

Declared in Prayer

Key Verse: *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”*

—Matthew 11:28

Selected Scripture:
Matthew 11:25-30

can be divided into three sections. The first 15 verses contain Jesus’ testimony about John the Baptist, in which he shows that John carried out his ministry faithfully, but that it had now come to an end. Then in verses 16-24 Jesus upbraids the generation of Jews living at that time, in particular those cities in which both he and John had been preaching. In the last 6 verses of the chapter, Jesus turns his attention toward his disciples, those who were following him as their Master. These verses are the focus of today’s lesson.

How appropriate it is that as Jesus turned his attention toward his beloved brethren, he offered a prayer of thanksgiving to God. “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” (vs. 25) Jesus was thankful that God had only revealed his plans and purposes to ‘babes’—those individuals having the childlike qualities of humility, meekness, love, and purity of heart. Most of the worldly ‘wise and prudent’ were not in such a condition of readiness, and so the Gospel message was hidden from them. So it has been throughout the Gospel Age, “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the

world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.”—I Cor. 1:26-28

In verse 27 of our lesson, Jesus identified the process by which such in a proper heart condition would come to know the Father and have fellowship with him. He said that no man truly knew the Father except himself, for he had been with him in his prehuman existence. However, to those whom he would reveal it, the Father would be made known to them, that they could have fellowship with both the Father and the Son. Apostle John states the matter in this fashion, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”—I John 1:3

The Key Verse of our lesson speaks of the fact that those who come to Jesus do so with the recognition that they have long been laboring and are heavy laden with sin and its effects in their lives, and they desire to be at rest from these. Truly that rest has been found by those who, through a complete consecration of their wills, have accepted the merits of Jesus’ sacrifice, and have had imputed to them his precious blood, releasing them from the condemnation of Adam. “For we which have believed do enter into rest.”—Heb. 4:3

However, entering into the above rest at the beginning of our consecrated walk is not the end of the matter. Jesus points out that there is a fuller rest, one which we can claim in each experience of life, if we learn of him. “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”—Matt. 11:29,30 ■