

—Horeb. This was the same mount from which the Law Covenant was delivered at the hands of Moses. Paul shows that this represents the heavenly kingdom. (Heb. 12:18-25.) The parable of the virgins shows that only those who appreciate present truth enter into the marriage since 1874. They must appreciate the "Presence."

The forty days' and forty nights' journey (a day for a year, as in previous type of 1260 days) gives the length of the journey (time) from the beginning of the awakening by "that servant," angel, in 1874, until the last member of the Elijah class shall have reached the kingdom (Mount of God, Heb. 12:22) "in [by] the strength of *that food*"—present truth. Then we shall meet our Lord and see him as he is.

The subsequent manifestation of power shows, as you have told us, the three features of the overthrow of the present

kingdoms of this world: (a) The winds (wars) now held back, show that the overthrow of present institutions will not take place until after the Elijah class has reached the Mount of God—actually changed. However, the elements are being prepared for the conflict before them. (b) Earthquake (social disorder) next follows. (c) Anarchy is the fire that completes the work. God was not in them in the sense that they were not of divine institution; nevertheless they were overruled to accomplish his purposes. (d) "The still small voice" (God's Word) which now speaks only to the listening ear (he that hath an "ear to hear") will then speak with authority in the kingdom, saying, "Peace, be still." Verse 13—It seems that the type here changes to teach lessons regarding our present privileges and responsibilities.

Yours in the One Hope,

C. E. FOWLER.

OUR LORD'S LAST DAYS

CONNECTED BIBLE READING WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR EVERY DAY AND NIGHT OF THE LORD'S LIFE, FROM THE 9TH TO THE 16TH OF NISAN, PROVING THAT HIS DEATH TOOK PLACE ON THE AFTERNOON OF FRIDAY, THE 14TH.

BY C. J. WOODWORTH

- 9th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Saturday to 6.00 P.M. Sunday:
John 12:1. "Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany." This accounts for *Sunday afternoon*.
- 10th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Sunday to 6.00 P.M. Monday:
John 12:2-11. Mary breaks the alabaster box. *Sunday night*.
John 12:12-15 and Mark 11:1-10. Triumphal entry. *Monday forenoon*.
- 11th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Monday to 6.00 P.M. Tuesday:
Mark 11:11. Lodged at Bethany. *Monday night*.
Mark 11:12-18. Cursing the fig tree; cleansing the temple. *Tuesday forenoon*.
- 12th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Tuesday to 6.00 P.M. Wednesday:
Mark 11:19. Lodged out of the city. *Tuesday night*.
Mark 11:20; 13:37. Many parables delivered. *Wednesday forenoon and afternoon*.
- 13th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Wednesday to 6.00 P.M. Thursday:
Mark 14:1-11. One of the two days before the passover, beginning on *Wednesday night*.
Mark 14:12-16. The apostles make arrangements for the last supper, *Thursday, daytime*.
- 14th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Thursday to 6.00 P.M. Friday, the day before the Jewish passover, called the "Day of Preparation:"
Mark 14:17-65. Last supper, Gethsemane, trial before high priest, *Thursday night*.
- Mark 15:1-34 and Luke 23:44-52. Trial before Pilate, crucifixion, body laid in tomb, *Friday forenoon and afternoon*.
Luke 23:54. Here it is distinctly stated that the death of Christ took place on the "Day of Preparation." This day is reckoned as the first day and night which Christ spent in the tomb.
- 15th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Friday to 6.00 P.M. Saturday, Jewish passover Sabbath:
Luke 23:54 and John 19:42. The Jewish Sabbath begins just as the "Day of Preparation" closes, at 6:00 P.M. *Friday night*.
Matt. 27:62. The chief priests ask Pilate to place a guard about the tomb, *Saturday morning*.
This day is reckoned as the second day and night which Christ spent in the tomb.
- 16th Nisan, 6.00 P.M. Saturday to 6.00 P.M. Sunday, First day of week:
Matt. 27:66. Watch set over tomb throughout *Saturday night*.
Matt. 28:1, Mark 16:1, 2, Luke 24:1 and John 20:1. The women come to the tomb early on *Sunday morning* and find the Lord is risen.
This day is reckoned as the third day and night which Christ spent in the tomb.

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"IF GOD BE FOR US WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?"

Romans 8:31.

What wonderful thoughts these words arouse! God for us! God on *our* side! It means almighty wisdom enlisted in our interest, almighty power exerted on our behalf, almighty love and infinite goodness watching over us and caring for and helping us. What immeasurable lengths and breadths, heights and depths of infinite grace are here so forcibly and so concisely set before the mind!

But we notice a limitation: The Apostle's suggestion is not that God is for every one, but for "*us*." To whom does he refer by this word "*us*?" Is it possible that divine love and energy, wisdom and power are not being exerted on behalf of the world, but only on behalf of the church in this present time?

Christian people are divided in their opinion respecting this matter. Our Methodist friends and generally Universalists and Unitarians hold that God is not for *us*, the church, specially; but that he is for everybody, everywhere. They hold that he is today trying to save everybody, and that he has been so trying for the past six thousand years. They must of course admit, when making such a claim, that thus far the divine plan has failed of success for six thousand years; because men are not saved and only a small proportion have yet had the necessary opportunity for salvation; namely, a knowledge of the only "name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved." They must realize that the logic of facts is against their contention and against all hope that by present methods and arrangements the world would ever be converted; for they are aware that while it is claimed in a general way that nearly a million heathen have been converted during the last century (and it is safe to say that a very large proportion of these are not so thoroughly converted as might be desired; that comparatively few of them could be termed "saints"), yet, during the same time it is

estimated that the numbers of the heathen have increased, in a natural way, to the enormous sum of two hundred millions. How long would it require at this rate, at this ratio of conversion, one million converts to two hundred million births, to convert the world? All can see that such hopes are quite illogical. Nevertheless, we can sympathize with and greatly appreciate the warmth of heart on the part of many of these whose theology we now criticize. Many of them—at least the founders of the systems—were forced to such conclusions, namely, that God is doing the best he can do for the world, in opposition to the doctrine of election and foreordination, as it has heretofore been misunderstood.

On the other hand, the great majority of Christian people, namely, the various branches of the Presbyterian, the Episcopal, the Lutheran, the Baptist and the Congregationalist churches *deny the theory* that God has been trying to save the world for the past six thousand years and has failed of his purpose. They hold, to the contrary, that his purpose has been to select or elect out of the world a church and that this work of election has been progressing and will finally be consummated; and that thus God's Word through the prophets shall be fulfilled, "My Word that goeth forth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void; but it shall *accomplish that which I please*, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. 55:11.) They hold that, since all of God's purposes shall be accomplished, it cannot have been his purpose either to convert the world or to bring every creature to a knowledge of Christ during the past six thousand years; because neither thing has been accomplished, therefore neither things could have been purposed.

