

## June 9

*In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. John 16:33*

THERE was no reward of earthly prosperity for the Lord's faithfulness, but the reverse--privation and persecution were realized, even unto death....He was a "man

of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" the reproaches of them that reproached God fell upon Him; though He was rich, for our sakes He became poor; so poor that He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."...And the servant is not above his Lord: if they have persecuted

Him they will persecute us also; and the reproaches of them that reproached Him will also fall upon us. The only present reward for which the followers of Christ may look is the heartfelt manifestation of the Lord's love and approval. Z.'95-207 R4072:4

R4071 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

## CALEB'S REWARD

--JOSHUA 14:5-14.--OCTOBER 27--

*Golden Text:--"He wholly followed the Lord God of Israel."--Joshua 14:14.*

IN all the promises to the faithful prior to the Gospel Age there were no intimations of spiritual things,--of the high calling to joint-heirship with Christ, of the privilege of being transformed New Creatures, partakers of the divine nature, etc. Thus, for instance, Caleb wholly followed the Lord God of Israel and received as his reward a choice portion of the land of Canaan.

We observe also many similar promises made to Israel as a nation conditioned on their obedience to God and their faith and loyalty:--They should eat the good of the land; their days should be long upon the land which the Lord gave them; their enemies should not triumph over them; they should be blessed in basket and in store, etc., etc. These were the immediate temporal rewards of earthly things promised to the obedient. But the promises to be realized to them even beyond the grave were also of an earthly kind. To Abraham God said, "Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for *all the land which thou seest*, to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever." And Stephen and Paul, referring to this earthly promise to Abraham and to his seed according to the flesh, remind us that this promise was never fulfilled to Abraham in his past life (nor has it yet been fulfilled to his posterity--"for an everlasting possession"); but that he died in faith believing that when he should be awakened from death in due time the promise would be verified.--Acts 7:5; Heb. 11:8-10.

These observations suggest several important questions. (1) May the Christian expect the temporal rewards of earthly prosperity as a present reward of faithfulness to God? (2) Shall the Spiritual Seed of Abraham share the earthly inheritance with the Fleshly Seed? or (3), vice versa, If the higher promises were made to the Spiritual Seed, the Gospel Church, can they apply also to the Fleshly Seed?

Considering the second question first, we answer, No; for the saints of the Gospel Age are to be changed from the human to the spiritual, divine nature. They are to be made like unto Christ's glorious body, who is now "the express image of the Father"--"the King immortal, *invisible* and dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see"; and with Christ they are to inherit all things. (I Cor. 15:51-53; Phil. 3:21; 2 Pet. 1:4; Phil. 1:5; I Tim. 1:17; 6:16; Rev. 21:7; Rom. 8:17.) While the Fleshly Seed of Abraham will rejoice to sit, each man, under his own vine and fig tree with none to molest or make them afraid (Micah 4:4), the Spiritual Seed will be reigning with Christ in glory, and from their exalted position will be able to bless all the families of the earth; and not only so, but even to judge angels.-- Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:16,29; I Cor. 6:3.

Nor can the Fleshly Seed of Abraham, even the most worthy and faithful prophets and martyrs, inherit the "*exceeding* great and precious promises," which belong to a subsequent dispensation of divine favor; for it is written that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God,"--the spiritual plane of that Kingdom being here referred to,--though they will inherit its earthly phase, as it is written: "Ye [unfaithful Jews] *shall see* Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God [the earthly phase], and ye yourselves thrust out." (Luke 13:28.) These two phases of the Kingdom will be in communication and cooperation during the Millennium--the one, the higher, spiritual and invisible, and the other, perfect, human and visible among men. Thus it is written, "Out of Zion [the spiritual phase] shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [the human, visible phase]." (Isa. 2:3.) And while the promise to Abraham, "In thee and in thy Seed [which Seed,] says Paul, 'is Christ'--Head and Body] shall all the families of the earth be blessed," shall be fulfilled in the Spiritual Seed primarily, yet the exalted earthly phase of the Kingdom is to be the blessed channel or agency through which the blessing shall flow to all the kindreds of the earth. And thus, as the Apostle declares, the promise of God--"In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed"--shall be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law (the Fleshly Seed), but to that also which is of the faith of Abra-

ham. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise.-- Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:16,29.

