house of God and built under divine direction, given to himself and to his father David. Then standing near the altar of the court, spreading forth his hands toward heaven, he prayed a most beautiful prayer, and one which we recognize as prophetically directed, and as teaching us the purpose and object of the great antitypical Temple constructed by the antitypical Solomon. The literal Temple was to be the place toward which all the Israelites should look as God's dwelling place, the center of his power, authority, forgiveness and blessing and help in every time of need. So in due time, when the spiritual Temple shall have been constructed and dedicated and filled with divine power, it will be the center toward which all who would approach God shall look for help and assistance and blessing and forgiveness, toward which they shall make their prayers, and in which they shall realize the manifestation of divine power and blessing on their behalf. R. 3283

.....
: Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of :
: the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, to King Solomon in :
: Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of :
: the LORD from the City of David, which is Zion. :
: 1 Kings 8:1 :
:.....

Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim.

– 1 Kings 8:6 –

The Ark, representing typically the divine covenant with Abraham, the fulfillment of which centered in the Christ, must be transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple, that thus the latter might supersede the former as the meeting place between God and his covenant people. The thousands of sacrifices offered during the procession of the King and priests and the celebrities of the nation, besides evidencing their devotion to God and their willingness to sacrifice, had a typical significance as representing the consecration even unto death of the whole company thus engaged in transferring the emblem of their faith and hope. In some respects, therefore, the King and the chiefs of the nation represented typically our Lord Jesus and the overcomers, and the chief priests and under priests represented the same from another standpoint. The procession was the meeting place between the sacrificing emblems of the present age and the typical representation of the kingdom glories and honors of the next age. The Lord's people today seem to be following this type. The Great King, antitypical of Solomon, has about finished the Temple construction and has sent forth the invitation of the heads, the chiefs of spiritual Israel, to attend and share in the great dedication. These chiefs are not the great of this world, but the Lord's very elect. From the four quarters of the spiritual heavens they are gathering, the procession has already commenced; but as the Temple was not complete until the Ark, its most important part, was placed in position, so the glorious Temple will not really be finished until every member of the body of Christ has been changed from the Tabernacle condition to the Temple or permanent condition in the first resurrection. R. 3282

It was in the heart of my father David to build a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. Nevertheless you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My name.’ So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke, and I have filled the position of my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised. And I have built a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. And there I have made a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

1 Kings 8:17-21

King Solomon Dedicates the Temple at Jerusalem by James Tissot, c. 1896–1902



Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven,

and he said:

23 “LORD God of Israel, there is no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, who keep Your covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.

24 You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father. You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day.

25 Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk before Me as you have walked before Me.’

26 And now I pray, O God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David my father.

27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!

28 Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You today:

29 that Your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, ‘My name shall be there,’ that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place.

30 And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, forgive.

31 When anyone sins against his neighbor, and is forced to take an oath, and comes and takes an oath before Your altar in this temple,

32 then hear in heaven, and act, and judge Your servants, condemning the wicked, bringing his way on his head, and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

33 When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and when they turn back to You and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication to You in this temple,

34 then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their fathers.

35 When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them,

36 then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk, and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

37 When there is famine in the land, pestilence or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, when their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities, whatever plague or whatever sickness there is,

38 whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, or by all Your people Israel, when each one knows the plague of his own heart, and spreads out his hands toward this temple:

39 then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men),

40 that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You gave to our fathers.

41 Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name's sake

42 (for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this temple,

43 hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name.

44 When Your people go out to battle against their enemy, wherever You send them, and when they pray to the LORD toward the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name,

45 then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

46 When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, far or near,

47 yet when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of those who took them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong, we have committed wickedness'.

48 And when they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who led them away captive, and pray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name:

49 Then hear in heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause,

50 and forgive Your people who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You, and grant them compassion before those who took them captive, that they may have compassion on them

51 (for they are Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace),

52 that Your eyes may be open to the supplication of Your servant and the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they call to You.

53 For You separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be Your inheritance, as You spoke by Your servant Moses, when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.”

– 1 Kings 8:22-53 –

After Solomon's dedicatory prayer was finished, the Lord openly manifested his favor toward the King and all the people by accepting their sacrifices with fire from heaven, as we read: "When Solomon had made an end of praying the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house [the Temple]....And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord was upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshipped and praised the Lord, saying, 'for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever'" —probably joining with the Levites in singing Psalm 136:1-26. R. 3283

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords! For His mercy endures forever: To Him who alone does great wonders, for His mercy endures forever!

Psalm 136: 1-4

I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob. Let us go into His tabernacle. Let us worship at His footstool. Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength.
Psalm 132:4-5,7-8

When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house.

– 2 Chronicles 7:1-2 –

It was following the dedicatory prayer and the offering of the sacrifices that God accepted the temple and manifested that acceptance by causing the shekinah glory to shine upon the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy, thus indicating a transfer of the Divine presence with Israel, from the Tabernacle (the temporary, movable place of worship) to this, as the permanent place for the manifestation of God's presence in the midst of the people. The typical features of this will be readily discerned by all. As the shekinah glory in the Tabernacle represented God's presence with Israel, accompanying their wilderness journey and difficulties, so now the anti-type of this is God's presence with the Church of the Gospel age in its present temporary or tabernacle condition; and so the coming of the divine glory upon the completed temple represented the future glory of the Church when its living stones shall have been brought together, when that which is perfect shall have come. The glory in the Tabernacle was merely a foretaste and illustration of the greater glory of the temple; and so in the Church's experience, the present indwelling of the Holy spirit in God's Church is only the "first fruits of the spirit," in comparison to the fullness of the spirit which will be ours when the temple of God shall have been completed, glorified, filled with his spirit. R. 2054



**When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying:
"For He is good, for His mercy endures forever."
2 Chronicles 7:3**

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

- 1 Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!**
- 2 For the LORD Most High is awesome! He is a great King over all the earth.**
- 3 He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet.**
- 4 He will choose our inheritance for us, the excellence of Jacob whom He loves. Selah**
- 5 God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.**
- 6 Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!**
- 7 For God is the King of all the earth. Sing praises with understanding.**
- 8 God reigns over the nations. God sits on His holy throne.**
- 9 The princes of the people have gathered together, the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God. He is greatly exalted.**

– Psalm 47:1-9 –

There were great demonstrations of joy in connection with this dedication of the temple. It meant much to the holy people as they realized that the great Creator had deigned to approve the erection of a dwelling-house with them. As the ark came forward the Levites sang and chanted, probably some of David's psalms, which apparently by inspiration were written for the occasion. (Psa. 47:1-9, 98, 99, 107, 118, 136.) The theme of the occasion seems to have been, "For his mercy endureth forever." Ah! how that oft-repeated expression of the Psalmist will be understood, appreciated by mankind shortly. When the priests with the ark shall have entered in, and when the Levites of the future, the Ancient Worthies and others, shall chant the praises of Jehovah throughout all the earth, making known to the people "That his mercy endureth forever" and that during the Millennial Age, in and through the Anointed, The Christ, they will have the privilege of returning to God and to all that was lost, how joyful indeed will be the occasion! How world-wide the blessing! Then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of the Father! R. 4297

**Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!
For His mercy endures forever.
Psalm 107:1**

So it was, when Solomon had finished praying all this prayer and supplication to the LORD, that he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.

1 Kings 8:54

Then he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying:

56 “Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses.

57 May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us,

58 that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers.

59 And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day may require,

60 that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God. There is no other.

61 Let your heart therefore be loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day.”

– 1 Kings 8:55-61 –

[Here is] a benediction and exhortation combined. In this, as in his prayer, Solomon shows great modesty, as well as zeal for the Lord and for righteousness; for he included himself as well as all the people in the exhortation, “Let him not leave us nor forsake us.” Not only does the construction of the temple give evidence of Solomon’s earnestness toward God and his desire to walk in the ways of wisdom, but now that its construction is finished his prayer and its dedication bear testimony to the same. His faith toward God and his humility of heart are everywhere manifested, not only in the words of his address in prayer, but also in his attitude upon his knees before the Lord, and in the sight of the people, with his hands spread up to heaven. It is a beautiful picture, and suggests to us the importance of not only having good desires, but also of permitting those desires to occupy our time, thoughts and attention fully; for during all the period of the construction of this great temple for the Lord, we may suppose that Solomon was kept very actively engaged as the chief supervisor of its construction; and we may reasonably suppose that during this time he was a most model ruler, walking in the reverence of the Lord. Well would it have been for him had his time always been similarly well filled with works for the glory of God, or for the good of God’s people. It was after this great work had been accomplished, that he began selfishly to turn his thoughts to self-gratification, which ultimately led him into devious paths, which were far from wise, according to the expression of his own proverbs. R. 2054

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

– Ephesians 2:10 –

The bringing together of these living stones beyond the Veil will be by the Resurrection Power, beautifully illustrated in the erection of Solomon's Temple, of which we read that its stones were prepared at the quarry and then finally assembled for the construction of the Temple, and that they were so perfectly shaped and marked for their various places that they came together without the sound of a hammer—without need for chiseling or for other labor upon them at the time of the construction. So, St. Paul says, the Church is God's workmanship. (Ephesians 2:10.) And His work will be so perfectly accomplished that there will be no need of rectification or alteration beyond the Veil.

It is this viewpoint that is especially interesting and profitable to the Lord's people. Such of them as can realize that they have been called of God to this High Calling, to membership in the Temple, can fully appreciate thereafter the necessity for the trials and difficulties of life which are shaping them, fitting them, for Heavenly glory, honor, immortality. These are the "all things" working together for good to them that love God—preparing them for the spiritual blessings and services of the future.—Romans 8:28. R. 5713

The whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

– Ephesians 2:21 –

The Church of Christ—the saints—are living stones, which are in process of chiseling and polishing, preparatory to the uniting of all these in one grand, glorious Temple of God beyond the Veil. (1 Pet. 2:5,9.) Any not enduring the chiseling and polishing will be discarded as unfit for the glorious Temple.

When the Temple was ready for dedication, Solomon presented it to God with [a beautiful prayer] in simplicity and indicative of King Solomon's perception of the great truth that God is a personal God, whose dwelling-place is not everywhere, but in Heaven. It shows us that the king fully understood that the Temple which he had made, like the Tabernacle before it, merely represented God's power and grace amongst His people. The presence of the Temple indicated that there were sinners who needed to be atoned for by its arrangements, and that mercy and forgiveness would be needed and that prayers toward God would be appropriate. "Hear Thou in Heaven Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive."

As Solomon dedicated the Temple, so the Church of Christ will be dedicated, formally presented to the Father. The great Antitype of Solomon will do this; namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, presenting us all as His members, as the Temple which is His Body, reared up on the Third Day—the Third Thousand-Year Day from the time of His death—the dawning of the Great Sabbath. (John 2:19-22.) As a result of the dedication, the glory of the Lord will fill the House. R. 5713

The fact that the typical Temple was filled with the glory of the Lord before it was entirely completed seems to imply that at this present time there will be some manifestation of God's favor toward His Church in glorification while yet the work of construction is not quite finished. However, it is difficult to read prophecy in advance of its fulfillment. We must wait to see what will be the fulfillment of this feature.

Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar, for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.

– Isaiah 56:7 –

When we think of the Church as the Temple under construction, it impresses upon us the thought that there is a future work to be accomplished. Why construct a Temple, and then not use it?

Serious injury came to us through various errors of the past: for instance, the thought that the Church alone is to be saved and all the remainder of mankind to be lost; and a further thought, that at the Second Coming of Christ the world is to be burned up, and the Divine Plan ignominiously terminated. With such a view, the construction of the Church as the great Temple would seem to be a waste; since there would be nobody to be blessed by it.

However, as our eyes of understanding open more and more clearly, we begin to see beauty in the Divine Plan and arrangement. So far from God's Plan terminating at the Second Coming of Christ, it will merely begin there, so far as the world is concerned. The Church, in one figure, will be the Royal Priesthood for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (Galatians 3:29.) In the other figure, the Church will be the great Temple through which all the world of mankind may have access to God and return to harmony with Him.

Thus, eventually, this glorified Church, or Temple, will be the House of Prayer for all people, all nations—not that they will pray to a house, but that they will approach God through the glorified Church, in which His Presence will be manifested and His mercy will be available to all. From this viewpoint, the Temple with its Shekinah glory represented the Church in the glory of the future, in association with Christ; and God will dwell in and operate through that glorious Church for the blessing of the world, represented by all those who will worship God looking toward His Holy House. R. 5713

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills. And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2:2-3

So during the Millennium, all the world will have the opportunity of approaching God through His great Temple of which Jesus is the Chief Corner-Stone, and the Church the living stones under His Headship. And God will hear the prayers thus properly presented, and will forgive the sins of the people; and as a result the work of Restitution will progress to a grand completion. R. 5714

I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

– Revelation 21:3 –

[Here we have the] figure of a symbolic Temple, which the Lord is now preparing, of which the saints will constitute the “living stones” and “pillars;” for it is declared that the tabernacle (dwelling) of God shall be with men in this city (government or kingdom). God will dwell in this glorious city or government—it will be his Temple, and the world of mankind will approach God in it to receive the divine blessings, as Israel approached the typical Tabernacle and the Temple in their typical religious services. Thus God, represented in his Church (the Christ, Head and body) will dwell with men (the world of mankind during the Millennial age) and they shall be his people; —all mankind will be treated from the standpoint of reconciliation, the propitiation price for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) having been paid at Calvary, and the due time having then come for the manifestation of divine favor, all peoples shall be treated as the Lord’s people; none of them shall be treated as aliens, strangers, foreigners from God and his promises and his blessings.

The Church, the Temple of God, will be so filled with all the fullness of God, when made like unto the glorious Lord, that nothing could add to their blessing of knowledge and divine favor; —will be so filled with the glory of God that from her, as from the Sun of Righteousness, shall proceed the light of the glory of God, which shall heal and bless the world during the Millennial age. This is the Sun of Righteousness to which our Lord referred in Matthew 13:43, “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father” —our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, of course being included. The same Sun of Righteousness is mentioned by the Prophet, saying, “The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams.” (Mal. 4:2.) Nevertheless, while so filled with the Lord’s glory we are not to lose sight of the fact which the Apostle impresses upon us, saying that Christ is the Head of the Church, even as the Father is the Head of Christ Jesus. Hence the Lord Almighty and the Lamb will always be an inner Temple in this great Temple, which God has provided for the world’s blessing during restitution times. R. 2832, R. 2833

The nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.

– Revelation 21:24 –

The expressions “nations” and “kings” are not to be understood as signifying that the world of mankind during the Millennial age will be divided into nationalities and kingdoms as at present: the word “nations” here signifies peoples, and is intended to show that all peoples, and not merely the people of Israel, will be thus favored under God’s Kingdom. The word “kings” represents those princes or chief ones of the earth who, during the Millennial age, will be the chief representatives of the heavenly, spiritual, invisible Kingdom of Christ. These princes will be Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the faithful prophets of the previous dispensation, who, loving God before the call to the Kingdom and to the Bride class, cannot be of it, but because of their faithfulness will be the princes whom the Lord will establish in all the earth—first making them perfect individuals, and qualifying them for their office, as a reward for their faithfulness to God in the dark times in which they lived —their manifestation of love for righteousness and trust in the Omnipotent One. The result will be that all the people will ascribe honor and praise and majesty and glory to the Lord’s Anointed, through whom their redemption and restitution was and is being accomplished. R. 2834

**I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go into the house of the LORD.”
– Psalm 122:1 –**

Those who hear the invitation to become members of the house of God, the house of sons, the antitypical Temple, and who receive the invitation into good and honest hearts, are indeed made glad, “Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound.” We couple with this a similar expression by the same poet prophet, who declares, “I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Not in earthly houses, not in earthly temples, do we hope to dwell forever; but those who become members, living stones in the spiritual house, the heavenly Temple now under construction, will indeed dwell in the house of the Lord forever. For them to go out would mean the destruction of the house, for of it they will be members in particular; as the Lord declares they will be pillars in the house of the Lord, and the ministers of his grace and truth to all the people. This text will be true also of the world during the Millennial age. All mankind will then be invited to approach the Lord in worship, to approach the spiritual Temple, the Christ, and through the Christ to approach the Father; and all who shall hear that message and who shall obey it will be glad indeed, even as the message brought by the angels at the birth of Jesus intimated that eventually the tidings of great joy shall be unto all people. R. 3283

The Kingdom which we are expecting, and which we believe is now in process of establishment, and is soon to smite the kingdoms of this world and to supplant them, is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly one, not a fleshly kingdom, but a spiritual one, not a kingdom which will be visible to the natural eye, but an invisible yet powerful kingdom. We find nothing in the Scriptures to corroborate the thought entertained by some that this Gospel age having begun in the spirit is to culminate in a reign of Christ and his Church in the flesh with an earthly throne, etc. Quite to the contrary, the King and his joint-heirs, the Church, as spirit beings, will have a spiritual empire, though their subjects to whom they will offer the blessings of the restitution purchased at Calvary will be men in the flesh, whose highest hope and ambition will be restitution to the grand perfection of the human nature lost in Eden, redeemed at Calvary, —an earthly image of the Heavenly Father. We hold that Christ and his saints during the Millennial Age will be no more visible to mankind than is the Prince of this world, Satan, whose associates in the misrule of the present evil world, the fallen angels, are likewise invisible. R. 2359

'I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.

– Haggai 2:7 –

Thank God for the prospect of an unshakeable kingdom, whose kings shall reign in righteousness and whose princes shall decree justice (Isa. 32:1; Pro. 8:15), and under whose dominion the whole earth shall be at rest. (Isa. 14:7.) This is the kingdom which the Prophet declares will indeed be "the desire of all nations," when it is once established and its blessings begin to be realized by the world. Yes, truly "the desire of all nations shall come" —with blessings of life and health and peace and prosperity and good government. As soon as this body is all selected, fitted and tested, then the kingdom will be established and the desire of all nations will have come—the long desired peace and prosperity which every experiment of their own will have failed to secure.

It is this body of Christ, this spiritual house of Israel, which, though lashed by many a storm, nevertheless "cannot be shaken," because it is firmly founded upon the Rock Christ Jesus: it is this house that Paul calls "the temple of God" (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19) that is to inherit the kingdom of God, and that Jehovah says he is going to fill with his glory.

He will fill it with the glory of the divine nature: he will make every member of it like unto Christ's glorious body: he will endue them with power from on high to execute faithfully all of the divine purpose for human restitution, and for the establishment of universal harmony and peace. Praise the Lord for such a prospect for both the Church and the world. May its inspiration be felt by every devoted heart, and its warning be heeded by every one who feels to any degree inclined to be unstable. Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand unshaken in the midst of the storms of this evil day, and be counted worthy to be a living stone in that glorious temple of God, now shortly to be filled with his glory, and to be an heir of that kingdom which cannot be moved, and which shall indeed be the desire of all nations. R. 3053

**For the LORD has chosen Zion.
He has desired it for His dwelling place:
"This is My resting place forever.
Here I will dwell, for I have desired it."
Psalm 132:13-14**

SOLOMON: WISDOM, INSTRUCTION, WARNING

The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon



Men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

– 1 Kings 4:34 –

By the time Solomon had reached his fortieth year, under the blessing of wisdom which he craved of the Lord, he had made the kingdom of Israel famous throughout the then civilized world. His kingdom connected with Egypt on the south, with the desert on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the north and west, except that small portion known as Phoenicia, whose king, Hiram, had made a league with Solomon and assisted him greatly in the materials and workmen for the temple. Solomon's ships and those of Hiram were known to all the nations of that time as far east as Judea and as far northwest as Britain. The account of the wealth which flowed to him is astounding. His table dishes were made of gold, a thousand shields for his mighty men were of gold, and other things in proportion were magnificent in the largest degree. The brilliancy of his mind found expression not only in financial channels, but his army was equipped on a scale of equal magnificence. Fourteen hundred chariots were imported, and thousands of horses for these and for a cavalry detachment for his army. Literary matters were not neglected; he wrote many sonnets and spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his fame in respect to these matters had extended to all parts of the world.

Solomon himself seems to have anticipated the coming of people from distant countries, because of the Lord's blessing upon him, and in his prayer at the dedication of the temple he made mention of this and freely ascribed the honor and glory thereof to God, asking a blessing upon "a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but coming out of a far country for thy name's sake, when he shall come and pray toward this house; for they shall hear of thy great name and thy strong hand and of thy stretched out arm." (1 Kings 8:41-42.) In all this Solomon very beautifully, modestly and properly gives the credit for his wisdom and greatness to God. And yet, so baneful was the influence of prosperity in his case, that, when he had reached the moment of greatest possibility for good, he forsook the Lord and his true wisdom. R. 3284 and R. 2067

Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name's sake (for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this temple, hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name.

1 Kings 8:41-43

Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.

– 1 Kings 10:1 –

Tradition tells us that the Queen sent her ambassadors with a letter to King Solomon before she went herself. With them she sent 500 youths dressed as maidens, with instructions that they were to behave accordingly in the presence of Solomon. She sent also a thousand costly rugs inwrought with gold and silver, and a crown composed of finest pearls and gold hyacinths; also camel-loads of musk, amber, aloes and other precious products of South Arabia. She added a closed casket containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced and a crystal goblet. A letter accompanied these gifts as follows: “As a true prophet thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens and divine the contents of the enclosed casket, to pierce the pearl and thread the diamond and to fill the goblet with water that has not dropped from the clouds nor gushed forth from the earth.”

The legend declares that when this embassy reached Jerusalem King Solomon told the bearers the contents of the letter before they presented it, and made light of their mighty problems. He caused the thousand slaves to wash their hands and faces and from the manner in which they applied the water detected their sex. He directed a fiery young horse to be ridden through the camp at the top of speed, and on its return caused its copious perspiration to be collected in a goblet. The pearl he pierced by some process known to him. The threading of the diamond with its crooked perforation puzzled him for a moment, but at length he inserted a small worm, which wound its way through, leaving a silken thread behind it. He dismissed the ambassadors without receiving their presents. When the emissaries reached the Queen of Sheba, their reports of these matters determined her to visit King Solomon in person. R. 3284

She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones, and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart.

– 1 Kings 10:2 –

Sheba, the Queen’s home, was in southern Arabia, a land noted at that time for its immense wealth, and particularly for its perfumes. Of these the Queen brought a royal present to King Solomon, adding also spices from India. According to verse ten the quantity of wealth, spices, precious stones and perfumes was immense, the value of the gold alone being estimated at three million dollars. If this sum of gold seems fabulous for a present, its reasonableness is nevertheless borne out by the historian Rawlinson, who says, “Strabo relates that the Sabeans were enormously wealthy, and used gold and silver in a most lavish manner in their furniture, their utensils, and even on the walls, doors and roofs of their houses.” R. 2067

She gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great quantity, and precious stones. There never again came such abundance of spices as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

1 Kings 10:10

So Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her.

– 1 Kings 10:3 –

We are not informed as to the character of her questions, many of which quite probably were in the nature of conundrums, after the custom of that time. Everything connected with this story, however, assures us that Solomon was truly a wonderful man, that his mental powers were great and active.

The zeal of the Queen for wisdom is evidenced by the fact that she brought so valuable a treasure so long a distance upon camels, and to some extent through a wilderness where she was liable to the attacks of Bedouin robbers. Deservedly her quest for wisdom was rewarded. She communed with Solomon concerning all that was in her heart (mind); and was richly rewarded by having her every inquiry answered, by seeing the temple built to the glory of God, Solomon's own palace just completed, the elaborate arrangements of its cuisine and the remarkable passage way leading from the palace to the temple. R. 3284 and R. 2067

Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom!

1 Kings 10:8

When the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.

– 1 Kings 10:4-5 –

The last clause of verse five corresponds in meaning with the common expression of our day, "took her breath away," as indicating overwhelming astonishment.

She herself declares that she had heard of his fame and had come to see him with her own eyes, and that notwithstanding her great expectations she found that not one-half of his greatness had been told her. The distance she came is estimated at 1,500 miles, and as the means for traveling was by camels, and their average speed twenty miles per day, it is estimated that the journey to Jerusalem and back to her home consumed five months; besides whatever time she spent at Solomon's court. Unquestionably it would be much less inconvenient today to journey around the earth than it was for the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon. R. 2067 and R. 3284

Then she said to the king: “It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes, and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard.”

– 1 Kings 10:6-7 –

The Queen confessed that, although she had been somewhat skeptical before coming, and had only half believed what she did hear, yet the half had not been told her of what she now saw and heard, bearing witness to Solomon’s wisdom and prosperity; and the summing up of her tribute of praise shows that she appreciated the wisdom of Solomon more even than his wealth and splendor, so that she almost envied his servants, who, continually with him, were blessed by the wise and gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. R. 2067

Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.

– 1 Kings 10:9 –

Her highest compliment and tribute to the King is recorded in [this verse], where she attributes Solomon’s excellent glory and wisdom to the Lord’s love of Israel; and she shows in this connection that she herself was a wise woman in attributing the Lord’s blessing and favor upon Solomon to be for the purpose of showing justice and establishing righteousness with his people Israel. Well had it been for King Solomon had he laid to heart and ordered his life according to these words of wisdom from the Queen of the South.

Although the blessings of the Millennial kingdom will come first and chiefly to the Church of this Gospel age, which will be associated with the Lord in the kingdom glory and sit at meat with him and participate in his honors and be blessed by his presence and wisdom, yet indeed a great blessing will remain for the world. As the Queen expressed it of the typical King, that God’s blessing upon Israel was manifested in choosing him for King, so God’s blessing to the world of mankind will be manifested in the establishment of Messiah’s kingdom, which is to bless all the families of the earth and to grant them an opportunity of coming back to covenant relationship with God, and thus eventually, if they will be obedient to his judgments and justice, back to all that was lost in Adam, with superadded favors and mercies. R. 2067 and R. 3285

The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

– Matthew 12:42 –

By these words the Lord indicated his approval of the desire for wisdom evinced by the Queen. Indeed this is the spirit of the Scriptures—growth in knowledge, grace and love, knowledge being essential to the development of character. Here we have set before us a lesson which our Lord taught in the words, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled”—blessed are they who hunger and thirst for wisdom, for knowledge, for understanding of the good and true, knowing that they shall be blessed of the Lord and shall find that which they seek. The Lord’s words were a reproof for his own nation and indicated that they were careless, indifferent respecting the Truth. It is still more important for us of today to notice that the same spirit of indifference prevails in nominal spiritual Israel. As the slightest suggestion of the heavenly wisdom manifested in our Lord’s words and deeds should have kindled enthusiasm and zeal in nominal Israel, which would have hungered and thirsted for the Truth and by seeking would have found the Truth, so likewise today what confidence we have respecting the Lord and his character and plan should awaken every spiritual Israelite and lead him to seek the great fountain of wisdom.

Our Lord indicated what otherwise would not have been quite apparent—namely, that Solomon’s wisdom and glory, prosperity and peace, were typical; that the antitype of the Solomon is the Christ. As it was not until after Solomon had built the great Temple of God at Jerusalem that his fame was spread abroad and his greatness manifested, so with the antitype Christ; not until he, the antitypical Solomon, has erected the great Temple of God, which is the Church—not until it shall have been filled with the divine glory as the New Creation—not until the new Jerusalem shall shine resplendently with the riches of divine grace and the brilliancy of the Lord’s polished jewels, will the fame of Emmanuel reach to the uttermost parts of the earth. R. 3284 and R. 3285

We cannot apply this lesson of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon better than it has already been applied by our Lord. (Matt. 12:42.) As we have already noticed, our Lord Jesus was “the greater than Solomon” — the antitype greater than the type. He is the embodiment of wisdom, of justice, of righteousness, and in his possession God has placed riches of grace and glory and honor and dominion. When the kingdom is the Lord’s, and he is the governor amongst the nations, all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto him. (Psa. 22:27-28.) R. 2068

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the kingdom is the LORD's, and He rules over the nations.

– Psalm 22:27-28 –

When [all the ends of the earth] shall witness the glory of Christ and the greatness of his kingdom under the whole heavens, the majesty of his Church, the true finished and glorified temple, the grandeur of all of his appointments and the blessings upon all who are his ministers or servants, they, with the Queen of the South, will agree that the half was never told them: that they had never dreamed of so wonderful and excellent a kingdom as that which God will thus establish amongst men, for which we pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth,” etc. Concerning that New Jerusalem it is written, “The nations shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it;” and as the willing and obedient shall then present their homage and riches and spices and odors (prayers and good deeds), these will be accepted of them; and in return they shall have from the Greater than Solomon the riches of his grace, including divine favor and life everlasting. —1 Kings 10:24; Rev. 21:24. R. 2068

Now King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, besides what Solomon had given her according to the royal generosity. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

1 Kings 10:13

Although Solomon's wisdom and greatness and riches and honor as the king typified the greatness of the Christ in the Millennial kingdom, his subsequent manifestation of weakness, causing the decay of his greatness, is not to be esteemed as typical, for of the antitype it is declared that of the greatness of his kingdom there shall be no end. Nor is this type alone in this particular. Similarly David was a type in some particulars; so was Moses a type in some particulars and not in others; so was Adam a figure of him who was to come, yet not a figure in his transgression and condemnation. R. 3285

God Visits Solomon

A Second Time

1 And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he wanted to do,

2 that the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon.

3 And the LORD said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me. I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

4 Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments,

5 then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.

6 But if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them,

7 then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

8 And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?'

9 Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them. Therefore the LORD has brought all this calamity on them.' "

– 1 Kings 9:1-9 –

God's second revealing of himself to Solomon occurred twenty-four years after he had become king, when he had reached the forty-fourth year of his age. He began the building of the temple in the fourth year of his reign. Its construction occupied seven years, and after finishing it he built his own palace, which took thirteen years. (1 Kings 7:1.) During this long period of twenty-four years Solomon was occupied not only with these great works, but in general in cultivating trade with neighboring countries, repairing his cities, etc., etc. He had just reached the period, we may suppose, where he was "in all his glory." His fame had spread throughout the world. He had become wealthy and had cultivated luxurious tastes, which in turn had increased the expenses of his government and, if prosecuted further, would lead to the oppression of his people with burdensome taxes. In the language of [verse one], Solomon had reached the place where he was able to gratify his every desire. He had reached the critical point of danger; for, without question, great prosperity is much more dangerous than moderate competency.

So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

2 Chronicles 9:22

Up to this point of time, we may reasonably infer, Solomon's course at least in a general way had the divine approval. He had accepted the prayer of his dream as the sentiment of his heart. He had been seeking for wisdom and to a considerable extent had been walking in her way and had received the promised blessings of affluence and fame. But now he had reached the danger point: He had come to a parting of the ways. One way would lead onward in humble reverence for God and a continuous seeking for Divine wisdom and guidance for the management of the kingdom and a seeking more and more for the elevation of the people, their prosperity, happiness and cultivation in mental, moral and religious directions. The other way opening before Solomon would lead onward to pride, folly, self-gratification, the oppression of his people and by setting before them a bad example of royal profligacy, licentiousness, extravagance, carelessness of religious obligations and charity for false religions.

At this juncture the Lord appeared to Solomon as before at Gibeon; that is, in a dream (1 Kings 3:5); and an account of the Lord's words spoken in that dream is given in [1 Kings 9:1-4]. The Lord's words imply his approval of Solomon's course up to this time, indicating that he had accepted the prayer of Solomon's first dream as Solomon's prayer, that he had accepted the temple built to his name, not only outwardly but in reality, as implied by the words: "Mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."

And the LORD said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me. I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually."

1 Kings 9:3

The Lord then proceeds to set before Solomon a view of the right and the wrong paths which lay before him, counseling him to choose the path of wisdom and righteousness as his father David had done. This reference to David shows us that the Lord was not expecting absolute perfection of David or Solomon, or any of the fallen race, but that he was seeking and would appreciate the heart intentions of those who sought to serve him and who, even though falteringly, sought to walk in his way.

Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel. But if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples.’

1 Kings 9:4-7

The outcome of both paths is particularly stated: the path of obedience would not only establish the kingdom in his own hands, but insure it in the line of his posterity, even as it was promised to David. In this promise God shows that he has reference not merely to the immediate descendants of Solomon and David, but that his particular reference is to Christ, the great King, the antitype of Solomon, whose Kingdom shall be an everlasting Kingdom, and all people shall serve and obey him. As God promised to David that Christ should come of his seed, so here he proposes the same to Solomon, that if Solomon would hearken to his words and walk in his way, the Messiah should come through his posterity. But on the other hand, the choosing of the wrong course now would mean disaster not only to Solomon and his greatness but to Israel and its national prosperity, and to the temple which was a delight to Solomon and a wonder to the world.

We all know the sequel: We know that Solomon chose the wrong path, that he chose self-gratification; and thus, although noted as the wise man, he is also noted as having determined his course unwisely and the “high” house which he had built to the Lord, that is, the notable house in the eyes of the world, did become a by-word. It was robbed of its treasures and profaned; and the world knows today that the Lord’s displeasure against Israel and his rejection of them for a time was the result of their rejection of him, and that this in part at least was induced by Solomon’s choice of the



wrong course; and that the high places which he established for the worship of false religions to please his wives and their heathen relatives, became snares to the people of Israel and continued to have an idolatrous and ungodly, sinful tendency for centuries; until God cast them out of their land, overthrew their typical kingdom and temporarily gave a lease of earthly dominion to the Gentile nations, to last until the time for his establishment of the antitypical Kingdom in the hands of the greater than Solomon and through the instrumentality of the true Israel of God; —until the time for the building of the true, spiritual, antitypical temple of which Christ and his Church are the “living stones” as well as the “royal priesthood.” —Eph. 2:21; 2 Cor. 6:16. R. 2059

As a matter of fact, our Lord Jesus did not come through Solomon's line, but through that of his brother Nathan, in whose lineal descent was Mary, the mother of Jesus. (See Luke 3:31.) Only the legal heirship came through Solomon, through his descendant Joseph, the legal father of Jesus. (See Matt. 1:7; Matt. 1:16.) That the line of genealogy given in Matt. 1:1-25 is not that of Mary, our Lord's mother, according to the flesh, is conclusively shown by a comparison of Matt. 1:11-12, with Jer. 22:30.

The practical suggestions of this lesson are applicable to all of the Lord's people, for although none of us of the Gospel age are called to be typical kings with typical grandeur and wealth and wisdom, as was Solomon, but on the contrary are called to occupy humble positions, not many great or wise or learned being chosen and called, nevertheless, before each of us continually appear two ways, the one the way of divine favor, spiritual blessing and light, the other the way of self-gratification, divine displeasure and condemnation. The choice which we are called upon to make is even more important than that which was placed before Solomon. R. 2060

**See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.
– Ephesians 5:15 –**

The question with [Solomon] was whether or not Messiah, according to the flesh, should come in the line of his posterity. The question with us is whether or not we shall make our calling and election sure as joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, our Lord, in the Kingdom and glory of which Solomon's was but a type. The resolution of each one should be that with humility he will accept the divine favor, seek to walk in the divine way—in the footsteps of Jesus—and by obedience, humility and love seek to make his calling and election sure, as one of the kings and priests of the antitypical Kingdom. —Rev. 5:10. R. 2059

[Solomon's] career ended in the glory of an unhealthy temporal prosperity. Yet it served well the purpose of God in foreshadowing the higher and real glory of Christ's Kingdom. It was the glory of Christ's Kingdom to which special reference was undoubtedly made in Solomon's inspired dream. In so far as that dream was fulfilled in Solomon and his reign it prefigured the glorious and peaceful reign of David's greater Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The prayer suggested in the vision was indeed the attitude of his heart. He truly sought the wisdom of Jehovah for the blessing of his dominion; and to this end he cheerfully submitted himself to the divine will in all things. It was this disposition of heart in our Lord Jesus, that pleased the Father, who therefore gave to him the wise and understanding heart, and has added also riches and honor of which the riches and honors of Solomon were typical. And as there was none like him before him, so there shall be none after him. "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." He truly shall be the "Prince of peace;" and in the beginning of his reign the glorious spiritual temple of God, the Church (which Solomon's magnificent temple foreshadowed), shall be completed, and filled with the glory of the Lord. R. 2046

Solomon's Fall



Great as King Solomon was, the latter part of his reign was less wonderful and less creditable than the first half. Although no rebellion took place during his time, nevertheless dissatisfaction was felt. The king rested upon the marvels of the early part of his reign, became more and more interested in foreign affairs, and multiplied the number of his wives and of his troubles. The wealth of the nation, represented in the great public improvements, was really public wealth, in which all the people were interested; but the subsequent greater attention to personal aggrandizement and to favoritism of the court was not in the interest of the people as a whole, but merely favorable to certain favored classes.

Although no rebellion was made against King Solomon, nor even protests, so far as the records show, nevertheless the people concluded that they would have a change in the kingdom during the reign of Solomon's successor, his son Rehoboam. This dissatisfaction was mainly with the ten tribes. The two tribes, in whose territory was the capital city, were satisfied with the great improvements which had come to them. King Solomon's capital city had been favored out of all proportion to the remainder of the country, in its public improvements. Israelites of all the other tribes had shared in a general conscription of labor at a comparatively small compensation; and they felt that justice had not been rendered them. R. 5723

***Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.
Proverbs 16:18***

Let us observe here that God did not propose always to provide for Israel a king whose reign would afford them the largest measure of temporal prosperity. Indeed, when they demanded a king and he granted them their desire, he faithfully forewarned them of the infringements of kingly power upon the rights and liberties of the people. (Read 1 Sam. 8:9-18.) All of this the nation experienced in the subsequent years of their history. R. 2046

The LORD said to Samuel:

9 “Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them.”

10 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who asked him for a king.

11 And he said, “This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots.

12 He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

14 And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants.

15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants.

16 And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work.

17 He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants.

18 And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day.”

– 1 Samuel 8:9-18 –

This was not the Lord’s idea of government, but it was his foretelling of what he foresaw that the imperfect and selfish heart of man would do when exalted to power; for he knoweth what is in man. So it was in Israel, and so it has been in all the world: selfishness exalted to power has always used that power, largely at least, for self-aggrandizement.* R. 2046

****Aggrandizement* refers to the act of making something larger or greater. It specifically refers to inflating something or making someone appear more important or powerful than they really are. (dictionary.com)**

**Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.
– 1 Corinthians 10:12 –**

As Solomon was the wisest man, so also he was the most foolish man; for the greater the opportunity the greater the loss, and the greater the knowledge possessed the greater the sin in its misuse.

McLaren has truthfully said of Solomon:

“There are many instances in history of lives of genius and enthusiasm, of high promise and partial accomplishment, marred and flung away, but none which presents the great tragedy of wasted gifts and blossoms never fruited in a sharper, more striking form than the life of the wise King of Israel, who, ‘in his later days,’ was ‘a fool.’ The goodliest vessel may be shipwrecked in sight of port.

