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In the Night Watches.

“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness ; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips : when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches.” — Psalm 63:5, 6.

PSALM 92:1 declares that it is “a good thing I to give thanks unto the Lord,” also to “sing praises” unto the most High. The more we learn about our God through an increasing understanding of His Word, the greater will be our desire to sing His praises. As our knowledge of Him deepens into a personal acquaintance with Him, through the outworking of His providences in our lives and the fulfilment of His promises of grace to help in every time of need, our lives should flow on in endless songs of praise to the God of our salvation.

The Lord referred to David as a man after His own heart, and in many of his psalms the sweet singer of Israel declares his love for the Lord and his delight in the law of his God. In one of them he writes:

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever : the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” — Psa. 19:7-10.

David speaks of meditating upon the Lord in the “night watches.” It was these meditations that enabled him to write: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained ; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3, 4) — And again, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” — Psa. 19:1, 2.

The hours from sundown to sunrise in David’s time presented a somewhat different situation than they do today. Now the electric light and other means of artificial illumination very nearly turn night into day, with the result that the vast majority. of the people keep active, either in work or in pleasure, for such long hours that there is scarcely time left for the proper amount of sleep, and seldom is there any opportunity for quiet meditation.

But this was not the case in David’s time. With the flicker of a dim flame from the burning of olive oil

almost the only means of securing light after the sun went down, probably most people spent much more time in bed than is the custom now. And since the body requires only a certain amount of sleep, there were doubtless many sleepless hours during the night.

In the case of David, while he was a shepherd boy, and later as leader of Israel's army, he no doubt spent many of his nights under the canopy of heaven. It was under these conditions that he rejoiced as he meditated upon the goodness of the Lord, and marvelled at the wonders of creation. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that the subject matter of many of David's beautiful psalms took shape in his mind as he thus meditated during the night watches. How wonderfully such surroundings would prepare him for the influence of the holy spirit which guided him in his inspired writings !

“For Our Admonition”

Truly David was a man of God, and the spirit of devotion and praise found in his writings is a sincere expression of his own heart, a heart that had been given to the Lord. When he wrote, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” he was expressing his own feelings in the matter, giving utterance to his own confidence in the keeping power of his God.

But beyond the expression of his own delight in the Lord, David was inspired by the holy spirit to pen messages peculiarly fitting to the needs of the people of God during the present age. Indeed, in the divine providence, this is the chief purpose of his writings, even as it is of the writings of all the Old Testament prophets ; for, as the apostle declares, not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister. They wrote for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come. — Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor, 10:6, 11; 1 Pet. 1:12.

This being true, we might think of David's experience of meditating upon the goodness of the Lord upon his bed during the night watches as having a counterpart even more blessed in our own experiences. We are not suggesting the making of a type of his experiences, but merely that they remind us of something greater in the divine arrangement than literally lying upon a bed meditating upon the goodness of the Lord during the dark hours of a night.

In God's creative design there are seven “days,” six of them having been completed about the time our first parents were created. Each of these days began with an “evening” and closed with a “morning.” There is reason to believe that each of these creative days was a period of seven thousand years in length, with the seventh, or last “day,” beginning with the creation and fall of man, and ending in the “morning,” a morning which will become fully bright at the close of the thousand year reign of Christ.

In each case the “evening” of the creative days marked an obscure beginning, with darkness settling down into a night, until the “morning” marked the close of each period. And so it was when sin and death came upon the scene at the beginning of the seventh creative “day.” From then until now, the world has been passing through the long hours of a night of darkness. “Weeping” has continued throughout this night, David tells us, “but joy cometh in the morning.”— Psa. 30:5.

Resting by Faith

During this long night of weeping the world has been greatly distraught and unsettled. But those who have had faith in the promises of God have enjoyed rest of mind and heart. This has been particularly true of Jesus' followers during the Gospel age. Paul wrote concerning these, saying, “For we which have believed do enter into rest.” (Heb. 4:3). We are keenly aware of the evil with which we are surrounded, and of the motions of sin in our flesh, but we place our faith in the finished work of Christ on our behalf and know that through Him and His kingdom all evil will eventually come to an end, and that even death itself will be destroyed.