This calls to mind the two phases of the Kingdom of God as presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. I., Chap. XIV., and the separate and distinct inheritance and office of each. We are also reminded of the Lord's teaching that not all the natural descendants of Abraham are to be heirs with him of the promise, but only such as Abraham would be honored in owning as sons --such as partake of his spirit or disposition.--See John 8:39,44.

While to the Natural Seed of Abraham is promised all the land which Abraham saw, and the privilege of dwelling in it in safety, and while the inheritors of the earthly phase of the Kingdom are to be princes in all the earth (Psa. 45:16), to the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, which Seed is Christ--Head and Body--are given the "*exceeding* great and precious promises."--2 Pet. 1:4.

This brings us to the consideration of our first inquiry, May the Christian expect the rewards of earthly prosperity for his faithfulness to God, either in the present life, or in that which is to come?

We have already shown that Christians, members of the Body of Christ, have beyond this life "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" for them (I Pet. 1:4); consequently the earthly inheritance of human perfection and a peaceful home, each under his own vine and fig tree, could not confine to earth the immortal spirit beings, partakers of the divine nature, the scope of whose powers must necessarily extend to the utmost bounds of creation.

Nor can the rewards of present temporal prosperity in worldly things be expected by those who are running for the prize of this high calling to glory, honor and immortality as kings and priests unto God; for the way to the crown is the way of the cross, the way of sacrifice, as well to every member of the Body of Christ as it was to our Head and Lord, Christ Jesus. <sup>(1)</sup>He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; the reproaches of them that reproached God fell upon him; though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor; so poor that he said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." <sup>(2)</sup>There was no reward of earthly prosperity for the Lord's faithfulness, but the reverse--privation and persecution were realized, even unto death. <sup>(3)</sup>And the servant is not above his Lord: if they have persecuted him they will persecute us also; and the reproaches of them that reproached him will also fall upon us. The only present reward for which the followers of Christ may look is the heartfelt manifestation of the Lord's love and approval. "In the world," said he, "ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace."

It should be observed also that while rewards of temporal prosperity were promised and given to Fleshly Israel as a nation and as individuals, yet the very cream of that nation, the faithful patriarchs and prophets received no such temporal rewards, but like the Gospel Church, they endured hardness as good soldiers and nobly fought the good fight of faith; and their abundant reward will be in the glory of the earthly phase of the Kingdom of God. Note the account of their faithful endurance as recorded by Paul in Heb. 11.

The temporal rewards and punishments and general discipline of Fleshly Israel were typical of the Lord's similar discipline of the world in the age to come; while his selection out from among that people of a worthy class of overcomers for the earthly phase of the Kingdom was typical of his selection during the Gospel Age of a class of overcomers for the spiritual phase of the Kingdom. In any case, it pays to wholly follow the Lord God of Israel, who is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him to walk in his ways.-- Heb. 11:6; Prov. 8:32-36.

[1] 1/3 Jun. 9 Manna

[2] 1/3 Jun. 9 Manna, John 16:33

[3] 1/3 Jun. 9 Manna

R4761 "TRIBULATION—THEN EXALTATION *Question*.—Are the Lord's people more awkward than others, more quarrelsome, or more injurious to their neighbors that they should have tribulation; or why does the Lord say, "In the world ye shall have tribulation"?

*Answer*.—We believe the Lord's own answer to the question is that himself and all of his true followers would have tribulation in the world because "the darkness hateth the light." We do not mean that all but the saintly are vicious or unkind. We know that there are many well-intentioned people. The thought is that there would be such inharmoniousness between God's people and those of the world that there would be continual disapprobation manifested by the worldly toward the saintly. Some of the world would *hate* righteousness while others would be so out of sympathy with the light that they would not give God's people the defense or assistance which they would otherwise be willing to give.