We were about to say that we agree with the last mentioned numerous families of Christians in reference to the doctrine of election; but we cannot make so broad a state-

ment. While we find in the Scriptures the declaration that an election is in progress during this age especially, and to some extent during all the past, yet it is not the *kind of election* to which such large numbers of our Christian friends hold. Their view of divine foreordination implies not only the election of a church, but the damnation of all who are not elected; and here we must differ; for we find nothing of this kind in the Word of the Lord. We find nothing in it to imply that all the non-elect are hopelessly lost; but, on the contrary, the teaching that the election of the church (Christ the Head, the church his body), during this Gospel age, is for the very purpose that they, as the "Seed of Abraham," may fulfil the divine plan as expressed in God's promise to Abraham, namely, that in this Seed (Christ and the church—Gal. 3:16, 29), as the heirs of the divine promise and benevolent intention, "all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Not only is the *character* of the Scriptural election a very different one from that which has generally been held by Calvinism, but the *object* of the election is as widely as possible different from their conception. We would use the same language as our Calvinistic friends in speaking of the "us" of our text, in that we would say that it refers to the elect church, but we deny that the damnation of all others is either stated or implied.

In the preceding verses (29, 30) the Apostle explains the character and methods of the divine selection of the elect church, and we cannot do better than notice its details, because so much depends upon this point. If we can find in the Apostle's description good and sufficient evidence to assure us that we are of this elect church then we shall have great cause for thankfulness, confidence and joy, in realizing that God with all his almighty power and wisdom and love is enlisted on our behalf. A great difficulty with many seems to be, not that they doubt that there is such an election in progress, nor that they doubt that God is *for* some, but that they doubt that they belong to that elect class—doubt, therefore, that they are of the "us," and that God is *for* them; and that he is causing all things to work together for good to them.

By reason of their natural constitution, some of the humble-minded of the Lord's people lack the confidence which they should have, while in some instances others who have such confidence have no real basis for it. Knowledge, therefore, clear knowledge of the Apostle's argument, is essential to proper faith respecting this subject, and proper confidence in God's care over those who have been adopted into his family and are seeking to make their calling and election sure. Our faith is made necessarily dependent to a large extent upon our understanding of the divine revelation on these subjects. Let us, therefore, critically examine the Apostle's statement with reference to the various steps in this election, and note our own connection with the same, step by step, that we may know to a certainty whether or not we are of the "us" class which he mentions, on behalf of whom the Lord's power and wisdom are and will be exerted.

The Apostle begins by asserting divine foreknowledge; a divine attribute which will not be questioned by any Christian. God not only foreknew the sin that would enter into the world through the liberty given to father Adam and mother Eve, but he also foresaw the fall that would take place as the result of his own sentence, and the mental, moral and physical degradation which have resulted. Moreover, he foreknew that in due time he would send his "Only Begotten Son," our Lord, to ransom all from sin and its penalty, so that ultimately he might be the Deliverer of all who desire to return to harmony with their Creator. He not only foreknew the humiliation of our Lord, his First Begotten Son, from his condition of glory and spiritual nature to the lower conditions of human nature, but he foreknew his trials, and his faithfulness through them, even unto death, even the death of the cross. In all this he foresaw our redemption sacrifice. He foresaw also the glory which he designed to bestow upon our Lord Jesus following his obedience, as expressed by the Apostle Paul, saying, "Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name [title, honor, etc.], above every name."

But our heavenly Father foreknew and foreordained still more than all this—the selection of the church to be the "body" of Christ, the "bride" of Christ, his associate, not only in the sufferings and trials of the present life, but also in the subsequent glory and great work of "blessing all the families of the earth." This is distinctly stated by the same Apostle in his letter to the Ephesians (1:4), where he declares that "God hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world." The same foreordination is distinctly stated by the Apostle Peter, who writes to consecrated believers, addressing them, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the spirit," etc.—1 Pet. 1:2.

But the *predestination* of this verse (Rom. 8:29) is not at all what has generally been understood: it is not said that God predestinates that some should go to heaven and others to eternal torment. That is where false human reasoning has corrupted the testimony of God's Word and made it of none effect, or worse—of bad effect. The Apostle's statement is clear, that God predestinated that all who shall be of this elect, foreknown and foreordained church in glory must first be "*conformed to the image of his Son*"; or as the literal reading would give it, "copies of his Son." How reasonable this predestination! How unreasonable the false view! God is calling a number of sons to "glory, honor and immortality," and has made Christ Jesus the Only Begotten, faithful in every trial, the Head or Captain of this foreordained company, whom he has since been calling, testing and preparing for the foreordained glory. And as it was but a reasonable thing that God should determine that if our Lord Jesus would be faithful he should receive the highest exaltation, so it was equally right and proper that the divine will should be forcibly asserted and that he should predestinate that none could be of that glorified "body of Christ," except as they would become imitators of Jesus, who is the firstborn among these his "brethren."

Having thus stated the matter concisely, the Apostle proceeds to apply it to the church individually, and to show the steps which God is taking during this Gospel age for the purpose of finding amongst men this class which he has foreordained shall be found. The Apostle gives the particulars in the following verse (30); and although it is simply stated, it has very generally been stumbled over, not only by believers in general, but also by theologians, because of two things. (1) The last word of this verse translated "glorified" should be translated "honored"; and should be understood to refer to the honor conferred upon all who, during this age, are brought to any knowledge of Christ—the true light. This honor went first to the Jews, and selected a "remnant"; but when that nation proved unworthy of this "honor" it was turned to the Gentiles, to gather out of them a peculiar people, a holy nation, to bear the name of Christ. (Acts 15:14.) (2) The reader naturally expects the Apostle to begin with present conditions and trace them up to the grand result—the glorified church—while on the contrary the Apostle very properly begins at the other end, and traces the results downward. He does not begin, as is generally supposed, by saying, God honored you with the knowledge of the gospel of Christ, and when you believed he justified you, and after you were justified he called you, and if you are faithful to your calling he will by and by exalt you to the condition which he foreknew. Indeed, it would not be possible to state the matter truthfully from that side; because many are honored with a knowledge of the Gospel of Christ who are never justified (because they do not accept the knowledge, do not accept Christ), and of those who do accept Christ and who are thus justified, it would not be true to say that they will all be sanctified; nor would it be correct to say that all who once are sanctified will reach the condition of glory; for "many are called but few chosen": few "make their calling and election sure."

But the Apostle argues the matter from the only proper and logical standpoint: having stated that God has foreknown or fore-intended the election of the church, he steps forward to the time when God's purpose and intention will have been completed, accomplished—the time when the election will be finished and the church accepted to glory. From that future standpoint he indicates the various steps *which led up to it*, saying, All those of the foreknown ones, glorified, will previously have been called; because it is a matter of grace, and no man taketh this honor unto himself, but "he that is called of God"—as the "Head of the body," so each member of the body. And, says the Apostle, every one thus "called" will previously have been "justified"; because God calls no enemies, no unreconciled sinners, to this high position. It was for this reason that Christ died, that through faith in his blood repentant believers might be "*justified*" and might be thus *prepared* to be "called." It is thus evident that the high calling to this glorious position of joint-heirship with Christ is a very different thing, indeed, from the calling of sinners to repentance. Sinners are called to repentance anywhere and everywhere and at any time. And when they repent, the Lord engages that in due time he will point them to

"The fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
Where sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

When they have lost their guilty stains, through repentance and faith in the Redeemer, they reach the condition of *justification*, and are ready to be "called" to sonship and joint-heirship. But the Apostle is still going backward in the

argument and, having told that the foreordained class would all be "called," and that they would all previously have been "justified," he declares that the justified ones would all previously have been favored or "honored" (not glorified): honored or favored with a *knowledge of the truth*, a knowledge of the Gospel.