Thus we are at rest. It is a rest “by” faith, and a rest “in” faith ; that is, in the “most holy faith,” the foundation of which is the meritorious sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Based upon the merit of the shed blood are all the various features of the divine plan of salvation — its times and seasons ; its heavenly calling for the church, and the hope of restitution for the world ; its prophecies pertaining to the end of the age, and its promises concerning the new age now dawning ; its explanation of the divine permission of evil, and its assurance that evil will not rise up the second time.

Yes, all this, and more, is contained in our “most holy faith,” that wonderful outline of the divine plan in which we find peace of mind and rest of heart. No matter how dark the night, or how far distant the morning hours at times may seem, we can continue to rest in this “bed” of divine promises, and while we rest, continue to sing the praises of our God.

Inadequate Beds

In Isaiah 28:20 we read about a bed which “is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it : and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” Two verses previous to this we are told of some who make a “covenant with death,” and an “agreement with hell.” The Hebrew word here translated “hell” is sheol, meaning simply the death condition. Contrary to this plain scriptural statement, it has been agreed by the moulders of religious thought throughout Christendom that there is no death.

Upon this false premise the creeds of the nominal church have been built — creeds, or confessions of faith, which have been designed to give “rest” to believers, but which, when they are put to the test, fail to do so. These creed “beds” are too short. One who endeavors to find satisfaction in them upon the basis of reason discovers that they are too short. Nor do they provide adequate covering to protect one from the chilling drafts of doubt and fear which plague the soul.

These, apparently, are the beds referred to by Jesus in His great prophecy pertaining to the end of the age, when He said that two would be lying in a “bed,” that one would be taken, and the other left. (Luke 17:34-37). And such was the position of some of us. We have experienced the shortness of these creed beds of Christendom, and have been most uncomfortable under their limited conceptions of the love and grace of God. But the Lord has favored us in that we have been lifted out of these beds and given rest upon the bed of present truth.

This is not because we are wiser than others, nor more worthy, but simply because of God’s grace in permitting us to know “the mystery of the kingdom of God.” (Mark 4:11). Surely this is great cause for rejoicing, and for praising our God, as now, while it is still dark, we are privileged to rest upon this soul-satisfying “bed” which the Lord has provided for us!

Resting but Awake

Our rest of faith in Christ, and in the great plan of God of which He is the centre, is not designed to induce sleep. While we are resting upon this bed of present truth during the world’s dark night of sin, sorrow, and death,, we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Concerning this Paul wrote, “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others ; but let us watch and be sober.” — 1 Thes. 5:5, 6.

“Let us watch, and be sober.” In our text David speaks of the “night watches.” In order to participate in a “night watch” one has to be awake and alert. Night watching is a very old institution, made necessary because of the sin and selfishness of fallen man. Darkness serves as a sort of natural protection for prowlers, thieves, opposing armies, or whoever would rob another or inflict damage upon him or his

property. As an offset to this, watchmen are stationed to detect the approach or presence of enemies, and to sound an alarm.

Obviously, a watchman would fail of his duty if he fell asleep. It is not his privilege, during the night, to “sleep as do others.” Rather, he is to “watch and be sober.” And, as Christians, this is our position during the night-time of sin and death. We are “watchmen” in Zion, as it were, and we should keep alert and be on guard against the approach of “enemies” of whatever nature they might be which would rob us, or others of the Lord’s people, of their heritage in Christ Jesus.

Paul continues, “They that sleep, sleep in the night ; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love ; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

(1 Thes. 5:7, 8). This, of course, is all symbolic language. To “sleep” suggests spiritual lethargy, and to be “drunken” indicates an intoxication by false theories, doctrine, and hobbies.