We think it quite true that those who are looking for the coming Kingdom must expect their peace, not from the worldly, but from another quarter. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." We also believe that part of our tribulation in the world is because we are being more and more transformed; hence we do not find the satisfaction in the world that we otherwise would and that others find. Our chief business is to keep our bodies under and restrain our natural appetites. The opposition of ourselves—the warring against our human nature and the misunderstandings of others—all these combine to make our tribulation in the world."

#### FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH

*Question*.—What is the connection between the first and the latter part of this text, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"?

*Answer*.—We have before us a very remarkable proposition in the Lord's call. We are called to be children of God, sons of the Highest, joint-heirs with Christ, his Son, in the Kingdom work. Instead of this bringing us great honor among men in the present life, it brings the very reverse—persecution, tribulation. God's people have persecution because they have consecrated their lives to him. The tribulation would naturally lead them to disappointment and to feel that God's favor is not with them.

Hence it is quite necessary for them to have some such encouragement as the words of our text, as though the Lord had said, Do not allow these tribulations to make you discouraged; remember that I am the Captain of your salvation; remember that I have gone before you; remember my degradation before obtaining a share in this Kingdom... These things should be an assurance to you of the greatness of the coming Kingdom; that the glories far outweigh any sacrifices you may endure."

#### R347 "TRIBULATION AND PEACE...

If we suffer for the cause of Christ and His word, we should thank God and take courage, and remember that by the sharing in His sufferings, our future reward is secured. If we *suffer with Him*, we shall *reign with Him*, said Paul...

Sufferings in the present time, for the truth's sake, we are to reckon a part of

our wages, and all who think they are *running* for the heavenly prize of our high calling, should look for these wages as a proof that they are so running as to obtain that prize. (1 Cor. 9:24.)...

"Ne'er think the victory won,  
Nor lay thine armor down:  
The work of faith will not be done  
Till thou obtain thy crown."

...Jesus says, in him we may have *peace*. We may have both the tribulation and the peace at the same time. We get a peace which so overbalances the tribulations, that we may say, we reckon the present afflictions and scorns of the world as *light* indeed, when weighed with the hopes of coming glory on which our peace is builded.

But if you have peace without the suffering, while all men speak well of you, BEWARE! That is the peace of a sleep in which one dreams that he is filled and crowned and awakes to find himself empty..."Be thou faithful *unto death*, and I will give thee a crown of life."

"Sure we must fight, if we would reign.  
Increase our courage, Lord;  
We'll bear the cross, endure the pain,  
Supported by thy word."

(1Pe 2:19-21 KJV) "For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. (20) For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. (21) For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:"

R1944 "GOLD TRIED IN THE FIRE... In every trial he watches to see what influences control our actions, whether they be influences of present advantage, or worldly policy, or personal friendship, or earthly loves -- of husband, or wife, or children, or houses, or lands, or whether they be honor among men, or love of ease, or love of peace at any cost; or whether, on the other hand, we are controlled by the naked principles of truth and righteousness; and whether we will defend these principles with zeal and energy at any cost of labor or suffering, or both, and so fight the good fight of faith...even unto death.

Those who do so, reflect the Master's image. Like him they are loyal to God, loyal to the principles of truth and righteousness, brave, obedient, faithful. These are the overcomers. They overcome by faith; for without a strong reliant faith they could not thus endure hardness as good soldiers, and pursue to the end a course which is continually against the current of the old human nature. Faith buckles on the armor of God and goes forth to the battle...

He who courts ease and peace at the expense of the principles of truth and righteousness, or who is so indifferent to the value of those principles as not to study to discern them in order to defend them, is not a faithful, overcoming soldier of the cross. "Ne'er think the victory won, nor once at ease sit down; Thine arduous work will not be done till thou hast gained thy crown."

Jesus said..."A man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me..."Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple...He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."--Matt. 10:34-38; Luke 14:26,33,35...