Perhaps only a comparatively small number of Christians have realized what a great honor was conferred upon them in the first knowledge brought to them of the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This "honor" has been so widely dispensed that many forget that it is a special honor, a special favor, just as they forget to recognize as special blessings the sunshine and the rain. But this "honor" is not yet as common as some other of God's blessings. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," throughout the whole world; but not so the gospel sunlight and the spiritual showers. These blessings have been general only in certain quarters.

"THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD IS JESUS"

When Christ as the "Great Light" arose in Palestine, and when on the day of Pentecost the church was illuminated by him, as a light for the world, that light was not sent southward into the darkness of Africa: the Africans were not "honored" with having the gospel of Christ. Neither was it sent eastward through India to its hundreds of millions: India was not "honored" with the gospel of Christ. Neither was it sent still farther East to the hundreds of millions of China: China was not "honored" with the gospel of Christ. But it was sent northward and westward through Europe and America. These lands were "honored," these peoples "have seen a great light," and with that light have received a great blessing. But how comparatively few have really seen this light, even when it shone around them on every hand. Alas! like the partly cured blind man of old they see a brightness and can discern something, but see nothing clearly. The Apostle explains their case, saying, "The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not."—2 Cor. 4:4.

Having followed the Apostle's reasoning, we are enabled to see clearly each step of divine providence taken in connection with the divine purpose and foreordination.

(1) We see that first of all, to a certain extent, God was "for" us, for the people of Europe and North America: he was for them or *favorable* to them to the extent of "honoring" or favoring them with the light of grace "as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, our Lord."

(2) In a still fuller sense God was "for" or favorable towards those who accept the light of truth, those who through repentance and faith in the precious blood are "justified" from sin through his grace.

(3) He was yet more "for" these justified ones, to the extent that he "called" them to suffer with Christ during this Gospel age, and by and by to share his glory.

(4) In a still fuller sense he is "for" all those who accept the call and who are seeking to "make their calling and election sure." God is in an especial sense "for" all these who are so running as to obtain the prize which he offers. "They shall be mine, in that day when I make up my jewels."

It is to this called and faithfully running class that the Apostle speaks as "us." He and those whom he addressed ("called to be saints"—Rom. 1:6, 7) had first been "honored" with the light; second, they, by repentance and faith, had accepted it and been justified; third, they had been "called"; fourth, they had accepted the calling and given themselves wholly to the Lord. And with the Apostle and the early church all who today can recognize themselves in this same position, as having taken these same steps, may properly apply to themselves the Apostle's words and say, God is *for us*; who can be against us!

All the "saints" throughout the whole world, who have taken the afore-mentioned steps, are probably altogether not a great multitude; but rather, comparatively, a "little flock": yet each one of these may say to himself, and realize to the very bottom of his heart as applicable to himself, these wonderful words—God is *for us*. He may endeavor to grasp the significance of these words, but he will surely fail to get all of their wonderful meaning. It is not possible for the human mind to grasp the riches of divine grace and love and power. We cannot comprehend them, we can merely apprehend them. If God be *for us*, with all of his infinite wisdom and power, it implies also that Christ is for us, for he is one with the Father; it implies also that all the angels, cherubim and seraphim, and all the heavenly powers of our knowledge and beyond our knowledge are *for us*—all enlisted upon our side, to do us good, to help us, to succor us in time of need, to uphold us in time of temptation, to strengthen us to do the Father's

will. "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

The view granted to Elisha's servant, of countless horses, chariots, and horsemen of fire or like fire, was of course merely a *vision*, nevertheless it represented a truth—that divine power is round about God's people on every hand for their protection and their deliverance. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that are his and delivereth them." "Are they [the angels] not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14.) Our Lord expressed the same thing, saying of his "faithful followers": "Their angels [messengers] do always behold the face of my Father." It matters not whether we shall understand this to signify that spirit beings continually surround those called to be the "elect" of the Lord, to guide and shape their interests for their highest good, or whether we shall understand it to be merely a figure of speech, signifying that divine power surrounds God's people; for the results would be the same; it matters not by which means the Lord would deliver them from the evil and help them in trial and adversity. The fact that God is "*for us*," and that he is making all things work together for good to those who love him, is the central thought, the essence, the strength of this message to "us."

How wonderful is all this! Let us cast our minds for a moment over the world with its fifteen hundred millions of inhabitants. Let us remember that they are all under the "curse," under the sentence of divine displeasure, except the few who have heard of the redemption—of the Way, the Truth and the Life—and who have by faith and obedience "escaped the condemnation that is on the world" and come back into harmony with the Father and into fellowship with his Son. Let us imagine, if we can, this "little flock" of the "honored," "justified" and "called," heaven-led and heaven-blessed, scattered here and there amongst the fifteen hundred million fellow-creatures. Oh, what joy, what comfort, what peace, what strength the thought must bring to each one who can realize that he has taken all of these steps thus far, and that he is still pressing "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling!" This joy is not dimmed, but is greatly enhanced, by the thought that soon, in conformity with God's gracious foreordination all the "elect" may have a share in the great work of blessing with the knowledge of the True Light the masses who are yet in darkness, "without God and having no hope" in him. For although a redemption has been provided for all, the knowledge of God's grace has not yet reached any but the favored or "honored" minority.

As the Apostle declares in this very same chapter (Rom. 8:22), it is indeed a groaning creation; it has been groaning ever since the sentence of divine wrath was expressed in Eden, and it must continue to groan until the great Deliverer shall have established his kingdom, and shall have rolled back the "curse" of death and depravity. Oh, what riches of grace have come to "us" through Jesus Christ, our Lord! And yet, as the Apostle says, although we have all this blessing and favor, we have also with it certain trials, difficulties and painful experiences, which the Father sees necessary for our development in order that we may come up to the terms of his predestination, "copies of his Son." And in consequence of this, as the Apostle declares, "We ourselves also [as well as the whole creation] groan within ourselves [while suffering with the world we suppress the groan, 'We lay our burdens at his feet and bear a song away'] waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"—"the body of Christ," the elect church.

The word *if* in this text does not signify a doubt or question on the subject; but quite the reverse. The Apostle has given the evidence that God is for "us," in the preceding verses, and now uses *if* as though he said, If I have proved that God is for us, then who can be against us!

"WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?"

Who can be against us, if God is for us? The Apostle does not mean that, having God on our side, none would dare to oppose our way. Quite to the contrary, we have bitter enemies and relentless foes. Who are against us? Their name is legion. The devil is against us; as the Apostle declares, "Your adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." The Apostle Paul assures us that we must contend against "the wiles of the devil." St. James declares that we must "resist the devil." The Apostle informs us that Satan is cunning and deceitful, as well as desperately wicked; and says that therefore we must have a battle, and as good soldiers we must have on the armor of God and use it faithfully. Thus we are to resist the devil, and he will flee from us. We are to "quench all

the fiery darts of the adversary" in open attacks, and yet to remember that we battle not with flesh and blood, but with a demon host; with "principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places."—Eph. 6:12.