We can avoid these conditions, Paul reveals, by “putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” In his letter to the Church at Ephesus, he admonishes us to “put on the whole armor of God,” that we may be able to stand against the “wiles of the devil.” — Eph. 6:11.

The truth, in its many aspects, and in its various applications in our lives, is the Christian’s armor. The very truths in which we find peace and joy and rest are also our protection against the insidious attacks of the Adversary during these dark hours of the night. It is for this purpose that the Lord gave us the truth.

Not in Darkness

Among the very important truths which guard the Christian’s heart and life today is a proper knowledge of the times in which we are living. It is this that Paul speaks of particularly when reminding us of our privileges as watchmen. We quote:

“Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you ; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety ; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” —1 Thes. 5:1-4.

The reason the “day of the Lord” does not overtake the “brethren” as a “thief in the night” is because they are “awake” and faithfully watching. In this lesson Paul is closely following the thoughts presented by Jesus concerning the time of His second presence and the end of the age. Jesus said, referring to a possible advanced knowledge of His coming, “Of that day and hour knoweth no man.” (Mark 13:32). For this reason He admonished His disciples to “watch.”

Paul says, “Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.” Jesus said that no one would know in advance, and Paul was not assuming that he did know, but he added, ‘For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.’ The Thessalonian brethren knew this “perfectly” because they had confidence in what Jesus had said on the point.

But the thief-like coming of the day of the Lord was to be true only so far as the outside world and drowsy professed Christians were concerned. “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness,” Paul insisted, “that that day should overtake you as a thief.” When Jesus gave His great lesson pertaining to the time of His second presence, admonishing His disciples to watch because they did not know the day nor the hour, He did not say in so many words that their faithful watching would be rewarded by a discernment of His

presence and the beginning of the day of the Lord. But this is how Paul understood what the Master had said. That is why he wrote, “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief.”

But this can be true only of those who are awake. “Let us not sleep, as do others,” Paul wrote. And oh, the joy with which the faithful watchers are rewarded! Concerning the saints who would be living in this time, and to whom, because of their faithfulness, the Lord would reveal His presence, Daniel wrote, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” — Dan. 12:12.

Yes, “blessed” indeed is the David class in this most wonderful time during which we are now living ! From the human outlook it is the darkest period of all time. In this darkness there is fear and apprehension. So frustrated is human wisdom that peace is feared almost as much as war. It is the time referred to in Psalm 46:2, 3, when the symbolic “earth” is being “removed,” and when the “mountains” are being “carried into the midst of the sea.”

But “we will not fear” wrote David. No, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in [this time of] trouble.” (vs. 1). He is helping in every needed way, and especially by having favored us with a knowledge of the truth. When on every hand there is unrest, nervous apprehension, chaos, and distress, we have a “bed” upon which we can recline and “rest.”

And if we keep properly “awake” during these dark hours, watching the on-moving events in the great plan of God, the very things which increase the world’s fears make our rest more complete. For among the things we see as watchers in Zion is the near approach of morning. Indeed, the Morning Star has already appeared, and through the din and confusion incident to the death of Satan’s world we discern the first gray streaks of dawn!

Singing Aloud

Surely, as David wrote, our souls are “satisfied with marrow and fatness.” The rich feast of truth, the “meat in due season” served to the household of faith by our returned Lord, satisfies our longings as nothing else could do. It is as manna from heaven, sweet, nourishing, and soul-satisfying.

And when we think of the many blessings which the Lord has so abundantly bestowed upon us, we cannot help, while resting upon our “beds” during the night watches, to sing aloud the praises of our God. David makes special mention of this in Psalm 149:5, where we read, “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” Yes, we are “resting” but not “sleeping,” and while we rest, we “sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.”

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,” David continues, “and a two edged sword in their hand.” In Psalm 92, where David says that “it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,” he also speaks of showing forth His loving-kindness. We give thanks to God in our personal and collective prayers to Him, but we show forth His praises when we speak of His loving-kindness to others. So, to sing aloud upon our beds, and for the high praises of God to be in our mouths, call for activity in making known the glorious Gospel of the kingdom.