The sun went down in a thick bank of clouds, which rose from undrained marshes in his soul; and, stretched far up in the western horizon. His career in its glory and its shame preaches the great lesson which the Book of Ecclesiastes puts into his mouth as ‘the conclusion of the whole matter:’ ‘Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.’” R. 2068

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

– Matthew 6:24 –

Mammon still is a great hindrance to all who desire to be the Lord’s disciples. Whoever worships Mammon—and it may be self or wealth or fame or position and honor amongst men, one or all of these—whoever worships Mammon cannot at the same time be a true worshiper of God, a true follower of Christ; because God and Mammon are rivals before our hearts. If we attempt to divide our love and attention, and to give part of it to God and to his service, and part of it to Mammon, the results will be unsatisfactory to God, unsatisfactory to Mammon and unsatisfactory to ourselves.

We must, therefore, decide either to live for self and earthly things or to renounce and sacrifice these in the interest of God and of heavenly things. The worshipers of Mammon may have certain advantages as respects the present life, in the way of earthly prosperity, but Mammon cannot give eternal life. It is the gift of God, and those who would have God’s gift must be God’s friends, God’s children; and he demands of such that they shall manifest their love and devotion to him by renouncing Mammon, by joyfully sacrificing earthly name and fame and favor and interest, thus showing their higher appreciation of his love and favor, the riches of his grace, and the exceeding great and precious things which he has promised to give them in the life to come. R. 2717

Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.

– Song of Solomon 2:15 –

[In this] text the word “take” is used in the sense of **catch**—help us to catch the foxes, especially the **little foxes**. The fox is known as a very cunning, but docile little animal, not capable of ferocity and viciousness, but nevertheless the cause of much harm. Its very appearance of harmlessness makes it the more dangerous.

King Solomon seems to be picturing the depravities of our fallen nature which are not so extreme, not so gross, as some, but which are none the less very harmful; indeed they are especially deceitful and likely to elude our attention, and for this reason need more careful and constant watching. The words seem to be the language of the Bridegroom to His espoused. He emphasizes the expression, “the little foxes,” and intimates that they would be very destructive.

If we apply the term to sins, we find that there are little sins which are really more dangerous than grosser sins, because we are less likely to be on our guard against these than against the greater sins. Every one would be instinctively on guard against lions, bears, serpents, etc.; but little foxes are so attractive-looking and seem so artless in disposition that unless one has had bitter experience with them he would have little or no fear. But these little animals are much given to scratching and generally destroying everything with which they come in contact.



The fox is particularly cunning and crafty when bent on mischief, hence less likely to arouse suspicion of its evil intentions. It has a peculiar simplicity of manner; it attracts by its apparent innocence, and is all the more apt to deceive.

In this illustration of the wise man the grape-vine is spoken of, as though these foxes have a special predilection for grapes—the grapes representing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. As these little foxes delight to tear the vine with their sharp claws and to gnaw the roots with their teeth, so small sins tear the branches and gnaw at the roots of the spiritual vine, thus endangering its very life. They destroy or devour the precious grapes, which are very tender. Grapes during the formative period and while very small are exceedingly tender and the stems very brittle and easily snapped off the vine and destroyed. So the Spirit's fruitage in the hearts and lives of immature Christians may be easily ruined, either by their own lack of care and watchfulness or by the example of the brethren. How careful should those be who have been longer in the Heavenly way to guard their words and conduct in the presence of the younger, less mature ones, the lambs of the flock! Unloving criticism of the brethren before beginners, or others, may do untold harm and is a manifestation of a lack of love and Christian maturity.



It is difficult for us to realize how potent is our influence for either good or evil in matters which, unless carefully scrutinized, seem trifling. Ah, these little foxes! Careless words, spoken with scarcely a thought or in a moment of impatience, little grumblings, a sarcastic word or laugh or look or shrug—oh, how these things count in our daily lives either for or against our own spiritual development, and often the development of others! How earnestly we should each seek to upbuild our own character and the characters of the brethren! Our Lord is marking all these things. Remember, “He that is faithful in that which is least, will be faithful also in much.” R. 5886

**He who is faithful in what is
least is faithful also in much, and
he who is unjust in what is
least is unjust also in much.
Luke 16:10**

Every child of God should be especially on guard against the little things—the things that seem like jokes, which sometimes do more harm in the Church than things which appear great; the little insinuations, that often leave a sting; the jesting about sacred matters, turning Scriptural passages into jests; the little acts of selfishness, etc. These things and many others which by careful thought each one may note really do much damage, injuring the branches and destroying the precious fruits of the Lord's Vine. Then let us, dear brethren, strive to be more and more watchful to catch these “little foxes.” Let us each, individually, watch and pray that we do not by thought or word or act of ours hinder or lessen our own fruit-bearing or that of another. R. 5886

The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

– Hebrews 4:12 –

Nothing can take the place of the Lord's Word; and all teachings, whether oral or printed, should be recognized as secondary to the inspired Word, and should be received only as corroborated by the Scriptures. Or rather, they are to be appreciated only as they **unlock** the treasures of wisdom hidden in the Bible—riches of which the world in general is ignorant, and of which even the majority of Christian people, although they have Bibles by the million, know comparatively little. Indeed, as Bibles become more numerous the great Adversary seems to be permitted to have the greater power to deceive and to mislead respecting its teachings; so that today, with its greatest opportunities, is witnessing a general decline of faith in the Scriptures—“a great falling away,” led by some of the principal luminaries in the nominal systems—falling from their steadfastness of faith, falling into scepticism and into the radically anti-Biblical theory of Evolution—under the lead of so-called “higher criticism” and scholasticism.

The more the Lord's people shall be able to discern that we are already in the “evil day” mentioned by the Apostle, in which many shall stumble and fall from their steadfastness of faith, the more should they give earnest heed lest they should let slip the precious things of the divine Word, which is a lamp to their pathway, and through which God supplies the needed aids for walking the narrow way which leads to the Kingdom. —Eph. 6:13; Heb. 2:1; Psa. 119:105.

It is not for us to judge the hearts of men; that is beyond our power; but the Lord seems to be using his truth in such a way that it shall become the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts, and that, sharper than any two-edged sword, it shall separate, shall discover, shall manifest, who have the spirit of the Lord, and who have not his spirit. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.” —Heb. 4:12. R. 2709

We understand that the Bible is the Divine presentation of the Divine will, purpose, plan, concerning us as His children. It is the Truth that the Lord designs shall sanctify us. “Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth.” So declares our Master. He does not say, Sanctify them through prayer! The Master's prescription is that we study the Word and become sanctified thereby. And who is wiser than He? If we have not written a volume on prayer, it is because we find no Scriptural authority or precedent for so doing.

While prayer is absolutely indispensable to the Christian, it is the Word of God which teaches us God's will and Plan and which points out the way for us to go. We believe it is the failure to see this that has been largely responsible for the great want of faith of many professed children of God. No amount of praying will make up for a neglect of the study of the Lord's Word, which is the only Lamp to our feet given us as our Guide in this long, dark night in which sin has reigned in the world. “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” —Psalm 119:105. R. 2532 and R. 5709

The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.

Psalm 119:160

It shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

– Deuteronomy 17:18-20 –

The Lord's instructions to the kings of Israel were that the king should study the law of the Lord, and put its principles in practice— "that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left." (Deut. 17:18-20.) But no king, either of Israel or of any other nation, however wise or good, ever did that. All have been more or less inflated with the pride of power, and their hearts have been lifted up above their brethren. Even David, the beloved of the Lord, succumbed to this baneful influence until, being greatly intoxicated with it, he fell into gross sin. The temptations of power to our impaired humanity in any position are always to the gratification of pride, ambition and self-aggrandizement. The only ruler of the world who will fully meet the requirements of the divine law, turning not aside to the right hand nor to the left, will be Jehovah's Anointed Son, our blessed Lord Jesus, who so loved his (future) subjects that he gave his life for them. His heart is never lifted up by pride, though God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and things in earth. —Phil. 2:9-11. R. 2046

Let every child of God take heed and profit by the lesson of his folly. The Word of God must be the daily companion, instructor and guide to every one who would be kept in the paths of righteousness, be he little or great. It is not enough that we read it, nor even that we study it, for the sake of mere information or for argument: it is given us to ponder and to feed upon, that its principles may be incorporated into our being, moulding our thoughts and guiding all our actions. This is what it is to have the word of the Lord dwelling in us as an energizing and moving power; and if we thus have fellowship with God through his Word and the privilege of prayer, we shall not be beguiled into sin, nor partake of the intoxicating spirit of the world. R. 2016

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image---any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me.

– Exodus 20:2-5 –

Israel, as a nation, took upon itself a special covenant with God at Mount Sinai, by which every individual of that nation, including the children, became bounden nationally and individually, to God, to be his people; while God bound himself to them to be their God, their king, their protector. In the compact or covenant the people further guaranteed that they would neither have, nor make images of, nor worship any other god. That covenant constituted Israel God's peculiar people; they became his typical Kingdom; he was the recognized King amongst them, and so it is written, "Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord, as King, instead of David his father." (1 Chron. 29:23.) It was God's throne all along, and earthly representatives sat upon it. Hence, so long as that nation was preserved as a kingdom amongst the nations, it was bound by the will or law of its King, the Lord, which specifically demanded that all idolatry should be put away. And as we have previously seen, God separated this one nation from all the other nations of the earth, in order that he might make of them a typical nation or kingdom, foreshadowing in them the "holy nation" of spiritual Israelites which he is now gathering out of every kingdom, people, nation and tongue, and which shortly he will organize under Immanuel, to be the Kingdom of Heaven, and to rule and bless all the families of the earth. —1 Pet. 2:9,10; Luke 12:32. R. 2364

Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as did his father David.

– 1 Kings 11:6 –

[God] granted [Israel's] request, and gave them kings, and with the kings, as we see, came in a spirit of "broadmindedness," or "public policy," on the part of King Solomon. And his desire to be popular with neighboring kings, and to be considered broadminded in a religious way, led him first to establish, for the benefit of the foreigners at his court, and for his foreign wives, the religious customs and ceremonies common to foreign nations. This, as we have seen, spread amongst the people, and led to a laxity of views respecting the worship of the true God: it led to the thought that everyone should have some kind of a religion, but that each should be at liberty to choose for himself, or to blend elements of the various religions. R. 2359

Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

– Deuteronomy 17:17 –

Solomon multiplied wives till he had seven hundred. Some of these “queens” were ladies of rank and refinement from the various royal families of surrounding nations, one being Pharaoh’s daughter. Solomon in his wisdom was esteemed by them, and they in turn were esteemed by him, not only for their personality, but because of the court alliance and influence with other kingdoms which it cemented. Having slipped from the path of obedience to God and integrity of heart, Solomon fell readily under the influence of his young wives into the support of idolatry. We are not to suppose that he ceased to believe in the only true God and believed in the heathen gods and idols and nonsense; but that he came gradually to feel that he wished to please his various wives. This thought is borne out by verse six, which declares not that Solomon left the Lord, but that he went not fully after the Lord, and that he did that which was evil in the Lord’s sight in sanctioning in any degree the idolatrous desires of his wives. R. 2068

He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned away his heart. For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.

1 Kings 11:3-4

King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites -- from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love.

– 1 Kings 11:1-2 –

Women have always exercised a potent influence in the affairs of the world, and Solomon’s deflection and the consequent deflection of his kingdom, were due in large measure to his foreign wives and their natural attachment to the false religions of their fathers. Mismatching was one of the first of Solomon’s steps in the wrong course: it was taken, no doubt, with a view to a closer relationship with surrounding nations and royal families. It was a worldly-wise step, but an unwise one from the standpoint of the Lord, who desired Israel to be his elect, holy, and peculiar people, separate and distinct from all the families of the earth. —Amos 3:2. R. 2324

**You only have I known of all the families of the earth.
Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.
Amos 3:2**

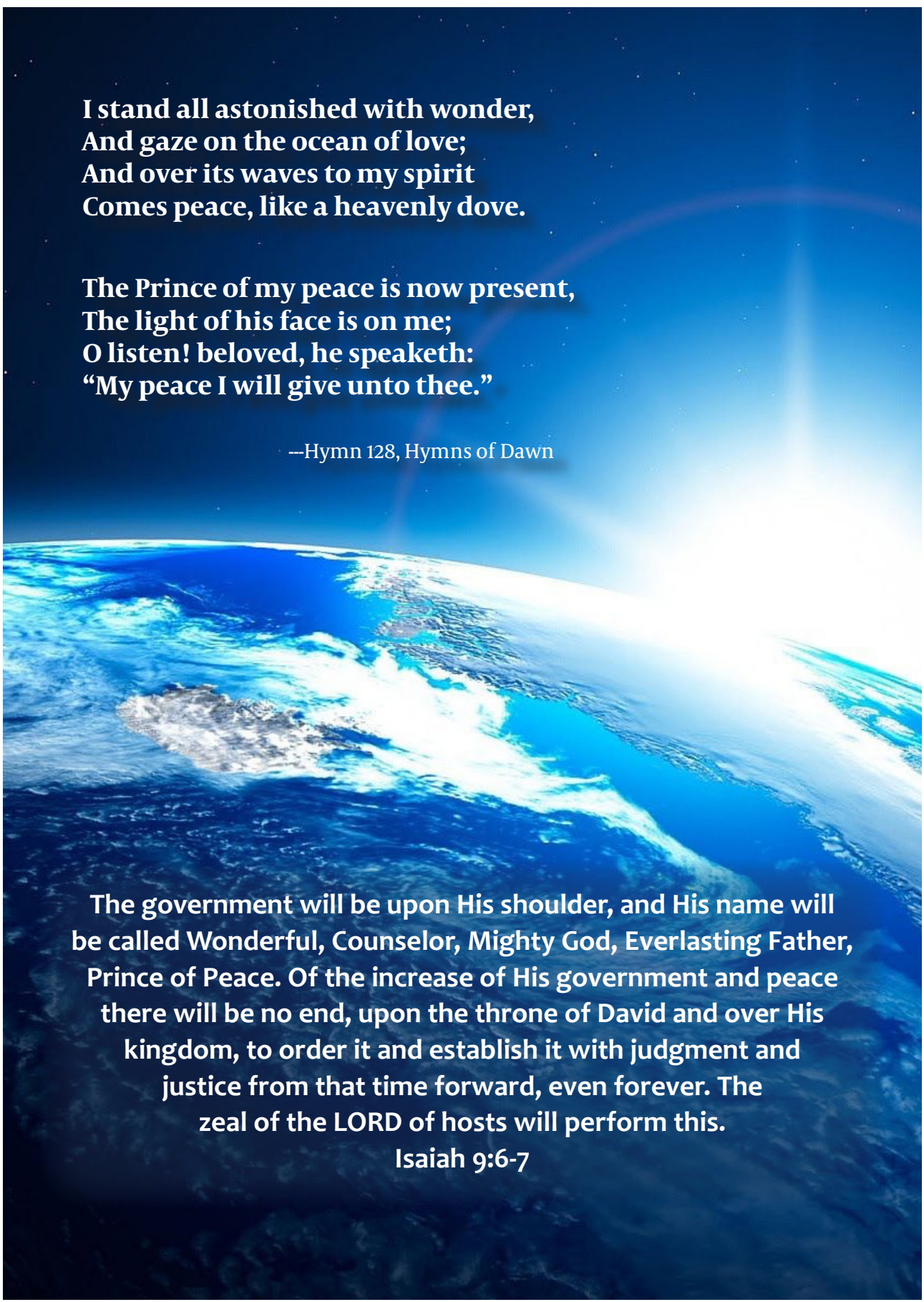
**The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.
Genesis 49:10**



**Behold, a king will reign in righteousness.
– Isaiah 32:1 –**

Of him it is written, “Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness;” and he is called “the Prince of peace.” Until his righteous reign is established in the earth the whole creation groans and travails in pain, and neither Israel nor the world could enjoy the blessings of that peace and prosperity which God designs to give through Christ. The reign of Solomon only prefigured this; and, as we shall see, the typical peace and prosperity of his reign were very hollow and unsatisfactory, yet the brilliant bubble was a speaking type of the future glorious reality; and when it had accomplished this mission of shadowing forth the glory to be revealed in Christ, the bubble burst and the groaning creation continued to groan under the heel of the oppressor, and will until he whose right it is shall take the kingdom and possess it. R. 2046

**‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Remove the turban, and take off the crown! Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted. Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer, until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him.”
Ezekiel 21:26-27**



**I stand all astonished with wonder,
And gaze on the ocean of love;
And over its waves to my spirit
Comes peace, like a heavenly dove.**

**The Prince of my peace is now present,
The light of his face is on me;
O listen! beloved, he speaketh:
“My peace I will give unto thee.”**

—Hymn 128, Hymns of Dawn

The government will be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:6-7

Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.

– 1 Kings 11:7 –

It was under the teaching of evil spirits that the people of Canaan first established the valley of Hinnom as a place of torture. This valley outside the city of Jerusalem, now known in the Greek language as Gehenna, had erected in it a brass figure of the god Moloch which, being hollow was heated intensely and then into its outstretched arms were occasionally placed children offered thus in sacrifice. God forewarned his people against this and every form of cruelty and also against the evil spirits which would so seduce them and pervert their minds as to lead them to such horrible and insane practices and beliefs. With Israel, therefore, this valley instead of being a valley of sacrifice, became the symbol of the Second Death in that it was made a crematory for the carcasses of dead animals, and for the bodies of certain vile criminals not deemed worthy of honorable burial. Under the Lord's arrangement, however, no torture was permitted in this valley or elsewhere in Israel—not the living, but the dead were consumed in it.

We are glad that we are living in a day when this Moloch torture is detested, a day in which civilized people, at least, look upon all such practices with abhorrence; nevertheless, the evil spirits operating upon the higher plane to suit the higher conditions of the spiritual Israel, have introduced false doctrines among them to such an extent that for centuries the masses of Christendom have attributed to the Almighty God of love a character and disposition far worse than that of Moloch. These false theories have cast into the fire not only a few sacrifices to satisfy Jehovah, but have made the whole human family to occupy this position, to be subjects of eternal torture—except a comparative few who with sincerity of heart and faith and obedience, lay hold upon Christ in this present life and are thus saved from an eternity of suffering. R. 3069

This doctrine of devils [the doctrine of hell-fire] was introduced amongst spiritual Israel during the period which we denominate the Dark Ages; it finds no countenance whatever in the Word of God, neither in the Law nor in the prophets, nor in all the dissertations of the apostles of the New Testament; at very most it claims to base itself upon certain misunderstood parables of our Lord and upon certain misunderstood symbolical figures of speech in the Apocalypse. Yet, so completely have the evil spirits done their work, that the masses of Christendom thoroughly believe that the Bible is the authority and groundwork for that awful doctrine of eternal torment, —this Moloch cruelty ascribed to the God of Love, and now that their minds are becoming emancipated so that they can no longer believe such doctrines, they are disposed to reject the entire Bible, the Word of the Lord, because they think that it is the foundation for this awful, blasphemous error. R. 3069

He did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

– 1 Kings 11:8 –

The King, rolling in wealth, yielded to these importunities of his wives and established for them and their foreign ambassadors and visitors shrines, altars, holy places, dedicated to the various false gods of surrounding nations—not that the King believed in these or worshiped them himself, but, through a mistaken view of broad-mindedness and a mistaken form of generosity to his wives and their sentiments, he violated his highest sense of responsibility to his own Lord, Jehovah. Gradually that devotion which had been his at first, and which the Lord had blessed by two special manifestations, yielded, and the King became less and less a man after God's own heart; possessed of less and less of his father David's loyalty of heart and zeal for the Divine will and worship.

Like all sins this one had its beginning—when Solomon built the high place or altar of Chemosh to satisfy his Moabitish wives; and what might be expected is told us in [this verse]: that when one system of idolatry had been introduced, the other foreign wives claimed similar rights, privileges, altars, etc., for the divinities of their lands. In yielding to these Solomon no doubt had in mind the foreign maids and servants of these wives and yet more the visiting delegations of court representatives from those various lands which, finding altars and temples to their divinities, would praise Solomon for breadth of character. But very different was such praise from that of the Lord and from that of the Queen of Sheba, who recognized in her day Solomon's true wisdom in his fidelity to Jehovah God.

R. 4297 and R. 2068

So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods, but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded.

– 1 Kings 11:9-10 –

The Lord's anger with Solomon was not a burst of fury nor a malicious anger. It was a righteous indignation against sin; and an anger of this sort is the only kind compatible with God's character. It is the only kind, therefore, that the children of God should cultivate or exercise. While anger in the nature of hatred, malice, strife, envy should be put away by all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son, anger in the sense of righteous indignation against wrong-doing, sin in its various forms, is proper; and although it should be used with great moderation, backed by love, there are circumstances and conditions in which it would be wrong not to have righteous anger and use it.

R. 2068

Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David. I will tear it out of the hand of your son.”

– 1 Kings 11:11-12 –

The rending of the bulk of the kingdom from the hand of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, was a part of the penalty for Solomon’s sin; yet it came in a natural way, and as the result of natural causes. The evil course which started in self-gratification and was manifested in the multiplication of wives and the gratifying of their desires for false religions did not stop there, but extended in other directions throughout Solomon’s affairs and kingdom. He patterned his conduct more and more after other rulers of his day, selfishly augmented his own fortune, and ministered to his own desires and the desires of his numerous household, regardless of the interests of the Lord’s people in whose interest and for whose happiness and welfare he should have sought to use the gifts of wisdom, influence and wealth bestowed upon him by the Lord. On the contrary, as we have seen (1 Kings 12:4; 1 Kings 12:11), he bound heavy burdens upon the people. R. 2068

I will not tear away the whole kingdom. I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.

– 1 Kings 11:13 –

This verse was fulfilled through Jeroboam, who had been an officer in Solomon’s industrial army. Partly from sympathy and largely through ambition, he sought to steal the hearts of the people away from Solomon and attempted a rebellion in Solomon’s day, but contrary to the Lord’s plan. (1 Kings 11:31.) It was after Solomon’s death that Jeroboam, allying himself with the ten tribes of Israel, aroused a certain amount of animosity by pointing out that King Solomon, being of the tribe of Judah, had favored that tribe chiefly. He then joined with the chief men of the ten tribes in demanding of Rehoboam how he would conduct the kingdom, telling him that unless he promised reform from his father’s methods and oppression they would revolt. Rehoboam refused to reform and they did revolt, and constituted a separate kingdom down to the time of the taking away into captivity by the King of Babylon, who took first the ten tribes and afterward the two tribes called Judah. Since the return from that captivity the distinction between Judah and Israel has not been maintained, and we find both the Lord and the apostles speaking of them, and applying prophecies to them, as “the twelve tribes,” “the house of Israel,” “the twelve tribes [a part of whom were] scattered abroad” –not ten tribes scattered abroad and two tribes at home in their own land, but a part of the twelve tribes in Canaan (chiefly Judah), and the remainder of the twelve tribes scattered abroad and living in the various cities of the Gentiles; as for instance, those at Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth, Thessalonica, etc., to whom the apostles first preached the gospel when they went with it amongst the Gentiles. —Acts 16:13; 17:2,10; 18:8,19. R. 2069

The statement here is that one tribe would be given to Solomon’s son; and this is entirely consistent with the facts, for although sometimes called two tribes, yet really the remnant of the tribe of Benjamin (after it was almost destroyed) was absorbed into the tribe called Judah. R. 2069

And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you. However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and My statutes.

But I will take the kingdom out of his son’s hand and give it to you—ten tribes.’ ”

– 1 Kings 11:31,34-35 –

[These verses] tell how the Lord rebuked Solomon for his course; doubtless through the Prophet Ahijah. (Vs. 29-37.) The Lord assured Solomon that, because of his unfaithfulness, the major part of the kingdom would be rent or torn with violence from his son and come under the rule of one of his servants—Jeroboam. This man had been a trusted officer in the raising of taxes and the levying of workmen for the King’s business. The same Prophet anointed Jeroboam, in the name of the Lord, to be king over the ten tribes; but, instead of waiting for the Lord’s time, as David had done, Jeroboam instituted a rebellion against the King, in which he was unsuccessful and obliged to flee from the King’s forces into Egypt. Afterward, in God’s due time, he became the King of the ten tribes. Incidentally we note here a lesson for all of God’s people; that we should wait upon the Lord for his times and seasons, in respect to all of life’s affairs, great and small. It is for us to be faithful and alert and on the lookout for the Lord’s providence; but not to anticipate them, not to make a move in advance in any event of the Lord’s own time. R. 4297

And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem*, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there.

1 Kings 11:36

***From the time it was called “The City of David,” according to 2 Sam. 5:6-9 (where the storming of its fortress by David is given), it also became the religious and political centre of the typical Kingdom by the divine, great King Jehovah’s appointment. (1 Kings 11:36.) After the division of the tribes, “The City of David” continued for a time to be the capital of the kingdom of Judah, though several times plundered, until at length it was made “desolate” at the Babylonian captivity. —2 Chron. 12:9; 21:16; 25:23; 36:3,10,17-20; 2 Kings 14:13. R. 1296**

Then Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”

– 1 Kings 12:3-4 –

The coming of King Rehoboam to the throne was the signal for a protest and for a demand that the king guarantee the people against oppression—a demand very similar to that of the British public in connection with the Magna Charta. The demand of the Israelites was made at the time of the king’s coronation—a time when all the tribes were supposed to participate in acknowledging their loyalty to the king. Then came the representatives of the ten tribes, with Jeroboam as a leader, saying, “Thy father Solomon made our yoke grievous; now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father and the heavy yoke which he put upon us lighter, and we will serve thee.”

The young king bade them depart for three days and then come again. When he conferred with the old men of the kingdom, asking what he should do, they replied, “If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and will serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then will they be thy servants forever.” But this advice was not fully satisfactory to young King Rehoboam; so he inquired of his personal friends, younger men of his acquaintance. These gave opposite advice, saying, “Thus shalt thou speak unto this people: My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s loins; and now, whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father has chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions” —whips with metal pieces at the end of the lash.

The thought of the younger men and of King Rehoboam, who agreed with them, was that if the king would yield, it would be merely the starting of rebellious demands which eventually would be unendurable. Their thought, therefore, was that the people should be intimidated, threatened. But the ten tribes under the leadership of Jeroboam were not intimidated. They withdrew, refusing to participate in the anointing of Rehoboam as their king. Only the representatives of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained loyal to the king.

Thus the kingdom of Israel was divided. Thereafter the ten tribes maintained the title Kingdom of Israel, and the two tribes were called the Kingdom of Judah, for over five hundred years—until the time of the return from Babylonian captivity of so many of all Israel as had respect to the Divine promises. R. 5723

Since the captivity, the name Israel has stood for the entire twelve tribes, as at first, being so used by Jesus and the Apostles; and the name Jews was similarly used for all in covenant relationship with God. The great majority never returned, but continued to live in the various provinces of Babylon throughout the world. Some of them, rejecting circumcision and dropping faith in God, were disowned of God and thus became like the remainder of the Gentile world. But others of them, remaining loyal to the Lord, and going up to Jerusalem annually to the feast, as directed by the Lord’s Word, continued to be known as members of “the twelve tribes scattered abroad.” Many of these were brought into contact with the Truth in the days of the Apostles. R. 5723

Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

– Matthew 7:12 –

All will agree that the wise men advised King Rehoboam properly, to the effect that a ruler should be the servant of his people; and that if he so does faithfully, his kingdom would be enduring and his people would be blessed. Their advice amounted to an admonition that the king should observe the Golden Rule—that he should do to his people and for them as he would that they should do to him, were their conditions reversed. The Golden Rule, laid down by the great Head of Christianity, is despised and rejected as impracticable; but we hold that it has not been given a trial. Those who have had the power have always feared to trust the Golden Rule in their dealings with the people. Political parties, clamoring for something like the Golden Rule, have time and again climbed into power, only to refuse to use the rule after gaining the opportunity, contending that the conditions made it impossible.

Soon, however, the Golden Rule will have a worldwide test, and will demonstrate that it is the only rule by which human happiness can be permanently secured. This is the promise of the Bible, which tells us that Messiah's Kingdom will give the world compulsory education along the lines of the Golden Rule for a thousand years. The Lord, through the Prophets, the Apostles and Jesus Himself, testifies to the success of the Golden Rule—that it will bring in everlasting righteousness, peace, joy, blessing; and that God's favor will be upon those who thus conform to His Law, giving them ultimately deliverance from sin, sickness, pain, death, and bringing the whole world of mankind to glorious human perfection, utterly destroying those who will refuse to be governed by the Golden Rule. R. 5723

**Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is:
‘HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE. AND
YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH
ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.’
This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this:
‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ There is
no other commandment greater than these.”**

Mark 12:29-31

Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

– 1 Corinthians 10:11-12 –

We may learn from this sad lesson of Solomon's fall:

- 1** It is not only important to begin life wisely in harmony with God, but equally necessary to continue it, and to end it so. We may learn also that the temptations and trials of life are not upon the young only, but rather that the strongest temptations are apt to come as we advance in life; and that for these we need the preparation of character well begun and cultivated, developed, strengthened by experience and endurance.
- 2** Another lesson respects the importance of marriage, and fully corroborates the Apostle Paul's statement, that while marriage is honorable, it should be only "in the Lord." Whoever has neglected this advice has either rued his neglect or by it has been led so far astray as to be unable to appreciate his own decline from godliness. Each Christian has in his own fallen members quite a sufficient downward tendency to fight against, without putting himself directly in the way of outside temptation, although he has the Lord's promise of grace sufficient for every time of need. If, neglecting the Lord's instruction, he surrounds himself with additional downward tendencies, by taking a husband or a wife not in the Lord—not seeking chiefly the Kingdom of God and setting his affections upon the things above, but upon the things beneath—he will surely find it greatly to his disadvantage, as did Solomon in the taking of foreign wives—aliens to the divine promises and blessings, the commonwealth of Israel.
- 3** Another lesson is that wisdom and wealth, education and influence and great opportunities are sure to become snares and injurious, unless we are continually guided in their use by the wisdom which cometh from above. And the more of these talents we possess by nature or by acquisition, the more need we have for the divine grace provided in our Lord Jesus only, the more need to study and ponder and practise the exhortations to humility and godliness contained in his Word, and the more need to make full use of every other agency which he has provided for our blessing and help—"building one another up in the most holy faith."

The moment when we feel self-confident is the dangerous one; the times when we feel our own weakness and are looking to the Lord for grace and help and guidance and strength, this is the time that by reason of his assistance we are strong. Let us take heed, then, lest we feel over-confident in respect to our own strength, our own standing on these questions of liberties, rights, privileges and self-denials for the good of others. It is right that we should think that we stand, but it is right that we continually appreciate that we stand not in our own strength but in the strength that God supplies through his promises and through his holy Spirit. R. 2069



It is only when we remember that the Kingdom of God under Solomon was a foreshadowing of the Kingdom of Christ that we get the proper view of the situation. It was God's typical kingdom and Solomon sat upon its throne as God's representative. So a greater than Solomon is eventually to sit upon the throne of earth and extend the Kingdom to the uttermost bounds and bring to the Kingdom riches, honor, wisdom and power greater than we can now properly appreciate and but feebly foreshadowed in Solomon's experiences. Solomon's blemishes are not to be considered as typical blemishes in the Kingdom of Christ, however. They teach another lesson, namely, that all power and wisdom in the present time are hindered by the unfavorable conditions surrounding, so that they become traps and snares, even to the wisest and best intentioned of men. Meantime the Lord's promise through Moses and the prophets was for a greater than Solomon, and wiser than he, and richer and more powerful than Solomon; able and willing to execute the Divine will amongst men, and to bring in a Kingdom of everlasting righteousness. That Kingdom has not yet appeared amongst men, and hence we still pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." R. 4298

All Is Vanity



***Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them."
Ecclesiastes 12:1***



By the time Solomon had reached his fortieth year, under the blessing of wisdom which he craved of the Lord, he had made the kingdom of Israel famous throughout the then civilized world. His kingdom connected with Egypt on the south, with the desert on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the north and west, except that small portion known as Phoenicia, whose king, Hiram, had made a league with Solomon and assisted him greatly in the materials and workmen for the temple. Solomon's ships and those of Hiram were known to all the nations of that time as far east as Judea and as far northwest as Britain. The account of the wealth which flowed to him is astounding. His table dishes were made of gold, a thousand shields for his mighty men were of gold, and other things in proportion were magnificent in the largest degree. The brilliancy of his mind found expression not only in financial channels, but his army was equipped on a scale of equal magnificence. Fourteen hundred chariots were imported, and thousands of horses for these and for a cavalry detachment for his army. Literary matters were not neglected; he wrote many sonnets and spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his fame in respect to these matters had extended to all parts of the world.

The Book of Ecclesiastes seems to have been written in later life, when the heart had grown sick with excess of sensuous pleasures and the lack of the real happiness which comes from a close and perfect walk with God, when he turned from all his riches and honors with the sad refrain, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." From his own experience he proves the truth of his theme, and counsels to others a different course from that which he himself had pursued, saying, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth....Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." ---Eccl. 12:1; Eccl. 12:13. R. 3284 and R. 1517

Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them.”

– Ecclesiastes 12:1 –

Well would it have been with Solomon had he learned this lesson in his youth from the law and the prophets, instead of ignoring these and turning to poor human philosophy—his own reasonings—and then, by the experience of a wasted life, finally proving the vanity of every other course save that of God’s appointment and direction, and losing the reward of divine favor which a course of entire faithfulness to God would surely have brought in due time. The course which Solomon chose and followed brought the temporal advantage which was very unsatisfactory; but it surely did not entitle him to a place among the ancient worthies, some of whom Paul enumerates in Hebrews 11:1-40, who are to have an honorable position in the earthly phase of the kingdom of God.

Hear the words of the Preacher. He says:

I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven. This burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind.

Ecclesiastes 1:12-14

Thus testifies one of the most successful men, from the world’s standpoint, that ever lived. He had all the comforts and blessings that wealth and power and honor and fame and natural qualifications of mind and body and education, and even specially granted superhuman wisdom could bestow upon him. And all of these he used chiefly for his own personal, present gratification. He says:

1 I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with mirth. Therefore enjoy pleasure,” but surely, this also was vanity.

2 I said of laughter— “Madness!” And of mirth, “What does it accomplish?”

3 I searched in my heart how to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.

4 I made my works great. I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards.

5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them.

6 I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove.

7 I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me.

8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and musical instruments of all kinds.

9 So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.

10 Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart rejoiced in all my labor. And this was my reward from all my labor.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled. And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.

– Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 –

Thus he proceeds from Ecclesiastes chapter 1:12 to 2:26 to show how he delved into every luxury to seek full satisfaction and to find in these things the chief end of his existence. But, after all, he pronounces the whole experience “sore travail.”

“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “All is vanity.”

Ecclesiastes 12:8

This conclusion of the whole matter of a life’s experience is that to which all men come sooner or later. “Vanity of vanities; all is vanity” is, after a wasted life, the poor world’s dying refrain, when they see it would have been better to have feared God and kept his commandments. And that they may effectually prove this conclusion is God’s object in letting them have the present experience under the dominion of Sin, which even Solomon in all his glory called “sore travail:” that they may be ready for the duty of submission to God, which will be enforced in the coming Millennial age of the world’s probation. This object is distinctly stated by Solomon in Chapter 1:13 and 3:10. — “I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised [by experience] in it.”

R. 1532 and R. 1533

What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun? – Ecclesiastes 1:3 –

The question is an important one, especially for the young; but all would do well to carefully consider it in the light of Solomon's experience, and with the prayer of the Psalmist in their hearts—"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Psa. 90:12.

In Ecclesiastes chapters 3, 4, and 5, Solomon gives us the results of his wide experience and observation from a business and social standpoint. He sees men laboring hard to amass wealth, and wisely inquires,

**What profit has the worker from that in which he labors?
Ecclesiastes 3:9**

Then he adds—and how truthfully his experience agrees with all our own observation and experience—that

**He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity. When goods increase, they increase who eat them. So what profit have the owners except to see them with their eyes?
Ecclesiastes 5:10-11**

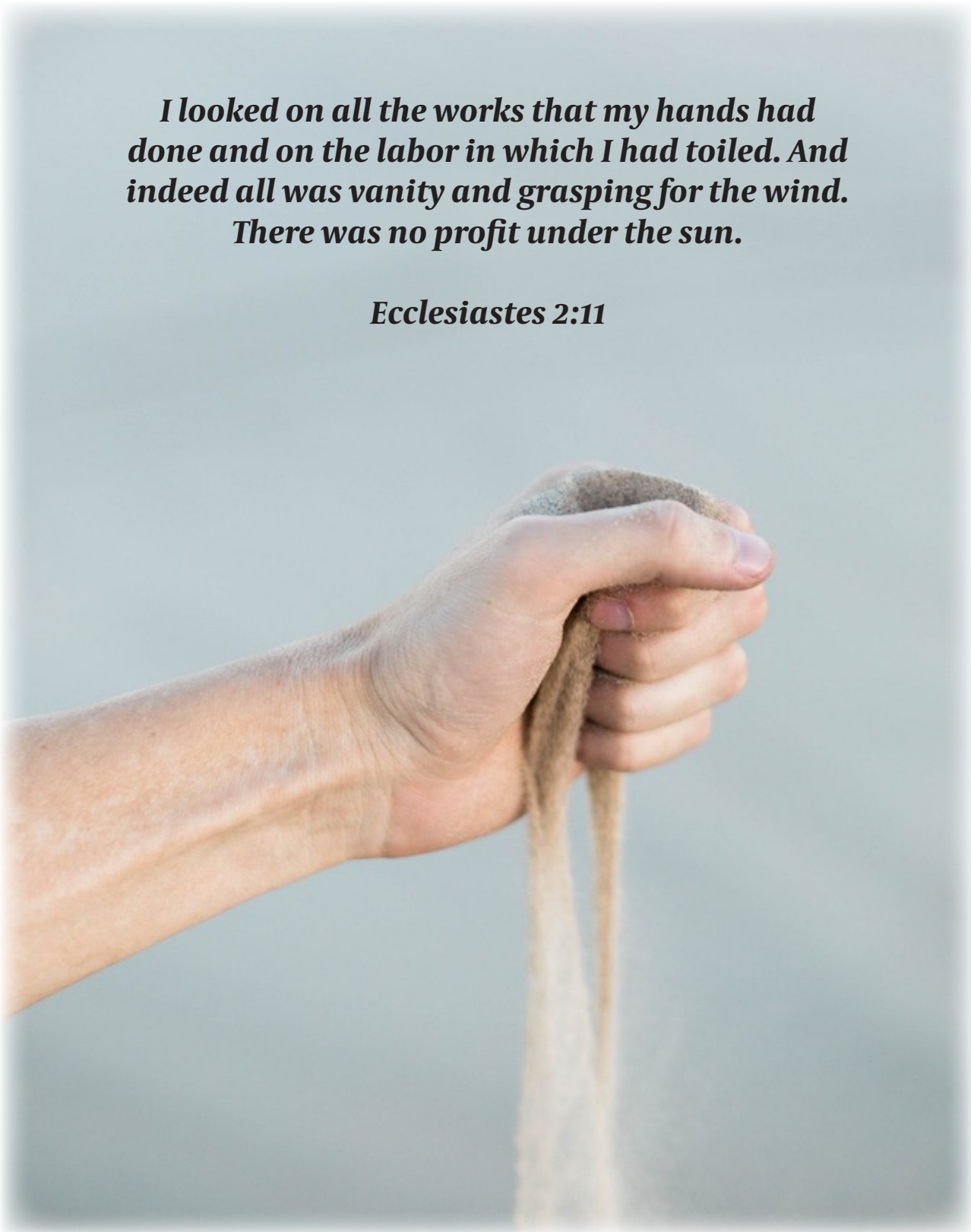
So business prosperity he regards as an empty bubble, and the excessive labor to accomplish it as laboring for the wind.

