

September 12

In your patience possess ye your souls.
Luke 21:19

"LET patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," the apostle explains. Very evidently patience, therefore, includes other

(Lu 21:19 KJV) "In your patience [G5281] possess ye your souls."

Strong's G5281 "hupomonē *hoop-on-on-ay'* From G5278; cheerful (or hopeful) *endurance, constancy*: - enduring, patience, patient continuance (waiting)" Thayer Definition: 1) steadfastness, constancy, endurance 1a) in the NT the characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings..."

STEADFAST CONSTANCY

R5650 "It is eminently proper that Jehovah should require that those whom He shall account worthy of that exalted position shall not only appreciate His goodness and His glorious character, and prefer His service to sin and iniquity, but demonstrate their thorough loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to His will to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of these principles. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the individual to have an established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful, endurance even unto death would be necessary to demonstrate such a character."

R3736 "The Lord is looking for those who are so faithful to the principles of righteousness that they will exercise it toward their enemies even when being persecuted by them and on its account. If the Kingdom of heaven is for such it is assuredly but a little flock. Let us strive the more diligently to be of that little flock--to make our calling and election sure."

R747 "THE NEVER-FAILING SPRING...

In a place where we once had our home there was a spring, famous in all the country round from the fact that it was never known to fail, or even to vary to any perceptible degree, either in volume or temperature. It bubbled up at the base of a very high mountain, close by the country road side. And there it may be found this day, year in and year out, through summer's parching heat and winter's biting frost, always the same, offering up to every passer-by a precious draft of clear, cold water. Other springs dry up; the water in the brooks sink away in the thirsty sand, and even the river becomes a poor insignificant thing, crawling along in the middle of its wide channel, the very shadow of its former self, but this spring--*the* spring-- keeps up its steady flow in defiance of the sun's withering rays and the torrid atmosphere. It seems insensible to climatic changes, and to it all seasons are alike. And this ever-flowing spring is known far and wide in that country. Every school boy knows it well and loves it, too, and so do the laborers in the field. Many knees bow at its brink in the summer time, and hot, sunburnt, toilworn faces are often mirrored in its crystal waters. The people have great faith in this spring.

graces of character--implies their possession to a certain extent. Amongst the Lord's people patience surely must be preceded by faith, and the degree of patience very generally measures the amount of faith. The Christian who finds himself impatient and restless evidently is lacking in faith toward

They would as soon expect the mountain to be removed as not to find it giving forth its bounteous stream. And when all other sources fail them, they feel sure that they know of one that will never deny their thirst. And, as we have said, the spring's temperature never changes. It marks the same degree all the year round. For this reason its waters seem intensely cold in summer, and slightly lukewarm in the dead of winter. It does not conform itself to the state of the atmosphere. The reason of this we shall explain presently. But what an illustration we have here of constancy--this spring that never fails.

So many professing Christians are like those surface springs, that are but the mere drainings of the upper soil. They promise well in certain seasons; they gush and flow in copious streams when the air is full of rain and the ground is soaked with water. It is easy enough to be a spring then. But where are they when the dry time comes, when the sun is high and the ground is baked with heat? Men seek them, and alas! they are not to be found. When springs are needed most they disappear, and where their waters flowed is nothing found but arid sand. It is not so hard to keep up appearances of spiritual strength in times of revival, when "showers of blessings" fall around, but in times of drought, under the scorn of the world, under the burning heat of bitter opposition, of fiery trial, of persecution -- how is it with the soul then? Does it remain in its place, giving out as before the gracious influences of a pure and meek and lowly spirit, or does it disappear and fade away in sin and worldliness?

Oh, how good a thing it is to be a constant Christian! A Christian through all times and seasons, in public and private, in all circumstances and conditions of life. Do you not know such souls-- sweet-tempered, gentle, gracious souls, always near to God, always with their faces shining with a light from heaven? You always know where to find them-- at the foot of the cross--ready to give you, a weary, thirsty seeker, a precious draught from the overflowing chalice of their own faith-filled, loving hearts. But the reason why the temperature of the spring is always the same is *because its sources are deep*. It has its origin far down below the surface of the earth among the very foundations of the mountain itself. It is not fed by the drainage of the surface, but by an ever-living rock-hewn reservoir down in the secret places of the hills. All its constancy and sweetness and purity is owing to the fact that *its sources are deep*. Herein we have the explanation of a mystery in spiritual things. The faith that is firm and changes not to suit the fashion of the times, the soul that is ever full of grace and truth, the character that is Christ-like, conforming not to the ways of the world, *must have its sources deep*--deep down in the bosom of the Rock. It is no wonder that many fail who profess faith in Christ, depending, as they do, upon transitory emotions upon shallow convic-

the Lord; for otherwise he would be able to rest in the Lord's gracious promises, and wait for their fulfilment. After using reasonable diligence and energy he should be content to leave the results and times and seasons with the Lord. Z.'03-361 R3245:3

tions and passing excitements. They cannot endure a spiritual drouth, because they have no depth. They have no real, vital union with the only One who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."--*N.Y. Observer*.