Let the soul be thus inspired with deep and abiding love for the melody of truth and the beauty of holiness, and filled with a holy zeal for God, then everything else takes a secondary place, and we have the victory by faith in every encounter with the enemy. The soul thus stayed upon God can always trustfully sing, --

"If on a quiet sea toward home  
I calmly sail,  
With grateful heart, O God, to thee,  
I'll own the favoring gale.

But should the surges rise,  
And rest delay to come,  
Blest be the tempest, kind the storm,  
Which drives me nearer home."

R2480 "The overcomers must all be proven to be such as would sacrifice every other thing for the Lord; such as would sacrifice the love and fellowship and approval, if necessary, of every other being, in order to retain the love and favor of the Lord."

A213-215 "Paul assures us that when begotten of the spirit through the truth, if we live after the flesh, we shall die (lose our life), but if we, through the spirit, do mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body (the disposition of the human nature), we (as new creatures) shall live; for the sons of God are those led by the spirit of God. (Rom. 8:13,14) This is a thought of utmost importance to all the consecrated; for if we have covenanted with God to sacrifice the human nature, and if that sacrifice was accepted by him, it is useless to attempt to take it back. The human is reckoned of God as dead now, and must actually die, never again to be restored. All that can be gained, then, by turning back to live after the flesh, is a little human gratification at the expense of the new spiritual nature.

There are, however, many consecrated ones desirous of [A214] the *prize*, and who have been begotten of the spirit, who are partially overcome by the allurements of the world, the desires of the flesh, or the arts of the devil. They partially lose sight of the prize set before us, and try to walk upon a middle road—to keep the favor of God and the favor of the world, forgetting that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God" (James 4:4), and that the instructions to those running the race for the prize are, Love not the world, and, Seek not honor one of another, but that honor which cometh from God only. 1 John 2:15; John 5:44

These, who love the present world, but who have not wholly forsaken the Lord and despised their covenant, receive a scourging and purifying by the fire of affliction. As the Apostle expresses it, they are delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit (the newly begotten nature) may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1Cor. 5:5) And if rightly exercised by the discipline, they will finally be received into the spiritual condition. They will have everlasting

ing, spirit life as angels have it, but will lose the prize of immortality...

Ours is a rugged, steep, narrow way, and were it not that strength is furnished for each successive step of the journey, we could never reach the goal. But our Captain's word is encouraging: Be of good cheer; I have overcome; my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. (John 16:33; 2 Cor. 12:9) The difficulties of this way are to act as a separating principle to sanctify and refine a "peculiar people" to be "heirs of God and joint-heirs [A215] with Jesus Christ." In view of these things, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, while we fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on "the crown of glory"—immortality, the divine nature. 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4"

#### R5116 PERSECUTION AND FIERY TRIALS THE CHRISTIAN'S EXPERIENCE

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

GODLINESS IMPLIES a character which is actuated by principles of righteousness. In all our dealings we are either just or unjust, kind or unkind, not according to what some people may think of us, but according to the standard of righteousness found in the Scriptures. Therefore, in order to develop that character which is pleasing to God, we should in every detail of life consider carefully what is right and what is wrong, according to that standard. This course is Scripturally termed meditating in God's Law. When we reach that development of character in which thought, word and deed are measured by the principles of righteousness, we shall have attained godlikeness.—Psa. 119:97.

What the Lord desires to see in His people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to Him and to His brethren, but a development of love in our hearts and our dispositions. If we profess to love one another and yet pursue a course of self-seeking, wherein do we manifest love? So St. John admonishes to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.—1 John 3:18...

Some one may ask, "Why should the godly suffer?" The Bible answers that sin has brought the world into opposition to God. Whoever, then, would have all men speak in commendation of him would not be in harmony with the Divine arrangement, for the masses of the world are pursuing a course that the Lord does not approve... Those who wish to have influence with the world must cater to popular prejudices. On the contrary, those who would be God's people must be loyal to the principles of righteousness and consequently must go in the opposite direction to that of the world. Hence they are opposed by the world...

#### SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN

While it is true that all who will live godly in this world will suffer to the extent

to which they are out of harmony with the present evil conditions, yet the promised blessings of the Scriptures are to those who live godly in Christ Jesus, those who are Christians. Of these St. Peter says, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed."—1 Peter 4:16.... Therefore, no one could suffer as a Christian unless he had become a Christian...

The sufferings which our Lord endured were the result of His activity in the service of the Father. These were His weariness, His weakness after giving out His vitality to heal others, His bloody sweat, His ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches, the sneers and the bitter words incurred on account of His faithfulness, to all of which He meekly and quietly submitted until His sufferings on Calvary terminated His human existence...

#### SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE NOT ALWAYS SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

Where people have suffered for conscience' sake, they have thus cultivated character, and will get a blessing in the next Age for that suffering. At present there is only the one door into membership in the Body of Christ—obedience even unto death. Suffering with Christ, as we have seen, is not the ordinary suffering common to all in the fallen state, but only such experiences as are the result, more directly, of following Christ's example in advocating unpopular truths and in exposing popular errors. Such were the causes of the sufferings of Christ; and such will be the causes of suffering, persecution and loss to all who follow in His footsteps. Such will have fellowship in His sufferings now, and in the end will be counted worthy to share in the reward given for faithfulness to principle.

Throughout the Gospel Age this course has meant self-sacrificing labor and endurance of reproach in the sowing and watering of Christ's doctrines. Now, in the end of the Age, it means a similar fidelity and endurance in the Harvest work now in progress—faithfulness even to the laying down of life itself, whether it be required by the gradual process of working it out in the Master's service, a dying daily, or by being brought more abruptly to a martyr's death.

#### SHRINKING BACK FROM SUFFERING

Our Lord forewarns us that in the end of the Gospel Age, many who have a love for Christ will allow their love to grow cold because of the iniquity and sin in the world. (Matt. 24:12.) It will be a test for such to decide whether they will follow the Lord in self-sacrifice as His disciples or whether they will partake of the worldly spirit. We see this test in operation now. A great many people who name the name of Christ, who really love the Lord, who appreciate much of His character, who would like to see the right prosper, nevertheless have no thought of making a spectacle of themselves before men. They would like to do right, to walk

honorably, and to have the favor of men as good citizens. But as to being warm and faithful followers of the Lord—through "evil report and good report" (2 Cor. 6:8)—their faith and zeal are not sufficient to endure the test...

The Lord's people should thoroughly understand the terms and conditions upon which they have been called. They should therefore not think it strange when trials come upon them, no matter how fiery, no matter how severe... If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on *their* part He is evil spoken of, but on *your* part He is glorified." (1 Peter 4:12-14.) The Lord is to be not only the Instructor, but also the Refiner to purge out the dross, that we may be made ready to share with Christ in the Kingdom of "glory, honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7.

#### TRIALS FROM FALSE BRETHREN

The Scriptures plainly teach that special trials may be expected in the Church, amongst the brethren. And we find it to be true that our severest trials come not from without, but, as the Apostle in substance says, "From among yourselves shall arise false brethren," to injure the flock in general through personal ambition. (Acts 20:30.) This becomes a test not only to the Church, but to all those who are in contact with us, for if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.—1 Cor. 12:26...

Even disputation makes life an activity, and is better than a dead condition—not to care what is spoken or not spoken. Nevertheless, those who have zeal should be careful that they manifest the Spirit of the Lord, as above indicated—gentleness, patience, meekness, brotherly kindness, love, humility.

Think it not strange that there are fiery trials amongst yourselves, arising from one cause or another, that will make it particularly severe for you. Those among whom you are thrown in contact will cause you suffering, because of your zeal and their misunderstanding, their imperfection, etc. Similarly, you may be a cause of trial to others. All of these fiery trials will work out good for you. It is far better to be amongst those who are fervent in spirit than to take a place amongst those who are lukewarm and thus lose the privilege of being one of those who are footstep followers of Christ. Perhaps those who are lukewarm will, in the Time of Trouble, learn a lesson. But the Little Flock are to learn their lesson in the present time—allowing the experiences of life to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17."