Nor is this all: we have a great enemy in ourselves, the "carnal mind," "the old man," *reckoned* dead, which must be kept in subjection. Perhaps the greatest battles and the greatest trials which we are called upon as "new creatures" to endure, are these battles of the new self, the mind of Christ, against the old fallen self, the mind of the flesh.

Furthermore: we have the "world" as "children of darkness" arrayed in opposition to us. They love the darkness and consequently hate not only the light, but also the "children of the light." This our Master declared, saying, "Ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world." "Marvel not if the world hate you; you know it hated me before it hated you." "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but now ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." And the world's hatred is not conducted along honorable lines of warfare. It would be ashamed to declare that it loved darkness, and ashamed to declare that it hated us because of the light. Its policy, rather, guided by the great adversary, is to "put light for darkness and darkness for light"; to misrepresent our best efforts as evil and selfish, and to misrepresent its own selfish efforts as honorable and good. "Marvel not, if the world hate you." "The darkness hateth the light."

Nor are these great adversaries the only ones to oppose us: we must expect to endure from still another quarter. As our Lord declared, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." Those whom you have dearly loved of your own family circle, and with whom you have had Christian fellowship, may turn against you and hate you for the truth's sake. Nor will this always be because of wickedness of intention: sometimes at least the persecutions will come conscientiously; as for instance, Saul of Tarsus, who afterward became the great Apostle Paul, was once a persecutor of "this way," and ignorantly did many things against Jesus and those who loved him. He himself tells us that he obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly, thinking that he did God service. And so doubtless it has been with much of the persecution that has come to the Lord's faithful ones in every age. Much of it has been inflicted conscientiously. It is quite remarkable, too, how the adversary succeeds sometimes in deceiving those who once knew better into thinking that anger, malice, hatred, strife, bitter words and slander, "works of the flesh and the devil," are *duty*. Alas, how blinding is the spirit of the adversary!

All these adversaries must be resisted unto blood, unto death, if need be; must not be permitted to hinder our walking in the footsteps of him who set us an example; must not be permitted to prevent us from becoming copies of our Lord and thus making our calling and election sure. But while resisting them with all our might, we must avoid carnal weapons and not render railing for railing; rather, so far as possible, we should use the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and, Michael-like, say, "The Lord rebuke thee." God is "for us," and declares that in his due time he will right present wrongs and falsehoods, saying, "Vengeance is mine, I will render recompences." Indeed, toward the class who war against us ignorantly and conscientiously we should feel no bitterness, but rather sympathy, love and an earnest desire and effort for an opening of the eyes of their understanding.

The Apostle was not ignoring all of these great adversaries which, like "roaring lions," would terrify us, and if possible arrest our progress in the path of consecration and sacrifice, which leads on to glory. This is not his thought when he says,

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" Quite to the contrary, his thought is, that *notwithstanding* all these things which are against us, we may realize that God is *for us*, that he has predestinated a church in glory and has justified and called us to be members of it, and brought us on the journey thus far, through all of these various steps. And if we can realize that God has thus been leading us up to the present time, to bring us to share his glory, and that all things thus far have been working for our good, this is our assurance that *all* wisdom, power and love shall be exerted on our behalf down to the very end of the race course, if we continue to abide in Christ faithfully.

What shall we fear? What could oppose our way so as to hinder it, if God be on our side? This reminds us of the adage, "God with one is a majority." So, God with us, and for us, and leading us, makes us mighty indeed, stronger than all these adversaries with all their arts and wiles and perversity, and able through his grace to come off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.

We urge that each reader mark the various steps of progress through which divine grace has already led him, and that, whatever he finds to be his present standpoint, he go on as the Lord leads, not content with anything short of "the whole counsel of God." The reader has been "honored" with a knowledge of the grace of God in Christ: if he has not yet accepted, let him quickly accept this grace by repentance for sin and with faith in the *ransom*. If he has done this and has received the grace of justification, and, as the Apostle expresses it, has "joy and peace through believing," then let him remember that still there's more to follow, and that the justified are "called." Not called to glory merely, but called to *obedience*, called to present their bodies living sacrifices to God in his service, holy and acceptable through Christ.

Alas! how many who have received the grace of justification stop there: they hear the call to suffer with Christ for the truth's sake, they hear the invitation to stand up for Jesus, in their thoughts and words and deeds, but heed not. They perceive that such a full consecration would necessarily mean not only the giving up of sinful pleasures, but also the giving up of some not sinful, that they might devote their words and thoughts and deeds as far as possible as he did, doing good to others. But of those who hear the call to present themselves, how few obey it, how few surrender themselves to him who bought them with his own precious blood! Yes, many are called; though few are chosen. All the justified are called to self-surrender, full obedience, full trust in the Lord and full submission to his will. And of those who do accept the call and who have made the covenant, and who are therefore of the "us" class mentioned by the Apostle, how many become "overcharged with the cares of this life, or the deceitfulness of riches," or the perplexities of poverty and so fail to obtain the fulness of heart-obedience, and consequently will fail to make their calling and election sure!

We are not now discussing what will be the *fate* of those who fail to be victors and to gain a crown and to sit with Christ in his throne; we are considering, rather, the *privileges* of those who have been "honored" of the Lord and led step by step up to present attainments of knowledge and privilege. We are seeking to bring before our minds at least a faint conception of the wonderful provisions of divine grace, and the full ability of every one so called to make his calling and election sure by laying hold of this grace of God, provided in Christ, by which, to them, all things shall work together for good, because they love God and are the called ones according to his purpose.

VICTORY NOT TO THE STRONG

1 Samuel 17:38-49.—AUGUST 9.

Golden Text:—"In the Lord put I my trust."—Psalm 11:1.

Not long after David's anointing he became the hero of a most remarkable battle. The Philistines, residing on the seashore of Palestine, were the enemies of the Israelites from earliest times, and, as we have already seen, they held mastery over them at the time of Saul's coronation. Subsequently the victory gained over them by Saul was not complete, and they still occupied the city of Gath and considerable territory in the land given to Israel. In Gath dwelt Goliath, a descendant of the giants or Anakim, whose sight terrified the spies of Israel when they first essayed to enter the promised land. Goliath was a Philistine therefore, not by birth but by naturalization, as people of various nationalities become Americans. Goliath was in the prime of his manhood, proud of his size and strength. The Philistines, too, were vigilant

and thought that with this champion and leader they might gain another victory over the Israelites. As a result they organized an army and marched northwesterly toward Jerusalem. King Saul, apprised of the fact, recruited an army to oppose them. The two armies faced each other on opposite slopes of the valley Elah. Evidently the opposing forces were fairly well matched and neither cared to make the attack. The Philistines, resorting to a method already known in history, proposed that a war be averted and that the issues between the two armies be decided by a personal battle. They sent forth Goliath as their champion and dared the Israelites to meet him. Similarly the Romans and the Albans, B. C. 667, settled the war by having three Roman Horatii and three Alban Curatii engage in mortal combat. The victory came to

the Romans, inasmuch as one of their number survived. Similarly later, Sir Henry d'Bonham fought with Robert Bruce between the two contending armies in Scotland.