R5499 "THE PURPOSE OF OUR TRIALS
"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."--James 1:12...

What is signified by *enduring* temptation? Evidently the thought is not the enduring of one temptation for one time or for many times. Even the world must endure trials. The reference is to the retaining permanently of the attitude of *patient* endurance and faithfulness when tempted, of remaining true to God under temptation and stress."

PATIENCE AND LOYALTY CLOSELY ALLIED

R5332 "How much do we love God? How sincere are we? A soldier in an army might be loyal in time of quiet, but how would he be in time of stress? Would he desert the flag then, or would he prove himself a good soldier? He would need a great deal of patience. If he says he loves his country, his endurance and faithfulness will be tested in her time of need. He must go on picket duty; he must sometimes do menial work. He must endure wearisome marches, and many privations. All these things are required of a faithful soldier. If he is faithful, he is likely to be promoted, honored, for his faithful service. So we are tested as to our loyalty. What are we willing to endure for Christ's sake? How fully are we submitted? How deep does our submission go? Are we wholly in harmony with the will of the Lord? Is our interest merely superficial, or does it enter fully into our hearts? The question is not merely, Shall we make the consecration?--but after the Christian has taken all of these preliminary steps, to what extent will he manifest patient endurance and obedience and loyalty?"

R5650 "PATIENT ENDURANCE THE FINAL TEST
"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."-- James 1:4.

THE Scriptures everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. In every phase of human experience we can see its need. To be just under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be unjust^[2] to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellowmen. Therefore the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humani-

[2] Original Mar. 15, 1915 Tower reads "unjust". Reprint reads "injurious"

ty. God Himself possesses this quality of patience, and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next Age the Church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop the character necessary for a place on the Throne with our Lord.

Patience is closely allied to love and mercy. If God were unloving, unmerciful, He would be without patience. In man's present blemished, fallen condition, patience is sadly lacking, although it is often exercised outwardly for policy's sake...

The Christian requires patient endurance to put on the whole armor of God, and having put it on, to keep it securely buckled. We need it in dealing not only with others, but also with ourselves, with our own blemishes. We should always take into account the various circumstances and conditions surrounding ourselves and others. As we look around, we see that the world is in a condition of blight, of sin. This knowledge should give us great sympathy with humanity, without which we would have but little patience. All of our brethren in Christ, like ourselves, are by nature members of this fallen human race. Therefore we should have a great deal of patient endurance with

the Lord's people, as we would have them exercise this grace toward us...

Parents require much patience, forbearance, in dealing with their children. The limit of patience might differ in regard to different children. Therefore the wise parent will judge how nearly each child has been doing the right thing, and how well each has received and profited by instruction. If he finds that any child of his is wilfully doing wrong, he should not continue to be patient, but should administer the rod. This would not mean that the parent had ceased to be patient. He might have patience the next day with the same child, and subsequently the application of the rod might come again. We are rather to be too patient, too sympathetic, than to have too little patience, too little sympathy. Remembering our own weaknesses, we are to exercise patience toward others who are seeking to overcome their imperfections, even as we are seeking to overcome our own. We all need that patience, forbearance, be exercised toward us...

Recurring to the word patience as used in our text, let us glance backward to our Lord's Parable of the Sower, as recorded in *Luke 8*. In *verse 15* we read, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest

and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," patient endurance, constancy...

Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the fruit may be developed and thoroughly ripened, that the grain may be made ready for the garner. Ah, how important this grace is seen to be, in the light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be *cheerful*. We cannot suppose that He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even when He saw them bearing much for His sake, if they endured it in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind...

So implicit should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of His providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as living stones for the glorious Temple which He is constructing, and which is now so soon, we believe, to be set up.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and can possess our souls, our lives, as New Creatures, even amidst tribulations, with cheerful endurance."