In the adjustment of human affairs he further perceives that iniquity and injustice prevail everywhere, and to such an extent that there is really no redress and no comfort to those who lay it to heart, except in the thought that God is above all the judges of the earth, and that his judgments will some day be manifest and prevail. (Eccl. 5:8.) R. 1532

**If you see the oppression of the poor, and the violent perversion of justice and righteousness in a province, do not marvel at the matter, for high official watches over high official, and higher officials are over them.
Ecclesiastes 5:8**

I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled. And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 2:11



For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals. One thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath. Man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity. All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust.

– Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 –

Death is not a **sleep**; it is **destruction**. Dead bodies decay because the work of destruction is progressing in them. We say that mortification sets in; that is, the destruction of the tissues goes on until everything that had life in that body has perished. This process of decay is common to both man and beast, and also goes on in the vegetable world.

Very few people seem to realize what is meant by the term “soul.” The Scriptural teaching is that man IS a soul, not that he HAS a soul. In Gen. 2:7 we read, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man BECAME a LIVING SOUL.” The Word of God speaks of both man and beast as **souls**. (See Num. 31:28.) Body, soul and spirit are in combination in a living organism.

A dog has a body; a dog has a life—a vitalizing principle; and aside from this life-principle and organism, a dog has a personality. Each animal has his own joys and sorrows; but whatever he is, these things go to make up the experiences by which a dog would recognize himself. So it is with a human being. There is a body and a life principle, the **union** of which makes the soul. The experiences—the home-life, education, environment, travels, finances, private affairs—all go to make up the personality. It is not the body, but the soul that has these experiences.

**For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.
Ecclesiastes 9:5,10**

When man dies, his **personality**, which is the result of his hereditary and prenatal influences combined with his experiences, **perishes**; for it cannot exist without a body.

God intends to restore to life, not the body, but the soul that died. The soul that went into death is the soul that was redeemed by Jesus. —Psa. 49:15. Through the resurrection, God has arranged to show His love for the world. It is written, “When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son” (Gal. 4:4); “Who gave Himself a Ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:6) — “for every man.” (Heb. 2:9.) Every man has gone into death or is going there; and unless a redemption had been provided, there could be no resurrection. So the Apostle Paul explains that, “since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order.” —1 Cor. 15:21-23.

This making alive will be the resurrection of the dead—not of those particles of matter which have gone to fertilize a tree and then through its fruit become a part of another organism, but the resurrection of the **being**—the soul. In the resurrection, “God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him.” (1 Cor. 15:38.) To the individual, it does not matter what **particles** compose his new body. What he is interested in is the resurrection of his **soul**—his being—his personality. That restoration is the all-important part of the resurrection. R. 5166

For who knows what is good for man in life, all the days of his vain life which he passes like a shadow? Who can tell a man what will happen after him under the sun?

– Ecclesiastes 6:12 –

[Solomon in] Chapter 6 shows how vain and unsatisfactory is every earthly good, when there is no hope beyond the present life. St. Paul reminds us that God not only declared His coming blessing, but that He made oath to the same. God's oath was not necessary to Abraham. He confidently believed; but, as St. Paul said, the oath was for **our** sake. The fulfillment of the promise would be so **long deferred** that we, who are so specially interested in it, might have feared some change in the Divine Program. St. Paul assures us that the oath was in order that, "by two immutable things (God's Word and God's oath), we might have strong consolation (we, the Church), who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us (in 'the good tidings', the promise), which hope we have as an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, within the veil, whither our Forerunner has for us entered." (Hebrews 6:18-20.) We see, then, by the Apostle's words, that the Abrahamic promise or Covenant has not yet been fulfilled—it is still an anchor for our faith. R. 1532 and R. 4939

When God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."

Hebrews 6:13-14

When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business that is done on earth, even though one sees no sleep day or night, then I saw all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. For though a man labors to discover it, yet he will not find it. Moreover, though a wise man attempts to know it, he will not be able to find it.

– Ecclesiastes 8:16-17 –

Solomon declares that, in view of God's mighty works, he had sought to find out the deep mysteries of his plan for his creatures, but that he had sought in vain. A knowledge of his plan was not then due; and so (chapter 9) he considered that the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God, but he could not tell certainly from the book of nature whether God loved or hated them; for he said,

**All things come alike to all:
One event happens to the righteous and the wicked.**

Ecclesiastes 9:2

So from this skeptical view he concluded to take all the pleasure he could out of the present—to make merry, and live as joyfully as he could, seeking, first of all, his own ease and pleasure, and, secondarily, the pleasure of others so far as it did not interfere with his own. Upon these very principles Solomon acted until, surfeited with self-gratification and sick at heart, he cries out at last, as does every one who drains the cup of worldly pleasure, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." R. 1532

1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”:

2 While the sun and the light, the moon and the stars are not darkened, and the clouds do not return after the rain,

3 in the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow down; when the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look through the windows grow dim;

4 when the doors are shut in the streets, and the sound of grinding is low; when one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of music are brought low.

5 Also they are afraid of height, and of terrors in the way. When the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper is a burden, and desire fails, for man goes to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets.

6 Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the well.

7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

– Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 –

VERSES 1-5 present a vivid pen picture of old age— “the evil days” of physical decline and infirmity, “when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.” The world offers its pleasures to the young, who snatch at the delusions; but age has proved them all empty bubbles. The world has nothing substantial to offer, and therefore, unless the mind has found its satisfaction in God, there is indeed no pleasure in old age.

VERSE 2 refers to the dimness of vision, both mental and physical, and to the fact that clouds of trouble of one kind or another quickly succeed each other after every refreshing rain which brings hope of succeeding sunshine of prosperity.

VERSE 3 “The keepers of the house [the arms and hands] tremble; and the strong men [the lower limbs] bow themselves [unable to support the weight of the body], and the grinders [the teeth] cease [to perform their office], because they are few; and those [various mental faculties] that look out of the windows [the eyes] be darkened [or dimmed].”

VERSE 4 “And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low.” —When the work of life is done there is little in common with the rising generation, and therefore less and less communication. “He shall rise up at the voice of the bird [—early, being unable to sleep well], and all the daughters of music shall be brought low [the failing powers cease to catch the strains of earthly enchantments].” But if he have the ear of faith, he catches the sweeter strains of heaven’s melodies, of which Solomon in all his glory never knew.

VERSE 5 represents the great burden, labor and sorrow of extreme old age with all its infirmities, until all earthly desires fail and he goes to his long home—the grave—there to await the morning of the resurrection. “Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning.” —Psa. 30:5.

VERSES 6,7 represent death—the silver cord of life being loosed, the golden bowl (the body which contained the precious life-blood), broken; the pitcher (the lungs which drew in life from the fountain, the surrounding atmosphere), broken at the fountain; or the wheel (the heart), broken at the cistern. Then, when the body can no longer perform its offices, the dust of which it is composed returns “to the earth as it was [mere inanimate dust] and the spirit [ruach, breath, wind] shall return unto God who gave it,” going back into his great reservoir of wind, breath—the surrounding atmosphere; and the being, the soul, is no more, save as it is engraven indelibly upon the tablet of God’s memory to be reproduced again in the resurrection at the last day—now so near. R. 1533

**“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “All is vanity.”
Ecclesiastes 12:8**

For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

– Ecclesiastes 12:14 –

While that future time will be the actual testing period of the world for life or death everlasting, we are not to forget that every good deed and every evil deed committed now will have a bearing then. Every good deed, every good thought, every good word, has its uplifting and beneficial influence upon character; and every evil word, thought and deed has its injurious effect upon character. Every kindness done to one of the Lord’s saintly, elect members, will be rewarded. Every evil deed done to one of the least of these will be surely punished.

Thus the world of mankind is now laying up in store helps or hindrances as respects their own everlasting interests. The honorable, the upright, even though they do not become Christians or saints, will have proportionately a better standing in the future time of trial. The dishonorable will have proportionate degradation in the future, and will come forth proportionately more degraded, and will need proportionately more stripes in order to rise up out of sin, degradation and death, by the assistance of the Savior and the glorified Church. —1 Cor. 6:2. R. 4902

[King Solomon], living before the Gospel age and its high calling began, counseled an easy course of moderation: saying, Why should one become overmuch interested in anything? Why not take life easy? But the Apostle saw a prize that inspired his zeal to the point of fervency; and he advises all who are running for the same prize to be **fervent in spirit**, in the service of God now open to them; —an opportunity not open to Solomon, and not then even revealed. —Eph. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:12. R. 1533

**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all.
Ecclesiastes 12:13**

Israel's Fall Downward After Solomon

Sin tends to national destruction in a very natural way—by sapping the vitals of the people of the nation. But in Israel's case there was something more than this. God entered into a special Covenant with that nation by which he bound himself and they bound themselves. Israel agreed to be God's people, to serve and obey him faithfully; and God agreed that, if they would do so, he would specially favor them and look out for their interests, their flocks, their herds, their health, their prosperity; all were to be blessed so long as they were loyal and true. On the contrary, God specially pledged himself that if they as a people proved unfaithful to the Covenant, he would specially chastise them, punish them, deliver them to their enemies, etc. Thus Israel's prosperity or defeat indicated surely the Lord's favor or disfavor, in a manner not applicable to other nations. R. 4820



Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David. I will tear it out of the hand of your son."

1 Kings 11:11-12

So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong for three years, because they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

– 2 Chronicles 11:17 –

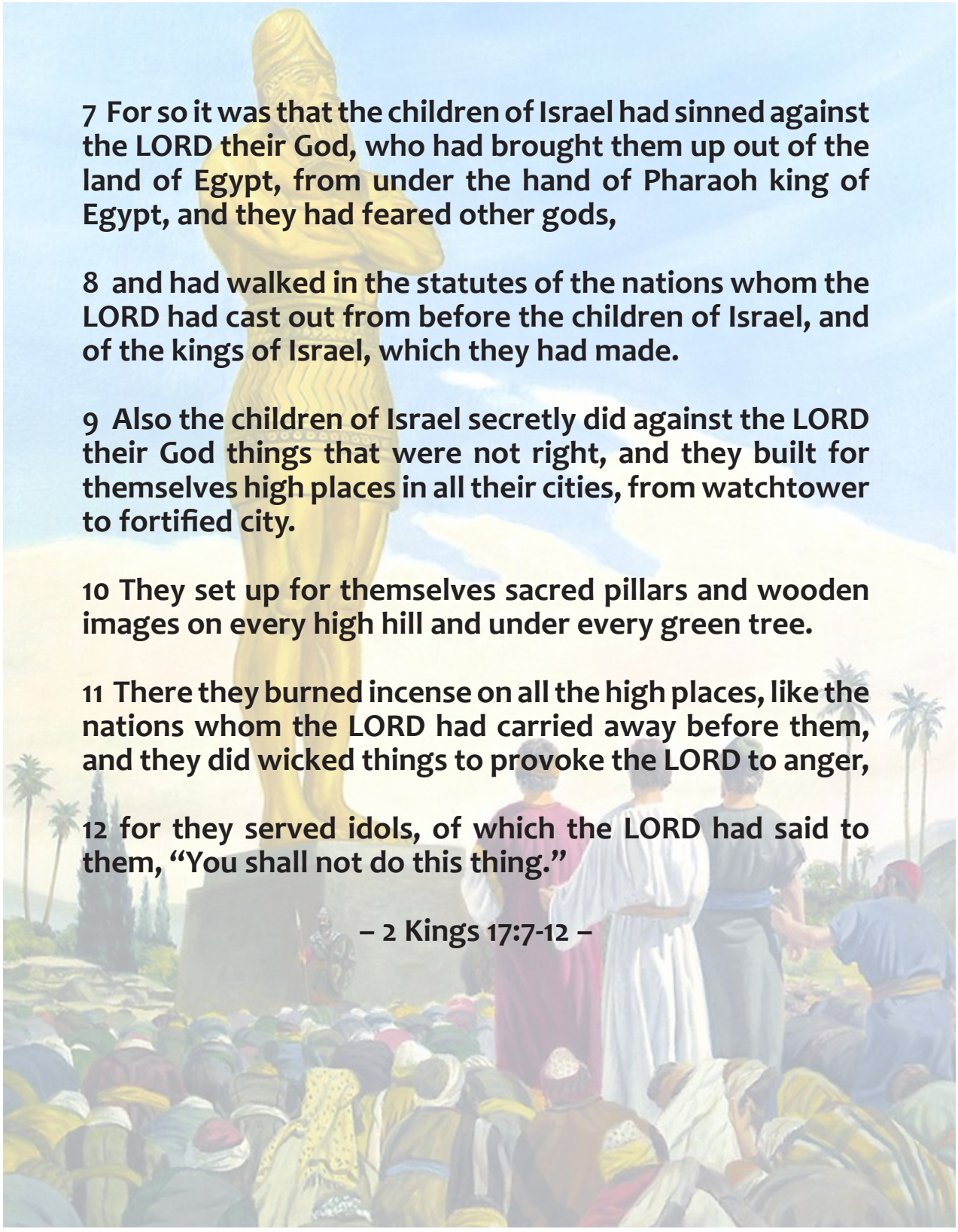
The history of the Kingdom of Judah—the two-tribe kingdom, [is] distinguished from the ten-tribe kingdom, which, because of its greater area and numbers, held the name of Israel. In our studies of the course of the ten tribes, we intimated that the division of the kingdom had worked to the advantage of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, known as the Kingdom of Judah, in that it had humbled them, drawn them nearer to the Lord, and made them more zealous of his worship, and more faithful in resisting idolatry of the surrounding nations: much of this, no doubt, resulted from the division of the empire, and the very wrong idolatrous course taken by the ten tribes.

The inspired record indicates that King Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, after he was deserted by the ten tribes, was considerably affected thereby, so that he and the people of Judah experienced a sort of religious reformation, as a result of which we are informed that not only the priests and Levites, but also the more religious of the people, Israelites indeed, deserted the ten-tribe kingdom, and allied and associated themselves with and made their home in Judah. “So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, strong, for three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.” —2 Chron. 11:13-17.

Before long, however, Rehoboam, finding himself strong in the kingdom, became lax in respect to its religious conditions, so that he and the people became negligent of the divine law. (2 Chron. 12:1.) As a rebuke for this, and as a lesson, the Lord permitted the army of Egypt to come up against Judah, “because they had transgressed against the Lord.” The victories of the Egyptian army under Shishak brought Rehoboam and the rulers of the people to their senses, and caused them to seek unto the Lord for help. “The princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves, and they said, The Lord is righteous.” Wherefore the Lord stayed the Egyptians, and did not allow them to overwhelm the kingdom, saying, “My wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem, by the hand of Shishak; nevertheless, they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries. So Shishak, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures from the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king’s house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.” Thus Rehoboam for a time was reduced to a subservient position. His kingdom had lost much of its wealth, accumulated under the reigns of Solomon and David, and all this was intended of the Lord to teach them an important lesson—that if the Lord let go of them they would be swallowed up of their enemies, and that the Lord, while demanding their obedience, always made that obedience profitable to them in their temporal welfare. R. 2362

Now it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom and had strengthened himself, that he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel along with him.

2 Chronicles 12:1



7 For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and they had feared other gods,

8 and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

9 Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city.

10 They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree.

11 There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD had carried away before them, and they did wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger,

12 for they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, “You shall not do this thing.”

– 2 Kings 17:7-12 –

In previous lessons we have seen Israel's tendency to copy after the nations round about. The people recognized the fact that God had chosen them to be his special and peculiar people: they were quite willing to be his special people, and to have his special favor, but seemingly they did not wish to be his **peculiar** people. They were willing to be peculiar, in the sense of having a peculiar deliverance from Egypt, and peculiar manifestations of divine favor, subduing their enemies before them, and bringing them into the land of promise, and dividing the land amongst them tribally, and so long as they were inspired with the hope that God would continue thus marvelously and miraculously to lead them, as his people, so long they were satisfied with their condition. They did not realize that the people who would be **fit** to be used of the Lord as his Kingdom, and through whom he would operate to bring the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant to all the families of the earth, must be not only peculiarly dealt with by divine Providence, but must also be peculiarly responsive to those providences.

When, therefore, they came to find that as God's people they were restricted and restrained, and that deviation from the divine program was punished, this **peculiarity**, this difference from the world, they did not relish. They rebelled against it; and in their desire for an excuse for rebellion they became skeptical, doubting that their experiences were in any sense or degree of or from the Lord. Their evil hearts of unbelief looked out upon the nations around them, and beheld greater national prosperity than their own amongst those who worshiped other gods, and for whom Jehovah had not declared special care. They came to feel that there were different gods, and that the God who had charge of them as a people or nation, and who commanded their obedience, and who punished them for disobedience, must indeed be respected and placated; nevertheless, they hoped, evidently, to gain something of national greatness by the worship of the heathen deities, which they believed blessed other nations, with Jehovah, whose blessings upon their nation were thus far largely promises, yet to be fulfilled.

First they were dissatisfied with the divine arrangement respecting their government. True, they had liberty, more than the other nations surrounding them, but the very fact that this liberty was not common or general, but rather unusual, caused them to desire that they might have a king like the nations round about them. (1 Sam. 8:5.) God pointed out to them the advantages of their **peculiar** condition, under which he had placed them, yet nevertheless granted their request, and gave them kings, and with the kings, as we have seen, came in a spirit of "broadmindedness," or "public policy," on the part of King Solomon. And his desire to be popular with neighboring kings, and to be considered broadminded in a religious way, led him first to establish, for the benefit of the foreigners at his court, and for his foreign wives, the religious customs and ceremonies common to foreign nations. This, as we have seen, spread amongst the people, and led to a laxity of views respecting the worship of the true God: it led to the thought that everyone should have some kind of a religion, but that each should be at liberty to choose for himself, or to blend elements of the various religions. We saw how, for political reasons, Jeroboam (after the ten tribes had split off from Judah, the kingly tribe, and had chosen Jeroboam to be its king, and form a new dynasty) took advantage of the "liberal" religious views to thoroughly engraft upon the people a false worship. And this false worship is stated by the Lord in the lesson before us to have been the cause of Israel's further decline, and ultimate fall, as a nation.

The lesson states (vs. 9) that Israel favored the false religions, and practiced them secretly: by that we understand that they hypocritically built the altars of sacrifice to the false gods, and established the false worship in all their cities and villages, under the pretence that they were doing this in the service of the true God. They were claiming, and probably to some extent deceiving themselves with the thought, that they were becoming more religious, more zealous, more holy, and that the evidences of this increase of religious zeal were to be found in these various altars of worship in every city, whereas formerly only the one city of Jerusalem had been the place set apart for divine worship. R. 2359

The LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.” Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God.

– 2 Kings 17:13-14 –

[These verses] recount the Lord’s testimony against his people in which he points out wherein they had failed in their part of the Covenant. They had done things which they should not have done and had left undone things which they should have done. Nevertheless, the Lord testifies unto Israel and unto Judah through the prophets sent to them, “Turn ye from your evil way and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to the Law which I commanded your fathers and which I sent to you by my servants, the Prophets.” God did his part, and more. Then we read, “Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks like the neck of their fathers, who believed not in the Lord their God.” “A stiff neck” is used symbolically to represent a self-willed and rebellious attitude of heart.

Israel’s service of idols finds its counterpart at the present time, too, for although we are not sunken to that degree of ignorance that would lead us to worship images, Christendom nevertheless is full of idols—every city, every village. The idols of the present time are known by different names, also, from those of olden times. One of the idols most worshiped today is “Popularity,” another is “Wealth,” another “Fame,” another “Self,” another “Our Denomination.” Few, very few indeed, have no other gods than the one true God.

As the Lord dealt with Israel, sending them repeated warnings and reproofs, through Elijah, Elisha, Amos and others, so to us he has spoken by a still higher authority, and in still more forceful language,

**For God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.
Hebrews 1:2**

Nevertheless, just as many who heard the prophets of old were careless, so today many are careless of the voice of the Son of God, and of his special messengers, the Apostles, and are failing to receive the blessing now due, failing to make their calling and election sure, as Israelites indeed, called under the New Covenant. R. 4820 and R. 2359

How many there are today in Christendom who persuade themselves that in multiplying forms and ceremonies, in building of elegant churches, and in the engagement of finer choirs, and grander organs, and in the multiplying of meetings, and in publicly showing an outward display, they are increasing in godliness, holiness, and becoming more religious. How important that we should learn the lesson that “*obedience is better than sacrifice*” —that not by multiplying forms and ceremonies and emblems of holy things are we brought near to the Lord our God, but by taking strict heed unto his Word. R. 2359

Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin. And sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

– James 1:14-15 –

The depth of depravity to which an intelligent being can sink can be measured only by the height of the original perfection and glory. Satan fell from a great height to a corresponding depth, and so likewise man falls to the very depths of iniquity, unless he repent and be converted from the error of his way, and voluntarily submit to the healing influences of divine grace. Sin, with accelerating speed, ever tends downward to more and more vile conditions, until it ends in the shipwreck of everything that is noble and pure; and “sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.”

Here we have a suggestion of the insidious character of sin; it does not stalk about openly in its horrible aspect, rather it starts in desire: it is prompted by selfishness of some kind, either in envy as in Cain's case or in ambition as in Satan's case. Small, refined, insidious are the beginnings of such desires, with no suggestion whatever of disloyalty to God or murder of our fellows. It is when these selfish desires and envyings, being unrepulsed, have gradually grown stronger and stronger, that, as the Apostle suggests, they conceive and bring forth to fruition, where they have life actually. Then the course is longer or shorter according to the individual or the circumstances, but the tendency of a desire that has conceived is to bring forth—to have the desire, the ambition, the envy, reach a consummation, and such a consummation is always sin. Such sin continued in, unrepented of, cherished, would surely lead on to death—the Second Death. How important, then, it is that we keep a close watch upon the desires of our hearts, and remember that out of the heart, out of the desires, proceed not only the good, kind, loving, generous sentiments, conceiving and bringing forth good deeds, kind words and proper conduct, but also out of the heart desires proceed the envyings and wrong and selfish ambitions which lead farther and farther away from the Lord and nearer and nearer to that condition which he would ultimately declare worthy of the Second Death.

R. 1964 and R. 3929

Let us apply to our own hearts the lessons that evil is insidious, and that every parting of the ways, every leaving of the divine path, signifies a separation from righteousness to a degree we are unable to estimate at the beginning. Let us learn that the only safe course to pursue is to trust in the Lord and to be glad to have whatever his providences may mark out for us, and to refuse to have anything contrary to his will, however desirable it might be, however gratifying to human ambition. Let us learn the lesson that ambition is a dangerous thing—especially in our present imperfect condition, where our judgments are more or less warped from the fall, where our knowledge is imperfect and where Satan is sure to put light for darkness and darkness for light. Our ambitions must be curbed, yea, every thought must be brought into subjection to the will of God in Christ, if we would be on safe ground as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. R. 3386

They rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them. They followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them that they should not do like them. So they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

– 2 Kings 17:15-16 –

The particular seductions which hindered natural Israel from receiving the divine instructions are enumerated in verses 15-17. They sold themselves to do evil, that is to say, they loved the reward of unrighteousness, held out in the immediate present, more than they loved the reward of righteousness held out as a promise for the future. They sold themselves to do evil, in the sense of seeking and accepting the rewards of evil doing.

A disposition of willfulness and dissatisfaction with the divine arrangements naturally leads people into these delusions—to seek to know of the future from some other quarter, to the intent that they might **frustrate, if possible, the operations of divine Providence**, so as to the more thoroughly accomplish their own self-will. This same spirit is not lacking today, and in many instances is leading people in the same direction, to consult the same fallen angels, demons, who now, as then, attempt to personate the dead, through Spiritualist mediums. The result now, as then, is that those who are thus seeking in a wrong direction for light and leading, and because **discontented with divine Providence** and arrangements, are in danger of being led further and further away from the only true revelation, and the true prophets thereof.

The statement of verse 15 is particularly noteworthy, as indicating how Israel got into all these other extremes; viz.,:

- 1 they rejected God's statutes—God's law, God's Word;**
- 2 they lost sight of and neglected the covenant which he made with their fathers—they lost faith in the promises of God;**
- 3 they lost sight of the testimony which he gave them respecting what would be the result of forsaking his counsel;**
- 4 they followed vanity (foolishness, —they did not take the wise course) and became vain (foolish) and went after the heathen that were round them (copied after others, desiring to be not peculiar, but popular) concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them.**

Applying these various points to antitypical nominal Israel of today, we find that to the extent she has gone from the Lord, in theory and in practice, it has been very generally as the result of:

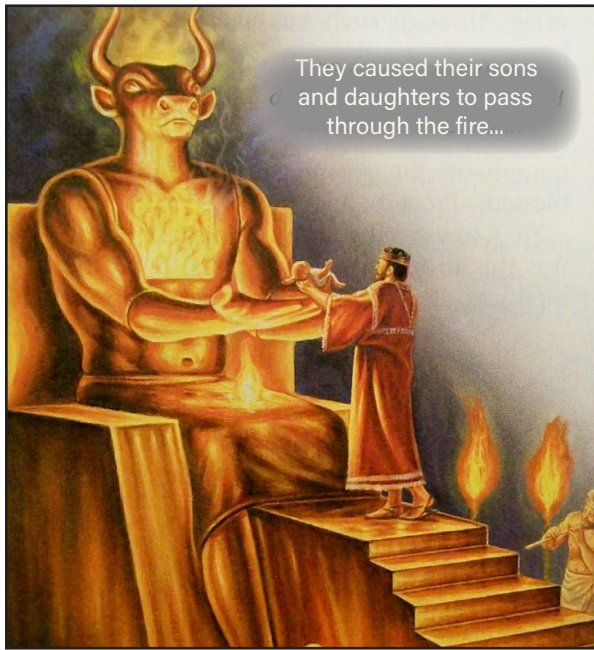
- 1 not heeding the Lord's Word;**
- 2 of being negligent of the promises which were set before spiritual Israel, the high calling;**
- 3 of becoming foolish, in attempting to serve God, and to be his "peculiar people," and at the same time attempting to please and to copy the world, and to be popular therewith.**

The disposition to "do like them," to do like the world in general, is the seductive point at which the great Adversary would switch us off from being the Lord's peculiar people, Israelites indeed, heirs of the promises. Let us remember, in this connection, the Master's words, "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but now ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hateth you." R. 2359

They caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.

– 2 Kings 17:17 –

In the fervency of their religious zeal, the Israelites, we are informed (vs. 17) caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire of Moloch –as sacrifices. Not that they were devoid of parental



love, but that they esteemed it a part of duty to make such “religious sacrifices.” And so today, many, misled by false teachings, and by mixtures of paganism with the divine revelation, have gotten to the place where they have similarly perverted ideas respecting the Lord and the sacrifice which would be pleasing to him. They have come to think of the Almighty as a ferocious deity, who would take pleasure in the everlasting torture of the children of men.

The modern Moloch, ignorantly worshiped by many professed spiritual Israelites today, is far more terrible than was the Moloch of olden times, for the children who were then burned did have an end of tortures, while, according to the theories now advocated by many in spiritual Israel, they worship a Moloch who will hopelessly torture his victims to all eternity. R. 2360

We have not today in nominal Christendom a literal Moloch of brass, heated red hot by internal fires, with arms open to receive the children to his embrace, as ancient Israel had, but we have instead a Moloch on a much larger scale—a much worse misrepresentation of the only true God, whose character is wisdom, justice, love and power. We have today in the minds of people, revered by many, mental imaginations of a god red hot with the flames of hell or purgatory, and visions of millions agonizing in his embrace. How terrible the thought! How God-dishonoring! How manifestly the work of the Adversary and totally contrary to the gracious messages which the Lord has so repeatedly sent, not only through the prophets of old but also through his Son and through the apostles, “speaking peace through Jesus Christ,” and assuring us of his love, as manifested in the great redemptive sacrifice, and of his intention to bless the world through the glorified Christ by appointing “times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” --Acts 3:21. R. 3464

They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.

– Jeremiah 7:31 –

Many people of today have not their senses sufficiently exercised by reason of use. They charge the Almighty with something that no human being would even think of doing. This expression, “have their senses exercised,” does not refer merely to minds, but includes the heart also. Brother Calvin had a very able mind, apparently; but the thing lacking was a proper heart-fellowship with the Lord; for if he had known the character of the Lord, he would have known that the doctrine of everlasting torture was contrary to every element of the Divine character. —See Jer. 7:31; 19:5. R. 5326

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**Solid food belongs to those who are of full age,
that is, those who by reason of use have their
senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

Hebrews 5:14

We have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

– 1 John 4:16 –

Why is this quality of love made so prominent in the Word of God? We answer, Because it is the first thing, the most important thing, the principal thing. It is the fulfilling of God’s Law; and, indeed, the sacrificial love enjoined upon God’s saints of this Age goes even beyond the requirements of the perfect law. But why is Love put first? It is not because God arbitrarily so placed it, not because He exercised His power of fiat and declared that it should be first. No. It is because no other quality of character is so lovely, so beautiful, so productive of happiness and joy, so great a blessing to all upon whom it operates. It is the very essence of God’s character. “GOD IS LOVE!” This quality particularly represents His personality. While God is all-just and all-powerful, we do not say that God is Justice or that God is Power, but that **God is Love**. He uses His great Power only as Love dictates and approves. He uses His Justice only in fullest harmony with His glorious attribute of Love. Love is the mainspring of all His doings. R. 5668

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**In this the love of God was manifested toward us,
that God has sent His only begotten Son into the
world, that we might live through Him. In this is love,
not that we loved God, but that He loved us and
sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

1 John 4:9-10

Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight. There was none left but the tribe of Judah alone. Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

– 2 Kings 17:18-19 –

Ephraim was the name of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, as Judah was the name given to the two-tribe kingdom of the same people. For many centuries Ephraim, the ten-tribe kingdom, especially after Solomon's death, was extremely perverse: not more degraded, we may presume, than the surrounding nations, but their perversion was more wicked, more reprehensible, because of greater privileges, blessings, knowledge and opportunities which the Lord had granted to them as the posterity of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the inheritors of the great Oath-bound Covenant made to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. One is amazed, in reading of the Lord's dealings with Ephraim and Judah, to note their general tendency toward idolatry, and this in spite of the divine chastisements, corrections, etc., which evidently influence only the few. In thinking of these matters we are to remember that the surrounding nations were still more grossly steeped in idolatry and its lustful orgies, practised in the name of worship. These other nations were not specially chastised for idolatry as was Israel, but were allowed to practically take the course they chose, as the Apostle explains in Rom. 1:28: God gave them over to a reprobate mind and to doing those things which were not proper because they had not wished to retain him in their minds.

The captivity of Ephraim should be viewed from this same standpoint. It was God's abandonment of the ten-tribe kingdom, his permission for them to have their way, and henceforth be treated of him as the heathen—without special chastisement. It was in this sense and in this sense only that those tribes were "lost." Located in various parts of Assyria they gradually assimilated with the population surrounding them, and lost identity as Israelites, intermarrying with their neighbors.

It was because of their failure to appreciate him, because of hankering after false gods and false worship and the more or less mingling of these false worships with the true worship, that God withdrew his favor. It is pointed out that God did not cast them off without reproofing them, chastising them and sending them messages by prophets and seers. To the seers the Lord gave prophetic visions and messages built upon these, and by the prophets he sent them instructions and warnings, encouragements and threatenings. Elijah and Elisha had been amongst them, and later Jonah and Amos and Hosea. Through all these the Lord had warned and cautioned.

The wrong course of the people is further declared in the statement that they not only worshiped false gods but made their sons and daughters pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord. They became the slaves of their passions and self-deceptions, and were so misled of the evil spirits as to consider this burning of their own children as acceptable sacrifices to false gods. It was well that all pretensions on their part to be people of God should cease; it was well that they should be removed to new scenes, amongst strangers, where under new conditions their minds would be otherwise engaged, even though it should be an entire alienation from God. R. 3463

And the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His sight. For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them commit a great sin.

2 Kings 17:20-21

Your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant.

– Genesis 17:5-7 –

There is but one standpoint from which the history of Israel can be properly understood and appreciated: namely, Israel's inheritance in the Abrahamic Covenant. All of God's dealings with the children of Jacob were with a view to a selection of the two seeds of Abraham—a natural seed and a spiritual one. To this end their national experiences conspired—to find in that nation certain noble, loyal, reverential souls, such as David, Jonathan, and all the holy prophets, and to prepare that people by disciplines, prunings, etc., to be the people to whom Messiah would first present himself and among whom he would find a goodly “remnant” prepared to be his followers.

I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven. I will give to your descendants all these lands, and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 26:4

The separation of the ten tribes from the two tribes at the death of Solomon was an important step in this selection. The Lord had distinctly stated in advance that the Law-giver whom he had promised should come out of Judah, and hence any Israelites indeed in the ten-tribe kingdom must have looked with longing interest toward Judah as the ultimate end of their hopes—the Messiah, and the fulfillment through him of the Abrahamic Covenant. Throughout the varying history of these two kingdoms the greater religious faith and zeal was always to be found in Judah, and gradually many of the more religious in Ephraim removed to Judah and identified themselves therewith, because of the greater religious privileges and blessings there enjoyed. Thus Judah eventually represented the cream of the nation, and the records show that not only Hezekiah, the king of Judah, was favorably disposed toward his brethren of Ephraim and made them welcome to the religious assemblies, but that other kings, his predecessors, had done similarly. Thus seen the captivity of Ephraim was merely the rejection of the skim milk of the nation, and as we have already seen was really not at all to their injury so far as temporal interests were concerned. It was their cutting off from divine favor in respect to the Abrahamic Covenant that was specially regrettable.

When a good while afterward the kingdom of Judah was overthrown and its people similarly taken into captivity and similarly scattered amongst the nations composing the Babylonish empire it was merely a carrying out of a further development of the divine plan. By this last stroke the Lord would put away all the more grovelling, sensual and worldly-minded of his people. The desolation of the land for seventy years permitted all who would to forget the original covenant of which they were heirs, permitted them to intermarry with the nations around them if they would, permitted them to settle and prosper and be content in their new homes; and then the Lord in his providence opened up a way for all who were not satisfied with the good earthly portion they were enjoying to return to their own land—a desolated land.

We can readily see that none of them would come back under such conditions except those who had strong faith in the Lord and in the original Oath-bound Covenant made to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob and the nation. All without faith and all of weak faith, all lacking in zeal, would surely find it much to their advantage every way to remain where they were. Viewed from this standpoint is profitable: **It shows us that God is working out his great and wonderful plan. Those favored in that plan are not coerced, though graciously dealt with and appealed to; neither does their neglect or rejection of divine favor estop the development of the divine plan. R. 3464**

And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”

– Romans 11:26-27 –

The Israelites suffered the penalty for their failure as a nation; they were destroyed, but not without remedy. Indeed, the Bible tells us that in the end of this Age, as soon as the election of the Church shall have been completed and the First Resurrection accomplished, God's favor will return to Israel, the twelve tribes, and their regathering will be the first blessing to humanity under Messiah's glorious reign. The Lord's special promise is that he will gather them from the North Country, and from all the lands whithersoever he has scattered them, and that he will bring them into their own land.

St. Paul brings this matter to our attention very explicitly in his letter to the Romans. (11:25-32.) The logic of his argument should be carefully noted, including the fact that Natural Israel will receive mercy at the hands of Spiritual Israel—in the Kingdom. —Vs. 32.

**For God has committed them
all to disobedience, that He might
have mercy on all.
Romans 11:32**

The nation of Israel transgressed Divine commands, and was therefore worthy of punishment—but this did not signify that that nation would become alienated from the Divine mercy which God had already intended and had already promised through Abraham. The time for the beginning of that mercy did not arrive until seven centuries after the narrative of this lesson—not until Jesus came to die, the Just for the unjust, to bring us back to God as a race—to open up “a new and living way.” Thus we read, “Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”

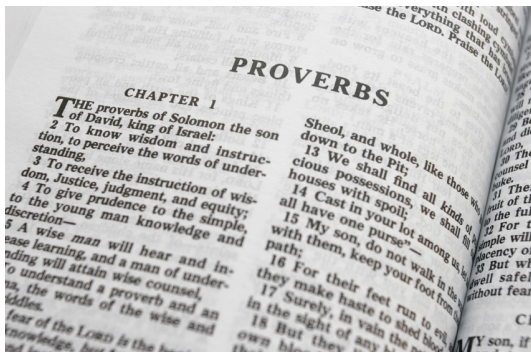
Neither Israel, in the days of Hoshea nor at any other time, nor any other nation, knew anything about the life and immortality which God purposed to proffer to mankind through the Redeemer in due time. As the Apostle again says, “This great salvation began to be spoken by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” —Heb. 2:3.