Goliath was a giant indeed. His six cubits and a span, if estimated on the 16-inch cubit, would represent 8 ft. 8 in., or counted by the 18-inch cubit would represent 9 ft. 9 in. A cubit is the length of the human arm from the elbow to the tip of the little finger; a span is half a cubit. Encyclopedia Britannica refers to several giants: one a Scotchman, whose height was 8 ft. 3 in.; another an Arabian of 9 ft.; Charles Birne, an Irishman, measured 8 ft. 4 in.; Patrick Cotter, 8 ft. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.; a Russian giant, 9 ft. 8 in. There is nothing, therefore, impossible or improbable in the story of Goliath. The giant was elaborately armored and practically invulnerable.

ISRAEL AND ISRAEL'S GOD DEFIED

At that time each nation apparently stood for a religious system and their prosperity and influence were largely credited to the favor of their god or gods. For forty days Goliath, clothed in his resplendent, gleaming armor, with a loud voice had shouted defiance to the men of Israel and incidentally to the God they worshipped, thus endeavoring to shame them and drive them to an unequal contest, of which he felt sure he would be the victor. We cannot wonder that no Israelite was found foolhardy enough to undertake a battle with the giant on the terms and conditions then prevalent—a battle with sword and spear and javelin; ordinarily anyone would have been but a child at the mercy of the foe.

Jesse at Bethlehem was only about twenty miles distant from the camp of the army, and on the fortieth day he sent David with greetings and delicacies for three of his elder sons who were in Saul's army and to bring back word of the progress of events. The ruddy youth, the shepherd boy David, with little knowledge of warfare, was surprised to see the challenger and that the God of Israel was thus defied by the heathen. By nature and by experience in the keeping of his sheep and the defending of them from wild animals David was courageous, fearless. Besides, he evidently was well born as respects reverence for God and faith in him. It was Goliath's defiance of the God of Israel that seemed to strike him most forcibly. He made inquiries as to why none of the Israelites in the name of the Lord had undertaken the battle, implying his own willingness to do so. Many of those with whom he communed on the subject were evidently impressed with his faith and ardor. But his own brethren were less appreciative, and sneered. However, the matter spread from mouth to mouth until it reached the ear of King Saul, who sent for David.

Although the king for some years had been out of favor with the Lord, he nevertheless had good reason for believing in divine power, as it had already been manifested in his own experiences. He evidently queried if this proposition of David, his only hope, might not be of the Lord. David explained briefly his own prowess in connection with the slaying of a lion and at another time a bear in defence of his flocks. The king admired the youth, his courage and his faith, and consented that he should undertake the battle with the giant, hoping doubtless that God would favor his people with a victory even against such odds of physical strength. King Saul had the best armor, of course, amongst all the Israelites, and he proposed that David use it. But when the latter tried it on he felt himself constrained and declared that he would have less confidence in it than out of it. He went forth to meet Goliath in his own way, armed merely with a shepherd's oak stick and with a sling and a shepherd's bag. Selecting five smooth stones for use in his sling he approached the giant as the latter came forth as usual to dare the Israelites.

The story of the conflict is quickly told. The Philistine was indignant that he should be asked to fight with a boy unarmored, and he cursed David in the name of his gods, saying, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air and unto the beasts of the field." David's reply was characteristic—full of that faith in God which marks his entire history from the first to last, and on account of which the Lord speaks of him as a man after his own heart. He said to Goliath, "Thou comest to me with sword and spear and with javelin; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee and take thy head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the hosts of the Philistines this day to the fowls of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands." Thus the issue was seen by both Philistines

and Israelites to be as between the Lord, his people and their enemies. Hastening forward David threw his first stone, which struck the giant in the forehead and caused him to fall senseless. Directly David finished the conflict with Goliath's own sword, beheading him while the Israelites, their faith reviving, attacked the Philistines, whose courage fled.

It is supposed that Goliath wore a helmet with moveable front common in those days, and that he laughed at the youth who was coming against him, and in so doing threw back his head, allowing the vizor of his helmet to open, exposing his forehead. Others suppose that he reached for his javelin, which he carried in a sheath between his shoulders, and in reaching back for the javelin the helmet opened at the opportune moment and admitted David's stone. However the matter happened we cannot doubt that David was quite correct in his understanding of the matter; that divine providence supervised the entire transaction and brought the victory. Nor was such marksmanship with the sling an unusual thing in those times, for we read how on another occasion 700 men of the tribe of Benjamin threw stones "to a hair's breadth."—Judges 20:16.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ADVERSARY AND CONFLICT

What lesson can the "New Creation" of the present time draw from this story of olden time? David, whose name signifies beloved, in many respects typified the Christ, Head and body. His experiences with Goliath illustrate well first of all our Lord's conflict with the Adversary during the forty-days' temptation in the wilderness. Our Lord's victory over Satan on that occasion, his loyalty to the Father and the work entrusted to him, his own self-sacrifice, meant the victory for all the world of mankind desirous of being in harmony with God and his arrangement. Did he not declare to us, "Fear not, I have overcome the world"? In overcoming Satan, the prince of this world, he was gaining at the same time a victory over all the hosts of evil and servants of sin. He stood faithful to God and to his covenant relationship and responsibility and hurled at the Adversary the pebble of truth—"It is written." As Goliath fell before David, so Satan was vanquished by our Lord, who declares, "I beheld Satan fall from heaven," and declared also as a result of his victory, "All power is given me in heaven and in earth," and sent forth his disciples in his name to similarly battle in his strength and to come off conqueror and to ultimately share with him in his kingdom, which is to "bless all the families of the earth."

It is written of the Lord's faithful disciples, who shall constitute the church of glory, that they must walk in his steps as he set the example. This means to them as to him a warfare against sin, its great representative and leader Satan, and all the hosts of deceived humanity who are on his side. Does not the Apostle intimate this when he says, We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in influential positions? (Eph. 6:12.) Our enemy is a giant in whose presence we are feeble indeed. The Apostle calls him a wily foe and our Lord taught us to pray the Father, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Very evidently, then, we need divine assistance in our unequal contest, as did David in his.

"NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT"

All those whom the Lord accepts to probationary membership in the body of Christ, have been previously anointed and come under the divine power and guidance. They have had their experiences, too, in struggling against evil in general, even as David had his experience with the lion and the bear, and those experiences in the Lord's providence were merely preparations for the great testing, the great conflict with the Adversary and his various devices for our injury. The natural thought in connection with such a contest is to put on armor similar to that of our opponent, as Saul offered his armor to David. It is for each of the Lord's people, however, to learn that victory cannot be won along worldly lines. We cannot fight evil with evil, wrong with wrong, boasting with boasting and slander with slander, hatred with hatred, etc. If we undertake so to do we shall surely lose in the battle. Our course, like that of David, must be full reliance upon the Lord and the use of the sling and pebble of truth. If we cannot conquer along these lines we cannot conquer at all. Who is sufficient for these things?—for such an unequal contest with the prince of darkness and all the hosts of sin? Surely the one who would have confidence in himself would be unwise; hence, as the Apostle says, we place our confidence in God; if we are loyal to him victory will be ours, if we are careless or unfaithful we shall not be of the David class—not be members of the glorious body of Christ, in which event we shall never reign with him, even as David, who received the anointing, would never have reached the throne, if he had fought the giant with Saul's armor.