R3245 (From Harvest Truth Database V8.0 2013)
WAITING PATIENTLY ON THE LORD

1 SAMUEL 2:1-10; 5:1-10--SEPTEMBER 13--

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"--Psa. 133:1

"YE have need of patience," writes the Apostle. "In your patience possess ye your souls," instructs our Lord. ⁽¹⁾"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," the Apostle explains. Very evidently patience, therefore, includes other graces of character--implies their possession to a certain extent. Amongst the Lord's people patience surely must be preceded by faith, and the degree of patience very generally measures the amount of the faith. The Christian who finds himself impatient and restless evidently is lacking in faith toward the Lord; for otherwise he would be able to rest in the Lord's gracious promises, and wait for their fulfilment. After using reasonable diligence and energy he should be content to leave the results and the times and seasons with the Lord.

Our lesson deals with David's attainment to the kingdom to which he was anointed, while a shepherd boy, by the Prophet Samuel. His patient trust in the Lord, and waiting for his time and way to give him the kingdom, are worthy of note, and constitute the most striking feature of this lesson. As a youth he exercised patience until the Lord's providence brought him the opportunity of meeting Goliath, and being advanced to the position of a captain in the army and made King Saul's son-in-law. Then came the check in his career, when for seven years he was treated as an outlaw by the king, and more or less so regarded by his fellow-countrymen. We have seen his patience under these trying circumstances, and noted his unwillingness to hasten the Lord's arrangements, in which he fully trusted, his unwillingness to raise his hand against the king, or to sanction his death at the hands of another. This lesson shows us that even after the death of Saul David still waited patiently on the Lord to give him, in his own way, the honors and powers promised.

For some time before Saul's death David and his six hundred followers had been living in the country of the Philistines, and been treated by them as allies; and when the Philistines went to war with Israel--to fight against King Saul, who had been the enemy of David and his companions--it would have appeared strange had the latter refused to join in the war. In the Lord's providence they were very graciously spared from either fighting against their brethren or

seeming unappreciative of their hosts, the Philistines, by the decision of the latter that they would prefer not to have David and his company go with them. After the defeat of Saul and his army the Philistines took possession of a considerable portion of the land of Israel, and it became a question for David as to what should be his proper course--how would the Lord give to him the throne of Israel, as promised? That David's heart was loyal to the Lord, as the needle to the pole, is evidenced by the fact that he did not conclude for himself what his course should be, but made inquiry of the Lord. This was probably done through the medium of the High Priest, Abiathar. He got the Lord's answer and followed it to the letter, locating, with his companions and their families, at Hebron and the adjacent towns. David was of the tribe of Judah, and thus settling in a central city of that tribe, where he and his family were well known, he was safe amongst friends;--besides, the Philistines were his friends. It was not long before the people of his own tribe chose him for their king, and anointed him accordingly--thus falling into line with the Lord's choice and anointing, already expressed years before.

This was seemingly a good start toward the fulfilment of the Lord's promise of the kingdom, but again the matter was deferred for another seven years, during which time David patiently saw Ishbosheth, Saul's surviving son, anointed to be king over one province after another of Israel, and, with his general, Abner, gaining victory after victory over the Philistines,-- seemingly establishing himself firmly in the power of the kingdom which David had certainly supposed was to come to him at the death of Saul. The experiences of these seven years surely were as strong tests of David's faith and patience as any in his career. To a man of his courageous temperament and energy the disposition must have been to assert the dominance of Judah over the other tribes, and to have declared them to be in rebellion, and to have attempted their conquest in the name of the Lord, with the assertion that he was the Lord's choice, anointed by Samuel, etc.

David's course during this time shows forth distinctly the true character of the man. He trusted that the Lord, who had been with him as a boy, and had delivered him from the lion and the bear, and had used him as Israel's champion in the battle with Goliath, and had guided him thus far, would continue to guide and direct, if he would

⁽¹⁾ Sept 12 Manna, Luke 21:19

continue to be submissive, and to act only along the lines of the Lord's direction. The wisdom of this course is manifest from the narrative. David showed, not only in his dealings with the men of Jabesh Gilead, but on other occasions, that he entertained no animosity toward those who were Saul's friends, and the friends of his family. A man of smaller heart would have done very differently, but would not have been "a man after God's own heart." David's course was defensive. The tribe of Judah he knew was acting in accord with the divine program, and hence, when Ishbosheth and his army attempted to coerce the people of Judah and compel them to recognize Ishbosheth, David and his supporters resisted this intrusion, though we have no evidence that David attempted to extend his authority over the other tribes --except as they might voluntarily choose to accept him as their king. This they finally did, at the end of seven and half years, and a grand coronation made him king over all Israel. His patient waiting for the Lord's time and the Lord's way evidently was very much better than any other course he could have pursued. The Lord's wisdom is always superior; though in the midst of their trials, his people, being unable to see the end from the beginning, may have too much confidence in their own schemes and methods and too little faith in the Lord.