It is well for us to keep in memory that God's punishment for sin is death; that this punishment came upon Father Adam and his entire family because of sin; and that thus far all mankind have died because of Adam's sin. It is well for us to remember that it is because we were all thus dead in trespasses and in sins through Adam's disobedience that God provided the Savior and his redemptive work. It is well for us to remember that this work must be efficacious for every member of our race; and that only by having enjoyed his share in the Redeemer's sacrificial merit could anybody be consigned to the Second Death; and then it will be only on account of willful, deliberate, intentional wrong doing. It is well for us to remember that the Second Death is the extreme penalty of the Divine Law, and not eternal torment, as many of us were mistaught to believe. “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” —Rom. 6:23. R. 4820

**Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and
knowledge of God! How unsearchable are
His judgments and His ways past finding out!
Romans 11:33**



THE Book



Wisdom



Warning



OF Proverbs

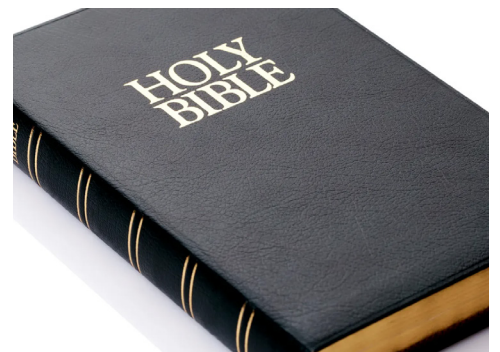
Truth



Instruction



Counsel



**Because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge. Yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find acceptable words, and what was written was upright--words of truth.
Ecclesiastes 12:9-10**

The Book of Proverbs

is a poem, the first nine chapters of which are a discourse on wisdom, which is personified. (The major part of the Book consists of the proverbs of Solomon, some of which—chapters 25-29—were collected and added later by King Hezekiah. Chapters 30 and 31, however, do not claim Solomon for their author.) The Book of Proverbs was probably the latest production of Solomon, when not only the promised wisdom from above, but also an experience gained under very peculiar and varied circumstances found expression in numerous concise and pithy sayings for the guidance and instruction of all who would live godly. These are frequently quoted and referred to in the New Testament.

In 1 Kings 3:11-12 we have the assurance of the divine inspiration of the wisdom of Solomon: “And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, behold, I have done according to thy word. Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.” But while we recognize and duly appreciate the wisdom of Solomon, we also mark his typical character, and perceive that only as a type of Christ could the fullness of the promise belong, of wisdom and riches superior to any preceding or succeeding him. In this light the statement of our Lord (Matt. 12:42) —“A greater than Solomon is here”—is in perfect harmony with 1 Kings 3:12. His peaceful and prosperous reign, his famed wisdom and his marvelous wealth and glory were typical of the Millennial reign of Christ, though it all falls far short of the glory of the antitype—as types always do. As a type, the peace of his reign in contrast with the warlike reign of his father David is strikingly similar to the predicted peace of Christ’s reign in contrast with the turmoil and war and confusion of the Gospel age which precedes and prepares the way for the reign of his Son and for the building and establishment of the glorious temple of God, whose living stones are now being made ready, even as David similarly prepared the materials with which Solomon built the typical temple.

It was Solomon’s worldly or secular wisdom which impressed the world. By nature and through God’s providential blessings in making of him a type, Solomon’s mental faculties were large and well developed; and these he exercised in many directions with marked success; —as a statesman, judge and financier. The statement that his wisdom excelled that of the Chaldeans, etc., seems to imply that his wisdom was along the line of the sciences and philosophies popular with them. But although “he spake 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1005,” they were not all deemed of the Lord worthy of a place amongst the sacred Scriptures.

He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five.
1 Kings 4:32

The three productions [of Solomon—Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon—] come down to us from Jewish archives of sacred religious literature; and, notwithstanding the imperfections of the writer, they come with clear indications of divine supervision and inditement. The wisdom expressed is above that which is natural to our fallen humanity. It is not necessary to the reverent study of the moral philosophy therein set forth that we should either forget or ignore the defective moral character of Solomon; for even the story of his life with its checkered manifestations of virtue and vice is no inconsiderable part of the lesson of these books. R. 1517

The Book of Proverbs was not written nor prepared by Solomon in its present form. Apparently quite a number of the proverbs for which he was celebrated were uncollected until a number of years after his death. The book as a whole divides itself into five portions.

I. Chapters 1 to 9—discourses on Wisdom, which is personified.

II. Chapter 10 to 22:16—Solomonic proverbs. These are recollections of epigrams.

III. Chapter 22:17 to 24:34—the words of the Wise.

IV. Chapters 25 to 29—King Hezekiah's collection of Solomonic proverbs.

V. Chapters 30 and 31—Words of Agar, Words of Lemuel, and an alphabetical acrostic on The Virtuous Wife. These last two chapters, it will be noticed, do not claim to be Solomon's proverbs, but were evidently thought by the editor to contain sufficient wisdom to be worthy to be classed with the Proverbs of Solomon.

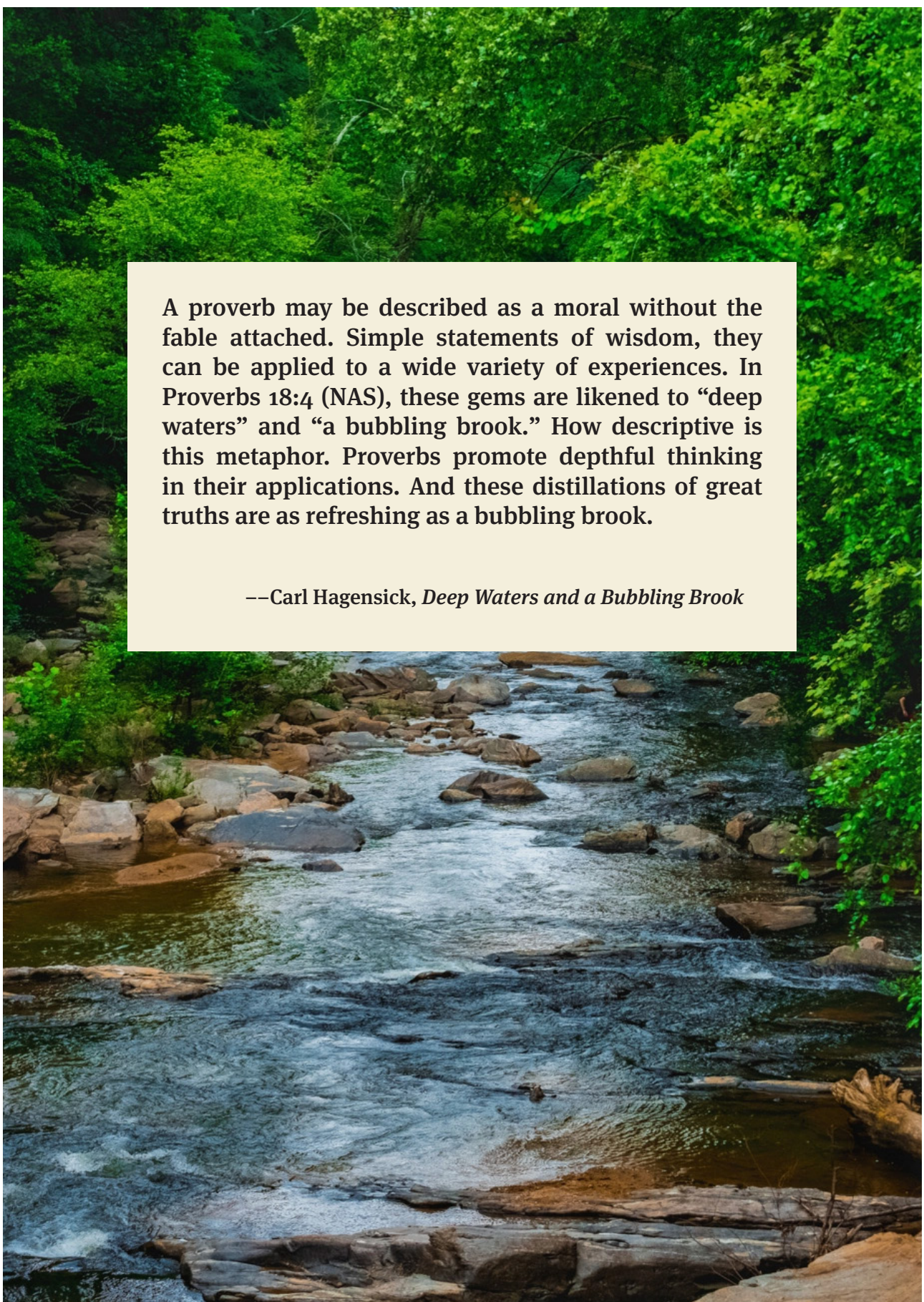
The Book of Proverbs contains very much that is recognized as wisdom by all who have understanding, whether worldings or Christians; but, as already suggested, the Proverbs do not deal with the heavenly wisdom which is foolishness with men and often runs counter to that which would be the best of earthly policy. It deals with wisdom from the earthly standpoint, and not from the standpoint of self-sacrifice in preparation for joint-heirship with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. Nevertheless, although the Proverbs were not prophecies, like the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc., we may well esteem them to have been supernaturally prepared inasmuch as Solomon was granted a supernatural wisdom, in order, as we have seen, that he might represent or prefigure Christ Jesus, our Lord, the "greater than Solomon." The propriety of respecting the Proverbs as inspired is shown in the fact that several quotations from them appear in the New Testament writings. Compare the following:

Proverbs 1:16 with Romans 3:15;
Proverbs 3:7 with Romans 12:16;
Proverbs 3:11-12 with Hebrews 12:5-6;
Proverbs 3:34 with James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5;
Proverbs 10:12 with 1 Peter 4:8;
Proverbs 11:31 with 1 Peter 4:18;
Proverbs 20:9 with 1 John 1:8;
Proverbs 25:7 with Luke 14:10;
Proverbs 25:21-22 with Romans 12:20;
Proverbs 26:11 with 2 Peter 2:22.

Furthermore, our Lord and the Apostles referred to the Jew's sacred Scriptures as a whole as divinely inspired, making no exception of Solomon's writings contained therein, which were, however, but a portion of his three thousand proverbs.

However well or illy Solomon followed his own teachings, it is conceded by all that those teachings were sound wisdom—as true today as when uttered. While Solomon's writings may not be ranked exactly with the inspired prophecies of the Scriptures, the fact that we are told that the Lord heard his prayer for wisdom, and granted the request, together with the fact that his writings were accepted as a part of the sacred canon in our Lord's day, and not objected to by New Testament writers, but on the contrary quoted from, is sufficient guarantee to us that the wisdom of these Proverbs is of a kind that cometh from above. R. 1517, R. 1518, R. 2053, R. 2388

**The words of a person's mouth are deep waters.
The fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.
Proverbs 18:4**

A photograph of a bubbling brook flowing over rocks in a lush green forest. The water is clear and turbulent as it cascades over numerous large, smooth, brownish-grey rocks. The surrounding forest is dense with vibrant green foliage, creating a serene and natural setting. The brook flows from the upper right towards the lower left of the frame.

A proverb may be described as a moral without the fable attached. Simple statements of wisdom, they can be applied to a wide variety of experiences. In Proverbs 18:4 (NAS), these gems are likened to “deep waters” and “a bubbling brook.” How descriptive is this metaphor. Proverbs promote depthful thinking in their applications. And these distillations of great truths are as refreshing as a bubbling brook.

—Carl Hagensick, *Deep Waters and a Bubbling Brook*

WISDOM PERSONIFIED

Chapters 1 – 9

Wisdom personified stands as an instructor and offers good counsel to such as have an ear to hear and a desire to obey her.

It is a great blessing and privilege indeed to find Wisdom, for few there be that find her in this present time. Wisdom is the light which cometh from above. She is the truth. Her grand exemplification among men was “the man Christ Jesus,” our Lord, “the true Light.” Light from above, Wisdom, is still in the world, as represented in the divine Word; but to the majority it is unseen, unknown; as it is written, “The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.” Thank God for the assurance that in due time all the blind eyes shall be opened, and that then the true light, the true wisdom from above, shall lighten every man! Then all will see the truth, and all will hear the voice of Wisdom, the voice of God, the voice of Christ, the voice of the Church, and be privileged to drink at the fountain of Wisdom and knowledge, and, if they will be obedient, to obtain the full measure of divine favor and blessing as represented in the offer of everlasting life. —See Rev. 22:17.

But, alas! Although but few find Wisdom now, still fewer heed her voice and purchase the true knowledge and its precious blessings as she directs. Nothing else that can be bought is so valuable. Under Wisdom’s direction now not only the silver of truth may be obtained, but the divine nature, as symbolized by gold, and graces of character, as symbolized in precious stones. All these may now be secured by obedience to her voice—and more; for “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man the things that God has in reservation for them that love him,” —including everlasting life, heavenly riches, honor, joy and peace. R. 2060



To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding, to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity, to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion— A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel, to understand a proverb and an enigma, the words of the wise and their riddles.

– Proverbs 1:1-6 –

The first six verses tell the object of the Proverbs to be for instruction, especially of the young and unlearned; to teach them true wisdom, appreciation of justice, of righteous dealing and equity in general. Verse 5 points out that the instructions are not merely for the youth; that no matter how wise a man may be, he will still have opportunity for increasing his wisdom, and that a teachable attitude of heart and a desire to know the truth are necessary to progress in wisdom, and that a teachable attitude of heart and a desire to know the truth are necessary to progress in wisdom. How profitable it would be to Christian people if this lesson of verse 5 were very generally applied by them! They would no longer be satisfied with a mere acceptance of creeds of the past, but would be going to the fountain head of wisdom, the Divine Revelation. They would no longer be saying practically, if not by words, We need and care nothing for the Divine plan of salvation; but, like the Bereans of old, they would be searching the Scriptures daily, that they might more perfectly understand the Divine plan. R. 2053

Youth is not the only time when it is necessary to steer one's course by the Word of the Lord. While the only right way to start in life is by taking heed to our way according to God's Word, it is equally right and necessary to heed it and to meditate upon it to the very end of our days. A life thus spent becomes beautiful in old age, which should show all the fruits of the spirit tinged with the glow of ripeness, and be a loving benediction to all within the range of its influence. Indeed, what a pattern of godliness does every aged saint present when the hoary head is crowned with the beauty of holiness, when a long life of self-denial and self-discipline gives a practical demonstration of the power of divine grace to overcome the downward tendencies of our fallen nature! What a pattern should the aged Christian be, of patient self-forgetfulness, of loving sympathy and gentle forbearance, able to give kindly counsel and timely assistance in various ways to those who are still bearing the burden and heat of the day, cheering them onward and inspiring them to noble deeds and persistent fortitude, and fully appreciating all their labors of love!

But, alas! the well-spent lives are few. How few have remembered their Creator in the days of their youth, and from youth to age have taken heed to their way according to God's Word! In many cases youth has been worse than wasted in sowing "wild oats," and subsequent years have reaped the bitter harvest; life's discipline has been endured with murmuring and chafing, the disposition has grown sour, and life a tiresome burden. Alas! too often, even among professed Christians, has the failure to "take heed" permitted the unholy passions to flourish to the great detriment of all spiritual progress, until at last but little remains except empty professions which bring only dishonor upon the name of Christ. Such is the

result of a mere start in the Christian life with little or no endeavor thereafter to develop Christian character according to God's Word. Yet God is gracious, and he is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, so that at whatever point in its downward way or its backslidden course, whether in youth or age, the soul halts and changes its course from the paths of sin to the paths of faith and righteousness, there the love of God is made manifest in pardon and peace, and the operations of divine grace are realized in helps and encouragements to pursue the upward way. R. 2146

**Of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—
and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.**

– 1 Corinthians 1:30 –

In Solomon's time the Lord was dealing with natural fleshly Israel, and his promises were along natural fleshly lines, but that during this Gospel dispensation he is dealing with spiritual Israel and his promises and blessings are along spiritual lines. The wisdom that his people are to seek and to enjoy, the wisdom that cometh from above, is not the wisdom of this world, as the Apostle clearly points out that the riches and honors which are in the hands of this heavenly wisdom, which comes to the Lord's consecrated Church, are spiritual riches and spiritual honors which the world sees not and appreciates not in this present time—which, like the wisdom itself, can be appreciated only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened and who can and do thus discern the riches of God's grace toward his elect Church, which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of [the] natural man, but which God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit."—1 Cor. 2:9-10.

Solomon was living in a time before the Scriptures were completed, at a time when it could not be said that the Scriptures are able to make wise, sufficient that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished. (2 Tim. 3:17.) Solomon recognized his loyalty to God, to truth, to righteousness, to uprightness of heart. In acknowledging the Lord's kindness in raising him to the throne he was acknowledging that God was the real King, that he merely sat upon "the throne of the kingdom of the Lord." This is further evidenced by the words, "God, thou hast made

For the humble, God has provided true wisdom in Christ. His words no less than his example show us that we are sinners and that "no man cometh unto the Father" except by him. Those who accept Christ are the "meek," "the poor in spirit," and lower than the average standard along the lines of worldly wisdom and power and wealth, yet nevertheless, the acceptance by these of Christ as their wisdom makes them really wiser than others; ---not only in respect to the greater riches which they are laying up in heaven, but also wiser in respect to the most ordinary affairs of this present life. R. 2263

thy servant King instead of David my father." What a strength it gave this young man to realize that he was in God's hands; that it was not merely to his father's foresight and wisdom that he came to the throne, nor by the superior prestige of his father's influence over the army and the majority of the people, but of the Lord's providences. Similarly, this should give strength to all of the Lord's consecrated people who realize that they have come into the present grace and Truth not by their own wisdom nor by the wisdom of others, but through the wisdom and grace of the Lord. R. 3278

The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

– James 3:17 –

The Apostle leaves no doubt respecting his meaning, for he distinctly outlines the course and fruitage of heavenly wisdom, saying, —The wisdom that is from above is first:

- **pure**—truthful, honest, sincere, not put on, not used as a garment of light to deceive and to cover up selfishness, malice, hatred, strife; it makes no compromises with sin, impurity, in any shape or form.
- It is **peaceable**. So far from being a quarrelsome, bickering disposition, the “new mind” desires peace—it will contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, but it will not contend simply from a love of contention, a love of strife; on the contrary, the new mind is peaceably inclined, would prefer, so far as possible, to yield a non-essential point in a controversy; it loves its opponents and sympathizes with their difficulties.
- It is **gentle**. Not rude nor coarse, not rough, in action or word or tone.
- It is **easy to be entreated**. Easy of approach, not haughty, not disdainful, not hard or cruel.
- It is **full of mercy and good fruits**. It delights in all things prompted by love and kindness; it takes pleasure in doing for others; not over-exacting, but generous, kind, benevolent.
- It is **without partiality**. It loves the good, the true, where these are found; and opposes the untrue, the impure and the unholy, whether found amongst friends or enemies.
- It is **without hypocrisy**. It is thoroughly candid; it needs not to feign love, because it is love; it needs not to put on a kindly exterior and to smother feelings of wrath and envy and strife, for it is without envy, without strife.

**Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.
James 3:13**

Let us seek to appreciate, in ourselves and in others, this heavenly wisdom, whose operation is so forcefully presented by the Apostle. Let us more and more fully accept Christ as our wisdom, for all of the affairs of life—little as well as great, temporal as well as spiritual. Let us seek to be more and more **filled** with the spirit of true wisdom that cometh from above, whose ultimate teaching is **holiness** to the Lord. R. 2446, R. 2264

**If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.
James 1:5**



Amongst those who acknowledge a Creator there has come to be a wide difference of opinion respecting his Word and his work. Some accept the Bible testimony as a divine revelation, relying upon it accordingly. Others, with a larger amount of self-confidence, deny that the Bible is God-inspired, go to the rocks and study them, —forming their conclusions in harmony with their findings. Both acknowledge God and that his power and wisdom are manifest in his creation, yet the latter, leaning more and more to their own understanding (Prov. 3:5), tend to question the personality of God, and seek, if possible, to prove that there are what they term “Laws of Nature” in operation now which have been in operation from time immemorial, and they query whether or not these laws must of necessity have had an author. They see life in its various manifestations, and admit intelligence, but claim that this intelligence was attained through a process of evolution, —attained without a Creator, as evolutions from inert matter. In other words, they have been seeking for some time to see whether or not in their theory a God is absolutely necessary, with a view to dropping him entirely from their theories, if possible.

However, the learned, worldly-wise, do not generally reach that “fool” condition; for the majority admitting that while they could reason out all manner of changes as respects conditions, admit that they cannot produce a satisfactory theory of the origin of matter, nor of the origin of the first spark of life, nor of the origin of the first gleam of intelligence. Hence scientists as a class still admit that there must be some kind of a God, but the Scriptures assure us that, looking in the wrong direction, they fail to see the real God, fail to discern his real character and plan. “The world by wisdom knows not God.” —1 Cor. 1:21.

While the leaders amongst natural men are searching for God and for truth in the rocks and in the sands, the children of God, begotten by his spirit, are seeking the wisdom that cometh from above, and are finding and knowing him whom to know is life eternal. Yea, and more than this, the “spirit of a sound mind” which they receive, and the guidance of the holy spirit, enable them to see “the deep things of God,” in those things which were written aforetime for their admonition—in the holy writings which by divine arrangement have been gathered and cemented together, and which are known to us as the Bible—the Book of all books. In thus doubting their own wisdom and the ability of themselves and others to master the deep subject of creation and the divine will and plan associated with it, these whom the world counts unwise are really wise, in that they look to the Lord for their instruction respecting these things; they manifest a faith which is pleasing to him, and put themselves into a position of heart in which they may be “all taught of God,” and thus know things which the natural man cannot know—thus seeing and appreciating things which “eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath entered into the hearts of [natural] men, . . . but which God hath revealed unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” —1 Cor. 2:9,10. R. 2834

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

– Proverbs 1:7 –

The first clause [here] is a quotation from one of his father David's Psalms (111:10), and is a gem of wisdom.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.

Psalm 111:10

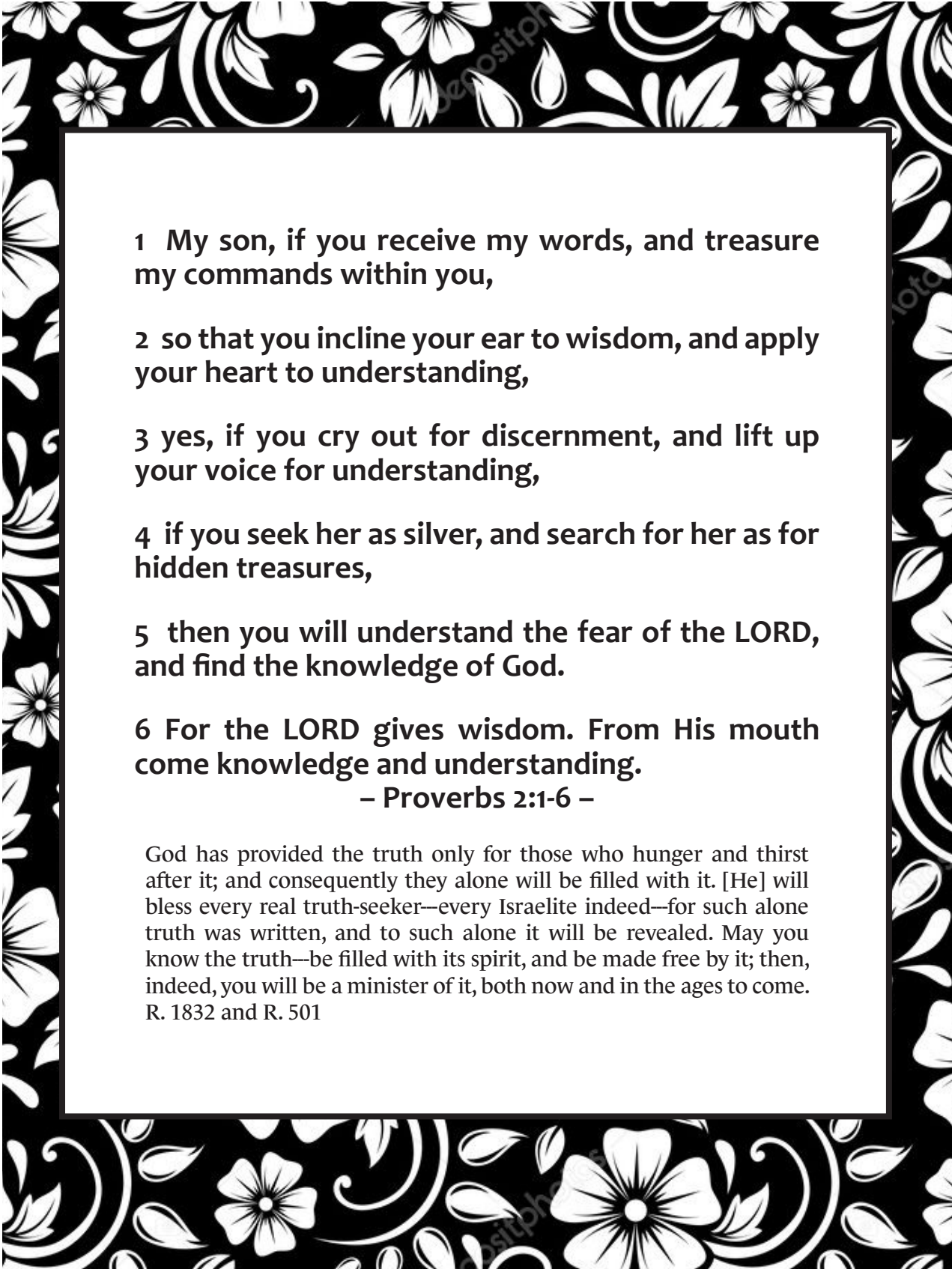
If the word "fear" be given the sense of reverence, the passage will be better understood. The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. They who say in their hearts there is no God are certainly stupidly foolish. They have failed to learn the very first lesson of wisdom. Reverence for the Lord is one of the first essentials in approaching his Word as a student: God's revelation looked at from any other standpoint than that of reverence will not yield its blessings to the searcher. One of the peculiarities of our day, and particularly pointed out by the Apostle Paul (2 Tim. 3:1-5), is the lack of reverence which manifests itself, not only in the world, but also amongst those associated as believers and in their families. The general tendency is toward headiness, high mindedness, arrogance, self-consciousness, disobedience. All of these come under the head of lack of reverence for God and for the order and arrangement which he has established.

Our first thought of the Almighty is, very properly, an apprehension of his greatness and our own insignificance. But as we come to know of his arrangement and Plan, this kind of fear gives place to respect and love, for he is very gracious toward all who are inclined to be in harmony with his beneficent arrangements and purposes. We find that he has made glorious plans, which are working out day by day, and that we have a share in them. Hence, this kind of fear casts out dread.

All of the fallen human nature have more or less of the earthly wisdom of selfishness, which disposition continually gravitates lower and lower unless it is resisted and displaced by the heavenly wisdom whose fruits are love, mercy and truth. This heavenly wisdom, we are told, has its beginning in the reverence of the Lord. That is, we must look away from our own narrow thoughts, plans and schemes and allow our minds to dwell upon the grandeur of God's benevolent, loving and glorious character until a gleam of his glory awakens in us a feeling of admiration, veneration and love, and then of longing to be conformed to his image. And while we, as God's faithful children, thus look and hold ourselves in position to receive the impressions from above, the divine likeness is traced upon our hearts, as we study God's revelation; and the heavenly wisdom begins to manifest itself in the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Those who thus reverence him, the Lord is pleased to recognize as his sons, and to acquaint them with his plans for their salvation through the great redemption which his wisdom provided; and to such the counsels of these Proverbs are addressed, while warnings are given to others. R. 2053, R. 4796, R. 1518

**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.**

Proverbs 9:10

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- A decorative border with a black background and white floral and leaf patterns surrounds the central text. The patterns include various flower shapes and scrolling vines.
- 1 My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you,**
 - 2 so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding,**
 - 3 yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding,**
 - 4 if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures,**
 - 5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.**
 - 6 For the LORD gives wisdom. From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.**

– Proverbs 2:1-6 –

God has provided the truth only for those who hunger and thirst after it; and consequently they alone will be filled with it. [He] will bless every real truth-seeker—every Israelite indeed—for such alone truth was written, and to such alone it will be revealed. May you know the truth—be filled with its spirit, and be made free by it; then, indeed, you will be a minister of it, both now and in the ages to come.
R. 1832 and R. 501

**Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?”
The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”**

– Mark 10:51 –

The word “lord” here is “rabboni,” the most reverential term of four titles used amongst the Jews at that time (rab, rabbi, rabban, rabboni). Then Jesus touched his eyes (Matt. 20:34), saying, “Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.” Sight came immediately, and Bartimeus became one of the followers of Jesus.

The lesson itself is a very beautiful one in demonstration of the Lord’s tender compassion and divine power; and from its incidents we might draw other lessons, parallels, as it were. For instance, sin brought alienation from God, and moral blindness, which prevails today in every land and on every hand. The Apostle thus pictures some of the heathen, desirous of having the light of truth, as blind men groping after things desired. He speaks of such as crying out to the Lord in prayer, and “feeling after God, if haply they might find him;” just as Bartimeus had cried out to the Lord and then went to him.

And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Mark 10:47

And such, when their eyes are opened to see the blessings of God bestowed upon them, should look, as Bartimeus looked, first into the face of the Savior with gratitude and appreciation, and look unto the Father through him.

And as Bartimeus cast away his outer robe that he might go to the Lord the more speedily, so the sinner should cast away everything found to be a hindrance—he should make acknowledgement and repentance of sins, and he should make restitution also as far as possible, and thus approach the Lord.

As it was not within the power of the multitude to give Bartimeus his sight, neither is it within our power to give sight to the spiritually blind. All we can do is to let the blind ones know that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by—that the great Physician is able and willing to grant them the opening of the eyes of their understanding. Those who long for sight, who love the truth, who hate darkness and error, and none others, will be attracted by the information, and lift up their voices in supplication for assistance. But, alas! when they do cry aloud for help there are sure to be some, even amongst the Lord’s friends, to rebuke them for their earnestness, instead of encouraging it. However, such oppositions only serve to demonstrate the amount of faith and the measure of love for the light, and the Lord evidently intends that only those who seek for truth “as men search for silver” shall find the knowledge of God. —Prov. 2:4. R. 2729

Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 2:3-5

For the LORD gives wisdom. From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright. He is a shield to those who walk uprightly. He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints.

– Proverbs 2:6-8 –

Some can look out into the realms of space and by modern appliances and mathematical calculations determine the distance to the sun, the center of our own solar system. With the aid of the telescope they can sweep through the vast expanse of the Universe and see something of its grandeur and its glory. They can study the movements of the planets in their various orbits, and forecast their future positions. They can ascertain also that there is a vast system of systems in the great material Universe. Truly, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language. (But) their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words!" —See Leeser and R.V.

But these wise men who study these wonderful works of the Almighty do not realize nor appreciate the love of God as manifested in His Son, our Redeemer. They have a certain knowledge of the Power of God, but very few of them appreciate His character. As the Apostle Paul has truly said: "In the Wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom knows not God." (1 Cor. 1:21. R.V.) Jehovah does not purpose that any shall know Him save in His own appointed way. The wisdom of man cannot find Him out. God is now seeking only those who have the true wisdom, in that they realize their own insufficiency, their need of instruction and guidance, and who can exercise the necessary faith when the Message of God is brought to them. All others will be able to appreciate the Message in the incoming Age of Blessing.

Many noble minds are filled with the wisdom of this world. They think of the mighty Universe with its millions upon millions of systems of worlds rolling through infinite space. They look at the earth, and think of the comparatively insignificant size of the little planet on which we live. By the power of the microscope, they examine the wonderful construction of plant and flower. They scrutinize the marvels of the structure of molecules and atoms of matter, and of midgets, mites and microbes. Then they shake their heads and say: "The idea that a God of such infinite Power would concern Himself about humanity! He is far too busy to trouble Himself about us!" These must wait a further and more favorable time for their enlightenment. The Lord can deal as yet only with those who have naturally some faith and who have gained a sufficient knowledge of Himself and of His character to believe in His Love and to be desirous of coming into fellowship and communion with Him. R. 5717

Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Hebrews 11:6

Let not mercy and truth forsake you. Bind them around your neck. Write them on the tablet of your heart.

– Proverbs 3:3 –

How grand the counsel of this verse! How wise, and how necessary to a large development of heart, are the graces here mentioned—mercy and truth! For one to keep the principles of truth and of righteousness before his own mind, is to be a thoroughly upright man or woman, one in whom truth, purity, goodness, will be in control. But a person who has merely these principles in control should cultivate more and more the quality of mercy. We should bind these about our neck. The thought is that of a necklace, or ornamental band. As a man puts around his neck a cravat, with a jewel in it as an ornament, placed where it will be displayed, so these qualities of character are jewels.

“Bind them about thy neck” signifies that these are to be esteemed as jewels and ornaments of character carefully guarded from loss and always in sight,—delightful things. And not only should they be manifest to all as outward graces, but they should be written or engraven in our hearts. Nobility of character, God-likeness, was a part of man’s original endowment, and was written in his very heart, nature, constitution; but Adamic sin and its resultant separation from God, and now six thousand years of degradation, have well nigh obliterated this original divine law from the heart of humanity. So to fallen man in general, the evil and selfish and resentful suggestions present themselves, instead of mercy and sincerity. But the child of God, the child of Wisdom, is to retrace and engrave again upon the tablets of the heart (that is, in his very character) these graces so generally obliterated. This work is at the present time being followed only by those who are in the school of Christ,—the “little flock.” But by and by the school of Christ will be enlarged; and these who are now pupils will be associated with the great Master as teachers and instructors of the Word; and then the whole world will be called upon to rewrite in their hearts the original law of righteousness. And all who appreciate the opportunity will be assisted in so doing by the Lord and his servants; as it is written. —Jer. 31:33-34. R. 2060 and R. 5309

This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jeremiah 31:33

Mercy
&
Truth

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.

– Proverbs 3:5 –

One of the first lessons of life to be learned is that our own judgments are unsafe, and even those who are least unbalanced by the fall and who, therefore, more closely resemble mother Eve who was perfect, are as liable as she was to make the mistake of seeking wisdom in a wrong direction—leaning to their own understanding.

Every matured child of God must learn well and appreciate the sentiment of this verse. Experience has taught him the imperfection of his own judgment in many things, and the fallibility of all human counsel; and he has learned and is still learning to trust the Lord implicitly. In order thus to trust the Lord, a knowledge of his Word and the plan of salvation which it reveals are very important; they inspire trust and confidence, not only in the ability and wisdom of God, but also in his justice and love. R. 2262 and R. 2060

In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

– Proverbs 3:6 –

It is not only proper that God's children should trust him in their hearts, but also that they should confess and acknowledge him as their Lord and Master in all of their affairs. Such as are careful thus to acknowledge the Lord have the assurance that he will direct their paths. Their paths will not be directed in ways most congenial to the fallen nature: nor do they wish for this; for, as already seen, they are desiring and seeking mercy and truth, as outward charms, and also as deeply graven inward principles.

Having committed our ways to the Lord, we should go forward only as He leads us. If we are not clear as to His will, let us not be in too great a hurry, nor try to guide ourselves, but present the matter to the Lord in earnest prayer, asking that we may have no will or way of our own, but may be guided only as He wills. Then let us wait and watch for the indication of His providence, and follow as He seems to lead, leaving the results with Him. We are not to follow our own choice, without evidences that it is God's will. R. 2060 and R. 5712

The preceding verse should be a part of this golden text, as it forms part of the condition of the promised blessing. It reads, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding." This is the blessed privilege of all the sons of God; and years of experience of many precious saints testify that the Lord is always faithful to those who put their trust in him, look for his leading and gratefully acknowledge his faithfulness. Let those who would prove his faithfulness trust him more and more, and cease to lean to their own understanding, and they will be brought to an increasing realization of their heavenly Father's love and care and providence, and into yet closer bonds of sympathy and fellowship with him. R. 1538

**Do not be wise in your own eyes. Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
– Proverbs 3:7 –**

Nothing is more dangerous to the child of God than self-conceit: it blocks the way to true progress and reformation of heart, and hinders true usefulness to others, and especially usefulness in God's service; for his Word declares, "God resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor unto the humble." Instead of self confidence, Wisdom dictates a distrustfulness of self, remembering its weaknesses and imperfections, and correspondingly the greater reverence for God and reliance upon him, which more than anything else will strengthen and enable us to depart from the evil of our fallen estate. R. 2060

Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase, so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.

– Proverbs 3:9-10 –

Whatever we possess should be made to contribute its part in God's service. Whether our substance consists of a rich endowment of talent, or education, or influence, its first fruits, its results, should go to the service of our gracious heavenly Father, as our Lord said: "Seek ye first [chiefly, to serve] the Kingdom of heaven."

Whatever our substance, if faithful in its use and in consecrating its best to the cause of God, a blessing will result to us. During the Jewish age God's covenant with that people was to the effect that faithfulness to him and his laws would bring them temporal prosperity; and the same rule will be in force during the Millennial age; as it is written, "In his days [the Millennial age] shall the righteous flourish," but "evil doers shall be cut off." (Psa. 72:7; 37:9.) This rule does not apply during this Gospel age, however: the meek do not now inherit the earth, nor the righteous in general. Now the proud are prosperous, "Yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." (Mal. 3:15.) Not only our Lord Jesus and the apostles, who honored God with the first-fruits of their being, but also many of the household of faith since, have not had overflowing barns and wine presses. Chiefly they have been "the poor of this world, rich in faith;" yet, nevertheless, they have had the finest of the wheat, the purest of the oil and the best of the wine, as represented in their spiritual nourishment and enrichment. R. 2060/R. 2061

**But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.
2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction, for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.

– Proverbs 3:11-12 –

The trials and difficulties of this present life are not to be esteemed as marks of divine disfavor, if we have become children of God, children of Wisdom, under the provided conditions of the New Covenant. We are to remember the promise of our Father, that “All things work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.” (Rom. 8:28.) Reproofs, trials, disciplines should be reminders to us that we are not perfect, that we still have need of the mercy of God in Christ, even with our best efforts; and should lead us to greater diligence in “perfecting holiness in the fear [reverence] of the Lord.” —2 Cor. 7:1.

All chastenings are testings, but all chastenings are not necessarily punishments. We should judge of the purpose of our experiences by self-examination, that we may ascertain whether in our conduct there has been something out of harmony with the Father’s will. In every case our experience is a test of our loyalty of heart—as to our willingness to learn the lessons which the Lord is seeking to teach us and our recognition of the source from which they come.

Ordinarily the word chastisement is used to signify correction for wrongdoing. But in the Bible, it is especially used to convey the thought of discipline or instruction in righteousness. Sometimes we use it in this way in the ordinary affairs of life. If we sin, we receive punishment indeed. But those who are trying to do right are continually receiving discipline of the Lord. There is a purpose in this training, or chastisement. The Church is learning how to build character pleasing in the Father’s sight, to be well qualified for particular service; and discipline is the means employed for that instruction.

Every child of God will need chastening. If we wander from the paths of righteousness, we are chastened to bring us back; but even if we did not wander, we should still need chastisement, that we might learn obedience. Our Lord Himself learned obedience by the things which He suffered. (Heb. 5:8.) Of St. Paul the Lord said, “I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name’s sake.” (Acts 9:16.) The Apostle was put through disciplinary experiences because he was a favored child of God. R. 2061 and R. 5147

If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons, for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

Hebrews 12:7-8

Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding. For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her. Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her.