This is the great privilege of all who have been called out of darkness into the marvellous light of the divine plan.

We rejoice in the fatness, the richness of the “meat in due season” upon which it is our privilege to feed. Resting upon our “bed” in the “night watches” we delight to meditate upon the goodness of the Lord, and

to give thanks to Him for His boundless grace.

But this should not be all. The result of our meditations should be a bursting forth in song, even the “new song” which the Lord has given us to sing. And when we take into consideration all that the Lord is doing for us, how can we keep from singing? Surely we will want to praise the Lord with joyful lips !

In Psalm 92:3 David speaks of praising the Lord upon an “instrument of ten strings.” We might think of these “ten strings” as representing the various fundamental doctrines of the divine plan. It is the beautiful harmony of these doctrines, when these “strings” are played upon by those who have learned the ‘-new song,” that really brings praise to our God.

These doctrines reveal the wisdom, justice, love, and power of our God which, blended in perfect harmony and unison, make up His glory. It is our privilege now to show forth this glory, while, resting upon our “beds,” we joyfully contemplate the time now nearing when a knowledge of His glory will fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. Praise ye the Lord! (Reprinted from “The Dawn”)

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Serving the Lord.

“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” (Rom. 12:11).

Whatever we do we are to do all unto the Lord; or rather, whatsoever we do we should do altogether unto the Lord. With the Christian, the chief business of life is to glorify God, to serve Him and, incidentally, as directed by the Lord, to serve the brethren, to serve the Truth, to serve righteousness, to serve all men as he has opportunity, “doing good unto all, especially to the household of faith.” In our text the word business seems to include any occupation, of any kind, that would be approved of the Lord. It would not do for us to say, Be not slothful in the liquor business or the tobacco business, for we are to give our attention only to those occupations which we believe have the Lord’s approval.

The expression, “not slothful,” is equivalent to the expression, not lazy, not indolent. The Apostle’s thought seems to be that any matter proper to be done should have the intelligent and active attention of him whose duty or privilege it is. Whatever is worth doing is worth doing zealously, well. The Apostle’s thought is that we are, first of all, to see that our business is a worthy one; and secondly, to prosecute it faithfully. If it is ‘to provide money for either our personal needs or the Lord’s work, we should prosecute that business with energy, and with appreciation of the privilege, as done to Him. We should not be slothful or careless in any way.

A certain amount of provision for our temporal need is necessary. How much time is to be given thus is a thing for each to determine for himself. After we have made a consecration to the Lord, to give our lives in His service, there is very little we can give at best. We should see that we “redeem the time,” buy it back from the affairs of this life, as far as reasonably possible, in order to secure the more of it for the special service of promulgating the Truth. This does not mean that we should leave our families dependent upon others. We should care for our proper interests. We should not be overcharged, but should have a proper care for those dependent upon us. As for our own requirement, having food and raiment, we should be content and not wish to accumulate for a long period of life.

The word fervent signifies very hot, to boil. The thought that the Apostle gives is that whatsoever we do we should do heartily, with our might, as unto the Lord. The one who takes the course of doing whatever he does in a careless manner forms a slothful habit, which is a drag on him all through life. Whatever we do we should do fervently. We are the Lord’s and whatever business we have is His. The Lord is pleased that we should be energetic in our affairs. If any one is in a business where he is violating conscience, he should get out of it into one in which he could do some good in the world.

The Lord’s people should not worry or take anxious thought respecting tomorrow. The Scriptures imply, however, that we should be provident and careful, laying by in store, that we may be prepared to do something for neighbors and friends who may need. Money laid by merely represents so many days of labor saved. We should not use all of our resources upon the immediate present, but exercise self-control, to the end that we may have good results in the future. This rule will apply to food and clothing, also. If our store is small, we should not wonder where the next suit of clothes will come from. If we had the next suit it might be stolen. Neither should we wonder, If I accept the Truth, what shall I do if my neighbors and friends turn against me? What if I should get into great disrepute on account of the Truth? We should leave all such things to the Lord. If we need persecutions, we hope that He will let them come to us.