"WORKS OF THE FLESH AND OF THE DEVIL"

The imperfections of the flesh with which we all must contend are indeed part of the works of the devil, for did he not in Eden accomplish the fall of our first parents, and thus the fall of our entire race into the sin and death condition against which we struggle in vain, except as we are rescued by him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood? But in addition to these inherited weaknesses of the flesh we must contend against the active works of the adversary—not only his temptations to ourselves but his intrigues through mankind in general, for he is indeed the "one who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience," and they are much more numerous than the children of obedience. Hence our assailants are manifold, and in many of their assaults upon us they have at least the sympathy of our fallen flesh, however antagonistic our hearts, our minds as new creatures in Christ.

The Apostle helps us to get a view of the great enemy and the influences he is bringing to bear against us on every hand and every day. He sums them up as follows: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest which are these,—adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders [he that hateth his brother is a murderer], drunkenness [intoxication literally or symbolically with the spirit of the world, Babylon], revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."—Gal. 5:19-21.

"WE WRESTLE NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD"

Behold in this list the Goliath with whom we must contend! The special weakness of one may not be the special weakness of another, but the list which the Apostle has here provided is sure to include the weak points of the flesh of every one of the Lord's consecrated people, every one who is a member of the David class, of the Beloved One, of the Christ. All who are anointed for the coming glory as kings and priests, as new creatures, have a Goliath in their own flesh to be fought, and fought to a finish! Either the old nature must die or the new one must die. Exhorting along this line the Apostle says, Mortify, therefore, your members that are upon the earth—the downward tendency of your flesh. It must be killed, it must be beheaded, as was Goliath; but there can be no complete putting away of the earthly mind, the fleshly mind and its influence until first we in the name of the Lord have conquered by smiting it with the pebble of truth.

As we look over the above list of the works of the flesh and the devil, we find that they are all rooted in selfishness; and as we look to the Lord as our pattern as new creatures we find that all the fruits and graces of the Spirit are reversely centered in love. In proportion, therefore, as the new creature lives, grows and thrives in love, the old creature, the works of the flesh, will perish with its selfishness.

We might be inclined to reason amiss on the subject and to say with the Apostle, Having begun in the spirit, are you seeking to be perfect in the flesh? We might say, Surely all who have been begotten of the holy Spirit and who have reckoned themselves dead indeed to the flesh and its inclinations and desires—none of these, surely, could ever be influenced again to come under the adversary's power and become a partaker of his spirit and participate in his works!

This is a wrong thought! It is possible for some of the Lord's true children to thus overcome. True, if thoroughly overcome by the spirit of selfishness it would mean the death of the new creature, and this would mean the second death. The path from the new nature into the second death is not necessarily a very long one, but we have no reason to believe that it could be taken at merely one step. We remember that the new nature up to the present time, up to the time of our resurrection change, is but the new mind, the new will, the new disposition in harmony with the Lord, his righteousness, his love. We are to remember, as the Apostle suggests, that we have this new nature in an earthen vessel and that the earthen vessel has practically all of its original blemishes and fallen tendencies still as powerful as ever except as the new mind has these under its mastery and control; but if that mastery or control should be released even for a moment the result would be the awakening, the reviving of the old nature. And we may be sure that our adversary is alert and fully realizes the situation and will do all in his power to put us off guard, even to the extent of endeavoring to make white appear black and black appear white before our judgment. The Lord very graciously shields us from temptations more than we are able to bear. Hence it is possible for us at all times to be overcome, not only in the infancy of our new nature, but also in its further development; but the testings permitted

grow more severe, more crucial, as we near our spiritual graduation time. Nor can we object to this; it is exactly what we should expect.

The Apostle, following this line of thought, declares, "I keep my body under;" and again he says, "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth"—your earthly ambitions, will, etc., everything in yourself that would tend toward envy, hatred, anger and strife—put these to death. Allow the new nature to have full sway and control in every thought, in every word, in every deed. And watch to this end; watch your thoughts, watch your words, watch your conduct. Many can watch their conduct who find it difficult to scrutinize and properly weigh their thoughts and their words. Truly the Apostle intimates that out of the heart proceeds envy, bitterness, evil speaking, back-biting and strife; unless they are in the heart the mouth cannot utter them, for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh.

"THE TONGUE IS A FIRE AND A WORLD OF INIQUITY"

Alas, yes! our words do judge us; as the Master declared, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." No wonder the prophet said, "I will set a guard upon my lips lest I sin with my mouth." The setting of a guard evidently means that we will practice great deliberation, great care in respect to everything that we say; that we should speak evil against none. Our evil speaking is not at all necessary to the Lord and to his cause; he is perfectly able to accomplish all of his purposes without our violating a single one of his wise arrangements on our behalf. If he is not wise enough to bring order out of confusion, surely we are not sufficiently wise, and it would be very presumptuous on our part to interfere with the Lord and his affairs, except strictly along the lines of the instruction of his Word. Let this be our authority; when he instructs us to speak let us speak, when he instructs us to be silent let us be silent. No other course is a safe one.

The Apostle declares the "tongue setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of Gehenna." (James 3:6.) In other words, that which fires the tongue to evil is a spark which belongs to the Second Death, for all anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife, evil speaking, back-biting, are all works of the flesh and of the devil, which are tending toward the second death. As the Apostle says in enumerating these, "They that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:21.) They that do such things, if they continue in that evil course, will not only fail to get a share in the kingdom, but fail to get a share in the great company, and will receive their portion in Gehenna—the second death. This is no exaggerated teaching on our part; it is the clear testimony of St. Peter and St. James. And not only is this the rule of this Gospel age and the church which is now on special trial, but the same will be the rule during the Millennium; those who will not come into harmony with the law of love, which is the opposite of all these works of the devil, will be counted as servants of sin and of Satan and will have their portion in the lake of fire, which is the second death.—Rev. 20:14.

When the Apostle speaks of the tongue as setting on fire the course of nature, we believe that he is expressing a truth in full harmony with that set forth by the Apostle Peter, when he tells us that the symbolic heavens and the symbolic earth shall surely be on fire. The tongue, that little member, will thus set on fire the course of nature and eventually bring in the great period of awful anarchy with which present institutions will go down, preparing the way for the kingdom of the Lord under the whole heavens. Whoever has an ear to hear can already perceive that bitter tongues are moving rapidly in the direction of the igniting of the great fire which the Apostle delineates. Passions are being aroused in church, state, financial and political circles. Selfishness is more and more getting into command until by and by, as the Scriptures declare, there will be no peace to him that goes out or comes in, but every man's hand will be against his neighbor.

If thus the tongue is to set on fire the course of nature in the nominal church and in the social world, shall we suppose that the church of the Living God, whose names are written in heaven, will be exempted from such trials, and shall we suppose that the tests will be less crucial with them than with the world? No, verily! We must expect that judgment will begin at the house of God and extend to the nominal house and to the world. It behooves each one to be awake on this subject of the unruly member, to bring ours into absolute submission to the will of the Lord; that we shall speak only those things which are edifying; that we shall speak evil of no man; that our tongues wherewith we bless and praise God shall be used only in blessing and assisting and uplifting and strengthening the Lord's cause.