– Proverbs 3:13-18 –

[These verses] represent the happiness and blessedness of the man that findeth wisdom—not the wisdom of this world which is foolishness with God, and which is earthly, sensual and often devilish (1 Cor. 3:19; James 3:15), but the wisdom of meekness that is from above, and is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” (James 3:13-14; James 3:17.) Those who have this kind of wisdom—viz., that attitude of heart and mind which fits us to receive the instruction of the Lord and to profit by it—are sure to get understanding of whatever truth is meat in due season for them. “The wise shall understand.” And in the understanding of God’s ways there is joy and peace and blessing which the world can neither give nor take away. Verse 18 is a beautiful reference to the restitution to the trees of life and the Edenic bliss, of all who shall “lay hold upon” and “retain” that heavenly wisdom of meekness and entire submission to the will of God. And truly, “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” R. 1520



Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

James 3:13-17

**Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble.
– Proverbs 3:34 –**

The Master declared that this principle held with Him and with the Father; namely, that “whosoever exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” The Apostles set forth the same proposition, saying, “God resisteth the proud, but showeth His favor to the humble”; “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” —James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:6.

The thought is that the self-seeking, the proud in spirit, could not be trusted by the Lord in a high position. They might do damage to themselves and to His cause, with such a spirit. On the contrary, He will seek those who are of humble mind and who would not be injured by the exaltation, nor in danger of deflecting in the future work to which all of the Kingdom class are called. R. 5414

**How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For
you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne
above the stars of God. I will also sit on the mount of the congregation
on the farthest sides of the north. I will ascend above the
heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.
Isaiah 14:12-14**

**Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, and give attention to
know understanding. My son, give attention to my words. Incline your
ear to my sayings.**

– Proverbs 4:1,20 –

[Here] the wise man represents himself as a father giving good advice to a son, and it were well for all the youth of the world, if their fathers more frequently communed with them and gave them the benefit of their experiences in life. Fathers recognize a responsibility for those whom they bring into the world, in respect to natural things, food, clothing, etc. Have they not a much greater responsibility respecting the culture of the minds and hearts of their children in the path of wisdom, justice, righteousness, truth?

One of the growing evils of our day, even amongst Christian people, is the disposition of parents, and we believe particularly of the fathers, to shirk this responsibility which they assumed when they became fathers. They incline to leave the instruction, reproof, guidance, counsel of their children entirely to others—to the church minister, to Sunday School teachers or to mothers. It is well that children whose fathers are so lacking in the proper parental instinct should have the counsel, advice, etc., of others, especially of their mothers; but all of these will not properly take the place of the father’s counsel, if he be a father in the true sense of the word, —taking watch-care over the highest interests of those committed to his care by divine providence. R. 2388

**Wisdom is the principal thing. Therefore get wisdom.
And in all your getting, get understanding.**

– Proverbs 4:7 –

Wisdom and understanding are not exactly synonymous terms. Wisdom describes more particularly the perception of right and wrong principles and their results and the propriety of following these. Knowledge or understanding relates more particularly to the information and building up of judgment and character, as the result of obedience to the voice of Wisdom.

No one of ordinary perception can fail to note that a wise and moderate course in life in obedience to the divine laws is beneficial with respect to the life which now is, and also that which is to come. True, many in the prime of life and health do not give heed to Wisdom's voice; true, many who do give heed are such as are already greatly impaired, having either inherited weaknesses and frailties from the un-wisdom of their parents (beginning with Adam and Eve) or having neglected the voice of Wisdom until retribution overtook them. But even for the impaired the counsel of Wisdom is profitable, as many have proved, and brings with it more of peace than can be found in any other way. R. 2060

Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of your life will be many.

– Proverbs 4:10 –

Father Solomon suggests that the obedient son of a wise father will prolong his days, by giving heed to the good counsel. The parent's whole course of life should manifest toward his children his love for them, and his deep interest in their welfare. The child is naturally disposed to think highly of its parents, and to appreciate their advice, unless this childlike confidence has been shattered by unkind treatment, threats and parental neglect. Children reason often as correctly as do older people, sometimes more so; they should be able to reason, upon evidence, (1) that they have the parental love and interest in their welfare; (2) that parental experience in life should be valuable to them at its threshold, to start them properly. And who will say that the child thus guided and helped by parental counsel would not be saved from many of the difficulties and pitfalls and troubles in life, and from much sickness, physical debility, etc., to a longer life? Moreover, the parent thus interested in the child, and seeking to give it lessons from his own book of experience, will find himself profited by his review of the successes, disappointments and mistakes of his life, and the causes of these. Whoever, therefore, performs his duty as a father is blessing himself as well as his child—and adding to his own years as well as to the years of his child.

Indeed, we may profitably apply this lesson to the sons of God, and consider God to be the speaker: for in holy things we but copy the Heavenly Father. While we were yet sinners he redeemed us, and by his love and justice he has drawn all that have been so far drawn to Christ as the Redeemer. Coming to Christ for forgiveness of sins, even justification, through faith in his blood, we thus came to the Father. It was then that the Heavenly Father addressed us, through his Word, saying, "My son, give me thine heart"—thy affections—thy love. And those who gave their love, their affections, to the Lord, gave their all; for our affections control us, whether for good or for evil. When we accepted the Lord's invitation, and gave him our hearts, our all, a living sacrifice, to be his and to do henceforth his good pleasure, it was not because we first loved him, but because he first loved us, and gave his Son to be a propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins. Now, therefore, having been accepted of the Father as new creatures in Christ, having been adopted into his family, by receiving the spirit of adoption and sonship, he speaks to us as to sons, in the language of Solomon, —that we take heed to his Word; and he promises us that by so doing the years of our life shall be many—very many, everlasting. R. 2388

I have taught you in the way of wisdom. I have led you in right paths.

– Proverbs 4:11 –

How blessed for any parent to be able truly to use the words of the eleventh verse as he lies upon his death-bed, addressing his children, "I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee [by my example] in right paths," and how blessed are such children; how much less liable than others to stumblings in life's pathway: how much more likely they are to be ready to hear and heed the voice of the Heavenly Father, and to walk in his paths. R. 2388

When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble.

– Proverbs 4:12 –

All such, relying upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the Scriptures, can look forward in confidence to [this] verse as a prophecy respecting the divine care over all those who have put themselves thus under divine protection and instruction as sons of God, and who will to abide in his love. They are assured that their steps in the spiritual way, in the narrow path, shall be guided of the Lord, and that in their race for the great prize of their high calling they shall not stumble, so long as they are followers in that path in which the Lord's providence guides them: yea, all things shall work together for good to those who love God, supremely. R. 2388



**He makes my feet like the
feet of deer, and sets me on
my high places.
Psalm 18:33**

Take firm hold of instruction. Do not let go. Keep her, for she is your life.

– Proverbs 4:13 –

It is along these same lines that the Apostle urges the Church, saying: "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest...we should let them slip." (Heb. 2:1.) It evidently is not enough that we should hear the Lord's Word; nor yet that we should receive it into good and honest hearts. It is necessary that we take fast hold of it; that we act upon it; that we incorporate it as a very part of our being: thus the spirit of the truth becomes the spirit of all the children of God; —the holy spirit in them is in harmony, in full accord, with the Heavenly Father's mind, disposition, will. R. 2389

Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it. Turn away from it and pass on.

– Proverbs 4:14-15 –

What better advice could be given to either natural or spiritual sons than is presented [here]? We are to remember that, no matter how far along we may have gone in the “narrow way,” there are always branching paths leading from it—paths of self-will, of pride, of worldly ambition, of selfishness, which lure us to leave the direct path, and which sometimes we may be in danger of entering, unintentionally, unwittingly. These paths at first emerge so gradually from the “narrow way” as to seem very little different from it, but gradually they diverge more and more from it, so that any of the Lord’s people, filled with the spirit of righteousness, truth, love, may soon discern the change, the different spirit and tendency.

All pilgrims seeking the heavenly city, the Kingdom, are exhorted by the Word of God to be very watchful against all the wiles of the Adversary, especially his disposition to switch us from the “narrow way.” It is well that we should be on guard, to note the spirit of all with which we have to do, and to refuse to go forward in any direction in which the spirit of holiness, meekness, purity, love, does not lead. Thus, if we have gotten into the wrong way, and our hearts be still loyal to the principle of love, we need not go far upon the wrong course without finding out and retracing our steps: but it is still better, as expressed in our lesson, that we **enter not** the path of the wicked.

Once entered, we may be able to retrace our steps with more or less difficulty, but the safe program is never to enter these by-paths. One of the Adversary’s seductions, by which many are led astray into by-paths of wickedness, contrary to their consecration vows, is through the human quality known as **curiosity**. They reason, —“I know it is untrue and has a wrong spirit, but I want to see and know: the knowledge of evil will but do me good.” But we remember that it was mother



Eve’s **curiosity** and her **fearlessness** to disobey the Lord’s command, that got her into difficulty as the first transgressor; and this reminds us of the Apostle’s words, “I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ.” (2 Cor. 11:3.) The wise man seeks to impress the lesson of the necessity of not tampering with evil, not touching it, not tasting of it, not putting himself within the reach of its influence, saying, —“Avoid it, pass not near it, turn in another direction away.” R. 2389



The spirit of liberty is a part of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the truth, and no Christian can too highly appreciate this liberty, nor too faithfully maintain his hold upon “the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,” nor too carefully avoid any “yoke of bondage.” But this is made one of the Adversary’s strong points of attack—*liberty*. He even used this argument upon our dear Redeemer—Use your liberty—Command that the stones be made bread, etc. The only safe or proper course for God’s children is to walk carefully in the footprints of our Redeemer and Forerunner, Christ Jesus, and to avoid every appearance of evil—avoid the use and exercise of liberty where there would be the slightest danger of being led into temptation and into sin. And be it noted that our Adversary never tempted us along the *lines of liberty* until our Lord set us *free*. The slavery from which we were set free by our Redeemer was the bondage of Sin, and being thus made free, we in consecration presented our bodies living sacrifices to the Father, in order that we might receive the adoption of sons in his spiritual family. This meant that we voluntarily gave up all human rights, liberties and preferences, accepting instead the divine will represented in the divine law, summed up in the one word—Love.

Since we have taken this step, we are no longer at liberty to do anything contrary to this law of the New Covenant—Love—even as God himself has no liberty to do contrary to it. We are therefore to scrutinize carefully all the matters, incidents and affairs of life as they come before us, lest the Adversary should beguile us from this “narrow way” of self-denial, self-sacrifice: lest he should seduce us into doing something that would be contrary to our Father’s Word, and in violation of his spirit of love. Hence, if any pathway has the slightest appearance of evil, or the slightest antagonism to the spirit of our law of Love, we (as obedient sons of God) should “avoid it, pass not through it, turn from it away.” R. 2389

LIGHT OUT OF DARKNESS

**“The light has been sown for the righteous
And gladness for upright of heart.”
In the darkness now covering the people
The children of light have no part.**

**“The path of the just” is bright-shining,
Even tho narrow the way.
The wicked alone dwell in darkness–
God’s children are those of the day.**

**The light of the world was our Saviour.
Thru the Gospel he taught us God’s plan.
He showed how he’d die and must suffer
In order to save every man.**

**We have been called out of darkness
Into his marvelous light.
In the day let us therefore keep walking,
Thus dispelling the darkness of night.**

— Alice M. Ripper

The path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is like darkness. They do not know what makes them stumble.

– Proverbs 4:18-19 –

[These verses] show us the two paths, and give us their general characteristics, and especially their terminations. Since there are none who are absolutely just, “None righteous, no, not one,” we must understand the reference to “the just” here to signify the justified children of God—reckonedly justified by faith. And from this standpoint this entire lesson may properly be regarded as a prophecy or teaching to the justified class of this Gospel age. It is true of every one of the Lord’s children—justified sons—that his path through life should be one of increasing light and blessing: one of personal progress and of blessing to others, through the light of the knowledge of the truth.

However, the application, we believe, is specially for the entire Church as a whole—Head and Body:—Christ the Just One, we his justified members. Our Lord was the great Light, which came into the world; his consecrated followers are his representatives in the world, who seek to let their light shine before men, and to glorify their Father in heaven. The pathway of this Church, Head and Body, has lain through a wilderness state, and a night of darkness, “gross darkness covering the people” of the world in general. Divine favor has been manifested toward this consecrated holy Body, in that the light of the divine Word has shone upon the pathway step by step. Of this light Solomon’s father wrote, prophetically representing the Body of Christ, saying, “Thy word is a lamp to my feet, a lantern to my footsteps.” The Head of the Body was thus enlightened by the Word of God, and guided in doing the divine will—even unto death; and so each member of the Body has been similarly guided by the same lamp of truth.

But while the Bible lights the pathway of the true Body of Christ, the consecrated “little flock,” it sheds no particular brilliancy upon the world’s pathway: that is to say, no light that the world can specially profit by. What light may be reflected to the world’s pathway is perhaps fully counteracted by shadows which rather confuse and perplex them. And this also is set forth in our lesson: “The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.”

The light upon the path of the Just—the path of the Christ—shows that the present social order of Christendom is to stumble and be wrecked in a time of anarchy, because the time has come for the establishment of God’s Kingdom, and because the world is not in the condition of heart to be ready to receive it, and hence are kept in darkness respecting it: “They know not at what they stumble,” although they realize that we are living in peculiar times, and that there is great danger of stumbling over something in the darkness with which they realize they are surrounded.

Let us, dear brethren, as sons of God, heed our Father’s Word most carefully, that we take not the wrong paths, but that we follow strictly and carefully and watchfully the “narrow way” of consecration, self-denial, humility, love, in which shines the light of the Lamp of Truth, and which alone leads to the Kingdom. R. 2389 and R. 2390

In olden times men had little lanterns which they attached to the toes of their sandals, and as they walked each step would be in the light. So the Lord has been dealing with the Church during the Gospel Age. The narrow way has been dark; but we have had the “sure word of prophecy,” which, as a lamp, shines on the pathway and will shine “more and more unto the perfect day.” When that day comes men will not need the lamp; for then there will be sunlight. Then the knowledge of God will fill the whole earth. R. 5055

**Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.
– Proverbs 4:23 –**

In reality a man is not always what on the surface he seems to be. His real character is deep down below—the purpose of his life. These are not the mere transitory thoughts, but the deep fissures of thought, if we may so designate those which involve the whole life. R. 5246

The heart, which is the center and mainspring of physical life, is here used as a symbol of the affections—which are the center and mainspring of the moral nature. Keep the center of the affections right, true and pure, and the words and deeds and looks and plans emanating therefrom will be good, true and pure, even though not always perfect. On the contrary, unless the heart is thus fixed, all attempts to otherwise regulate the life will be measurably fruitless and, at best, only spasmodic. How necessary, then, if we would live consistent Christian lives, moving steadily on in the way of righteousness, that our affections should be centered in God, that our hearts should be as true to him as the mariner's needle to the pole.

The Scriptures bring to our attention the fact that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds—by having them made over. —Rom. 12:2. The Apostle, speaking of some very vicious traits of character, says, “And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Cor. 6:11.) This cleansing, this sanctifying, comes not merely through the reading of the Truth, or the mental application of the Truth, but through the heart—thinking on the Truth. This heart-thinking, these deep resolutions, are ours as Christians, and are to be guided by certain principles. These have to do with the real man whom God is considering—not the old creature, more or less blemished, according to the degree of depravity. God looks at the New Creature. These deep heart convictions and purposes constitute a transformation of character. This is the man's real condition, and so is he.

While each should be on guard against communications and sparks that would be injurious, each one should also be on guard against allowing sparks to fall upon himself and to ignite in his heart. The fire-quenching apparatus, the water of Truth, should be continually at hand also, so that any spark alighting, its baneful influence may be quenched before irreparable injury be accomplished. “Keep your heart,” then, would seem to imply the thought that we not only are not to give forth evil as injurious sparks to others, but that we are to watch, guard our hearts, that no evil either originate there or be received into them. Let us remember the adage that we cannot help the flying of crows over our heads, but we can keep them from nesting in our hair. We cannot rid the world, nor even the Church, of evil-minded people, but we can avoid fellowshiping such, as the Apostle directed, saying, “Mark them which cause divisions amongst you and avoid them” (Rom. 16:17)—as you would avoid a pestilence or a vile odor or the sparks from a neighbor's burning barn.
R. 1562, R. 5246, R. 4380

See also Proverbs 23:26

KEEPING THE HEART

“Keep thy heart with diligence”
The Master says to thee,
For out of life’s issues come,
So guard it well for me.

Ah yes, dear Lord, my heart is thine,
Mine all, none less I’d give.
Did’st thou not give thine all for me
That even I might live?

E’en tho mistakes I often make,
And hasty words I speak,
Still in my heart a contrite one,
Thy will alone I seek.

Help me to keep my motives pure,
Repel each evil thought.
To keep my mind on things above,
And of thy Word be taught.

I know thy grace sufficient is,
I’ll therefore do my part
To walk in footsteps of my Lord,
And ever keep my heart!

--Alice M. Ripper



**For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.
– Matthew 12:34 –**

The heart and the mouth are under very special scrutiny, the former representing the individual character, and the latter being an index of the character. The indication is clear that a right condition of heart is necessary to right words; for “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,” as experience testifies to every man. Our first concern, then, should be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be fully under the control of divine grace; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, brotherly kindness, love, faith, meekness, temperance, supreme reverence for God and Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles be fixed, established, in the heart, then out of the good treasure of the heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace. R. 1937

Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you.

– Proverbs 4:24 –

What a fearful responsibility attaches to the tongue that wags in an evil, or even in a flippant, way, which is also dishonoring to God!

We now stand before the bar of judgment, we inquire, in the words of Peter, “What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” God-likeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let such things be put far away from all who name the name of Christ in sincerity and truth. And let us remember daily to settle our accounts with the Lord, to make sure that no record of idle words, unrepented of, and consequently unforgiven, stands against us. “Let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ.” “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Thus out of the good treasure of the heart we shall be able to speak the words of truth and soberness, to honor our Lord by a godly walk and conversation, to subdue the evil tendencies of our fallen nature, and to have our conversation “honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” —Phil. 1:27; 4:8; 1 Pet. 2:12. R. 1937

**He who guards his mouth preserves his life,
but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.**

Proverbs 13:3

Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you.

– Proverbs 4:25 –

There is only one way for any to do who would keep in this narrow way of sacrifice even unto death, and that is what Paul directs, “Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” — “lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,” and considering him, how he endured, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. (Phil. 3:13; Heb. 12:1-3.) If we keep looking at the things behind, we lose sight of the heavenly things and begin to over-estimate the earthly, and to correspondingly discount the heavenly. In other words, we begin to be conformed to this world. The Apostle says, “Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed;” let your minds be continually turned heavenward. R. 1263

**Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,
fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (NIV)**

Hebrews 12:1-2

For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He ponders all his paths.

– Proverbs 5:21 –

The Judge has been, and still is, taking minute cognizance of men’s actions and words (Pro. 5:21), although they have been entirely unaware of it; and he declares that “Every idle [“pernicious,” injurious or malicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Matt. 12:36); and that even a cup of cold water, given to one of his little ones, because he is Christ’s, shall in nowise lose its reward. (Matt. 10:42.) The context shows that the “pernicious” words to which Jesus referred were words of willful and malicious opposition spoken against manifest light. (Matt. 12:24; Matt. 12:31-32.) He also affirmed that it would be more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon and Sodom in the day of judgment than for Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, which had misimproved greater advantages of light and opportunity.” —Matt. 11:20-24. R. 2613

**Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise.
– Proverbs 6:6 –**

The Christian is not to take anxious care respecting the future, in matters beyond his control. He is, however, to take thought for every matter that is subject to his control. He is to seek to order his life so that it shall be useful to himself and to others. He is to remember the Scriptural injunction, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise,” and is to follow the ant’s custom of laying up provision in advance of necessity. This lesson is taught by all of our Lord’s providences; for instance, the plowing and the sowing are to be done bountifully and in faith, not doubtfully and fearfully. So also the cultivation is to be done with patience, waiting for the harvest: and when the harvest comes the lesson of nature is that the reaper shall not merely reap what he wishes to eat, and let the next day look out for itself, but that he shall gather into barns, making provision for the winter and for the next seedtime. Our Lord’s remark that the fowls of the air do not gather grain into barns, and yet are fed, nor do lilies spin, yet are clothed, was not intended to teach that his followers should adopt the method of the fowls respecting their food, nor expect to be clothed as the lilies. It was intended to teach confidence in God as our care-taker, and thus permit his faithful children to plow and sow in faith, to labor in faith, and to reap with faith, to lay up in store with faith, and to use with faith; recognizing every good gift as of the Lord (through the sun and rain, by plowing and reaping), the same who provides for the birds, though in a different manner. The Christian is ever to remember that man shall not live by bread alone: that he is not wholly dependent upon his own energies; that his affairs are in the Lord’s hands for supervision, and that the promise is, “Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.” Putting this confidence in God’s supervision of his affairs, while making a true Christian restful in mind, will not make him slovenly, careless or idle in doing with his might what his hands find to do, as unto the Lord. R. 2488



**These Six Things the LORD hates, yes,
Seven are an abomination to Him:**

A proud look,

A lying tongue,

Hands that shed innocent blood,

A heart that devises wicked plans,

Feet that are swift in running to evil,

A false witness who speaks lies,

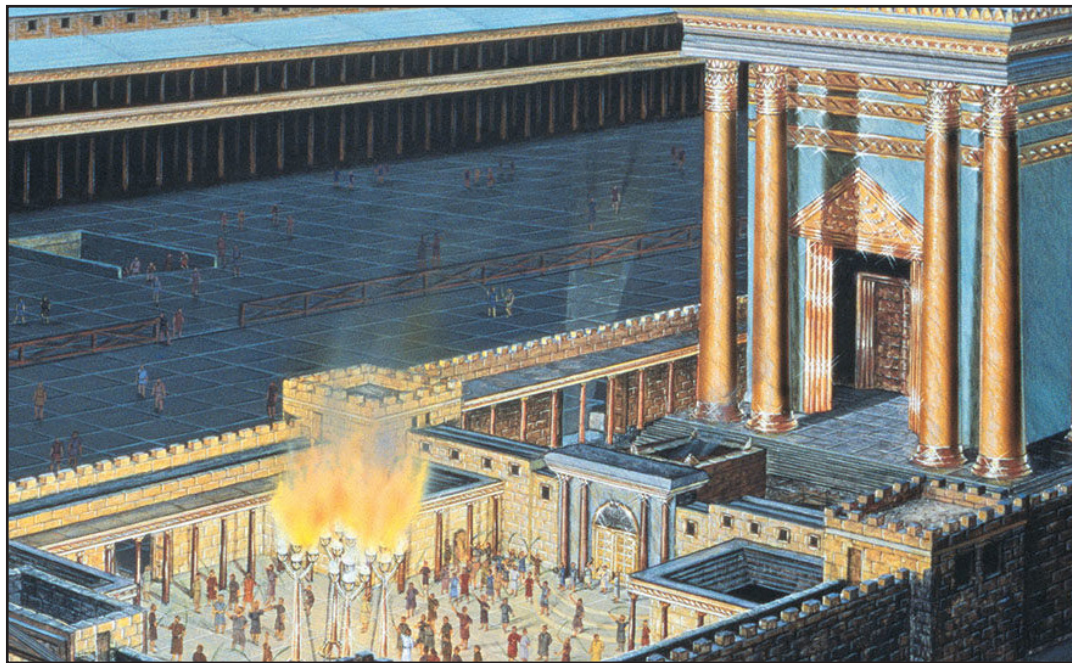
And one who sows discord among brethren.

Proverbs 6:16-19

For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light.

– Proverbs 6:23 –

It is said that during this festival [of the Feast of Tabernacles,] there were two great lights near the porch of the Temple, where Jesus discoursed (the Court of the Women—the portion of the Temple structure open to women as well as to men). These lights or candelabra, ornamented and gilded, were about seventy-five feet high, and threw a great light over the city, extraordinary for that period. It is presumed that this may have given Jesus the text for a discourse on the light of the world: but it is possible that our Lord took occasion to make this observation at the time of the performance of a certain ceremony by the Jews, described by Buxdorf as follows: The ninth day, or day after the expiration of the eighth, which belonged to the “Feast of Tabernacles,” is a solemn day likewise, and is called, “The Feast of Joy for the Law;” because on that day the last section of the Law was read, the rest having been read weekly during the course of the preceding Sabbaths. On this ninth day the custom of the Jews was to take all the books of the Law out of the chest, and to put a candle into it, in allusion to Pro. 6:23, and more particularly to Psa. 119:105. —Synag. Jud., c. xxii. This act, symbolically considered, would imply, first, that the Law was a light, and secondly, that ultimately the Jewish Law would be superseded by the True Light—the Gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. R. 2438



**Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Psalm 119:105**

My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers. Write them on the tablet of your heart.

– Proverbs 7:1-3 –

It is only in heart-to-heart fellowship that we become truly acquainted with another; and only so can we realize the depth and sweetness of divine love. But the conditions of this fellowship, the process by which we may come to really know him in whose favor is life, and his dear Son, our Redeemer and Lord, must not be overlooked. The conditions are that we have and keep the divine commandments. The having and keeping of the commandments, our obedience to the heavenly wisdom, constitute the proof of our love to God. Thus also is proved our love of righteousness; for the law of God is the law of righteousness, commending itself to the highest moral instincts of our nature. To the soul, therefore, that loves righteousness the commandments of the Lord are not grievous (1 John 5:3); for they are the expression of the most exalted virtue, the noblest benevolence, the purest love, and all the beauties of holiness.

It is not enough, therefore, that we have read the Word of God and gained a general knowledge of its principles and precepts and the plan and purpose of our God: there is yet more, much more, to be learned and done. There must be a daily laying up of its treasures of wisdom and counsel in the heart, and the working out of its principles in the life. “Thy words were found, and I did eat them,” said one of the saints of old; “and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” (Jer. 15:16.) So must we also feed upon them in our hearts.

Moses, addressing the typical people of God, shows with what carefulness God would have all his people regard his testimonies, saying, “Ye shall lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house and upon thy gates.” (Deut. 11:18-20.) Joshua also said to them, “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.” —Josh. 1:8. R. 2093

I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me.

– Proverbs 8:17 –

This is said respecting wisdom, but God himself is the very personification of wisdom, and hence this applies to God. Similarly to those who are privileged to hear of God’s grace, Christ is wisdom. As the Apostle declares, “He is made unto us wisdom” —unto all who rightly, properly accept him. R. 4269

**Listen to me, my children, for blessed are those who keep my ways.
– Proverbs 8:32 –**

This brings us to the consideration of our first inquiry, May the Christian expect the rewards of earthly prosperity for his faithfulness to God, either in the present life, or in that which is to come?

Christians, members of the Body of Christ, have beyond this life “an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven” for them (1 Pet. 1:4); consequently the earthly inheritance of human perfection and a peaceful home, each under his own vine and fig tree, could not confine to earth the immortal spirit beings, partakers of the divine nature, the scope of whose powers must necessarily extend to the utmost bounds of creation.

Nor can the rewards of present temporal prosperity in worldly things be expected by those who are running for the prize of this high calling to glory, honor and immortality as kings and priests unto God; for the way to the crown is the way of the cross, the way of sacrifice, as well to every member of the Body of Christ as it was to our Head and Lord, Christ Jesus. He was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”; the reproaches of them that reproached God fell upon him; though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor; so poor that he said, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” There was no reward of earthly prosperity for the Lord’s faithfulness, but the reverse—privation and persecution were realized, even unto death. And the servant is not above his Lord: if they have persecuted him they will persecute us also; and the reproaches of them that reproached him will also fall upon us. The only present reward for which the followers of Christ may look is the heartfelt manifestation of the Lord’s love and approval. “In the world,” said he, “ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace.”

It should be observed also that while rewards of temporal prosperity were promised and given to Fleshly Israel as a nation and as individuals, yet the very cream of that nation, the faithful patriarchs and prophets received no such temporal rewards, but like the Gospel Church, they endured hardness as good soldiers and nobly fought the good fight of faith; and their abundant reward will be in the glory of the earthly phase of the Kingdom of God. Note the account of their faithful endurance as recorded by Paul in Hebrews 11:1-40.

The temporal rewards and punishments and general discipline of Fleshly Israel were typical of the Lord’s similar discipline of the world in the age to come; while his selection out from among that people of a worthy class of overcomers for the earthly phase of the Kingdom was typical of his selection during the Gospel Age of a class of overcomers for the spiritual phase of the Kingdom. In any case, it pays to wholly follow the Lord God of Israel, who is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him to walk in his ways. —Heb. 11:6; Pro. 8:32-36. R. 4072

**Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain it. Blessed is the
man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the
posts of my doors. For whoever finds me, finds life, and
obtains favor from the LORD.
Proverbs 8:33-35**

He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, and he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself. Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you. Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

– Proverbs 9:7-8 –

Following our Lord's example and injunction, we are endeavoring to set meat in due season, "things new and old," before the household of faith, the children of the Kingdom, and not before "dogs"—those who are still outside of divine favor, who have not yet received the grace of God and been adopted into his family and constituted sons. These precious truths are pearls of great price—of great value—to those who have the hearing ear and the understanding and appreciative heart—those who have been begotten of the spirit and are "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and seeking to live the new life. We do not attempt to present these matters to the brutish, the swinish, knowing that they would not appreciate them; but would merely feel a disappointment and resent our good intentions to our injury. Our Lord points this out later on in the discourse (verse 6), and his words are in full accord with those of Solomon, "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee." —Pro. 9:7-8.

It is to the household of faith, then, that the Lord says, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is useless that we give this advice to others than the pupils in the school of Christ, for not having put themselves under the instruction of the great Teacher it gives evidence that his instructions are not appreciated by them. R. 2589

Do not give what is holy to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Matthew 7:6

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

– Proverbs 9:10 –

The Apostle admonishes us to work out our own salvation with “fear.” The Scriptures declare that “The fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Prov. 9:10.) Our first thought of the Almighty is, very properly, an apprehension of his greatness and our own insignificance. But as we come to know of his arrangement and Plan, this kind of fear gives place to respect and love, for he is very gracious toward all who are inclined to be in harmony with his beneficent arrangements and purposes. We find that he has made glorious plans, which are working out day by day, and that we have a share in them. Hence, this kind of fear casts out dread. R. 4706

After the Jewish high priest had crumbled the sweet incense upon the fire of the golden altar, after its fragrance had penetrated beyond the second veil and had covered the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat, he then himself passed beneath the veil. Every time the high priest raised the veil thus to pass under it he probably feared; for in case he had failed in any particular to carry out his sacrificial work acceptably he would have died as he passed under the veil. So our Lord Jesus knew that His work must be acceptable in the most absolute sense, else He would forever forfeit His existence. He would become as though He had not been; He would lose **all**.

There was no earthly being to give our Lord encouragement along this line. There was no one to say, You have done everything perfectly; you could not have done better. So the Master went alone to the Father for this assurance and for strength and courage. He prayed, “Not My will, but Thine be done”; and the Father heard His prayer and gave Him the needed assurance and strength. He was heard in respect to that which He feared; and during all that night and the following day, up to the hour of His crucifixion, He was calm and courageous.

So the Lord’s people should have a proper fear. Proper fear is good for them. But it should not proceed to the point of hindering their efforts and dissipating their courage. They should have the fear enjoined by St. Paul when he said, “Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it.” (Hebrews 4:1.) This proper fear the Master had. He never became discouraged, never held back from the work which the Father had given Him to do. His fear was a filial one, which engendered a watchfulness and care, a circumspection of walk and of life, that He might be wholly pleasing to the Father. This all Christians should have. We should watch lest we neglect some privilege or duty.

This proper fear will lead us to careful inspection of ourselves. We should ask ourselves, “What do I believe? Why do I believe it? We should go over the ground again. We should again go over in our minds the proofs of the correctness of our Faith. By so doing, the Lord will strengthen us in the Faith, He will strengthen our heart. If any hope in themselves, and lean upon their own strength mainly, it will be to their advantage that the Lord shall allow them to come to the point of discouragement, that they may become more timid, may lose all self-assurance, may realize their utter helplessness and weakness and their need of leaning wholly upon the Lord, of looking constantly to Him for guidance and support. As the Lord’s children thus learn to wait upon Him, to them is fulfilled the promise, “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” —Isaiah 40:31. R. 5712

EPIGRAMS OF SOLOMON

Chapters 10 to 22:16

**Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.
– Proverbs 10:12 –**

Anything injurious to the real interests of another should never be spoken. We cannot be too careful of our words concerning others. There seems to be a tendency with some of the Lord's children to indulge in confidences with others of the brethren and to relate incidents that reflect upon another brother or sister, that show up certain manifestations of weakness in that one. The disposition that thus exposes the imperfections of the brethren is surely not the love that covers. (1 Pet. 4:8.) We know some who have been long in the narrow way, who do not seem even yet to have overcome this disposition. Do they forget that they themselves have weaknesses perhaps as pronounced as the brother or sister whom they criticize? The very fact that they ignore the Master's injunction along the line of our text proves their own lack of development. [Matt. 18:15-18]

Let us pray more earnestly than ever, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth! Keep Thou the door of my lips!" R. 5530

**Speak evil of no one, but be peaceable,
gentle, showing all humility to all men.
Titus 3:2**

**And above all things have fervent love for one another, for
"LOVE WILL COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS."
1 Peter 4:8**

The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.

– Proverbs 10:22 –

[Our Lord Jesus'] wealth, consisting of heavenly glory and, subsequently, of human talents, and every kind of good possessions, was all sacrificed, including even his reputation, so that the Apostle declares, "He made himself of no reputation." His will also was sacrificed,—the strongest individual thing that any being can possess; as he himself declared, he sought not his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him. His life, the most precious thing to any intelligent creature, was freely laid down, a sacrifice, a sin-offering, in harmony with the divine plan, on our behalf. —Phil. 2:5-8—*Diaglott*.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9

It is by virtue of his sacrifice of riches and honors and will and life itself that our dear Redeemer is now the great and glorious Royal High Priest, with all power in heaven and in earth, which he soon will take to himself. (Rev. 11:17.) [For His Church] the heavenly riches are to be attained in the resurrection, when the Millennial Kingdom shall be inaugurated, and the faithful overcomers, by their resurrection change, shall be richly endowed with all the good things which God hath in reservation for them that love him, and who prove their love by present-time devotions, sacrifices, etc.

But, we should notice that there is a foretaste of these heavenly blessings granted to the faithful in this present life; these heavenly riches granted us now the Apostle speaks of as "riches of grace" (Eph. 1:7,18), and these grace-riches include faith, hope, and joy in the holy spirit and an ability to see and appreciate with the eye of faith things actually not seen as yet. The Apostle declares that these treasures of wisdom and grace—knowledge of divine good things in reservation, and the fellowship with God which permits us to anticipate and enjoy those blessings in a measure now, are all hidden in Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:3.) We must come into Christ, as members of his body, the true Church, by sacrifice, —before we can have the opportunity of even searching for these hidden treasures, or of finding any of them. And then, as we progress faithfully in our sacrificial service, as priests, walking in the footsteps of the great High Priest, we find more and more of these true "riches of grace" day by day, and year by year, as we progress. R. 2761

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.

Ephesians 1:7,17-18

Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is His delight.

– Proverbs 11:1 –

We should not only square our every act and word with strictest justice, but beyond this we should scrutinize our every thought and “bring every thought into subjection to the will of God” as expressed in Christ. Love, do you say? Yes! in its proper order, “Love is the principal thing.” But Justice must come first to be in line with the Divine precepts.

“Just before Generous” is an old and a very true adage. After learning to think justly of the words and acts of others we are prepared with a proper mental foundation to think generously—lovingly.

The Scriptures say not in vain that “A false balance is an abomination unto the Lord.” (Pro. 11:1.) And this balancing applies as truly to mental as to physical dealings with others. Whoever does not love righteousness; yea, whoever does not hate inequity, is surely in danger of being frenzied by delusions in this evil day. Surely Satan and the fallen angels under him are being granted extraordinary power to tempt God’s people and later on the world, to cut loose from all moderation in a frenzy of error on one subject or another with one person or another. Let us be forewarned and “watch and pray lest we enter into temptation.” R. 4514

Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD, but the blameless in their ways are His delight.

– Proverbs 11:20 –

Loving gratitude is one of the divinely implanted instincts of a soul bearing the image of God, and one which should therefore be cultivated. It is this element of the intelligent creature that is designed to be responsive to the divine goodness and benevolence; and it is this element of character in man which makes fellowship and communion with God possible. If the goodness of God could awaken in us no sense of grateful appreciation; if we were wholly dead to such sentiments, there could be no pleasure on God’s part in manifesting his goodness to us, and there would be nothing in us to call out his love; and so also nothing, of all his goodness and grace, would awaken love in us. But since for the divine pleasure we are and were created (Rev. 4:11), God endowed his intelligent creature with this element of character which, being responsive to his own goodness, institutes a lively and delightful fellowship with himself, which is the chief end of human existence, both on the side of the creature and of the Creator. —Psa. 16:11; Pro. 11:20; 15:8. R. 2031

You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.

Revelation 4:11

Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished, but the posterity of the righteous will be delivered.

– Proverbs 11:21 –

While the most intelligent and influential, who are thus misusing their talents and betraying their trusts as stewards of the Lord's goods, as did their prototypes in the Jewish age (Matt. 15:7-9; Matt. 15:14), are the greatest sinners in Zion, those also who blindly follow their leading become partakers of their sin (Rev. 18:4) and share the same penalty—both together “fall into the ditch” and, as “stubble,” are prepared for the fire.

While in their fear of the fiery trouble which they now see coming upon the earth, they anxiously soliloquize (for they hesitate to express their fears openly)— “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings [the consuming burnings, the trouble threatening to last until the whole present order of things is consumed]?”

If these inquiries were made of the Lord, and with a disposition of heart to obey his voice, the fearful calamities now, alas! soon to be experienced, would be averted; but such is not the case. These are mere soliloquies, the underbreath expressions of their fears, the only result of which is the leaning still more to their own understandings, the compromise of truth and righteousness and a determination to band together for mutual protection and the resistance of the righteous judgments of God. As to the results of such a union, see Isa. 8:9-10; 28:17,18. R. 1875

But hear the word of the Lord, ye who have no part nor lot with the workers of iniquity, and who would inquire of him upon what conditions any may stand in this evil day; for thus saith the Lord,

**He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, He who despises the gain of oppressions, who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil: He will dwell on high. His place of defense will be the fortress of rocks. Bread will be given him, His water will be sure.
Isaiah 33:15-16**

The one thing most desired by the clergy, whose craft and reputation and honors are in danger, and which they, as a class, are most earnestly striving for, is Union at any cost; because in union there is strength. But thus saith the Lord of hosts by the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah (Isa. 8:9,10), “Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye [heathen] of far countries; gird yourselves and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together and it shall come to naught; speak the word and it shall not stand.” But the Lord knoweth them that are his, and will be gathering his elect ones out of the various divisions of Babylon, and will bless and feed them, while Babylon is falling. R. 1548

There is one who scatters, yet increases more. And there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty.