If in that way He chooses to make the Truth worth something to us, we should be glad. “All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” — 2 Tim. 3:12.

On the other hand, the Lord does not intend us to go through life in a careless manner, happy-go-lucky, so to speak. We are to have a proper thought for the day. What are the responsibilities of today? What are the

cares? As the Scriptures enjoin, be “not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” We are to have a great deal of zeal. We are not to worry over things that may happen tomorrow, but have faith that God will be with us tomorrow, and give grace sufficient for us when it shall come. If the Lord’s people are living faithfully they will have a great deal to think about every day. They will not need to go out in advance to worry about tomorrow. We shall have plenty to do if we give attention to the present difficulties, and go to the Throne of Grace that we may obtain grace and strength to help today.

Our Lord assures us that if the main thought of our hearts is concerning His service and the promotion of righteousness and the attainment of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him, then we need carry no anxious cares respecting the future. As His disciples we shall have trials and tribulations enough day by day, and shall need daily to lean upon the Bridegroom’s arm as we seek to walk the “narrow way.” Sufficient for each day will be the evil of itself ; and thanks be to God, we have also His promise that daily His grace shall be sufficient for us.

To those who are the Lord’s consecrated people it is the greatest privilege imaginable to serve the Lord. The Lord is looking to see to what extent we are willing to sacrifice earthly things, earthly approval, that we may have His approval and hear His “Well done !”

Full Deliverance for God’s Saints.

“He shall call upon Me and I will answer him ; I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him and honor him.” — Psalm 91:15.

WHEN considering the above text, we are naturally interested to know who or what class would be thus favored of God and whether or not we might become members of that class. The context seems to show that the Psalm is prophetic and refers to the Lord Jesus and the Church — The Christ as a whole. No doubt it has been true in a certain sense of some others. For instance, when Abraham called upon the Lord, God heard him in his troubles and blessed him. And the Lord will yet give him great honor, because he loved and trusted God. The same might be said of the faithful ones all through the Jewish Dispensation. But the Psalm seems to refer especially to The Christ. These are the ones who bear the closest relationship to God. Their love is manifested in a special sense by their faithfulness to the will of God, their faithfulness in honoring His name, their faithfulness in upholding His Truth, in being willing to die in God’s service, in laying down their lives for the brethren, in developing the fruits of the holy spirit ; for all this is included in their covenant.

It is this class, therefore, that the Lord will answer when they call upon Him; it is this class that He will deliver and honor, will care for in trouble. All who come to God, must necessarily, before they can be accepted, enter into a Covenant of Sacrifice with Him through Christ, giving up their will — loving the Lord and His will better than themselves and their own will or the will of any other. Of course, a large proportion of those who proclaim themselves to be Christians are merely nominal Christians — Christians in name only, who never made a covenant with God.

Of those who do enter into this Covenant, not many carry it out faithfully, submitting their lives and their every interest to God’s will. Noticeable examples of the faithful ones of the past were our Lord Jesus and His Apostles. And there have been others, of course, of this faithful class throughout this Gospel Age, now closing. All these are styled by Jehovah His jewels, and are to be made by Him into a glorious diadem, the Lord Jesus being its brightest and choicest gem. These are to show forth during eternal ages Jehovah’s Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. Throughout this Gospel Age God has been working in these to will and to do His good pleasure.