The Lord's people of today should take well to heart this lesson of faith, obedience and patient waiting on the Lord. We, too, are waiting for a Kingdom, and for the peace and blessing which the Lord has promised shall come therewith. We, too, see Philistines in the way, and rival brethren, who, though really the Lord's, do not see so clearly as we the Lord's program for the establishment of his Kingdom. It is for us to wait patiently on the Lord, while he uses the wrath of man to praise him, and to make straight the way of the Lord, and to usher in eventually his Kingdom under more favorable conditions than would be possible if we were to attempt to act for

ourselves, or in any manner or sense to hasten his arrangements.

The Golden Text is an excellent one, and applied to this lesson we see it illustrated in David's course. Although he was a man of war, courageous and aggressive toward the enemies of the Lord and of Israel, David was most emphatically a man of peace toward his brethren of all the tribes;--careful to treat them as brethren, and to do all in his power to maintain unity and brotherly love and friendship. Although misunderstood and persecuted by them for a time, he finally was appreciated and proclaimed king of all Israel, with the result that all the brethren, thus united by his wise counsel and conduct, did dwell together in unity, and Israel had peace and prosperity, whereas by a different course on David's part a fierce and long-lasting civil war might readily have been enkindled.

We are reminded, too, of the fact that it was the Lord's own brethren who persecuted him, but that, as the Apostle explains, "in ignorance they did it." We rejoice to know that when the Lord shall have fully established his Kingdom, all who are the Lord's people, all desirous of being on the side of righteousness, will hail him gladly as their King; and that the unity and peace and blessing of that glorious Millennial age will far exceed anything that our minds can grasp or our tongues express. Like our Lord, let us seek to be peacemakers, and to dwell together with all the brethren in the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace. Let our activities, our combativeness, etc., be engaged against the great enemy and all the works of sin,--including those in our members, our own fallen flesh. We, and all the brethren, will thus find sufficient engagement for every combative element of our nature, in ways well pleasing to the Lord, and employment for every lovable and helpful quality we possess, in building one another up, and doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.

R4909 (From Harvest Truth Database V8.0 2013)

"YE HAVE NEED OF PATIENCE"

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."--Jas. 1:4.

THERE ARE two quite distinct words in the Greek which, in our English Scriptures, are translated "patience." One of these is a word that in a general way corresponds to the common thought of patience as we speak of it in connection with the everyday affairs of life, meaning merely forbearance, or long-suffering. Indeed the Greek word is generally translated long-suffering. It is the other word with which we are more particularly interested in the treatment of our text, and which is the one most frequently translated patience by the New Testament writers.

This word has a much deeper and fuller significance than attaches to our English word patience. It signifies, rather, constancy, the thought being an endurance of evil in a cheerful, hopeful, willing, patient manner. It represents, therefore, an element of character, and not merely a temporary condition or restraint of feeling or action. It signifies that development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the Divine Wisdom and Love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised to overthrow them in God's due time.

This grace of patience smooths the way for every other Christian grace, because all must be acquired under the process of patient and continuous self-discipline. Not a step of progress can be gained without this grace of patience; and not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, or wins the approval of the world's conscience, or glorifies the God of all grace whose Truth inspires it. It is *enduring meekness*, striving to stem the tide of human weakness, and endeavoring with painstaking care to attain to the Divine likeness. It is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy; it is quick to perceive the paths of righteousness, and prompt to walk in them; it is mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others.

The importance of endurance in the Christian's character is fully borne out by the Apostle Paul's use of the word; for on more than one occasion he places *patience* above and beyond *love*, which we have seen is the "mark" of character for which we are to run--the "*mark for the prize*." For instance, in writing to Titus (2:2), enumerating the characteristics of the advanced Christian, the Apostle uses the following order: "Vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity [love], in *patience*." Though we have all the other qualities, this final test of *patient, cheerful endurance* must be passed

before we can be accepted of the Lord as members of the *very elect*.

Again, in writing to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:10) respecting himself, the Apostle puts this quality of *patient endurance* in the place beyond *love*, saying, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, *patient endurance*."