– Proverbs 11:24 –

The Lord's consecrated people will do well to cultivate hospitality, and that of the kind which Abraham showed, —without waiting for it to be requested. A Scripture statement is, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Pro. 11:24.) Another declaration is, "The liberal soul shall be made fat." (Pro. 11:25.) In practicing liberality we are developing God-likeness, for is not God benevolent; is he not continually giving to his creatures? The greatest of all his gifts was the gift of his own dear Son to die for us —to ransom us. True, all cannot exercise liberality alike—those who are in debt or in poverty are properly to consider themselves hindered, limited in this direction by justice to their creditors, their families, etc. Nevertheless, the spirit of benevolence and hospitality should always abound in our hearts, whether we have much or little opportunity to manifest it; and rarely do those who exercise themselves in this respect fail to profit by this course, even in temporal matters. Where we cannot give all the succor needed, we can at least dispense words of consolation and cheer, which may prove of much greater value than money. Many need the spiritual counsel and advice and encouragement, which every true Christian should be able to give, far more than they need temporal assistance. To have Christ-likeness implies not only a desire to be helpful to the groaning creation and "especially to the household of faith," but it means more, —it means the effort to assist them, even at the cost of our earthly comforts and pleasures. R. 2857

The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.

– Proverbs 11:25 –

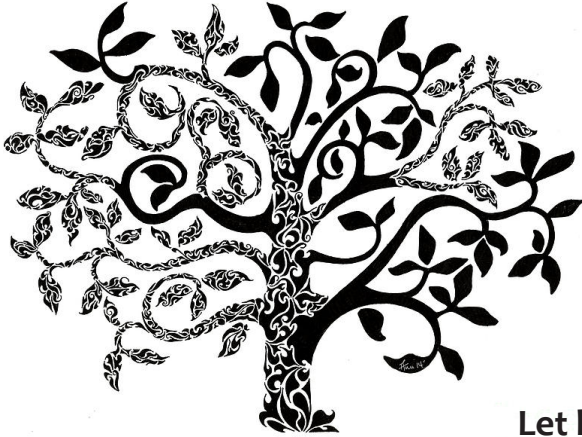
The evident lesson is that the Lord is pleased to see his people cultivate breadth of heart as well as breadth of mind; —generosity in proportion to their knowledge of him and his generosity. In telling the Message of His Grace we shall grow spiritually. "He that watereth shall himself also be watered." As we proclaim the Truth from an honest, earnest, loving heart we shall become more and more filled with it ourselves.

Our God has other glorious attributes besides Love, but this attribute is the especially predominating, overruling quality of His character. God's Justice co-operates with His Love. And His Wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that His Love would not approve. So as we grow, this quality of Love should be more and more manifest. We are to see that our words are loving, kind, gentle. We are to curb any tendency to self-glorification or show in telling of God's great Plan to others. Let us keep self out of sight, that the beauty of the Truth may be seen. Our manner of presenting the Message to others has much to do with its effectiveness. Speaking the Truth in love, we shall not only be accomplishing much more for others, but the Message will also be more impressed upon our own mind.

Whoever appreciates these things of God and then speaks forth in love and sincerity will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind, and the Truth will become clearer and sweeter. In helping others he will be helping himself. Thus the various features of the Plan of God become more firmly engraved upon his mind. R. 2212 and R. 5720

**The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.
– Proverbs 11:30 –**

A righteous life may indeed be compared to a tree of life of whose virtues others may partake and live. And blessed are those whose wise and righteous course of life becomes a constant incentive to virtue, winning others away from the path of sin and ungodliness to righteousness, peace, faith and trust in God.



The Scriptures also imply that any who have gotten into a condition of very low spirituality might have a possibility of recovery, not through themselves, but through the ministry of faithful ones of the Royal Priesthood. The Apostle James speaks of some who are “sick.” He says to let such a one call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, and that the prayer of faith shall recover him to God’s fellowship—and he adds:

**Let him know that he who turns a sinner from
the error of his way will save a soul from death and
cover a multitude of sins.**

James 5:20

Apparently that soul is in death’s throes; but if he manifest a sufficiency of faith, and will call in some true brethren and humbly confess his sin and ask for prayers, he would seem to be taking a step that would be considered favorably by the Lord, who might give him a further opportunity and trial.

Our thought is that, ordinarily, there would be no need for the individual to confess his trespasses to any one, unless it were to a person who had been trespassed against, and to whom, therefore, apologies would be due. Otherwise our sins are to be confessed only unto the Lord, unless under extreme circumstances, where one had lost fellowship with the Lord, and felt that there was nothing for him otherwise but complete alienation from God. In the latter case, we would advise such a brother to call in the Elders of the Church and make a confession, that his sin against the Holy Spirit may be canceled. R. 1520 and R. 5453

The Apostle James, in speaking of saving a soul from death, is evidently referring to one who is going into that careless condition where the new mind has become, as it were, stupefied, where the old mind has gotten the ascendancy over it. If we see one of the Lord’s people getting into such a condition, we should seek to restore him, “considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1); and those who do recover such an one “save a soul from death.” (Jas. 5:20.) Thus brotherly kindness and assistance are specially commended of the Lord. A special blessing comes to all those who have an earnest desire thus to save an erring brother; a great reward is suggested for those who are successful in such an attempt. R. 4628

STRENGTH - DEVELOPMENT

*The strong right arm is only strong
Because an active will
Has made it serve. But were that arm
Left idly hanging still,
'Twould lose the hoarded strength of years,
And lose more rapidly
Than it was gained, by Nature's law
Of inactivity.*

*'Tis true of souls. They gather strength
With every cross they bear,
With every humble sacrifice,
With every heartfelt prayer,
With every conflict bravely met,
And trial bravely borne;
With every throb of anguish felt
When tender ties are shorn.*

*The tears and toils of His dear ones
Are wisely, kindly, sent
By Him who knoweth what they need
For soul-development.
The path of idleness is one
By vagrant children trod.
They grow in grace most rapidly
Who labor most for God.*

--Unknown



- 1 Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid.
- 2 A good man obtains favor from the LORD, but a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.
- 3 A man is not established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous cannot be moved.
- 4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who causes shame is like rottenness in his bones.
- 5 The thoughts of the righteous are right, but the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.
- 6 The words of the wicked are, “Lie in wait for blood,” but the mouth of the upright will deliver them.
- 7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand.
- 8 A man will be commended according to his wisdom, but he who is of a perverse heart will be despised.
- 9 Better is the one who is slighted but has a servant, than he who honors himself but lacks bread.
- 10 A righteous man regards the life of his animal, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.
- 11 He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, but he who follows frivolity is devoid of understanding.
- 12 The wicked covet the catch of evil men, but the root of the righteous yields fruit.
- 13 The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous will come through trouble.
- 14 A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth, and the recompense of a man’s hands will be rendered to him.
- 15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.

– Proverbs 12:1-15 –

The simple teachings of these proverbs are so plain as to need no explanation; but they are worthy of careful and prayerful pondering. They suggest a series of questions for self-examination which every child of God would do well to propound to himself in the quiet retreat of his accustomed place of prayer. Let him not ask himself, Am I **perfect** in every thought, word and deed, knowing that none of the fallen are so; but let him ask:

Verse 1: Do I love instruction and knowledge? am I seeking for it daily in the line of God's Word and providences? and am I ready to consider and heed reproof rather than to spurn and resent it?

Verse 2: Are the purposes of my heart all pure and upright, bringing with them a constant sense of the Lord's favor?

Verse 3: Am I rooted and grounded in the principles of righteousness, so that I will not swerve and cannot be moved?

Verse 4: Am I faithfully acting my part in my station in life—in my relationships to my fellow men and my family?

Verse 5: Am I keeping a vigilant guard over my thoughts, that they stray not into forbidden paths?

Verse 6: Am I ever ready to defend the righteous against the snares of the wicked? In these days when the wicked are devising perverse doctrines to overthrow the faith of the righteous, am I zealous in my endeavors to establish them in the right ways of the Lord?

Verses 7 and 8 are precious promises to the righteous.

Verse 9: "He that is despised and laboreth for himself is better than he that aimeth after honor and lacketh bread." How true!

Verse 10: The truly righteous extend their tender mercies to the lower creation, as well as to human kind.

Verse 11: The true child of God is no idler or visionary dreamer.

Verses 12 to 14: The rewards of virtue and the penalties of wrong-doing are sure to follow, sooner or later, and every act will meet its just deserts in due time.

Verse 15: cannot be too carefully considered— "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes." Herein is the danger of an evil course: it is deceptive to those who take it: the wrong-doer, having succeeded in justifying himself, finds the downward course smooth and slippery, until the retracing of his steps becomes almost impossible. "But he that hearkeneth unto the counsel of the Lord is wise." R. 1520



Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but counselors of peace have joy.

– Proverbs 12:20 –

“Seek peace and pursue it.” And not only so, but we are to be peace-makers and not strife-breeders. When all around men’s souls give way, a special opportunity comes to the people of God for pointing their distressed fellow-creatures to the grand blessing which God has provided for the near future, and for re-establishing faith in the Creator and in the future life, and for pointing out that it is to be attained only by those who learn the true lesson of life and who come to love righteousness and to hate iniquity. R. 5458

**Depart from evil and do good.
Seek peace and pursue it.
Psalm 34:14**

**The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
James 3:18**

Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.

– Proverbs 12:22 –

[This verse] points us to God’s abomination of lying lips and his delight in the Truth. The principle of Truth is honesty, and it effects not only our words, but all of the conduct of life; yea, and also our thoughts. Hypocrisy is deceit of action. To deceive another is lying in one of its most unworthy forms. And, as the mainspring of life is in the heart, and “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,” and the conduct of life is arranged, we may see that a deceitful heart and a deceitful mind are most dangerous things in the world. How jealously, therefore, God’s people should guard their thoughts—in respect to God, in respect to the world, in respect to every word and act, to the intent that no injustice is permitted, no falsehood is recognized. Such are the pure in heart. Such are the saints. Such will see God and be joint-heirs with their Lord. How diligently, then, we should watch our hearts, our thoughts, that they be honest, true, truthful, in every sense and particular! R. 4318

The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.

– Proverbs 12:26 –

As children of God we have been called to a position of great favor and advantage. Our Heavenly Father has revealed to us his plans and purposes and has condescended to take us into his fellowship and active cooperation; and so grand and glorious and extensive is the outlook of the future that we are able to view the things of the present life in a vastly different light from that in which the world views them.

So we are not to love the present order or arrangement, nor the things that are part and parcel of it, identified with it; but rather we are to love the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, for which we pray, “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth.” We are to love the world only in the sense of having sympathy with it, as our Heavenly Father has, while we are unsympathetic with its arrangements.

**Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?
Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes
himself an enemy of God.
James 4:4**

According to God’s arrangement, we must take our choice between the Divine friendship and fellowship, and worldly friendship and fellowship. The things which the Lord loves are distasteful to the world; and the things which the worldly love—evil deeds and evil thoughts—are an abomination to the Lord, and those who love and practice such things must lose the fellowship of the Lord and his spirit, must go into the outer darkness of the world. R. 4766

The love of the world, the friendship of the world to which the Apostle refers, is the love of fellowship, which implies the partaking of its spirit—its aims, ambitions and hopes, and its methods of pursuing them. If any man love the world in this sense, surely the love of the Father is not in him. R. 4766

He who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

– Proverbs 13:3 –

Our Lord left a worthy example to his people, which the Apostle urges all to follow, saying, “Let your speech be always with grace [with manifest love and kindness], seasoned with salt [a purifying and preservative influence].” (Col. 4:6.) And Peter adds, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,”—wisely, and in accordance with the spirit and Word of the Lord. Again, it is written, “Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile [deceit].” “Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles.” “The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious words: but the lips of a fool [an unwise, reckless talker] will swallow up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.” “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”—Psa. 34:13; Pro. 21:23; Eccl. 10:12-13; 5:2.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

Matthew 12:35-36

In view of the fact that the present is our (the Church’s) judgment day, we see what great importance attaches to our words. All our words are taken by the Lord as an index of our hearts. If our words are rebellious, or disloyal, or frivolous, or flippant, or unkind, unthankful, unholy or impure, the heart is judged accordingly, on the principle that, “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Thus our words, in all the varied circumstances of our daily life, are bearing testimony continually before God of the condition of our hearts. So our Lord’s words imply: and in this view of the case how timely is the admonition, — “Be not rash with thy mouth; and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God [And remember that “all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” —Heb. 4:13]; for God [our Judge] is in heaven [upon the throne], and thou upon earth [under trial before the bar of God]: therefore let thy words be few.” Let them be thoughtful and wise, as uttered before God, and not rash, hasty and illy considered.

As imperfect beings, we may always be perfect in word and deed is not possible. Despite our best endeavors we will sometimes err in word as well as in deed, yet the perfect mastery of our words and ways is the thing to be sought by vigilant and faithful effort. But, nevertheless, for every idle word we must give an account in this our day of judgment. If, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that in any particular our words have been dishonoring to the Lord, we should remember that, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1); and in the name of our Advocate we may approach the throne of grace, explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of the error, our deep regret at our failure to honor his name and his cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge, but that it may be blotted out through his gracious provision for our cleansing through Christ, humbly claiming that in his precious blood is all our hope and trust. R. 1937, R. 1938

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.

Proverbs 21:23

He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.

– Proverbs 13:20 –

Things are either right or wrong; and the right side is always God's side. The reason that the path of the "little flock" is declared to be a narrow or difficult one at present, is, that it is God's path—the **right** path; and the world being wrong, —out of harmony with God, and consequently out of harmony with righteousness—is in opposition, directly and indirectly, to all who are in harmony with God and righteousness. And the more progress we make into harmony with God and righteousness the more the worldly-minded will hate us, and the more narrow and difficult the path of life will be. Hence the Apostle's words: "The friendship of the world is **enmity** with God." (James 4:4.) Can anyone suppose that God offers prizes of any grade or degree to those at enmity against him even to the extent of sympathy and harmony with his enemies and opponents? Surely not.

A pure heart signifies purity of will, of intention, or purpose, which like the needle to the pole, always turns toward righteousness. Though some sudden or strong temptation may for an instant, through the weakness of the flesh, draw it to the right or to the left, yet it quickly recovers its normal position, which is loyalty to truth and righteousness. A pure heart loves righteousness and hates iniquity. It loves purity and despises impurity and unrighteousness. It loves cleanliness of person, of clothing, of language and of habits. It delights in the society of the pure and shuns all others, knowing that "Evil communications corrupt good manners." —1 Cor. 15:33. R. 5123

**Do not be deceived:
"Evil company
corrupts good habits."
1 Corinthians 15:33**

He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

– Proverbs 13:24 –

The home that is ruled with the rod must of necessity be an unhappy home. The homes of the New Creatures should be ruled by love not by the rod. The rod is to be kept merely as an occasional necessity for enforcing the rules of love; and when it is administered it is to be wielded by the hand of love and never by the hand of anger. The New Creatures, governed by the spirit of a sound mind, learn gradually that order is one of heaven's first laws, and hence that it should be one of the first elements and characteristics of the homes of the New Creatures.

It is scarcely necessary to admonish the New Creation that they should not use angry or harsh words to their children; for such know that language of that kind is improper to any one under any circumstances. On the contrary, their "speech should be with grace," with love, with kindness, even when reproving. Nor is it necessary to suggest to the class we are addressing the impropriety of a hasty blow, which might do injury to the child not only physically, but also wound its affections, develop in it a fear of the parent instead of love, which should be considered the only proper groundwork on which the obedience and order of the home are built. The parent owes it to himself as a part of his own discipline, as well as to his child, that he shall never inflict a punishment which he has not sufficiently considered, and coolly and dispassionately found to be not **more**, but **less**, than justice might properly demand. The child [should] understand thoroughly also that the parent has no anger toward him, no malice, no hatred, nothing but sympathy and love and the desire to do him good. F524, F525

**There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.
– Proverbs 14:12 –**

[This] is a solemn warning against self-deception—against pursuing a course of conduct which is radically wrong, being opposed to the spirit and intent of the divine law, and yet which may be made to **seem** right by a line of false reasoning, suggested by the will of the flesh and apparently founded upon the Word of God, yet denying its fundamental principles of righteousness. The delusions of Satan also greatly help along such deceptions, and thus the blinded one is urged along in a course which seems to him to be right, but the end of which is death.

Christians should above all things guard themselves against the folly of this way. To do this, let us ever remember that, even though through Christ we have a reckoned standing of justification before God, the human heart which we still have is “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9), and that it requires constant watching and purging to enable us to put in practice the Apostle Paul’s rule, —In simplicity and godly sincerity have your conversation in the world. (2 Cor. 1:12.) To do this requires humility, sobriety, godliness. If the heart be puffed up with pride, or ambitious for vain glory, or if it be selfish, or in any measure intoxicated with the spirit of the world, then beware; for there is great danger of getting into that way that seemeth right, to a man **because** blinded by his own perverse will or fleshly mind. R. 2038

Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

– Matthew 7:13-14 –

The Broad Road to Destruction is thus named because it is most easy to the degenerate human race. Six thousand years ago, as a sinner condemned to destruction, Adam (and the race represented in him) started upon this road, and after nine hundred and thirty years he reached its end—destruction. As years and centuries have rolled on, the downward path has become more and more smoothly worn, and the race has sped more and more rapidly to destruction, the way becoming daily more glazed and slimed and slippery with sin.

For six thousand years the race has steadily pursued the broad, downward way. Only a few, comparatively, have tried to change their course and retrace their steps. In fact, to retrace all the steps, and reach the original perfection, has been impossible, though the effort of some to do so has been commendable, and not without beneficial results. For six thousand years sin and death have reigned relentlessly over mankind, and driven them upon this broad road to destruction. And not until the Gospel age was a **way** of escape brought to light. Though in previous ages rays of hope were dimly seen in types and shadows, which were joyfully hailed and acted upon by a few, yet life and immortality were not brought to light until the appearing of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the proclamation by the apostles of the good tidings of redemption and remission of sins and a consequent **resurrection from the destruction**. (2 Tim. 1:10) The teachings of Jesus and the apostles bring to light **life**—a restitution or restoration to life for all mankind, as based upon the merit and sacrifice of the Redeemer; and they show this to be the significance of many Old Testament types. They also bring to light **immortality**, the prize of the high calling of the Gospel Church. A205

**Jesus Christ has abolished death and brought life
and immortality to light through the gospel.
2 Timothy 1:10**

**Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.
– Proverbs 14:34 –**

[This verse is] illustrated on all the pages of history. The kingdoms of this world are not the kingdoms of our Lord—he is not their ruler; nevertheless the general principle expressed [here] prevails. In proportion as any nation conforms to principles of righteousness, justice, in that same proportion the nation is exalted; while in proportion to the prevalence of sin in any nation will be its tendency to downwardness in every respect.

When we look about us in the world and perceive that national policies are shaped by absolute selfishness, and that the rulers amongst men are very generally consecrated to doing their own wills so far as possible, we may well be astonished to see to what extent the influence of the righteous, the salt of the earth, exercises a preservative effect upon them. So far from wondering why the kings of earth are not better than they are, we are inclined to wonder that the laws and regulations of Christendom are anything like as good as they are. Undoubtedly there is in the great majority of the human family, at the bottom of their hearts, a respect for righteousness and truth and goodness; and were it not that this is overbalanced at the present time by prevalent selfishness and evil influence from every quarter, we might have hope for such reforms as many seem to expect, but which the Scriptures do not warrant us in expecting. Our hope, on the contrary, is that the Lord, according to promise, will establish his own Kingdom in power, superhuman power; that the great King Immanuel will subdue all things unto himself; that thus released from present bonds of selfishness, evil surroundings and Satanic deceptions, the great majority of mankind will choose righteousness—choose obedience to the Lord—that their experiences under the blessings of the Kingdom shall, in the majority of cases, fix character in accord with the principles of righteousness. R. 3399

All of the Lord's people, in proportion as they see the downward and degrading influence of sin, become more and more strong in their determination to uphold righteousness in their every thought, word and act, and to throw their influence upon that side of every question in every appropriate manner. In so doing they will be seeking first, primarily, the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and be in process of training for the great privileges of the Kingdom time, that they may be associated with the Lord in the bestowment of the blessings of that Millennial Kingdom upon all the families of the earth. R. 3399

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Philippians 3:20-21

REST IN THE LORD

Just to let thy Father do
What he will;
Just to know that he is true,
And be still.

Just to follow, hour by hour,
As he leadeth;
Just to draw the moment's power
As it needeth.

Just to trust him: this is all!
Then the day will surely be
Peaceful, whatsoe'er befall,
Bright and blessed, calm and free.

Just to recognize its light,
All-enfolding;
Just to claim its present might,
All-upholding.

Just to know it as thine own,
That no power can take away:
Is not this enough alone
For the gladness of the day?

Just to let him take the care
Sorely pressing,
Finding all we let him bear
Changed to blessing.

This is all! and yet the way
Marked by him who loves the best:
Secret of a happy day,
Secret of his promised rest.

– *Selected. R. 1559*

**Soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
– Proverbs 15:1 –**

1 It is good **policy** for anyone—Christian [or not]—to learn to give soft answers, even under anger-provoking conditions. Business people study this as a matter of policy: it means custom, sales, profits, wealth, and to ignore this rule in business is to be considered foolish.

2 But that which is merely an outward form, **policy**, and often hypocritical in worldly people, is to abound much more in the child of God, begotten of a new mind. In him it is not to be put on for policy's sake, but to be the outgrowth or **fruitage** of the holy spirit or disposition which rules him as a “new creature in Christ Jesus.”

Any other answer than “a soft answer” is incompatible with the holy spirit of Love—with its meekness, gentleness, patience and brotherly kindness. If the truth must needs be spoken and if under the circumstances the truth be severe, **hard**, nevertheless and indeed all the more the hard thing needs to be stated as **softly as possible**. This evidently is the thought of the Apostle when he recommends “speaking the truth in love.” R. 2325

**The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.
– Proverbs 15:3 –**

That the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good, is unquestionable. “The Word of God is a discerner of [even] the thoughts and intents of the heart: neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” (Pro. 15:3; Heb. 4:12-13.) That God could interfere with and stop all forms of evil is undoubtedly true; but that he has not yet so interfered is manifest; and that the time will come when all evil shall be fully restrained is his distinct promise. Hence it is as proper to say that God **permits** sin, wickedness and crime, as it would be false and slanderous to say that he causes, creates, instigates or is in any sense the author of such things.

The fact that the Lord has **knowledge** of all conditions of things is not out of harmony with the other fact that He **permits** conditions which He disapproves, and which He declares that He will ultimately **destroy**. “All the wicked will He destroy.”—Psa. 145:20.

“Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God tempteth no man....Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own desires [for wealth, power, revenge, etc.] and enticed.... **Do not err**, my beloved brethren. Every **good** gift and every **perfect** gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change or the least variation. ...For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness [right will or mind] of God.” (James 1:13-20.) Nevertheless, God has repeatedly shown us how even the wrath of man has been overruled by him to accomplish his **good** purposes. R. 1779 and R. 5209

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight.

– Proverbs 15:8 –

Since for the divine pleasure we are and were created (Rev. 4:11), God endowed his intelligent creature with this element of character which, being responsive to his own goodness, institutes a lively and delightful fellowship with himself, which is the chief end of human existence, both on the side of the creature and of the Creator. —Psa. 16:11; Pro. 11:20; 15:8.

.....
• You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for •
• You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created. •
.....
Revelation 4:11

We are to think of our heavenly Father as rich and benevolent, kind and generous, yet wise as well as loving. We are to suppose that he will have pleasure in giving us the desires of our hearts if those desires are in harmony with his plan, which plan he has already framed on such lines as to include our very highest and best interests and the highest and best interests of all his creatures.

.....
• The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. •
.....
James 5:16

The prayers of the unrighteous, we understand, will avail nothing; and in this connection we are to remember that “there is none righteous, no, not one,” and that all the righteousness which we have or which permits us to present ourselves before the Father, or which guarantees us that we shall be heard of him, is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us—the merit of his sacrifice covers all our blemishes. Let us remember, too, that it is the fervent prayer that is the effectual one—the prayer that is earnest, from the heart and not merely from the lips. R. 2031, R. 3663, R. 3664

A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!

– Proverbs 15:23 –

[One] channel of blessing and instruction which the Lord has provided and commended for the saints, and which surely has proven a blessing to all of the household of faith in running for the “mark,” is the assistance which the Lord supplies to us through the “brethren.” Sometimes it is “A word in season; how good it is!” —perhaps a word of counsel, perhaps a word of reproof, perhaps a word of instruction. Perhaps it is merely the testimony of daily lives of the brethren, as we see them patiently enduring hardness as good soldiers, without murmuring—taking with joy, with thankfulness, with faith, with confidence, all things which Divine providence may permit, assured that they are all working out future blessing. Although this channel of blessing might at first seem to be of the brethren, we are sure, nevertheless, that it is of the Lord, though through the brethren. It is because the brethren who render such assistance in the way are the brethren who themselves are receiving assistance from the Lord; and so it has been from first to last; the Elder Brother, and all the brethren, as they become advanced members of the Body of Christ, joyfully assist, even to the extent of laying down their lives for the brethren, and all this is the work of God—the effect of his spirit. By all these various agencies God is working in us to **will**, and working in us to **do** his good pleasure—that we may increase and abound in love. R. 4663

**Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD.
– Proverbs 16:5 –**

“The proud in heart” are the haughty-minded—those who feel haughty toward others and are not sympathetic, who think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, who despise others. The heart of such a one is not that which God could love or that anyone could love; **it is an abomination in the Lord’s sight**. An abomination is that which is extremely displeasing—that which is repulsive—that which a person should not wish to entertain—should not harbor—must reprove.

The pride mentioned in our text is not due to ignorance. It is too great an appreciation of self. All such pride, the Lord tells us, is an abomination in His sight. This is not merely that God does not like it, but that there must be a reason why He abhors it. No creature has any real cause for pride. As the Apostle asks, “What have we that we have not received from the Lord?” We have absolutely nothing. If we had ten talents instead of one, our ability would be nothing to be proud of; we did not produce these talents. On the contrary, they were given to us. But to display the talents or to boast about them would show that we thought they were our own, and that we were proud because of our possession of them. No man has a right to be proud because of receiving something from another. To that extent he is a debtor, a recipient. In the case of humanity, we are all recipients of the Father’s favor. All of the blessings of life—both temporal and spiritual—are of Divine provision for us. And if we have many of these blessings, there is still no occasion for pride. Pride implies a self-sufficiency. R. 5000 and R. 5704

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled,
and he who humbles himself will be exalted.
Matthew 23:12

Honest weights and scales are the LORD’s. All the weights in the bag are His work.

– Proverbs 16:11 –

We should apprehend the principle of justice now without waiting until we are made perfect. We should seek to note the operation of divine justice and the operations of justice and injustice in humanity, with special notice and criticism of ourselves. He who fails to appreciate justice must of necessity proportionately fail to appreciate mercy, for mercy is merely the difference between love and justice. We are to seek to note the principle of justice in our dealings with others, and to “deal justly and keep judgment,” as the Lord directs, but we are to compensate for our own imperfection and the imperfection of others by permitting love to govern, and to cover all the multitude of faults in those with whom we have to do. Nevertheless, we are to seek to view our own conduct in the light of justice, and with as few allowances as possible for our own imperfections. R. 3635

The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips. Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.

– Proverbs 16:23-24 –

Not only will the “wise and understanding heart” keep the feet in the paths of righteousness, but also “the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips”, so that he shall speak forth “words of truth and soberness,” words of wisdom, of kindness and of love. How important that the fountain should be sweet, that thus the stream that issues from it may be healthful and refreshing to all within the range of its current! Truly, “pleasant words [of wisdom, of counsel and of loving kindness] are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones [in that they refresh and comfort and stimulate courage and thus fortify the soul and strengthen it to noble deeds].”

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Your lips, O my spouse, drip as the honeycomb.
Honey and milk are under your tongue.
Songs of Solomon 4:11

God’s Word is a great storehouse of food for hungry pilgrims on the shining pathway. There is milk for babes, and strong meat for those more developed (1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:14); and not only so, but it contains food adapted to the different seasons and conditions; and Jesus said the faithful servant should bring forth meat in due season for the household of faith— “things new and old,” from the storehouse. (Luke 12:42; Matt. 13:52) It would be impossible to bring forth such things from any sectarian creed or storehouse. We might bring forth some things old and good from each, but nothing new. The truth contained in the creeds of the various sects is so covered and mixed with error that its inherent beauty and real value are not discernible. The various creeds continually conflict and clash; and as each claims a Bible basis, the confusion of thought, and evident discord, are charged to God’s Word. This has given rise to the common proverb: “The Bible is an old fiddle, upon which any tune can be played.”

The faithful student of the Word should be able always to give a reason for his hope. The Word of God alone is able to make wise, and is profitable for doctrine, instruction, etc., “that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished.” (1 Pet. 3:15; 2 Tim. 3:15-17) Only this one storehouse contains an exhaustless supply of things both new and old—meat in due season for the household. Surely no one who believes the Scripture statement that “the path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day” will claim that the perfect day came in Luther’s time; and if not, we do well that we take heed to our lamp as unto “a light that shineth in a dark place UNTIL THE DAY DAWN.” 2 Pet. 1:19. R. 2038 and A24

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.
– Proverbs 16:25 –

See entry for Proverbs 14:12

An ungodly man digs up evil, and it is on his lips like a burning fire. A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends. A violent man entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good. He winks his eye to devise perverse things. He purses his lips and brings about evil.

– Proverbs 16:27-30 –

How different is the picture of the ungodly man! [contrasted with the man in verses 23-24.] “An ungodly man diggeth up evil [apparently finding a morbid satisfaction in searching for it], and in his lips there is a burning fire. A froward man **soweth strife**, and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good. He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips, he bringeth evil to pass.” Thus, as Isaiah says, “The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” —Isa. 57:20-21.

But blessed is the man that hath learned the right ways of the Lord and walketh therein with a perfect heart. Such a one, unlike the wicked who go about digging up evil, delights himself in doing good and in speaking forth the words of truth and soberness. He is slow to anger, and studies carefully how to rule his own spirit, which is surely a great work and worthy of the ambition and effort of every Christian.

How blessed are the closing years of a long life devoted to this most worthy end of ruling one’s own spirit in harmony with the principles and precepts of the Word of God; when, as Mr. Whittier has beautifully expressed it, —

**All the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angers of the strife
Are rounding into calm;**

and when the hallowed influences of ripened Christian graces are manifest to every beholder. Truly, “the hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness.” But if not, it is but a monument of folly and its ripened evil fruitage is most undesirable. R. 2038

**The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, if
it is found in the way of righteousness.
Proverbs 16:31**

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

– Proverbs 16:32 –

To rule one's spirit (mind, disposition) implies a conflict similar to that of taking a city; for, no matter when we begin, we find entrenched therein many armed and opposing powers. They have possession by heredity—they are there as the result of the fall. And, if we have passed the days of youth, they are the more entrenched, and it requires the greater skill and generalship to rout them. But, whether he begin early or late, he that would rule his own spirit must war a good warfare—he must “fight the good fight” of faith down to the very end of the present existence. If a man would rule his own spirit, he must not only storm all the fortresses of inherited evils which seem to be almost a part of his nature, but, having gained possession and taken his seat upon the throne of this symbolic city (viz., the will), he must thereafter be continually on the defensive; for the old enemies are constantly on the alert, and ever and anon seeking to regain possession, so that he that continues to rule his own spirit is one who not only has routed the enemy, Sin, from the throne of his being, but who continues to keep him at bay.

To rule one's own spirit is by no means an easy task; and, as in the illustration, it cannot be done single-handed and alone. Consequently, the wise general will invoke all the assistance at his command, remembering the words of the Apostle— “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the powers of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” These powers of the world, the flesh, and the devil are all closely allied; and, therefore, he who plans for conquest and an established reign thereafter must seek alliance with another and a stronger power; which power is tendered to all who earnestly undertake the great work. This power is none other than the

almighty arm of our God, who says to all who accept his strength, “Greater is he that is for you than all they that be against you;” gird yourselves like men, fear not, be strong.

**Be sober, be vigilant, because
your adversary the devil walks
about like a roaring lion, seeking
whom he may devour. Resist
him, steadfast in the faith,
knowing that the same
sufferings are experienced by
your brotherhood in the world.**

1 Peter 5:8-9

What more appropriate watchwords than these could express the proper attitude of the Christian soldier? The “brotherhood” includes all the soldiers of Christ throughout the world, and this symbol of their present character is not a mere empty sound; for there is a mighty conflict in progress, a war being waged, and the encounter is one of desperate earnestness. Those who know nothing of this great conflict, and who have no part in it, though they may

bear the name of Christ—Christians—really have no right to that name; for they are not Christ's soldiers. Jesus himself was a soldier, and fought the battle through to the bitter end, and gained the victory. And he is the Captain of all those who accept the redemption he purchased and that follow in his footsteps, and he will lead them on to certain victory, if they faint not. —Gal. 6:9.

R. 3269 and R. 1859

The Apostle, out of the fullness of his love and sympathy for all his comrades in the army of the Lord, adds to his earnest exhortation this parting benediction—

**May the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after
you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.**

1 Peter 5:10

**The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.
– Proverbs 16:33 –**

The statement [in this verse] is to the effect that God's overruling power takes cognizance of even those things which men may regard as mere chance, and that nothing can come to pass without his knowledge and permission, and that eventually all things will be overruled to the accomplishment of his purposes. R. 2038

MY COMFORT

He holds the key of all unknown,
And I am glad.
If other hands should hold the key,
Or if he trusted it to me,
I might be sad.

What if to-morrow's cares were here
Without its rest?
I would that he unlock the day,
And, as the hours swing open, say
"My will is best."

The very dimness of my sight
Makes me secure;
For, groping in my misty way,
I feel his hand--I hear him say,
"My help is sure."

I cannot trace my future way,
But this I know:
I have the smilings of his face,
And all the refuge of his grace
While here below.

Enough; this covers all my want,
And so I rest;
For what I can not, he can see,
And in his care I sure shall be
Forever blest.

---John Parker

Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife.

– Proverbs 17:1 –

Discontent is the general malady of the world today. Selfishness is harassing the vitals of society, in its every class. The rich are generally grasping for more millions; the comfortably fixed are anxious to be wealthy; the poor are grasping for “rights” and for “hours” and for “more pay.” All are having beginnings of trouble already in the strikes, lockouts, etc., and all are finally coming to see that the Peace! Peace! cry is a delusion, and that more trouble instead of less lies ahead of them. Every day seems to spring some new complication.

The only safe place for God’s children is as far as possible out of all the strife. Remember the statement of the Bible, “**Godliness with contentment**

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 • **Godliness with contentment is great gain.** •
 • **1 Timothy 6:6** •
 •
 •

is great gain,” and lay in a large stock of both. These two qualities will serve to separate you and your aims from the worldly and their aims, ambitions and greeds. Rather be willing to earn a humbler living with godliness and contentment and the great gain of peace of heart, communion with the Lord and some more time to spend in his service, doing good unto all as you have opportunity—especially to the household of faith.

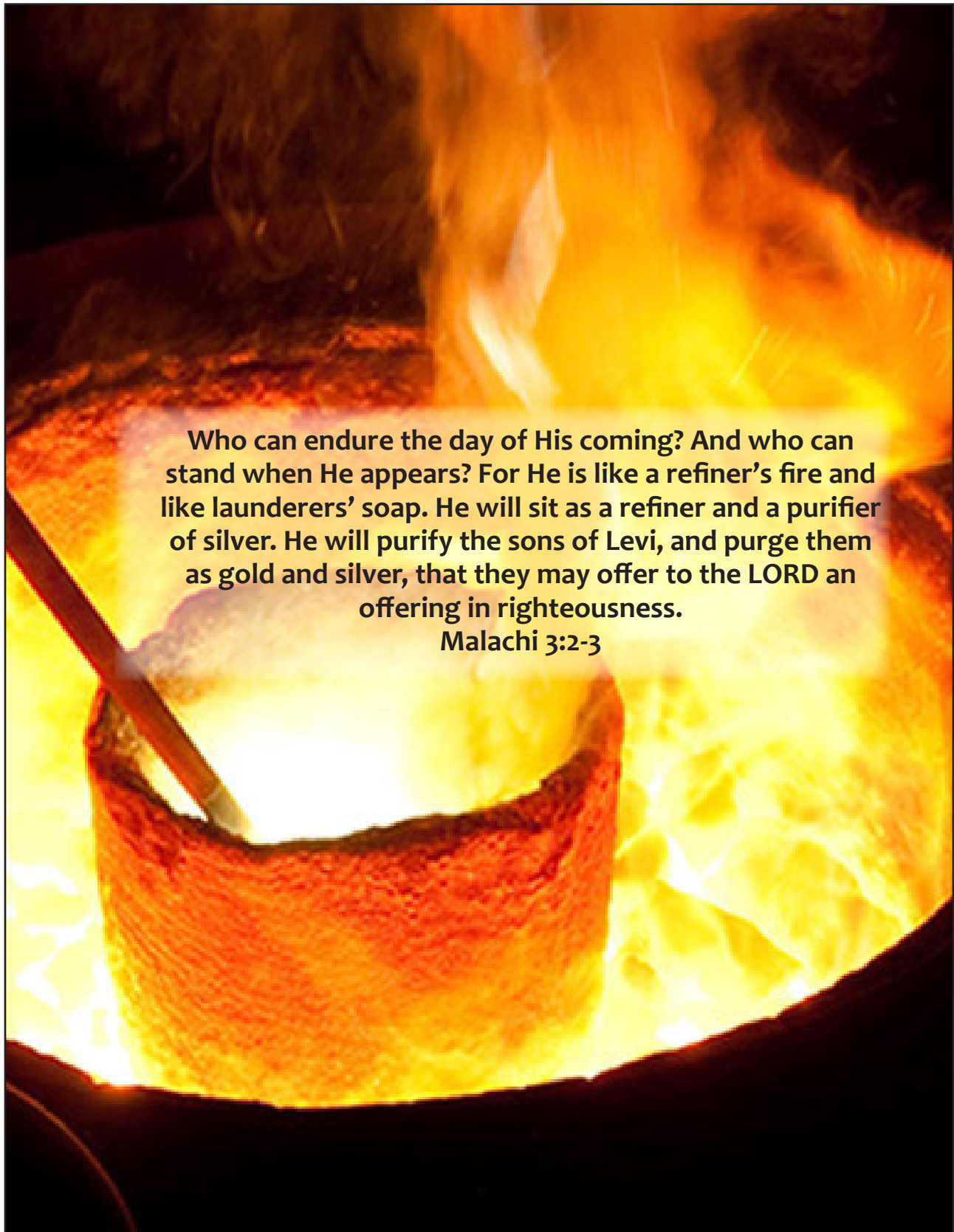
.....
 • **A little that a righteous man has is better than** •
 • **the riches of many wicked.** •
 • **Psalm 37:16** •
 •

• A very few scattered here and there
 • understand the real situation.
 • These are God’s holy ones, his
 • special friends. He has revealed to
 • them the real situation through his
 • Word. They know what others are

ignorant of, that the blessings now beginning are but a foretaste of greater ones yet to come, and long promised by Jehovah “by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21.) These strive not so anxiously as the others for their full rights and full share of present blessings. They thankfully take what comes, acknowledging that every good and perfect gift comes from their Heavenly Father. And what they do get, even in the present time, thus affords them more pleasure than the greater number of comforts does to others. “The little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.” (Psa. 37:16.) Even their faces distinguish them from others. Whatever their condition, whether sickness or health, whether very poor or in comfortable circumstances, these have peace within and realize that godliness with contentment is a great gain. Theirs is indeed a peace that the world can neither give nor take away. (John 14:27.) These are always rejoicing, and now so much the more as they see the great blessings of the Millennium drawing near. They are content to receive their share of coming blessings in God’s way and in God’s due time. These, if they cannot obtain their rights under

present laws and regulations, will wait for justice, remembering the Apostle’s words: “Be patient, brethren; the coming of the Lord draweth nigh” —his Kingdom will give full justice to all; wait for it. (James 5:7.) R. 1243 and R. 1245

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 • **Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than** •
 • **great treasure, and turmoil with the treasure.** •
 • **Better is a portion of vegetables where there is** •
 • **love, than a fattened ox served with hatred.** •
 • **Proverbs 15:16-17** •
 •
 •



Who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver. He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness.