But, God works in no one contrary to that one's own will. If we wish to step out from under Christ's instruction, there is nothing to prevent us. God would that we remain, but is not willing to urge upon us, to press upon us, this matter. God wishes only such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in Truth, because they love Him. This class who seek faithfully to do the Lord's will because they love Him may call upon Him in every trouble and difficulty. His answer will not come in an audible voice, and may not come in the manner that we expect ; but He will answer in the best way the petitions of His saints which are asked in harmony with His will, His Word. That is, as Jesus said, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you [if you remember and act upon My teaching], ye may ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" ; for those thus abiding in Him would ask only those things which God has provided for them, only such things as His providence has arranged for them, only such things as His Word authorizes His saints to pray for. The Lord has promised these that they shall have their requests. He has been blessing and caring for His people throughout the Gospel Age. Their needs are often supplied before they call. They are to have the Word of God clearly in mind that their prayers and endeavors may be in line with His will. Thus their disappointments will be His appointments, and will be accepted as of the Lord.

"I will be with him in trouble," is the promise. The intimation here is that the Lord will not, necessarily, prevent our getting into trouble. We might see the trouble coming and pray to the Lord, but He might not deliver us from the trouble. And we should not ask that we might be spared the affliction if His Wisdom sees it is best for us to have it.

The trouble might prove very beneficial to us.

The Lord has already told us in His Word that we are to rejoice even under tribulation; for tribulation, rightly received, will work out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So while the Lord does not promise us that we shall escape trouble, He does promise that with the trouble He will give His children consolation of heart, sustaining grace, that will enable them to rejoice in the midst of their tribulation (2 Cor. 4:6-18 ; 12:9, 10 ; Isa. 43:1, 2.). This was exemplified in our Lord Jesus and in the Apostles. Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God in prison, with their feet fast in the stocks and their backs bleeding from the whippings which they had received. They could rejoice in tribulation for Christ's sake.

The Lord is ever with His people ; therefore they should not be discouraged. His children have the comfort and assistance of the letter of the Truth and the spirit of the Truth. But they have all these blessings only in proportion as they are willing to exercise faith ; for the glories promised are not yet theirs in reality ; these are theirs only by promise now.

"I will deliver him and honor him." The deliverance of the Lord's saints, in the fullest sense of the word, will be by their participation in the First, Chief Resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was delivered from all. His trials and afflictions when He was raised from the dead. The promise to the Church also is that we shall be delivered when our resurrection "change" shall come to us. "Sown in weakness," we shall be "raised in power" ; sown an animal body, we shall be "raised a spiritual body." This will be the full deliverance, and with it will come the promised honor and exaltation.

There are deliverances, of course, for the children of God at the present time, according to our need. And the Lord gives us a certain kind of honor, but not usually the kind of honor that the world appreciates. This honor may come mixed with such tribulation as would make it not desirable in the world's eye. But the honor that will come to the saints in the end will be such as all will know and will appreciate. All the members of Christ will share in the Kingdom glories and honors with their Head. He and the members of His Body glorified will reign in the Father's Kingdom, and will be associated together throughout all eternity in the great work of God.

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Question Box.

ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ELDERS

Question.—In 1 Tim. 5:19 (R.V.) it states—”Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses.” Does this imply that elders are to receive special consideration in the matter of accusations ?

Answer.—The Apostle in this statement recognizes two principles. (1) That an elder has already been recognized by the congregation as possessing a good and noble character, and as being specially earnest for the truth, and devoted to God. (2) That such persons, by reason of their prominence in the Church, would be marked by the Adversary as special objects for his attacks -- objects of envy, malice, hatred and strife on the part of some, even as our Lord forewarned — “Marvel not if the world hate you ;” “ye know that it hated me before it hated you ;” “If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household !” (Matt. 10:25; 1 John 3:13 ; John 15:18.). The more faithful and capable the brother, the more nearly a copy of his Master, the more proper his choice as an elder ; and the more faithful the elder, the more sure he will be to have as enemies, — not Satan and his messengers only, but as many also as Satan can delude and mislead.