But since it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh we must keep our hearts with all diligence, we must remember their natural deceitfulness; we must be on guard lest they should deceive us now into thinking that evil is good, and that in promoting evil in speaking and slandering one another we are promoting good. This is a part of the artifice of the adversary, and, as the Apostle says, "We are not ignorant of his devices." Let us, then, be more than ever

on guard to scrutinize our motives, and not only so, but after finding good motives, let us scrutinize our methods and square them all with the Word of the Lord, especially remembering his instructions that we shall love one another as he has loved us—to the extent of laying down our lives for each other—and that we shall be obedient to him to the extent that we shall give heed to his Word, not forgetting his methods of procedure, as outlined to us in his own words.—Matt. 18:15-17.

THE SPIRIT OF ENVY AND MURDER

1 Samuel 18:6-16.—AUGUST 16.

Golden Text—"The Lord God is a sun and shield."—Psalm 84:11.

This lesson affords us a contrast between a spirit or disposition in harmony with the Lord and a spirit or disposition out of harmony with him and his arrangements. The first is exhibited in David, the shepherd boy, secretly anointed to the office of king and later brought into prominence through his victory over Goliath, recounted in our last lesson. So far as Saul is concerned the record is that an evil or malevolent spirit possessed him. On the contrary the Spirit of the Lord is said to have been with David from the time of his anointing. We are not to confuse in our minds those blessings of the Lord's Spirit in ancient times with the still more blessed experiences of God's people throughout the Gospel age under the anointing of the holy Spirit, the begetting of the holy Spirit, the sealing of the holy Spirit as sons. Doubtless there would be much in common in the experiences of those who received the Lord's Spirit at that time and those who receive it now; but most certainly that which we now enjoy as the "house of sons" is far beyond anything that was possible for the "house of servants" to experience; because the holy Spirit as a comforter and guide into the truth and a seal of the new nature was not then given, because Jesus was not then glorified. Hence the blessing of the Spirit given at Pentecost and enjoyed by the church since is peculiarly the Lord's blessing for the bride class and has been possible only since their Advocate appeared in the presence of God for them in the merit of his own sacrifice.

To whatever extent the holy Spirit was bestowed upon the "house of servants" it would necessarily be a spirit of moderation, of fellowship with God, of desire to do his will and of peace with him; and to this extent it would be the spirit of a sound mind, relieving its possessor of much of the nervous fret and strain, excitability and languor which might be his own naturally under trials and disappointments. Of Saul, it is said that an evil spirit entered into him, but this does not necessarily mean that he became obsessed of a demon, but rather that an evil mind, a perverse mind or disposition, an unhappy or melancholy mind took the place of the restful and peaceful and trustful mind which he previously had enjoyed.

AN EVIL SPIRIT FROM THE LORD

But we read that an evil spirit from God came upon Saul and he prophesied in the midst of the house. This would seem more like an obsession, or, as Dr. Merrine suggests in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Saul had psychic epilepsy; he says, "Epilepsy may coexist with a healthy growth and development of the intellectual faculties, and a very high degree of intelligence and even genius may be associated with it. Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar, Napoleon, Petrarch, Mohammed, Moliere, Handel and many other great men were epileptics. Certain peculiarities are common to the whole class of epileptics, and dominate their character, such as an explosive irritability of temper; in some instances a display of highest excitement, and again a gloomy stupor. Numerous criminal acts have been committed while in this state."

We do not get the thought that this evil spirit was from the Lord in the sense that the Lord exercised this evil influence upon Saul, but we understand the word *from* in an entirely different sense, and signifying *not of*, contrary to: "An evil spirit [apart] from the Lord was upon Saul." The Apostle tells us that anger, malice, hatred, envy and strife are works of the flesh and of the devil, and hence to whatever extent Saul or anybody else came into sympathy with these works of the adversary to that extent he would have, would be controlled by an evil spirit, an evil disposition, the Adversary's spirit; and, as a matter of fact, those who come consciously into accord with the adversary in spirit become thereby exposed to obsession, to the intrusion of the evil spirits themselves.

It is undoubtedly true that persons whose minds are in sympathetic accord with righteousness and truth, are proportionately surrounded by a protective influence which shields them from the intrusion of the evil spirits. This is the intima-

tion of the Scriptures, which declare that the holy angels are ministering spirits for those who shall be heirs of salvation, and "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them." (Heb. 1:14; Psa. 34:7.) But with any departure from the reverence of the Lord, with any departure from loyalty to righteousness and truth would come a corresponding separation from this holy protecting influence of the angels of the Lord and a consequent exposure of heart, of mind, to the malevolent influences of the fallen angels, who are ever ready to enter into such, and more seriously than ever defile them. This lesson seems to be enforced by our Lord's parable of the man out of whom a devil had been cast and his heart swept and garnished; not, however, receiving into it the good Shepherd of his soul, but, standing for righteousness merely in his own strength, he was assaulted by seven demons more wicked than the first and was overcome, and the last end of that man was worse than the beginning.—Luke 11:24-26.

Thus it was with Saul; as a natural man he evidently had some noble characteristics, because of which Samuel loved him; but failing to make a full consecration of himself to the Lord he was continually beset by his own will, a spirit of selfishness, which hindered him from being a satisfactory servant of the Lord. As a result of this, the Lord's special protection and assistance were not afforded him, and correspondingly the spirit of selfishness grew. In our lesson we saw that so far from desiring that the will of the Lord should be done in him and in all of his affairs the very reverse spirit of selfishness, of self-will, grew rankly in his heart. These heart conditions merely needed an opportunity to manifest themselves, and this opportunity came in connection with David. After the exploit with Goliath the fame of David greatly spread abroad throughout the cities of Israel. As the story was told subsequently that he with the army gave battle with the Philistines and victory resulted, his praises were sung after the custom of the time by women and children, who at the gates of the various cities saluted the returning victorious warriors. A song gradually spread, the chorus of which was, "Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his tens of thousands."

It would have required a man of very large calibre in Saul's place not to be offended at this, not to feel jealous of such honors given to the young hero of the hour, implying that he had entirely eclipsed the king. But whatever might have been the natural sentiment of King Saul or others there can be no doubt as to what would have been the proper one. The king should have rejoiced and taken pleasure in honoring the young patriot, whose chivalry had been so blessed to the whole nation. To have done this would have been to evince the spirit of a sound mind, and it would have redounded to the honor of Saul himself. But it does not surprise us that it had an opposite effect upon him, knowing as we do the general spirit of the world in respect to such matters—the spirit of selfishness and pride. Saul was filled with anger and envy and eyed David jealously henceforth. He recognized in him a rival; he also perceived that David was a true servant of the Lord, and that the Lord's blessing was upon him. Jonathan, on the contrary, of a different cast of mind, loved David more and more, because of the very qualities which led his father to hate David.

LESSONS FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES

Keeping in mind that the anointed David represents the church, the Lord's anointed, who by and by with Jesus their Head shall occupy the throne of the world's dominion for the blessing and uplifting of mankind, and for the deliverance of all from the yoke of Satan, sin and death, we may properly enough apply the essence of this lesson to this class. Their victories over the evil one, over the power of sin in their own bodies, and their general fighting of the good fight of faith bring the approval of some of the Jonathan class, as well as the comfort of the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the Lord's Word. (2 Pet. 1:4.) But these victories over

sin will not bring to this class the love of the world, the love of those who have not the Lord's Spirit, but a selfish spirit, the spirit of those represented by Saul. Of this condition of things the Lord forewarned us saying, "Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you." He tells us that we are the children of the light, and should let our lights shine, and that in proportion as we are faithful in so doing it will bring upon us the opposition of the children of darkness, who love the darkness rather than the light, who love sin rather than righteousness, selfishness rather than love.