#### HYMN 20

"Awake my soul, stretch every nerve,  
And press with vigor on;  
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,  
And an immortal crown."

R4416 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

#### "I HAVE MUCH PEOPLE IN THIS CITY"

--ACTS 18:1-22.--AUGUST 1.--

Golden Text:--"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."--John 16:33.

ST. PAUL made but a brief stay at Athens, the Lord's providence guiding him to Corinth. Silas had remained for a time at Berea, and Timothy at Thessalonica, and later he returned to Philippi. Meantime St. Paul was apparently considerably cast down. His epis-

tle to the Corinthians, written later on, clearly implies his discouragement and possible sickness. He wrote, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling." (1 Cor. 2:3.) His rough experiences at Philippi, his small success at Athens, the slenderness

of his purse, and his need of fellowship, contributed to make him rather downcast, and he informs us that the Lord encouraged him with a vision. Soon after his arrival at Corinth he found Aquilla and Priscilla his wife. They were tent-makers, and this being Paul's trade (as every Jewish youth was required to learn a trade) he abode and labored with them. Of this period of his affliction he wrote to the Thessalonians, "Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you, in all our affliction and distress, by your faith." (1 Thess. 3:7.) And later he wrote of his experience to the Corinthians, saying, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."--1 Cor. 4:11-13.

Many of us can find a lesson in St. Paul's experiences. If God permitted him to be in want, to be traduced, slandered, oppressed--if he needed such experiences in order to bring out the best that was in him and to make his epistles the more useful to the Church, possibly the Lord's dealings with us at times may be with the same end in view--our preparation for further usefulness in his service.

#### PAUL WAS PRESSED IN SPIRIT

Notwithstanding all of his discouragements and the fact that his tent-making labors barely sufficed to provide for him things decent and honorable, he never forgot that his chief mission in life was the preaching of the Gospel. If the earning of his daily bread hindered his preaching during the week he at least took his Sabbath days for the more important work when he could reach a congregation of the Jews. We read that he reasoned with them in the synagogue every Sabbath day. But apparently he was under a measure of constraint and did not speak in his usual boldness and vigor, perhaps because of the lack of moral support, which is an important factor with all and an essential to many. But finally Silas and Timothy arrived, bringing with them not only good fellowship and encouraging news from Berea, Thessalonica and Philippi, but also, as the Apostle tells us, a gift--quite probably from Lydia, the seller of purple dyes, supposed to have been comfortably circumstanced. The effect of these encouragements is intimated. Paul was pressed in spirit--he felt a fresh vigor urging him to still more vigorously present his message and bring matters to a focus and crisis at the synagogue. After testifying with great boldness and finding his message repelled by the majority of the synagogue, St. Paul forced the crisis himself by shaking his garment as though he would not even take from them the dust, saying to those who had opposed and blasphemed, "Your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean. From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." There are times when positiveness is absolutely necessary, even though it cause a division amongst those who profess to serve the same God. There are times when much more good can be obtained thus than by a continuance under disadvantageous conditions.

The same is true today. Oil and water will not mix, and time spent in trying to blend them is altogether wasted. When positive bitterness and hatred are manifested, as in the case under consideration, it is better to withdraw. But neither the Apostle nor we would recognize as proper or at all allowable that the Lord's people should quarrel and take offense one with the other over trifles unworthy of consideration. The shaking off of the dust was not only what our Lord suggested but a custom of the time, a warning as it were, that the Apostle felt that he had discharged his entire duty and left the responsibility upon their own shoulders.

The effect was good in two ways. It helped Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, to take a decided stand, whereas otherwise he might have been stunted in his spiritual development. Crispus decided for the Lord Jesus and took his stand with the Apostle and a few others. Secondly, the fact that the Jews had repudiated the Apostle and his message would draw the attention of the Gentiles more particularly to his Gospel. And some of these already believed. The new meetings were held in the home of Justus, a reverent man who resided near the synagogue. Thus Paul's message in the synagogue would continually remind the Jews as they attended this synagogue worship and would be a continual invitation to them to come in and hear more respecting the fulfilment of the prophecies in Jesus. The result was that a considerable number of the Corinthians accepted God's grace and were baptised, thus symbolizing their consecration. Let us, too, learn that opposition is not necessarily an injurious thing to the Lord's cause. It is safe to say that a most dangerous condition is the stagnant one.