These reasons should guarantee an elder against condemnation on the word of any one person, if otherwise his life appeared consistent. As for hearsay or rumor, they were not to be considered at all ; because no true yokefellow cognisant of the Lord’s rule (Matt. 18:15), would circulate rumors or have confidence in the word of those who would thus disregard the Master’s directions. To be heard at all, the accusers must profess to have been witnesses. And even if two or more witnesses made charges there would be no other way of hearing the case than that already defined. Any one person charging wrong against the elder, should, after personal conference failing, have taken with him two or three others who would thus become witnesses to the contumacy. Then the matter, still unamended, might be brought by Timothy or anyone before the Church, etc.

Indeed, this accusation before two or three witnesses, being the requirements as respects all of the members, leaves room for the supposition that the Apostle was merely claiming that an elder should have every right and privilege guaranteed to any of the brethren. It may be that some were inclined to hold that since an elder must be “well reported,” not only in the Church, but out of it, an elder should be arraigned upon the slightest charges, because of his influential position. But the Apostle’s words settle it that an elder’s opportunities must equal those of others.

This matter of witnesses needs to be deeply engraved on the mind of every New Creature. What others claim to know and what they slanderously tell is not even to be heeded —not to be received. If two or three, following the Lord’s directions, bring charges against anyone — not backbitingly and slanderously, but as instructed — before the Church, they are not even then to be believed ; but then will be the proper time for the Church to hear the matter — hear both sides, in each other’s presence ; and then give a godly decision and admonition, so phrased as to help the wrongdoer back to righteousness and not to push him off into outer darkness — (From “The New Creation.”) .

Our Pilgrimage.

A scorching wind, a withering blast,
A desert stern and bare,

A journey long, with scarce a song;
But still my Lord is there.

A sky of blue — no clouds in sight,
A pleasant garden fair

With birds, and flowers, and happy hours;
My Lord is also there.

Then teach us Lord in want, in pain,
In happiness, in rest To trust in Thee, whate'er our lot,

And teach us Lord to murmur not
For what Thou doest is best.

Phil. 4:11-13.

“The Plan of God—in Brief.”—This 104-page booklet covering the main features of God’s Plan of the Ages. Most helpful ; heavy paper cover, price 1/ -

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.” —Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d. ; 6 copies for 4/ -.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

“Do the Dead Know Anything”—The full and satisfactory answer to this question is given from the Bible in this 24- page booklet. Price 5d. per copy;

“Christ’s Return”.—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is £ 7/12/6.

Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?

There has been considerable appreciation of the article appearing in July "Peoples Paper" — "Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?" — and in view of the importance of this subject, especially at the present time, this article is being printed in tract form, to enable all our friends who so desire to have a quantity on hand for distribution as they feel may be helpful to others who have ears to hear.

The following letter received recently from one of our readers is of good interest in this connection — "I am writing to thank you for sending your 'Peoples Paper' to me. I always enjoy reading them, and one you sent me a couple of weeks ago contains what I always wanted explained to me — Does God perform miracles of healing today? A friend of mine tried to get me interested in healing; she says it can and is being done today. I said I didn't think those things were meant for today. I'm glad you sent the paper as it explains what I've felt all along. My friend says she has seen the miracles done at the meetings of the British Israel American News. I went one day with her to one of these meetings, where they had in the service the speaking in tongues, and the men on the platform interpreting what the people said. Well, I didn't go again, as to me it seemed wrong; it just left me cold, and it quite upset me. But your 'Paper' is as clear as the day is long, and my mind is at rest on that subject.

"I wonder would you send me some of Frank and Ernest Dialogues; they would help me very much. Also the booklets 'The Manner of Christ's Return and Appearing,' and 'The Everlasting Gospel.' Enclosed—, use balance as you think fit. Thanking you for your kindness."

By having some of the above mentioned tracts on hand our friends may be in a position to assist many at the present time who are in doubt and perhaps are being deceived by the great increase in what is called the Pentecostal movement in recent times. Order as soon as possible, and mention how many copies can be used to advantage. These tracts are supplied free from the Tract Fund.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. g, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. 4.45 p.m.

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