Perhaps, too, Saul represented those of the present time who in the nominal church system, the nominal kingdom of God, affect to be reigning now. As they perceive the Lord's blessing on those who have no titles amongst men and whose anointing is not of man, neither recognized by man, they feel jealous of their success, they seem to realize that the prosperity of present truth in the world makes steadily against the institutions of Babylon. Every victory for truth, every evidence of the Lord's favor towards it seems to beget an evil spirit of indignation, of opposition, hatred, envy, strife—"works of the flesh and of the devil."

Saul's coming under an evil influence, by which he prophe-sied, seems to correspond thoroughly with the power of evil spirits exercised at various times in the past. And speaking of the power that Babylon will exhibit in the near future, the Lord tells us that the image of the beast will become so alive shortly that it will call down fire from heaven upon all opposed; that is to say, it will, apparently in the name and power of the Lord, express imprecations and fiery vengeance from the Almighty upon all who are not in full sympathy and accord with it. It may even seek to destroy us with the javelin of bitter words, misrepresentation and slander, as Saul threw his javelin twice at David. But as the latter was not smitten with the javelin, so we shall not be injured as new creatures, no matter what the Lord may permit to come against us according to the flesh. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose"—to his anointed. His Word is, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets [ministers] no harm." (Psalm 105:15.) And again, "Nothing shall by any means hurt you," injure your real, highest interests.

These words of the wise man have been amply demonstrated as truthful through many centuries of the world's experience. Some one has said, "Jealousy is said to be the offspring of love. Yet, unless the parent makes haste to strangle the child, the child will not rest until it has poisoned the parent."

The lesson to the new creation is that we should be specially on guard against jealousy, envy, hatred and strife. We cannot doubt that much of the final testing of the "very elect" will be along these lines. "Who shall be able to stand?" is a question, therefore, that appeals to all those who have taken their stand for the Lord, for righteousness, for truth—their stand for love of God and of the brethren. If indeed, we have consecrated our lives, to lay down our lives in the service of the Lord and his truth and in the service of the brethren, what should it not mean to us as respects the manifestation of that love and faithfulness! Any root of bitterness, any word of bitterness, any thought of jealousy entering into our hearts might mean the defilement of not only the brother or sister against whom these are directed, but would surely mean the poisoning of our own hearts, the destruction therein of the spirit of love, the Spirit of the Lord; and possibly this evil spirit, far from the Lord, proceeding from us, might contaminate many members of the body of Christ for their defilement. How much on guard, therefore, each of us ought to be; how we should analyze our thoughts, our motives, our intentions to see that they all square perfectly with the law of love to the extent that our Lord indicated, saying, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you;" to the extent of being willing to die for each other's interests and welfare and honor!

On the contrary the Spirit of the Lord in David kept him sweet, kind, generous toward his enemies. He indeed fled from the king's presence when in a fit of anger Saul threw the javelin, and we may be sure that it was nothing less than faith in the Lord and in his divine providence that enabled David to continue to serve the king as his musician, and by the sweet music of his heart and of his voice, to cheer Saul and drive away his melancholy. Such should be our attitude toward those who oppose us. The natural disposition of an evil course toward us would be to arouse an antagonistic spirit in return, render evil for evil, railing for railing, accusation for accusation. The result of such a course would be our

own injury as well as the possibility of further injuring our opponents. David's course was the proper one; he waited upon the Lord, he was submissive to what the Lord's providence permitted. In his estimation and ours nothing could befall him that would be outside the divine knowledge and the divine power to prevent. Hence these trying experiences meant for David a great development of character, a strengthening of his heart in harmony with the divine will.

PROVIDENTIAL CHANGES ACCEPTED

In various ways did Saul seek to arouse in David a spirit of antagonism; not only did he make an attempt to assassinate him twice, but he kept back from him a part of the promise he had publicly made, that the one who would gain the victory over Goliath should become his son-in-law. How foolishly shortsighted was Saul's course even up to this time! He might have fallen into line with the Lord's providences and have fulfilled his obligations to David, and by having David as a son-in-law, his own family would have been closely knit to that of David when the latter would ultimately come in possession of the kingly authority, as the Lord had ordained. But jealousy and hatred are usually blind to their own best interests. So Saul kept back his daughter from being the wife of David, and his next step was to send David to the army as the commander of a regiment, with the hope and the expectation that his boldness in war would mean his death. But the Lord was with David and blessed him, and the record is that "he behaved himself wisely in all his ways."

So with all those who now have the Lord's Spirit in still greater measure and power for the illumination of their minds, their hearts and their guidance in the right way. All these, under this heavenly influence and as sons of the Most High, should behave themselves wisely, prudently, in a manner to glorify their Father in heaven, to honor the Lord Jesus, to make themselves helpful to all the household of faith, and to let their lights so shine before men that the latter may take knowledge of the fact that they have been with Jesus and learned of him.

But the more wisely David conducted himself, the more envious did King Saul become. The more the Lord blessed and prospered David in his humility of life and wisdom, of course the more opposition did he have from the king. And so it will surely be with us. In proportion as we have the spirit of a sound mind and are zealous for the Lord and for the brethren, laying down our lives in the service of the truth, the more hatred and fear we may engender in the hearts of those who are out of heart-harmony with the Lord. But as we read of David that all Israel and Judah loved him, so we may be sure as respects the true people of God; for they are more and more loved and respected—those who have the Lord's Spirit, those who are of the David class. By and by when Satan shall have been bound, and when the Lord shall have established his kingdom under the whole heaven, when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears unstopped, then all the people, all who are in accord with the Lord, shall recognize the faithfulness of the David class, the Christ, and shall glorify God on their behalf.

"THE LORD GOD IS A SUN AND SHIELD"

Our Golden Text is a great encouragement to the David class, the beloved class, the anointed ones, the members of Christ. To these the Lord God is both a sun and shield; he not only enlightens these but he will not suffer them to be injured by the blessings which he bestows upon them. He will shield them from all enemies and everything that would tend to injure them in any manner; all things shall work together for good to those that love him, to the called ones according to his purpose. (Rom. 8:28.) With such blessed assurances, then, we may look forward into the future with rejoicing and with confidence, trusting to have a share in the glorious rewards God has promised to the faithful.

As it would not have done for David merely to have thought about his anointing to be king and the blessing that would then come to him, so it would not do for us merely to think about the kingdom honors that God has promised to the faithful, for in so doing we might be puffed up and thereby made unfit for a share in those coming blessings. Rather our attention, like that of David, must be directed to the things of the present, without, of course, forgetting the blessed influence of the coming prospects. It is ours to do with our might what our hands find to do at the present time, remembering that only thus can we make our calling and election sure.

As each step of opposition on the part of Saul worked out a blessing for David, giving him wider experiences and fitting and preparing him for his future usefulness as the king, so all of the trials and difficulties and the disappointments that the Lord will now permit to come upon us from the world, the flesh and the adversary—all of these will prove but preparations for his glorious kingdom privileges, if faithfully used.