"THE LORD YOUR GOD DOTH PROVE YOU"

One might ask, if "Love is the fulfilling of the Law" and "the mark for the prize of our high calling," how can patience rank higher than Love? The answer is that patient endurance does not come in merely at the close of our race, but it is a requisite all the way along the race-course. We need this *cheerful endurance* of the *earliest trials* in the Christian way; and as we speed along in our race for the "mark," the spirit of *cheerful endurance* should be *growing stronger and stronger at every step of the journey*. Some might be faithful for a few days or a few months or a few years, yet be unworthy of the great Kingdom blessing of Christ.

In the Parable of the Sower, our Lord gave an illustration of this fact, saying that some seed fell on stony ground and sprang up; *it grew*; but finally, when the burning heat of persecution came, the tender plants withered away. In choosing the members of the Kingdom class the Lord is looking for a *depth of soil*, a *depth of character*, a *depth of heart* that will be *patient to endure*. Those who lack this *one* quality will not be fit for the Kingdom. *Patience* is necessary as an element of character on *any* plane of being; but with the *Christian* it is specially important to have it developed *from the beginning of the race*. We need it with us at the *first quarter mark*, and at the *second quarter mark*, and at the *third quarter mark*, and still with us at the *fourth quarter mark*, the *mark for the prize--perfect Love*.

And when we have reached this mark of the race where we love, not only our *friends*, but our *enemies*, it is required of us that we *stand up to the mark faithfully, cheerfully, patiently enduring the tests* which the Lord will even then see fit to have come upon us. God subjects

His people to testing, *long testing*, sometimes for months and years. As it is said, "The Lord your God *proveth you*."--Deut. 13:3.

Hence it is that the Apostle Paul exhorts us, "Having done all, *stand*"--*endure*. Having reached the "mark," "Let *patient endurance* have her perfect work," or "*perfect her work*." Let *patient endurance* demonstrate, not only that you have the character, the quali-

fications of Love, demanded in the race for the prize, but also that you have love as an *element of character, deep-rooted, immutable*, so that you can *endure opposition cheerfully*.

St. Paul tells us that we have need of this *patient endurance* that, after having done the will of God [after having brought our own will into complete subjection to the Divine will], we might receive the promise. (Heb. 10:36.) The thought in the Apostle's mind seems to be that there is a certain work for us all *to do in ourselves* - "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2:12,13.) It is God who is working in us to *will* and to *do*--to cooperate in this work. Let us make sure that rebellion of any kind in our heart be thoroughly killed, mortified; and that we bring the will into perfect submission to the Divine will, so that we may have *no other will than His*. Even then, after we have overcome to this extent, *we have need of patience*. The Lord will not accept us merely because we are consecrated. He requires that the consecration shall be *proven*. *To begin with*, He accepts the consecration; then He *tests us* to demonstrate to what extent we really love Him.

PATIENCE NECESSARY TO FRUIT-BEARING

Patient endurance is also mentioned in the Scriptures as being the Lord's Word, or teaching. Our Lord says, "Because thou hast kept the *Word of My patience* I will also *keep thee*." (Rev. 3:10.) Twice in the Gospels also we note that our Lord brought to the notice of the disciples the importance of the quality of patient endurance. Once was in the Parable of the Sower above referred to. (Luke 8:11-15.) He said, "That [sown] on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, *keep it*, and bring forth fruit with patience [with cheerful endurance, constancy]." The thought here is that in order to be of the fruit-bearing class, which the Lord will approve and accept in His Kingdom, it is necessary to do more than receive the Word of His Testimony, even though we receive it with joy; for that class in the parable is represented by the stony ground, which at first gave evidence of great fruitfulness and vigor, but withered under the sun of persecution, because of lack of depth of soil. That stony, shallow ground represents, the Lord explained, a class of hearers who rejoice greatly in the Truth, but do not *endure*; they are such as cannot withstand persecution or opposition, but wither under it, become discouraged. Such cannot be of the Kingdom class, all of whom must be *overcomers*.

In this parable our Lord shows us that patient endurance, constancy, is the *final test*, following after the readiness of preparation to receive the seed; following after the seed has been received and has sprouted; following after love and hope and joy and faith have caused it to spring forth and to give promise of fruitage. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the grain may be developed and thoroughly ripened and made fit for the garner. How important patient endurance, cheerful endurance, seems to be, in the light of the Lord's Word! for we cannot suppose that He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even if He saw them enduring much for His sake, if they *endured in an impatient or unhappy frame of mind*. They would not in that event be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment is expressed in the words, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O God!"