Evidently the Lord saw that his servant Paul needed some special encouragement at this time and hence another vision was granted

in which he was told, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee, for I have much people in this city."

What an insight this gives us to the Divine supervision of the Gospel message and its servants! How these words remind us of the promise that the Lord will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will, with every temptation, provide also a way of escape! That vision and its message, we may be sure, was not for the Apostle merely, but for us also and for all of the Lord's people from that time until now. The same God is rich unto all that call upon him and able to shield and to deliver all of his servants and will allow them only such experiences as his infinite wisdom sees will be advantageous to his cause, and work out for his servants a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The Lord's statement that he had much people in Corinth teaches us a lesson also. It shows that the Lord knows the hearts of all--and has a care, not only for his saints, but also for those who have not yet heard of and received his grace, but whose hearts are in a favorable attitude of honesty, sincerity. A further lesson comes to us in this connection. We are to remember that the Lord is his own superintendent of missions and is able and willing to guide his consecrated servants, not only as to direction and place of service, but also as respects the time they shall remain to accomplish his will and the character of the experiences it will be necessary for them to have in order best to accomplish his purposes. The more our faith can grasp this situation, the more we can rely upon the Lord and use his wisdom instead of our own; the more successful will we be as his servants; and the more happy and contented; because realizing that all things are working together for good to us and for all who are his, submitted to his guiding care.

#### A YEAR AND SIX MONTHS TEACHING

Corinth was nicknamed the Vanity Fair of the World, because it was a center of frivolity, pleasure-seeking, etc. It is credited with having been one of the most licentious and profligate cities of its day. It may at first seem very strange to us that this vilest of the great cities should yield larger spiritual results than any other, so that the Lord would specially specify that he had "much people" there and would providentially detain his ambassador there a year and a half, while in other places he had been permitted to remain only a few days or a few weeks. The philosophy of the matter seems to be this: Outward morality frequently leads to a pharisaical spirit of self-righteousness, which is most pernicious and a deadly foe to true righteousness. On the other hand, where sin stands out glaringly it has a repulsive effect upon the pure in heart, upon all who love righteousness, and this repulsion from the evil seems to prepare such hearts the better for a genuine consecration to the Lord and for his message. This theory holds good, at least in the missionary work at Corinth, as in contrast with that of places much more respectable in reputation.

The lesson for us in this connection is that we should be on guard in our own hearts against this self-righteous spirit of outward observance, which lacks true holiness, true sanctification. Is it not along this line that the Lord found fault with one of the seven Churches, saying, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth? Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." (Rev. 3:16,17.) This is our Lord's charge against the present state of the Church, so rich in earthly advantages, so rich in spiritual privileges, so self-satisfied. Let us be on guard lest in any manner or to any degree such a lukewarmness should come over us and we come under Divine disfavor.

#### "BE OF GOOD CHEER"

Our Lord's words in the Golden Text should comfort us, as they have comforted his people for the past eighteen centuries: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." There is no suggestion that we can escape similar tribulation. Indeed, if we escape the sufferings of Christ we will be denied a share in his coming glories. Hence, we should not desire to escape tribulation, but rather go on courageously; nevertheless, not too boastfully, not too courageously, but in meekness, in fear, in trust of the Lord's promises that he has overcome and is able to succor us in temptation's hour, and will do so if we but abide in his love and seek his protection. It is in view of this promised aid that we are exhorted to "be of good cheer." "Greater is he that is for us than all they that be against us." Not only will victory be ours, but, more than this, it is ours already. "Nothing shall by any means hurt you." What may seem to others to be injurious to us, must, under Divine supervision, work out blessings.