Malachi 3:2-3

He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates friends.

– Proverbs 17:9 –

Anything injurious to the real interests of another should never be spoken. We cannot be too careful of our words concerning others. There seems to be a tendency with some of the Lord’s children to indulge in confidences with others of the brethren and to relate incidents that **reflect** upon another brother or sister, that **show up** certain manifestations of weakness in that one. The disposition that thus exposes the imperfections of the brethren is **surely not** the love that **covers**. (1 Pet. 4:8) We know some who have been long in the narrow way, who do not seem even yet to have overcome this disposition. Do they forget that they **themselves** have weaknesses perhaps as pronounced as the brother or sister whom they criticize? The very fact that they ignore the Master’s injunction along the line of our text proves their **own lack** of development. Yet these would probably resent the implication that they are guilty of evil speaking.

Above all things have fervent love for one another, for “LOVE WILL COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS.”
1 Peter 4:8

The **sooner** every follower of Christ comes to see that all this is **slander**, that it is **besmirching** the good name of a brother or sister, that it is a **direct violation** of the repeated injunction of the Word of God, and that defamation is theft of another’s reputation, the sooner they will see this subject as it really is, **in all its hideousness**—as it **must appear in the sight of the Lord**. R. 5530

He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.

– Proverbs 17:15 –

Strictly speaking, no man can justify another, i.e., to make or truthfully pronounce him conformable to God’s law. Yet it is quite a common thing for men to pronounce that right which is wrong, and thus they attempt to justify evil and evil doers. And the same disposition which leads them to do this, leads them also to condemn the just. Because they prefer evil, they attempt to deceive themselves and others into the idea that wrong is right and right is wrong. This is an abomination to the Lord.

But while God condemns man’s attempt to thus justify the wicked, [Romans 4:5] shows that he can and does justify the wicked. How? Certainly not in the same way he has just condemned—by excusing wickedness, or attempting to make it appear right, and remitting the penalty which he had justly pronounced against it. No, but God devised a way by which he could be just, and yet the justifier of sinners who believe in Jesus (Rom. 3:26), viz.: By giving his only begotten Son who “for the joy set before him,” became our willing substitute. Our sins having been laid upon or imputed to him (Isa. 53:6) if we believe on him, his righteousness will be imputed to us; and thus we are justified. Sin having been cancelled by the Redeemer, the sinner will in due time be made actually perfect.

R. 657

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: **But to him who does not work but believes on Him who** :
: **justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.** :
: **Romans 4:5** :
.....

A friend loves at all times.**– Proverbs 17:17 –**

Indeed, we may be sure that in proportion as we understand the Bible and receive the spirit of the Truth, in that same proportion we shall be able to appreciate and to copy and to exemplify the best there is of principle—whether of friendship, or of duty to a monarch, of duty to our family relationship, or of duty toward our God. There are many influences operating toward a spirit of selfishness, avarice, jealousy, while the influences making for true friendship, true love, all the best qualities of heart and head, are from the Lord.

It is a beautiful friendship which in stress forgets self and thinks only of the interests of the friend. As though in contrast with all the human loves and friendships, we read of Jesus, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Nevertheless, in the case of Jesus, it meant more than any earthly love or friendship; for “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” The Apostle declares that the Lord thus set an example to all Christians, that they should “lay down their lives for the brethren,” be ready to die the one for the other. This is the Heavenly love, the Divine friendship. R. 5664

The name of the LORD is a strong tower. The righteous run to it and are safe.**– Proverbs 18:10 –**

In the midst of the “perilous times” of this “evil day,” and of the warning voices of prophets and apostles pointing out snares and pestilences and subtle dangers on every hand—and in the midst, too, of a realizing sense of the actual existence of such evil besetments and perils—how precious to the saints are the assurances of divine protection and care and personal love!

The earnest Christian of many years has had this assurance amply verified by blessed experience. Let those younger take heed, apply their hearts unto instruction, learn to trust the Lord with implicit faith, and he will make you also to realize the blessedness of this refuge, and the sweetness of abiding in him. Let the language of our hearts continually be, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.” R. 2038

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress. My God, in Him I will trust.”

Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.

Psalm 91:1-3

My lovingkindness and my fortress, my high tower and my deliverer, my shield and the One in whom I take refuge.

Psalm 144:2

Praise the Lord for such assurances of his loving care! “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!” R. 2038 and R. 3331

**He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.
– Proverbs 18:13 –**

[When Jesus was transfigured on the mountain,] Peter proposed making some booths on the mountaintop for the Lord and his guests. Luke adds, “Not knowing what he said.” He was bewildered, confused, but in harmony with his natural temperament wished to say something.



Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep, and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” ---not knowing what he said.

Luke 9:32-33

The voice from heaven, however, seemed to say, Be still! hearken rather to the words of my beloved Son. Not a few need to learn the lesson of quietness—to hear and learn, be taught of God, before they have much to say. Peter evidently learned, as we may judge from his after conduct, to be slower to speak and swifter to hear. (James 1:19.) This is an important lesson to all who would be servants of the Lord: we must learn that of ourselves we know nothing, and can do nothing aright. The proper learning of this lesson means a lesson in humility and in patience, a lesson respecting our own nothingness, and that “our sufficiency

is of God.” Those who reach this condition become apt students in the school of Christ—not forgetful hearers, but doers of the Word: and such only are prepared to teach the truth to others. Those who are too forward and ready to teach, before they have received instruction from the Lord, are very apt not to know what they say, as was Peter’s case; and if such be true-hearted and worthy of being used of the Lord as his servants, they are very apt to receive numerous reproofs from time to time. R. 2289

So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

James 1:19

Silence

Silence is one of the hardest things to refute.

Not every question deserves an answer.

I have often regretted my spoken word, never my silence.

The best time to hold the tongue is the time when we feel we must say it or bust.

Silence cannot be misquoted, but it can be misinterpreted.

No echoes return to mock the silent tongue.

Well-timed silence has more eloquence than speech.

One thing about silence is that it can't be repeated.

--Carl F. Schrade,
Deep Waters and a Bubbling Brook

**Death and life are in the power of the tongue.
– Proverbs 18:21 –**

The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.

James 3:6-9

St. James had evidently learned well and deeply his lesson respecting the ferocity of the human tongue. He compares it, roughly speaking, with beasts, reptiles, fish and fowl. He declares that any of these may be considered as tameable. Man's superiority and power to conquer these has been demonstrated. But power to conquer the tongue and to make it tame and obedient and thoroughly reliable has never yet been demonstrated. "The tongue can no man tame." It is an unruly (restless, ceaseless) evil. And no serpent bite contains so dangerous, so violent poison. The serpent's bite may cause pain and physical death, but the tongue can do more, in that it can produce moral ravage, which will bite, devour and cause madness to others, and its influence extends to death eternal.

St. James is not speaking of the tongue from the worldly standpoint, but as a member of the Church of Christ to fellow-members. We all use our tongues in praising God, in confessing his grace and mercy and love, and in speaking forth his praises. This is proper. How can we do otherwise? But, alas, that it should be true that the same tongue which thus praises the Creator so often proves a curse, an injury, a world of iniquity to fellow-man! And especially to the fellow-members of the "household of faith!"—setting on fire the course of nature by slanders, evil-speaking and evil-surmising, hints, insinuations, etc. Oh, Lord, who is sufficient for these things! Truly, as St. Paul declares, "Our words are either a savor of life unto life or of death unto death."



The course of nature, more literally the wheel of life, or the human course from the cradle to the tomb, may easily be set on fire at any time. There are thousands of opportunities. The tongue is the match. Possibly St. James had specially in mind the course of the New Creature and its dangers. What if it should be set on fire and the entire spiritual prospect blighted, destroyed! That this is his thought seems to be implied by the words, "And it is set on fire of Gehenna." The world in general have evil tongues, reprobate minds; but being unregenerate the world's children are not in danger of Gehenna, the Second Death. But the Church, having received the grace of God in Christ, having been "begotten again," has staked its all upon the attainment of the spiritual blessing which the Lord has promised to the faithful. In the Church, therefore, the power of the tongue is much more potent than elsewhere. It may set on fire the course of the New Nature for some—a fire which may burn into the Second Death, and a fire which may not be confined to the one in whose heart it is ignited, but which may spread to others with similar effect, blighting the sweetness, the happiness, the Christ-likeness in the present life and destroying all future prospects.

St. James, to illustrate the power of the mind, the will, in the control of the body, and especially in control of the tongue, illustrates the matter by the bridling of a horse. The fiery steed, much stronger than a man, can be “broken” or tamed, bridled and made to do the will of the driver. But not so the tongue. It is most unruly. The new will takes hold with determination that the tongue shall go in the proper direction only, speaking forth words of justice and love, yet ere long the tongue runs away, breaks its bonds. Here we have a runaway accident with damage to some—perhaps to many.

Similarly with ships; a rudder is so placed as to turn the ship about in the face of the most severe gales—not only little ships, but great ships are thus turned about by very small helms, which answer perfectly to the steering apparatus of the helmsman. But the tongue, which should be tractable to the guidance of the New Creature and its most useful servant, is, on the contrary, perverse,



uncontrollable. The tongue, therefore, one of the least of our members, is one of the most important of them. It can accomplish great things, either for good or for evil, just as the little fire of a match might be so used as to set on fire a forest. R. 4381

Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things.

See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

James 3:3-5

The public servants of the Church are to some extent specially its “tongues,” and what an influence they wield for good or for evil, in the blessing and upbuilding of the Lord’s people, or for their injury—cursing! How necessary that all the tongue-servants of the Lord’s Body be such, and such only, as are of his spirit! Their influence not only extends to those who are in the Church, but in considerable measure they are mouthpieces heard outside. And the same principle applies to every individual member of the Church, in his use of his member, his tongue. He may use it wisely or unwisely, with heavenly wisdom or with earthly wisdom. He may use it for strife, and tearing down the faith and character of the brethren, in overthrowing love and confidence, or he may use it in building up these graces of the spirit. How many have proved the truth of the Apostle’s words, that the tongue has great possibilities, either for defiling the whole body, the Church, and setting on fire the course of nature, by stirring up the evil poisons and propensities of the fallen nature! How few amongst the Lord’s people have conquered the tongue to the extent of bringing it into subjection to the will of God, that they may minister good, and only good, to all with whom they come in contact! Let us, dearly beloved, be fully resolved that by divine grace (promised to assist us) the present year shall witness great progress in our control of this most important member of our bodies, bringing the same into full subjection and obedience and service to the King of kings and Lord of lords—to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. R. 2447

A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

– Proverbs 18:24 –

True friendship is a rare flower on our sin-cursed earth, and when it is found and proved it should be greatly prized. It is an element of the original likeness of God. True friendship can never exist in a heart where selfishness reigns; for the moment self-interest is crossed, the false and fickle friendship begins to decline or proves treacherous.

We have already noticed that friendship implies like qualities of mind and of heart. The generous love the generous, the noble love the noble, the honest love the honest, the meek love the meek, etc.; but now we call attention to the fact that amongst the Lord's people are not many great, wise or noble—naturally speaking—and that God loves and accepts as his covenant people, friends, children, chiefly those who are not noble by nature. We notice also a love and friendship amongst the Lord's consecrated people stronger and deeper than any earthly tie or relationship—notwithstanding the fact that amongst the Lord's people are “not many great or noble,” but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. How comes this seeming contradiction of a general rule of friendship? We reply that God's love toward us as sinners was not that of friendship but of compassion, and similarly the love of his people for sinners is not that of friendship but of compassion, sympathy, the desire to help them out of their degradation. Not until after we had ceased to be sinners, through acceptance of Christ, were we privileged to become the friends of God and to realize him as our friend. Not until we had ceased to be sinners, and had been accepted in the Beloved, would we become the friends of others similarly transformed, and begin to grow in this quality of friendship—love for one another as brethren, partakers of the holy Spirit.

In a word there are two planes of friendship—a natural plane, on which men of like natural qualities would be drawn together; and a spiritual plane, on which those unlike in natural qualities, but alike in spiritual hopes, aims and ambitions, are drawn still more closely together by the new tie, the new love, which binds not their flesh but their hearts in Christian love and unity. These New Creatures in Christ Jesus know each other not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. In each other's spirits or new minds there are the noblest sentiments, the highest aspirations, that which is good, true, noble, pure—whatever may be their weaknesses according to the flesh. They love each other from the new standpoint of intention, will, harmony with God, and their friendship for one another grows increasingly as they perceive each other's energy in fighting the good fight of faith against the evil influences of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. No tongue nor pen can properly express the love, the friendship, which subsists between these New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away and all things have become new. R. 1907 and R. 3233

**You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.
No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know
what his master is doing, but I have called you friends, for all
things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.
John 15:14-15**

Christian Fellowship

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Blest are the sons of peace,
Whose hearts and hopes are one,
Whose kind designs to serve and please
Through all their actions run.

Before our Father's throne,
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
O may this mutual love
Encourage ev'ry fainting heart,
His zeal and faith to prove.

Our glorious hope revives
Our courage ev'ry day,
While each in expectation strives
To run the heav'nly way.

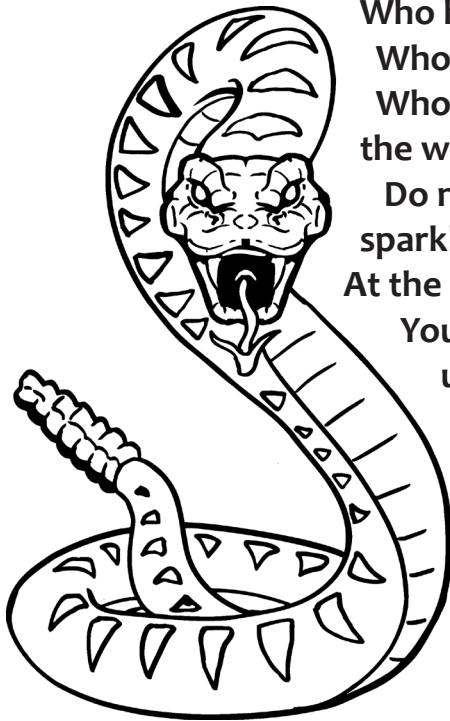
—Hymn 23, Hymns of Dawn

Wine is a mocker. Strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

– Proverbs 20:1 –

While it cannot be said that the Bible commands total abstinence from intoxicating liquors, it can be said that everywhere from Genesis to Revelation it reprobates drunkenness and points us to its debauching effects as injurious both physically and spiritually.

Here we have a pen picture of the drunkard, true to life; and those who pursue this folly find themselves finally bound in the galling yoke of a terrible slavery. Would that this curse were banished from every land. And, thank God, the time is not far distant when, under the established Kingdom of God, this evil shall be thoroughly and promptly dealt with.



**Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions?
Who has babbling? Who has wounds without cause?
Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at
the wine. Those who go in search of mixed wine.
Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it
sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly.
At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper.
Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will
utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one
who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like
one who lies at the top of the mast, saying:
“They have struck me, but I was not hurt.
They have beaten me, but I did not feel it.
When shall I awake, that I may
seek another drink?”**

Proverbs 23:29-35

The Word of God says that no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God. (I Cor. 6:10.) The Scriptures do not say that a moderate use of liquor brings woe, sorrow, redness of eyes, etc., and we are not to add to their words. But we do well to remember that “They that tarry long at the wine” probably reached that condition through **habit**, and that most of such began the use of liquor with the intention of becoming moderate drinkers only. —Prov. 23:30.

Beware of the slavery of habit! Even the force of the “exceeding great and precious promises” is not sufficient to hold in check our fallen appetites when they are constantly being fed and the chains of habit are being forged. Surely the new nature cannot thrive under conditions which deprave even the old nature! Let every New Creature resist faithfully the seductive influences of evil, if he would make his calling and election sure to the Kingdom.

Solomon the Wise gives us the picture of the drunkard—redness of eyes; woe; sorrow; contentious; complaining. He advises, “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red and giveth color to the cup and goeth down smoothly. At last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” It would appear that there is a charm or enticement connected with alcoholic stimulants which gradually wastes the strong and quickly enthralls the weak of will. The wise man associates the demoniacal power of liquor with its twin-sister, fleshly desire and general immorality, saying, “Thine eyes shall behold strange women and thy heart shall utter perverse things.” He adds, “Thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea [like floating wreckage] and as he that lieth on top of the mast” —in imminent danger of destruction. He describes the condition of those who become beastly drunk. They are unconscious of injury and seem to have their chiefest pleasure in unconsciousness, so that, upon recovering from one debauch, their desire is to seek the stimulation again. Thus are the chains of slavery to a most degrading habit gradually forged and manhood gradually enslaved and earthly prospects, not to mention heavenly hopes, go glimmering.

There is a marked contrast between the spirit and sentiment of the world and that of a true Christian. With the world there is a general tendency to indulge at times in a little revelry, and with many of them there is a decided inclination toward drunkenness. Even among the abstemious there is a feeling that an occasional drink is not only permissible, but quite necessary.

The Christian, however, has set before him the high standard of a sound mind, with meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. The more a Christian possesses the spirit of righteousness, the Holy Spirit, the more he realizes that he has passed from darkness into light. The Divine standard is to be his viewpoint always. Instead of looking forward to revelry, he is rather to turn away with regret that any such conditions prevail among mankind. The world considers the use of liquor to be proper if not too frequently indulged in. The Christian, on the contrary, considers drunkenness and revelry to be improper and to be resisted so far as he and his influence are concerned.

The Christian is to display increasingly the spirit of true holiness. The Apostle says, “Let your moderation be known of all men.” (Phil. 4:5.) The very promises made to us in the Scriptures tend to make us sober. Our God is most gracious!

*What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?*

Hence anything that might lead our steps away from the spirit of holiness is to be regarded as something pernicious, for it might cost us Divine favor, our eternal life and a share in the Kingdom. R. 1520, R. 5098, R. 4600

**As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your
conduct, because it is written, “BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”
1 Peter 1:15-16**

**Who can say, “I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?”
– Proverbs 20:9 –**

O wretched man! I find that my body is a dead body, that sin has gained such a power over it and so chained it down to things that are evil, in fact and in intention, that I cannot do the things that I would, —that when I would do good and keep the perfect law, sin is present with me, and hinders, —being an integral part of my body; so that the good that I would do, the perfect life that I would live, I am unable to perform, and the evil things that I would not do, which my mind, my will, rejects, and which I strive against, those things to some extent I find myself unable to resist; and here was my helpless condition as bound to the Law Covenant. I realized that I never could gain, through its assistance and offers, the glorious perfections that I desired, and the eternal life which could accompany only these perfections.

**So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
Romans 8:8**

What shall I do? How can I escape this condition of things? I thank God that a way of escape has been provided; I thank God that in his due time he has sent Jesus, as a great Redeemer, and that through his death the world of mankind has been redeemed from the original sentence, and additionally that all we who were Jews and under the Law Covenant are **set at liberty from that covenant**—that the death of Jesus on our behalf means the death of our Covenant, which, though in some respects an advantage, was very unfavorable to us because of our inherited weaknesses. I thank God that now I am at liberty to become united to Christ, at liberty to consider my union with Moses and the Law Covenant as at an end, at liberty to take on me the vows and covenants required of all called to be the Bride of Christ. Thanks be unto God for this deliverance from the bondage of the Law of Works into the liberty of the Law of Faith in Christ Jesus! R. 2721

**Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men,
resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the
free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.
Romans 5:18**

This justification, which we receive through faith in Christ, becomes to us the basis of our new hopes in him , —of becoming his disciples, and, if faithful, ultimately joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom. This the Apostle expresses in the words, “By whom also [additional to justification and its peace] we have access by faith into *this grace* [the privilege of adoption into God’s family] wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God [in the hope of sharing in God’s glory and Kingdom with our Lord and Head].” The Apostle proceeds to prove, not only that the death of Christ was necessary as the off-set to Adam’s transgression, and the payment of his penalty, but he demonstrates that this penalty was fully paid, and that God has accepted it on behalf of the world in general, and not of the Jews only, and has transferred all to Christ. R. 2720

It is a snare for a man to devote rashly something as holy, and afterward to reconsider his vows.

– Proverbs 20:25 –

It is those who thus respect their covenant obligations, and fulfill them, that shall forever abide in the tabernacle of the Lord and dwell in his holy Kingdom. It is in view of these solemn obligations that the Lord counsels those who would come to him to “first count the cost” and make sure that they are ready to assume them (Luke 14:28-32), and that on another occasion he said, “No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62.) Again we read, “If any man draw back, my soul shall have **no pleasure** in him.” And the Apostle Paul shows that some at least will draw back unto perdition—destruction. —Heb. 10:38-39.

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• **When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it, for** •
• **He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed—** •
• **Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.** •
• **Ecclesiastes 5:4-5** •
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Thus viewed, how imperative are the obligations of our covenants with God. But, on the other side of this great responsibility, are the bountiful encouragements and assurances of divine grace: —“My grace is sufficient for thee;” “My strength is made perfect in [your] weakness;” “I will teach thee and guide thee in the way which thou shalt go.” Yes, the blessed promises stand out on every page of the sacred Word; and the spirit of God is ever ready to seal them upon the hearts of his consecrated children who continue to look to him for the supplies of grace, and who make diligent use of them.

Thus the Lord is able to carry on to completion the good work which he has begun in us; and he will do it in all who continue loyal and true to their covenant and zealous for the cause of truth and righteousness. “He that doeth these things shall never be moved.”

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• **Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and** •
• **election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble, for so an** •
• **entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting** •
• **kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** •
• **2 Peter 1:10-11** •
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We next notice that while Peter’s words encouragingly indicate the possibility of the glorious inheritance to all who are called, there is also the implied possibility of failure to enter into it. There is an “if;” a **contingency**, upon which the scales of divine judgment as to our worthiness or unworthiness of the inheritance must turn. And it is in view of this contingency that Paul urges all the called ones to great sobriety of mind and carefulness of conduct, saying, “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;” and again, “Let us therefore fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” It is not enough, therefore, that we have **consecrated** ourselves to God as living sacrifices; that we have **covenanted** to follow in the footsteps of Jesus; for the consecration, the covenant, the promise, will avail nothing if we prove unfaithful to it, except to rise up in judgment against us. “Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.” —Eccl. 5:4-5. See also Deut. 23:21-23; Pro. 20:25; Heb. 10:38-39; Psa.15:1-5; Luke 9:62; John 15:6; Acts 5:4-5. R. 2081, R. 2154

To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

– Proverbs 21:3 –

Coming down to the ordinary affairs of life, we see that justice should be the very foundation of everything—between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, teachers and pupils, employers and employees, etc. The lesson of our text is a very important one to us of the Church. In Christian character justice, obedience to God's Law, comes first; mercy and benevolence come afterwards. We do not know of a principle that the Lord's people need to learn more particularly than this one of **justice**.

Injustice seems to crop out in many ways in the fallen human nature. Little injustices are daily practiced in respect to trifles. These are thought not worth considering. But whoever cultivates injustice in even a small way is building up a character which will be unfit for the Kingdom. As justice is the foundation of God's Throne and of God's character, so justice must be the foundation principle governing the lives of His people.

Ordinarily considered, sacrifice is a step beyond mere obedience. Obedience is a *duty* toward God. We ought to obey God. To His creatures God's will is *Law*. This is duty of the very highest type. But the privilege of sacrifice granted to the people of God goes beyond duty, beyond obligation. We may *give* unto the Lord what He has not *required* of us; but what we give in sacrifice is voluntary, not commanded. R. 5431

[So then] the proper course for us as disciples of Christ is that we observe the Golden Rule in our conduct, watching over our thoughts and our lips; and also that we present continually all that we have and are in sacrifice to the Lord. But obedience, justice, **must come first**, for this is demanded by the Law of God. Before we can make much development in the cultivation of sacrificial love, we must learn to have a love of justice, righteousness. There is a trite and true proverb that a man must be just before he is generous. It behooves the children of God, as members of the New Creation, to study with diligence this subject of strict justice toward all, and to put into practice day by day this quality of character which is absolutely essential if we would be acceptable to God; for it lies at the foundation of all Christian character. R. 5430

The lesson of obedience is one which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. It is necessary, too, that we have the *spirit* of obedience and not obey merely the letter. Whoever has the true spirit of obedience will not only obey the expressed commands of the Lord, given in His Word, but will seek to know the Divine will in everything. He will seek to note the providences of his life, that he may be guided in the way the Lord would have him go. It is such faithful, obedient children of God who exclaim in the language of the Prophet:

Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart!

Jeremiah 15:16

Let all, then, who would be wholly acceptable to our Father in Heaven be very diligent to build character in harmony with His Law, having justice in thought, in word and in deed at the foundation, justice in our relationship to God, to the brethren and to all, and then building thereupon all the various qualities of love, that thus we may grow up into Christ our living Head in all things. R. 5431

A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.

– Proverbs 22:3 –

Let no one suppose that it will be possible to escape the difficulties and trials of the great Time of Trouble, whose shadow is now clouding the earth. The most and the best that could be hoped for in this direction would be an amelioration of the conditions by the exercise of that wisdom which cometh from Above, described by the Apostle, who says that it is “first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits.” To whatever extent any individual, anywhere, shall follow this prescription of Heavenly wisdom, to that extent we may be sure he will have God’s favor. And that favor guarantees to the recipient that “all things shall work together for his good.”

The place of hiding is the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty. (Psa. 91:1-9.) This secret place of the Most High, Beloved, is the place of intimate communion and fellowship with God, through the blessed privilege of prayer and through faith in his precious Word and his promised providential care.

*When all around our souls give way,
He then is all our hope and stay.*

Oh, how precious is this hiding place! What rest and refreshment we find in the midst of the commotion that is even now bestirring the whole world. R. 5571 and R. 1788

**Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you.
Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past.
Isaiah 26:20**



**He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress, My God, in Him I will trust.” Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge. His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.
Psalm 91:1-10**

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

– Proverbs 22:6 –

The thought seems to be that if the plastic mind of a child be properly cared for, properly impressed with the principles of righteousness, that impress cannot be wholly effaced even though the child might temporarily try forbidden paths of sin. Would that this important matter could be clearly discerned by all of the Lord's people, and that all could realize that in bringing children into the world a serious responsibility is undertaken, a responsibility which cannot be shirked, a responsibility which no right-minded person would desire to shirk.

We cannot encourage imperfect parents to expect to rear imperfect children full of wisdom and the graces of perfection, but we can assure them that very much indeed depends upon the way in which they train their children as to what kind of men or women they shall become, and whether they shall bring to their parents happiness or unhappiness, sorrow or joy. What a blessing it would be both to parents and to children did the former rightly understand how early the training and disciplining is necessary—that it should begin in the parent before the child is born; that discipline, obedience, insisted upon with firmness and kindness, should be inculcated from the day of birth persistently.

We believe that, while children are born with a certain amount of depravity and predilection to evil, nevertheless, their little minds are in a large measure blank pages, upon which principles either for good or for evil are sure to be deeply engraved. If their minds be not directed in the lines of justice and mercy and love and patience, and if they be not taught that these are the divine requirements, and their reasonable service, we may be sure that they will be taught the reverse of these, as they come in contact with the various depraving influences of life—the world, the flesh, the devil. Those parents who consider their children to be each a little garden-spot, and who faithfully plant in these the seeds of justice and love and patience and meekness and gentleness, and all the fruits of the spirit, to the extent that they may be able, will be sure to find a rich reward in the graces of character that will result, under the Lord's blessing. R. 3598, R. 3711, R. 2903



And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4

WORDS OF THE WISE

Chapters 22:17 to 24:34



Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge, for it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you. Let them all be fixed upon your lips, so that your trust may be in the LORD. I have instructed you today, even you.

Proverbs 22:17-19

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

– Proverbs 23:7 –

According to a man's innermost sentiment, so is he. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is his real character.

What is your real will? What are your real sentiments? **Not**, What **words** do you use? not, What are your **actions**? but, What is the **motive** underlying all these?

The New Creature is to be God-like, spiritual, eventually of the spirit nature in glory—perfect. But before it attains that perfection, the heart of the New Creature is required to prove its loyalty. Some will be overcomers in a higher sense than others, but none will be overcomers except those who are true, loyal, pure. If, therefore, we have made a consecration to God, it would be our endeavor that our hearts, our desires, our motives be perfect. The only proper attitude is to confess our imperfections, if we are wrong. God expects us to be loyal of **heart**. And that loyalty of heart should reach out and control the whole life. R. 5246

Proverbs 23:15-25



My son, if your heart is wise, my heart will rejoice—indeed, I myself. Yes, my inmost being will rejoice when your lips speak right things.

– Proverbs 23:15-16 –

[Here is] manifest the right desire and ambition of a true parent for a son— viz., wisdom and righteousness. The ambitious aim of some parents is to have their own sons men of wealth, or power, or fame, or social prominence: but none of these things are worthy of their ambition. It is the wise son (wise in heavenly wisdom) that maketh the glad father.

The exhortation is that of a parent or a teacher who has had experience in life and who fain would be helpful through advice to one starting upon life's pathway. Knowledge of good and evil may reach us either through the instruction of those who have already profited by either or both of these. To profit by instruction is indeed an evidence of wisdom. The "prudent [wise] man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple [foolish] pass on, and are punished." (Pro 22:3.) We see folly in this respect repeated every day. Those who profit by the experiences of others either through instruction or observation are the smaller number, but they are the wise ones. The majority must gain their wisdom through severe experience—punishment for errors, for rashness, for lack of observing the natural laws of cause and effect. Since they will not learn through instruction that whatsoever a man soweth the like shall he also reap, they must learn this lesson through bitter experience. The lessons of wisdom learned, no matter in which school, the school of instruction or the school of experience, are valuable, and ultimately, we believe, will be profitable to the majority of our race. Ultimately all shall learn that peace, joy, divine favor, including everlasting life, can be had only by walking in the way of truth, honesty, righteousness—the godly way.

Hear, my son, and be wise, and guide your heart in the way.

Proverbs 23:19

This lesson seems to picture before our minds a youth starting upon life's journey where two roads meet; the one an upward road, an honorable course of morality, prudence, self-control, patience, perseverance, righteousness; the other path a downward road, a way of gratification of the depraved tastes and appetites of the fallen human nature, a way of apparent ease, of carelessness for the truth and for honesty and self-restraint, a way of loose liberty, a way that leads into intemperance of language, of thought, of conduct, of food and of drink; and which leads on to further degradation and dishonor.

The voice of wisdom is heard by nearly every young man and woman starting in life, directing them to the upward and honorable path; it reaches them either through parents or instructors or friends or observation. The smaller number, however, are wise enough to accept heartily the instruction and so to avoid the downward path entirely. The vast majority desire the pleasures of sin for a season at least. They have no thought of going onward in the path of sin, but merely to remain near by the noble path of morality and honesty and truth. They do not realize that each step in the downward

road away from the path of righteousness will cause their hearts to lose appreciation of righteousness and to become inured to sin. Very few, therefore, accept the lessons of wisdom promptly and heartily, and act thereon. There will indeed be opportunities farther down the journey of life to leave the downward way and to seek the upward path, but they will be much more difficult than at the beginning, at the parting of the way in youth—more difficult because the downward path has been leading their characters and sensibilities farther and farther away from the way of morality and honesty. R. 1502 and R. 2073

The guiding of the *heart* in the right ways of the Lord is more important than the guiding of our actions, because if the heart is right the actions will regulate themselves accordingly. “Keep thy *heart*, for out of it are the issues of life.” (Pro. 4:23.) By communion with God in prayer and through the Word of truth our hearts are kept in the love and service of God; and it is therefore only by constant use of these means that our hearts can be guided in the right way. R. 1502

Do not let your heart envy sinners, but be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day, for surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off.

– Proverbs 23:17-18 –

There may be times when those who walk in the way of wisdom may seem to see disadvantages therein, and pleasures in the way of sensualities; but the voice of wisdom instructs such to look beyond and consider the full end of the downward way, to respect the Lord and seek to walk honestly and uprightly, assured that the end of this course will eventually be better than the other.

It is indeed folly to envy sinners and thereby to miss the joy and peace which naturally flow from a heart full of the love and reverence of the Lord; for there is an end of their brief pleasures, while those whose joy is in the Lord have a never failing source of consolation. R. 2074 and R. 1502

**Do not mix with winebibbers, or with gluttonous eaters of meat.
– Proverbs 23:20 –**

Statistics show that hundreds of millions of dollars are spent every year for intoxicating liquors, which not only fail to profit the users, but which do others as well as themselves serious injury—mental, moral and physical. How many have been brought to poverty through intoxicants! And, to our shame be it said, this sin against self and manhood is more common in the civilized or so-called Christian nations than in some others.

**For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and
drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.
Proverbs 23:21**

The sin of gluttony leads usually to another kind of poverty. The poor may become sotted with drink, but rarely can they afford to be gluttonous. Gluttony is chiefly, therefore, a sin of the rich or well to do. It leads to poverty of both mental and physical strength. It is as truly intemperance as drunkenness, although not so far reaching in its bad influence.

The lesson speaks of the intemperance and impropriety of sloth, or idleness, or lack of energy; and the observation of every wise man proves that true happiness is associated with energy—mental and physical activity. “Not slothful in business,” is one of the characteristics of a Christian, as set forth by the Apostle. We live in a day, however, in which another form of intemperance prevails in an opposite direction with not a few—intemperance in energy and ambition; a consuming desire for honors or wealth, that robs many, not only of proper social enjoyments, but, more important still, of spiritual privileges and joys. R. 2074

We are in sympathy with the spirit of “total abstinence,” though we cannot subscribe to all that is said and done and hoped for by its advocates. All true “saints” would surely be glad to forego their own liberty that thereby they might promote the general welfare and fulfill the advice of the Apostle, that— “We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” Seeing the terrible injury being done by strong drink throughout the civilized world, surely every reader of this journal is now and always will be a temperance advocate—especially by example—while telling the “good tidings of great joy.” R. 3746

See also Proverbs 20:1 and Proverbs 23:29-35

Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

– Proverbs 23:22 –

This is but another way of saying, Honor thy father and thy mother. And the obligation of honor to parents never ceases, though that of obedience does when the years of maturity and discretion are reached.

True wisdom will never despise the counsel of the aged, especially from parents, of whose interest in the child's welfare there can rarely be doubt. It is one of the peculiarities and difficulties of our day that because of the sudden increase in knowledge and educational facilities the young have in many departments of knowledge outstripped their seniors. The resultant tendency is disrespect for the experiences and advice of parents and seniors, and a disposition to be heady, high-minded, unthankful, unholy, disobedient to parents and other like disgraces foretold by the Apostle as features of our day. (See 2 Tim. 3:4.) On this account additional wisdom and great patience are needful on the part of parents and all instructors of the young. Recognizing the influences which counteract parental instruction, and recognizing the fact that the children may be in advance in some points, the wise parent should seek to set a good example in proper childlikeness himself, and be ready to learn from and with the children along the lines of their superior advantages, explaining that the present increase of opportunities for knowledge are phenomenal, and not of men but of God, as foretold by the prophet respecting the "time of the end." (Dan. 12:4.) By this course of honesty and wisdom the parent will maintain the confidence of his child, who will then be the better prepared to learn in turn along the lines of the parent's experiences in life and respecting principles of morality and the evil tendencies of immorality. Thus wisdom in the parents has very much to do with the choice of wisdom by the child. R. 1502 and R. 2074

Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

– Proverbs 23:23 –

Truth, wisdom, instruction and understanding are not dear at any price, and when secured should never be sold or compromised for the short-lived advantages of error. Buy the **truth**, and sell it not: in meekness and with a ready and appreciative mind seek **instruction** in the ways of God's appointment, but never take counsel with the ungodly. In God's Word a refreshing **understanding** of the truth is gained and the **wisdom** that cometh down from above is secured, with all the peaceable fruits of righteousness. R. 1502

TRUTH

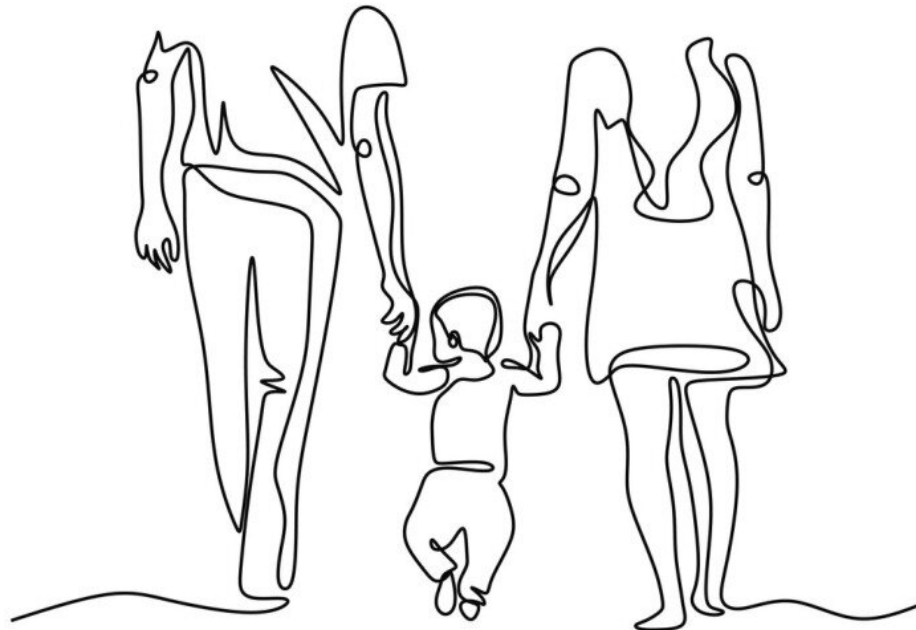
One of the chief lessons to be inculcated is, that truth is precious above all things---with reference to the ordinary affairs of life and dealings between men, with reference to spiritual things, with reference to God, and with reference to the divine plan. Truth is to be prized, and those who love and practice the truth are to be esteemed, and such only; error, falsehood, no matter how gaudy or showy or attractive, is to be disdained and repudiated. This is in harmony with our Lord's prayer, "Sanctify them [i.e., separate them from the evil and set them apart for good] through thy truth: thy Word is truth." R. 2074

The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, and he who begets a wise child will delight in him. Let your father and your mother be glad, and let her who bore you rejoice.