Our Lord at another time was telling His disciples that as the result of being His followers they must expect opposition, trials, *tribulations*. Perhaps it may assist some to realize the strength of the meaning of the word *tribulation* when they know its origin. It is derived from the Latin word "*tribulum*," the name of a roller, or threshing-machine used in olden times for cleaning wheat, removing from it the outer husk, or chaff. How appropriate the term when applied to the Lord's consecrated people, who in the Scriptures are symbolized by wheat! Our new natures are the kernel, the real grain; yet this treasure, or valuable part, is covered with the husk of earthly conditions. In order that the wheat may be made properly ready for the "garner" and for usefulness, it is necessary that each grain shall pass through the tribulation necessary to remove those qualities which, until separated, render us unfit for the future service to which we are called of the Lord.

In proportion as we are able to realize our own imperfections, and the perfect will of God concerning us, we shall be enabled to bear patiently, and even with a certain kind of rejoicing, all the tribulations which the Master may see best to let come upon us. Our Lord explained to His disciples that so long as they lived in this

present Age, when sin abounds, and when Satan is the prince of this world, they must expect tribulation from various quarters; but He assured them that they would, nevertheless, be fully and completely under Divine care and protection, even though the persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful, hopeful constancy] possess ye your souls."--Luke 21:19.

"HE THAT OVERCOMETH SHALL INHERIT ALL THINGS"

One object of the test of patient endurance is that we may be "strong in the Lord," that we may have the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus--not merely the firmness, but also the gentleness. All this must be developed before we can receive the things promised, the things which God has in reservation for those that love Him. (I Cor. 2:9,10.) These things are spiritual and might be apprehended by our minds, but could not be comprehended. The promise that we are to be like our Lord includes not only the spiritual and heavenly conditions, to which we shall attain in the First Resurrection, but also the blessing of sharing in the uplifting of the world. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) But to "be Christ's" means, not only that we shall accept Him, join Him and His standards, but also that we shall be good soldiers. Those who would not be good soldiers would not be worthy of being members of the Body of Christ, for such could not be conquerors and "more than conquerors" through Jesus Christ our Lord.--Rom. 8:37.

We already have the "promise," but it has not yet been received in the sense of being fulfilled. The promise is a conditional one. "He that doeth these things shall live by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) So in our Lord's arrangement, the condition of the promise is that we shall abide in His love, His favor. Whoever accepts of Christ's death and trusts in Him and seeks to follow the Divine commandments, walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, will receive the promise, for the promise is made to "*overcomers*." All the promises of the Gospel Age are made to the "overcomers." Such shall sit upon the Throne. Such shall become the Bride of Christ. Such shall be joint-heirs with the Redeemer and participate in all His great work as the great Messiah, to bless Israel and through Israel the world of mankind.

By faith the Church now begins to enjoy this conditional promise, which depends upon their faithfulness to the end--their *patient endurance*. Such loyal ones have the earnest of the promise and shall be joint-heirs in the Kingdom. All others will be cut off from that membership. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth [cleanseth, pruneth] it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2.) We are on trial; and the trial is to prove our loyalty. If this trial time, or probation, is satisfactory, the membership is made permanent. Those who fail to live up to the conditions, are not counted worthy to be members of the Body of Christ and joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

LET US ABIDE IN HIS LOVE

Who can consider the importance of becoming copies of our blessed Lord and Head without feeling that to attain to this character-likeness will be a life-work! It cannot be accomplished in a day or in a year; but the whole life must be devoted to it; and day by day, if we are faithful, we should realize a measure of growth in grace and of development in Christian character. It is not enough that we know the Truth, or that we be content to hold it in unrighteousness. We must see to it that the Truth is having its legitimate and designed effect upon the character. And if the Truth is thus received into good and honest hearts, we shall have the assurance of the Apostle Peter that "We shall never fall," but that in due time we shall be received into the Kingdom.

Hence we see the necessity of ever keeping the instructions and precepts of the Lord fresh in our minds, and of drinking deep into their inspiring spirit, although we are already established in the faith. To be established in the faith is one thing; to be established in Christian character and in all the graces of the Spirit is *quite another*.

Beloved, "Let us run with patience [cheerful constancy, patient endurance] the race set before us" in the Gospel. (Heb. 12:1.) As already observed, the race must be run with this constancy if we would reach the "mark;" and after reaching the mark we can maintain our position only by the grace of constancy, patient endurance, that having *done all, we may STAND!*

(James 1:12 KJV) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation:
for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which
the Lord hath promised to them that love him."