– Proverbs 23:24-25 –

These verses suggest, and properly, that wisdom in the young does not depend wholly on inculcation, instruction. Probably the majority of wise children are born wise. “He that **begetteth a wise child** shall have joy of him.” If parents in general could realize the importance of the parental office and the bearing of their own characters and sentiments upon their offspring, laying the foundations for good and wise characters before the children are born, the responsibilities of their position and relationship would, we believe, not only favorably influence their children, but help also to develop positive character in themselves.

The parents who have failed to discern the laws of nature under whose control they have brought forth children; and whose children therefore reflect the parental unwisdom and unsettledness of character, have in consequence double reason for exercising patience toward the unwisdom of their offspring, and double reason for perseverance in their later efforts to correct that unwisdom and to lead their children into right ways. R. 2074



My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways. – Proverbs 23:26 –

Originally man was created in God's image and likeness. As a result of the fall our hearts are not perfect, but are prone to sin. The Lord invites us to give our hearts, our affections, to Him: "My son, give Me thine heart." (Prov. 23:26.) God has provided the Channel whereby He can restore us to the relationship of sons, that Channel being the Lord Jesus. After we have accepted the Lord's proposition and given Him our hearts, we become the Lord's dear children, as the Apostle expresses it. The next thing is to keep the heart in loyalty, in full submission to the Divine will. The necessity for thus keeping the heart is manifest. Even though our hearts are loyal to the Lord, yet we are surrounded by adverse conditions. The world, the flesh and the Devil are assailing our hearts, which need, therefore, to be watched continually. As the Apostle says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Cor. 4:7.) We have these adverse tendencies, or conditions, to deal with.

God is not judging His people merely in respect to their flesh, in respect to the deeds of life. These are more or less imperfect. He has so fixed the matter that the result of that which springs from the heart, for which the heart is responsible, is life or death. If the issues are right, the result will be life eternal. If the issues are wrong, the result will be death, unworthiness of life. It is not merely the issues of our **conduct** that determine the everlasting result, life or death, but the issues of our **hearts**. They not only affect the present life, in the cleansing or polluting of those with whom we come in contact, but they determine or settle the matter as to whether or not we shall have life.

When we give our hearts it includes all that we have and are in the highest and noblest and fullest sense—that which was illustrated by the three gifts of the wise men is all represented in this brief statement, "Give me thine heart." Whoever gives his heart to the Lord fully and unreservedly, gives his body, gives his worship and reverence and praise, and gives his earthly treasure, time, talents, influence, money—all—to be used in joyful service for the glory of the King.

To those who have already accepted the Lord's favor, who have already presented their bodies living sacrifices, who have already given the Lord their hearts, we urge a remembrance of the fact that the sacrifice once put upon the altar must remain there, and that the longer it remains the more joyful should be the service, the more appreciated every opportunity for sacrifice, the more thankful should be the heart and the more rich should be the experience in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts and preparing us more and more through the graces of the Spirit for the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that so love him and so reverence his Son. R. 4904 and R. 3704

Our little all is surely none too much to give to our God, to our Redeemer, to the cause of righteousness. A mistake made by many well-meaning people is the keeping back of a part of their heart for themselves. If we give the Lord nine-tenths of our heart and our will and reserve one-tenth, in the furthest recesses, it will but weaken and blemish our character, our lives our success in Divine service. We will find ourselves making paths for selfishness and sin, from the unconsecrated, farthest corners, all over the consecrated nine-tenths. Properly, the Lord could not accept such a consecration under his call, "My son, give me thine heart." R. 4812

See also Proverbs 4:23

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has babbling? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine. Those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly. At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: “They have struck me, but I was not hurt. They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?”

– Proverbs 23:29-35 –

See Entry for Proverbs 20:1

For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity.

– Proverbs 24:16 –

A just man will not fall into sin. The very most that could happen to him would be to stumble. There are various causes for stumbling. But if the heart is right, the man will rise again; for the Lord will show him that he has made a mistake and will point out the way to him by which he may recover himself. If he is a lover of righteousness, he will desire to press on toward that which is right, just, approved of the Lord, even if he should stumble many times. —Psa. 37:23-24; Pro. 24:16. R. 5218

**The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and
He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly
cast down, for the LORD upholds him with His hand.**

Psalm 37:23-24

KING HEZEKIAH'S COLLECTION OF SOLOMON'S PROVERBS

Chapters 25 to 29

These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah copied:

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.
– Proverbs 25:11 –

Some one has wisely said that **Error can get around the world while Truth is getting its boots on.** Oh, the power of a slanderous word! Oh, the power of an insinuation! Yea, even of a shrug of the shoulder! Who does not know it? Who is unaware of the fact that this is the practice of the world daily; and alas, the practice also of many of God's people—professing Christians! The bitter word of sarcasm or insinuation is shot out often unthinkingly, but the terrible poison goes from heart to heart and fresh roots of bitterness are scattered abroad, which a lifetime of holy living cannot fully counteract.

On the contrary, what a power the tongue has for good, using the word **tongue** here in its broad sense, representing not only words spoken, but the words written and printed. As an illustration: What speaker or writer has ever done more to help poor humanity than the Prophet David in the inspired Psalms which he wrote? Truly, as Solomon has said, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11.) As for the Church, the Lord has indeed agreed that He will not judge the Church according to their words and their deeds entirely, but according



to their spirit, their intention, their will, their energy, their zeal for Him and His Truth. Nevertheless, He assures the Church that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak, and that they may thus judge or test themselves. If their hearts are right—full of love for God, for the brethren, for mankind, for their enemies, they will speak accordingly, manifesting their love and kindness in words as well as in deeds. The good heart out of its good treasure will shower blessings—fruits

**A man has joy by the answer of his mouth,
and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!**
Proverbs 15:23

and flowers of refreshment and kindness, while the evil heart will send forth bitter words, poisoned arrows, injurious to all with whom they come in contact. OV 208

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat. And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, for so you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the LORD will reward you.

– Proverbs 25:21-22 –

We should notice that the Law of God demands not only justice, but also love—love supreme to God, and love to our fellowmen. It demands mercy, kindness. Let us note the injunctions along this line which God gave to natural Israel under the Law. Let us see how far-reaching they were. “If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.” “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.” (Exo. 23:4-5; Pro. 25:21-22.) If love so broad and so comprehensive as this is demanded by God’s Law, and was obligatory upon Natural Israel, to what degree should Spiritual Israel possess and manifest this noble quality!

Our feelings should be largely those of sympathy and pity for wrong doers, remembering that surely either in the present life or in that which is to come a man shall reap according to his present sowing.

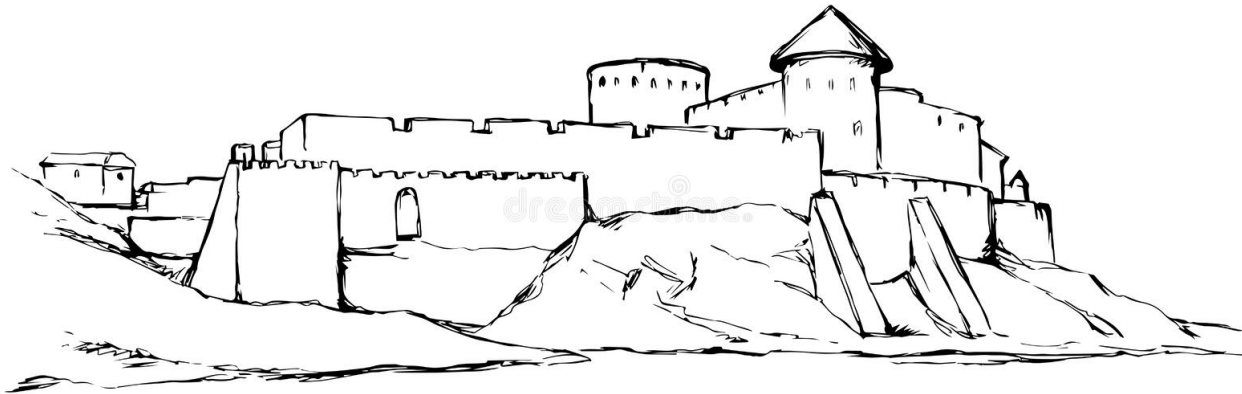
For these reasons and in order to cultivate in us more of the divine mind, we are instructed to be kind to our enemies and not to see them want for necessities of life. Such treatment will be more likely than any other to do them good, and to win them as friends. We are not, however, to treat them kindly in order to see how badly we can make them feel under it. We are to treat them kindly because love is the principle of our nature, the “new commandment” of our Lord and Master, the holy spirit which is more and more actuating us. We are to treat them thus, regardless of whether we ever melt them by our kindness in the present life or not. R. 5643 and R. 2214

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• **Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather**
• **give place to wrath, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS**
• **MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord. Therefore,**
• **“IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM. IF HE IS**
• **THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK. FOR IN SO DOING YOU**
• **WILL HEAP COALS OF FIRE ON HIS HEAD.” Do not be**
• **overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**
•
• **Romans 12:19-21**
•
.....

Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.

– Proverbs 25:28 –

In olden times cities were particularly places of refuge, where the inhabitants of the country congregated for protection. When the earth was less populous and the necessity for government was less appreciated than now, any marauding band was likely to take possession of whatever was open to their attack. So the cities of ancient times had strong walls. This was true, we remember, of Jerusalem and Jericho. It was true of ancient Troy, and also true of cities in Europe. In Vienna, the old wall of the city still stands; and so with other walled cities.



To rule one's own spirit, mind, disposition, implies a conflict similar in some respects to that of taking a city; for no matter where we begin, we find entrenched within us many armed and opposing powers. If the child of God would be the victor in this fight, he must not only storm all the fortresses of inherited evils, which seem to be a part of his very nature, but having gained possession and taken his seat upon the throne of this symbolic city (his will), he must thereafter be continually on the defensive; for the old enemies are constantly on the alert, and ever and anon seek to regain possession, so that he who continues to rule his own spirit is one who has not only routed the enemy, Sin, from the throne of his being, but is continuing to keep him at bay.

This ruling of one's spirit is by no means an easy task; and, as in the illustration, it cannot be done single-handed and alone. Consequently, the wise "general" will invoke all the assistance at His command, remembering the words of the Apostle— "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." (Eph. 6:12.) These powers of the world, the flesh and the Devil are closely allied, and therefore he who plans for conquest and an established reign thereafter, must seek alliance with another and a stronger Power. This Power is tendered to all who earnestly undertake this great work. It is none other than the Almighty Arm of our God, who says to those who accept His strength, greater is He that is with you—that is for you—than all they that be against you; gird yourselves like men, be strong, fear not. —See 1 John 4:4; Isa. 35:4. R. 5487

**Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him.
Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.**

– Proverbs 26:4-5 –

When talking to any one who speaks foolishly, do not talk foolishly in return. You dishonor yourself. In the second case: “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit,” would signify that you do him a service if you show him the folly of his position, thereby kindly helping him to a proper attitude of mind. R. 5050

**Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing,
knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.**

1 Peter 3:9

As a dog returns to his own vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.

– Proverbs 26:11–

While we may safely reckon that many members of denominations are properly true children of God, and may properly fellowship them as brethren in Christ, notwithstanding the fact that that they are still in Babylon, and blind to the harvest message, yet the case seems quite different when we apply it to those who by God’s grace have once been delivered out of Babylon, and who return thither “as a dog to his vomit, as a sow that was washed to wallowing again in the mire,” of sectarianism and blasphemy against God. I think this is a case such as the Apostle Peter mentions, where “it would have been better for them that they had never known the way or righteousness, than that they should know it and turn again from the holy commandment.” —2 Pet. 2:21-22.

However, on the question of **right**, I suggest that it is all **right** that those who are not appreciative of the light should go into the outer darkness. It is all **right**, because it is the divine arrangement, that those who have tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and have not appreciated them, should lose them. We are not saying that they lose them forever; that is not for us to decide, but for ourselves we safely can say:

*My soul, be on thy guard:
Ten thousand foes arise.
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize.*

*Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor once at ease sit down;
Thine arduous work will not be done
Till thou hast gained thy crown.*

—R. 2991

A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself. The simple pass on and are punished.

– Proverbs 27:12 –

As our Master said at the first advent, so we may now repeat, —“The children of this world are wise in their generation” —wiser, sometimes, than are the children of light. Therefore the latter need to take the more earnest heed to the divine revelation, which is able to give them the “spirit of a sound mind” beyond all others. R. 2867

See also Proverbs 22:3

One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.

– Proverbs 28:9 –

“God heareth not sinners.” (John 9:31; Job 27:9; Prov. 1:28,29; 28:9; Psa. 66:18; Isa. 1:15.) Christ is the way, the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by him. (John 14:6.) While father Adam was created a son of God and then had access to his Father, yet this relationship and its privileges were cut off when he rebelled and was sentenced as a sinner to death; —all relationship was severed, all rights and privileges were forfeited. True, God has mercifully provided a great sacrifice for sin, and reconciliation through the precious blood of the Redeemer, and through him a return to all the privileges, communion and favors lost in Adam; but this provision is restricted: it is not for everybody; it is open only to those who, desiring to flee away from sin, come to a knowledge of the Savior and accept the favor of God on the conditions of the New Covenant.

Provision is made for these, that they may divest themselves of the filthy rags of their own righteousness and put on the robe of Christ's righteousness through faith; and thus prepared they may be introduced to the Father as redeemed and restored sons—reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Then, and not until then, should we expect that their prayers would be anything else than an abomination before God. None will be heard and accepted by the Father, while rejecting the New Covenant and the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved.

But to those who realize their sins and, repenting of them, accept the Redeemer and the New Covenant as the only way back to sonship and fellowship with the Father, the Apostle says, —

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” “For through him [Christ] we both have access by one spirit unto the Father.” —Eph. 2:18,19. R. 2024

A faithful man will abound with blessings, but he who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.

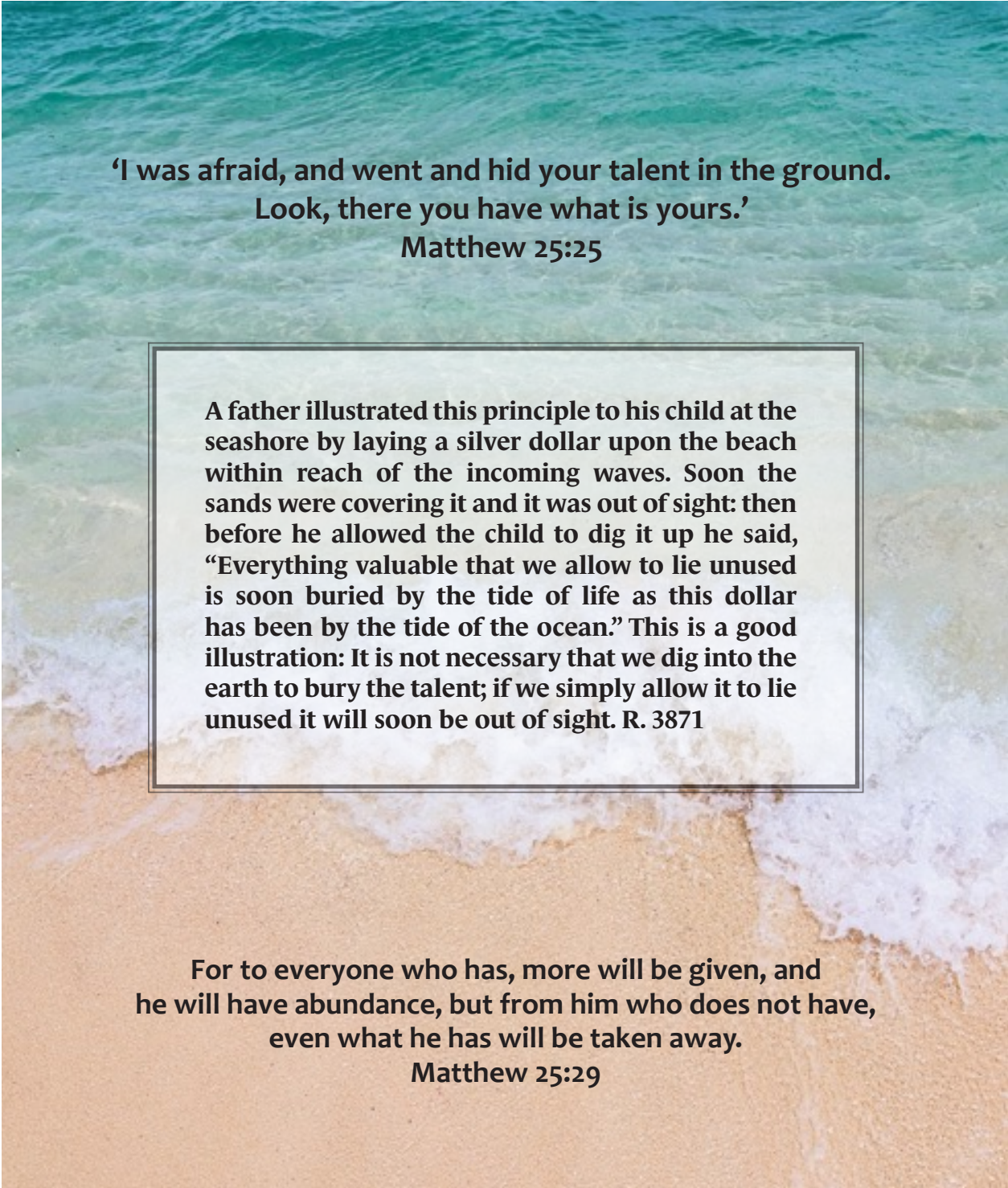
– Proverbs 28:20 –

We sometimes hear the claim made that all men are born free and equal, but there could be no greater mistake than this. Men are indeed born free so far as liberty of thought, will or intention are concerned, the only limitation being their knowledge or lack of it. But they are not born physically free, mentally free nor morally free. There is an incumbrance, a mortgage of sin and death, upon the whole human family which has descended from father Adam. This mortgage is called the curse. Some bear a larger share of it than others by heredity, environment. The original image and likeness of God has thus been marred, measurably effaced. If we assume that Adam as a perfect man had ten talents, it would be quite appropriate to say that not one of his posterity today, after six thousand years of falling, had more than five talents, and the majority much less, two talents and one talent. It is safe to estimate the mass of mankind as one-talented by nature. These talents which we possess by nature were transferred and became the Lord's when we accepted him, gave him our hearts, consecrated our all to his service. A "talent" represented 3,000 shekels of silver, and the shekels in turn were the great and the small, representing in value in our money one thousand dollars or two thousand dollars. In the parable the servants are represented as trading with these, that is, working with them, using them. They were left free to exercise their best abilities with merely the general regulation that these were for use, and that their faithfulness would be represented in the results they would secure from using them. So it is with the Lord's consecrated people; we are not specially hampered by directions as to how we shall use our consecrated talents, powers, privileges, opportunities. The Lord has a great work for the future, and is less interested in what results we shall obtain from the use of our present talents than in the demonstration of our loyalty and zeal. The Parable [of the Talents] admits that our talents at present are inferior, not great in the sight of our Master, and that he seeks to see our diligence, our faithfulness to him and his cause.

The parable shows the Master beginning with the more influential and rewarding faithfulness (1) with a share in his favor, the "joys of the Lord," and (2) with a rulership or control of larger blessings and opportunities and talents. This statement briefly outlines what is elsewhere more elaborately set forth, namely, that the chief blessing upon the Church will be the manifesting to them of divine favor and love as represented in the glory, honor and immortality with which they would be clothed upon when received into the divine presence as participators in the First Resurrection. If this were all the blessing how rich it would be! How wonderful the thought that for faithfulness for a few short years in so reasonable a service—the service of him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood—we should be counted worthy of such great dignity, honor and blessing everlastingly! The second or additional blessing is the honor of the Kingdom, the dominion, the privilege and opportunity of being participators with our Lord Jesus in the glorious work of uplifting the world of mankind out of present sin-and-death conditions. How forceful is the statement, "Faithful over a **few** things, ruler over **many** things." How abundantly the Lord does reward all of our little efforts in the service of truth and righteousness—in his service—whatever our talents, few or many.

The one-talent man of the parable is represented as being strictly honest; he had not wasted the talent, he had not used it in ministering to the flesh, in riotous living of any kind. He had kept it safe, and seemed to feel that his Lord would commend him and say, While you have not brought me any return I appreciate the fact that you exercised great care with the talent entrusted to you, and hid it and kept it safely, and that now you are able to return it. But not so. The Master was angry with him

and said, "Thou wicked and slothful servant." The point of this reproof lies in the fact that these servants represented only the consecrated and not the world—in the fact that every consecrated child of God in his consecration vow has agreed to spend and to be spent in the Master's service, whatever his talents, whatever his power. This man was admitted to the Lord's family, made partaker of the holy Spirit and granted a relationship in the body of Christ only because of this consecration to do and to serve, to use, to spend, to be spent. Hence conduct that would not be reprehensible on the part of the world is a violation of his covenant on the part of this servant. R. 3870



**'I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground.
Look, there you have what is yours.'
Matthew 25:25**

A father illustrated this principle to his child at the seashore by laying a silver dollar upon the beach within reach of the incoming waves. Soon the sands were covering it and it was out of sight: then before he allowed the child to dig it up he said, "Everything valuable that we allow to lie unused is soon buried by the tide of life as this dollar has been by the tide of the ocean." This is a good illustration: It is not necessary that we dig into the earth to bury the talent; if we simply allow it to lie unused it will soon be out of sight. R. 3871

**For to everyone who has, more will be given, and
he will have abundance, but from him who does not have,
even what he has will be taken away.
Matthew 25:29**

ONE TALENT

He couldn't sing and he couldn't play,
He couldn't speak, and he couldn't pray,
He'd try to read, but break right down,
Then sadly grieve at smile or frown.
While some with talents five began,
He started out with only one.
'With this,' he said, 'I'll do my best,
And trust the Lord to do the rest.'
His trembling hand and tearful eye
Gave forth a world of sympathy,
When all alone with one distressed,
He whispered words that calmed that breast.
And little children learned to know,
When grieved and troubled, where to go.
He loved the birds, the flowers, the trees,
And, loving him, his friends loved these.
His homely features lost each trace
Of homeliness, and in his face
There beamed a kind and tender light
That made surrounding features bright,
When illness came he smiled at fears,
And bade his friends to dry their tears;
He said, 'Good-bye,' and all confess
He made of life a grand success.

--John L. Shorey

He who is often rebuked and hardens his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

– Proverbs 29:1 –

[This verse] tells what will be the final outcome of any conflict between God and the sinner. If reproofs are not rightly received, if they do not have a corrective influence, they will have the opposite effect—the sinner will be the more obstinate and self-willed and opposed to God. The result of such a contest with the Almighty must mean their overthrow, their destruction—a destruction from which there is no recovery—no remedy. Whoever shall be remanded to the Second Death, there will be no hope for him.

But, thank God, this irremediable destruction of the Second Death will come only upon willful evil-doers of the class mentioned in this text—often reproofed and yet stiff-necked. Some of the Church might be classed in this category because of previous enlightenment, etc., enjoyed, but surely the world in general has not had such reproofs and such an intelligent understanding of the Lord as would make them properly amenable to the Second Death. And God purposes that every member of Adam's race must have this one full, complete privilege and opportunity for eternal life before he can be sentenced to the Second Death.

The philosophy of this is plain: Adamic death, which comes to all men as a result of Adam's sin and his condemnation as a sinner, is to be entirely wiped out, and Adam and all of his race are to be fully released from it. The right to set men free from that sentence was secured by the great Redeemer, Jesus, who offered up himself a corresponding price for all, to be testified in due time. This great fact has been testified to a comparatively small number during this Gospel Age—to such only as have an ear to hear and the seeing eye of faith. These only are set free from Adamic death now—and that not actually, but by faith, in order to permit them to become sanctified followers of Jesus.

An important fact, heretofore very generally overlooked, is that God's provision through the death of Jesus embraces every member of Adam's family as well as himself, and is the guarantee, to each and every member, of another chance or opportunity for harmony with God, aside from the one which Adam had and lost. Those of us who, as the Spirit-begotten Church, enjoy this favor in the present time, must not expect any further favor along this line in the future, for Christ dieth no more; and only one share in his redemptive work is provided for every member of the race. But so many as do not now hear and see and understand the grace of God, must be brought to a knowledge of this great truth. This includes the heathen as well as many residing in civilized lands, the eyes and ears of whose hearts have not seen nor heard the true message of Divine grace in Christ Jesus, and who, therefore, could not refuse him nor be refused by him thus far. R. 4820

The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

– Proverbs 29:25 –

Having proved “what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God,” nothing should be able to unsettle his faith or turn him from the line of duty, and no fear of man should bring him again into the snare of bondage to superstition or human traditions or opinions of others. If each individual prove his own work—his faith in the doctrines and his conduct in life—by the square and compass of God’s Word, “then shall he have rejoicing in himself and not in another” --i.e., his faith, no matter through what privileged human agent or agency it may have been received, will be so established by the Word of the Lord that it will be **his own**, and in no sense dependent upon another.



It was the neglect of this principle, of the right and duty of the individual judgment in proving all things by the inspired Word, that brought upon the Church the snare of the great apostacy, which set up infamous popes to dictate in matters of faith and conduct and subvert the consciences of men. Let us remember the command, “Sanctify **the Lord of hosts himself**, and let **him** be your fear, and let **him** be your dread.” Let us fear and dread to displease him; let us see to it that we know and love righteousness and that we have the law of God, not in our heads only, but also in our hearts, for so shall we ever find acceptance with him; and to such, who in faith continually rely upon the Lord, who go forth, strong in the strength which he supplies through faith, to do valiant service for truth and righteousness, comes also the blessed assurance, “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.”

It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

Psalm 118:8

I will meditate on Your precepts and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes. I will not forget Your word.
Psalm 119:15-16

For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion. In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me. He shall set me high upon a rock.

Psalm 27:5

While the storm of trouble that is to engulf the whole world will affect all men, both individually and collectively, the Lord’s people, who seek only to draw yet closer to him, entering more fully into the secret place of communion and fellowship and rest in him, and shutting the doors of faith about them, will there be safely hidden from the alarm and fear and trembling that will take

hold upon all other classes; and while they patiently endure its effects upon their temporal interests, they will rejoice not only in the knowledge of God’s overruling providence, in the whirlwind and in the storm as well as in the calms of life, but also in his blessed assurance that his wrath will be thus revealed only “**for a little moment**,” and then will his righteous Kingdom be manifested in power and great glory, and they shall shine forth as the sun. R. 1788

My Presence Shall Go With Thee And I Will Give Thee Rest

**ALMIGHTY God, the Lord of Heaven and Earth,
O Thou, the Source and Center of each sphere,
The Lord of Being, throned afar, Whose hand
Upholds the weight of worlds, yet, wondrous thought!
Nor day nor night too occupied to note
E'en when a sparrow falls to earth, Whose eyes
A watch-care keep o'er every child of Thine;**

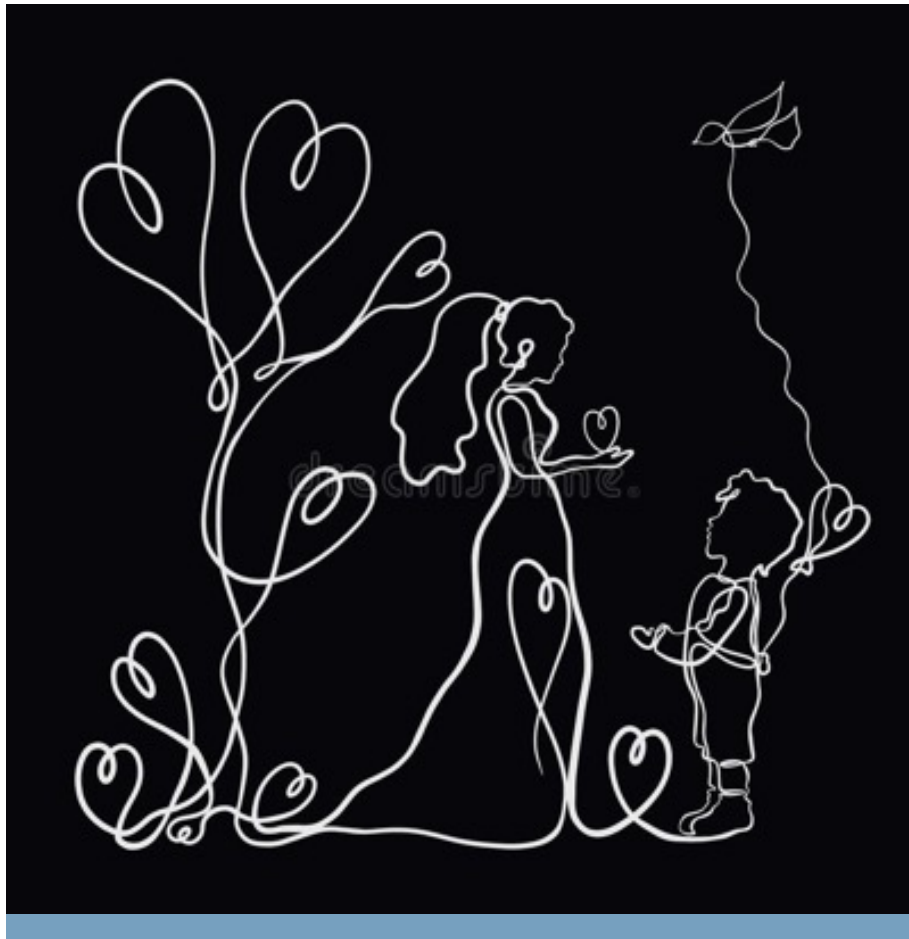
**Whose guardian angels daily shape the course
Of those who love Thee more than life itself;
Whose chastening rod doth guide them in the way
That leads to endless life! – how sweet to feel
Thy presence ever near, to know that Thou
Dost never sleep nor slumber while Thy child
In time of need doth feebly cry to Thee.**

**O Thou, in Whom no shade of turning lies,
Thou changeless and unvariable One!
Though all unfaithful prove, yea, though the earth
And heavens depart, by faith we clasp Thy hand,
We calmly rest our weary hearts on Thee,
Assured that Thou will ne'er forsake, that we
Shall be forever precious in Thy sight!**

---Gertrude W. Seibert

SOLOMON: WISDOM, INSTRUCTION, WARNING

WORDS OF AGAR, WORDS OF LEMUEL, THE VIRTUOUS WIFE *Chapters 30 and 31*



Every word of God is pure. He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

– Proverbs 30:5 –

The **testimony** [the instruction] of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple [the meek, teachable ones—clearly pointing out to them the ways of righteousness].

The **statutes** [the decrees, ordinances and precepts] of the Lord are right [the infallible rules of righteousness], rejoicing the heart [of the obedient].

The **commandment** of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The **fear** of the Lord is clean [not a menial, servile fear, but a noble fear, begotten of love—a fear of falling short of his righteous approval], enduring forever.

More to be desired are they [the law and the testimony of the Lord] than gold; yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned [concerning the dangers of the way and the snares of the adversary, and concerning everything which is calculated to discourage, or to hinder his growth in grace], and in keeping of them there is great reward.”

“Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who doth meditate therein day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” (Psa. 1:1-3.) If we make the Word of God the theme of our constant meditation, its principles will soon be assimilated and become part of our mental make up, making our characters more beautiful and commendable both to God and to our fellow men; and in harmony with this habit of the mind the acts of life will speak. R. 1296

**As for God, His way is perfect.
The word of the LORD is proven.
He is a shield to all who trust in Him.
Psalm 18:30**

The Virtuous Woman--Proverbs 31:10-31

- 10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.
11 The heart of her husband safely trusts her so he will have no lack of gain.
12 She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.
13 She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands.
14 She is like the merchant ships. She brings her food from afar.
15 She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants.
16 She considers a field and buys it. From her profits she plants a vineyard.
17 She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms.
18 She perceives that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out by night.
19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hand holds the spindle.
20 She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.
21 She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet.
22 She makes tapestry for herself. Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.
24 She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants.
25 Strength and honor are her clothing. She shall rejoice in time to come.
26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness.
27 She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.
28 Her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praises her:
29 “Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all.”
30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.



Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

– Proverbs 31:30 –

[Proverbs chapter 31] is not a part of Solomon's writing, but, as stated in verse 1, was written by King Lemuel. Energy, economy and forethought are of course commendable in both men and women; and without these no home can be either comfortable or happy. But this is an extreme view. [This verse] is the best of this lesson; especially the latter clause. The Christian woman, like the Christian man, while careful to be faithful in the duties of home and family will "seek first [chiefly] the kingdom of God and [conformity to] its righteous requirements," making the fields, vineyards, silks and wealth quite secondary considerations. R. 1520

Do not let your adornment be merely outward---arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel. Rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

1 Peter 3:3-4

A truly virtuous person does not advertise his virtue---it will surface on its own.

---p. 181, Deep Waters and a Bubbling Brook

The Light Within

People are like stained glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out. But in the darkness, beauty is seen only if there is a light within. Let us today start looking for that light. But more so, let us learn to let our own light shine brightly.

“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. --1 Peter 3:3-4

--p. 224, Deep Waters and a Bubbling Brook

**Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.
1 Timothy 4:12**

Epilogue

We have the assurance that no part of the true Church's pathway has ever been left in darkness, nor will it be—even to the end of the age. As the Apostle said, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

[Proverbs 4:18] seems to harmonize with this declaration, that the path of the Just would shine more and more clearly (lighted by the lamp, God's Word) even unto the perfect day. Since we have not yet reached the perfect day, we cannot know how much more brightly our lamp may shine in the future; but we do know that it is now shining more brilliantly than ever before for all those who are walking in the "narrow way." In its light we can see, as never before, the glories of the divine character, illustrated in the divine plan of salvation for mankind. We can see also our own position as sons of God, justified through the precious blood and called to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, with a clearness and distinctness that before was unknown. And yet all this light, this increasing light, as we near the perfect day, is coming from our Lamp which God provided,—the Bible.

**Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Psalm 119:105**

But while the Bible lights the pathway of the true Body of Christ, the consecrated "little flock," it sheds no particular brilliancy upon the world's pathway: that is to say, no light that the world can specially profit by. What light may be reflected to the world's pathway is perhaps fully counteracted by shadows which rather confuse and perplex them.

**The way of the wicked is like darkness.
They do not know what makes them stumble.
Proverbs 4:19**

Our lamp shows us the great stumblingstone in the path of the world's progress in its present course. It shows us that the Christian world is about to stumble over that Stumblingstone and Rock of Offence over which the typical Israel stumbled eighteen centuries ago,—that the Christian world is to stumble over the second presence of Christ, as the Jewish nation stumbled over his first advent; and that the stumbling here will mean the wreck of Christendom, as the stumbling there meant the wreck of Judaism.

**To you who believe, He is precious. But to those who are disobedient,
"THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED HAS BECOME THE
CHIEF CORNERSTONE," and "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A
ROCK OF OFFENSE." They stumble, being disobedient to
the word, to which they also were appointed.
1 Peter 2:7-8**

The light upon the path of the Just—the path of the Christ—shows that the present social order of Christendom is to stumble and be wrecked in a time of anarchy, because the time has come for the establishment of God’s Kingdom, and because the world is not in the condition of heart to be ready to receive it, and hence are kept in darkness respecting it: “They know not at what they stumble,” although they realize that we are living in peculiar times, and that there is great danger of stumbling over something in the darkness with which they realize they are surrounded.

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-6

Let us, dear brethren, as sons of God, heed our Father’s Word most carefully, that we take not the wrong paths, but that we follow strictly and carefully and watchfully the “narrow way” of consecration, self-denial, humility, love, in which shines the light of the Lamp of Truth, and which alone leads to the Kingdom. R. 2390

The path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.

Proverbs 4:18





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Other Resources

Notes on The Song of Solomon by Anton Frey

Front Cover

King Solomon by Simeon Solomon, circa 1872

Back Cover

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Appendix



Kings and Rulers of Israel

Saul
David
Solomon
Rehoboam

10 Tribe Kingdom

2 Tribe Kingdom

RULERS of Israel (North)

RULERS of Judah (South)

Jeroboam I	Disobedient	Rehoboam	Disobedient
Nadab	Disobedient	Abijah	Disobedient
Baasha	Disobedient	Asa	Obedient
Elah	Disobedient	Jehoshaphat	Obedient
Zimri	Disobedient	Jehoram	Disobedient
Omri	Disobedient	Ahaziah	Disobedient
Ahab	Disobedient	Athaliah	Murderer
Ahaziah	Disobedient	Joash	Obedient
Jehoram	Disobedient	Amaziah	Obedient
Jehu	Disobedient	Azariah (Uzziah)	Obedient
Jehoahaz	Disobedient	Jotham	Obedient
Jehoash	Disobedient	Ahaz (Jehoahaz)	Particularly Horrible
Jeroboam II	Disobedient	Hezekiah	Completely Faithful
Zechariah	Disobedient	Manasseh	Particularly Horrible
Shallum	Disobedient	Amon	Disobedient
Menahem	Disobedient	Josiah	Very Faithful
Pekahiah	Disobedient	Jehoahaz II	Disobedient
Pekah	Disobedient	Jehoiakim	Disobedient
Hoshea	Disobedient	Jehoiachin	Disobedient
		Zedekiah	Disobedient