

LET NOT YOUR HEARTS BE TROUBLED.

"Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." (Jno. 14:1,2.)

Emboldened by his success in Eden, Satan attempted again to thwart the benevolent designs of God, by deceiving the second Adam.

He, therefore, boldly presented himself, and proposed a compromise, which would avoid the necessity of suffering and death on the part of Jesus, and enable him in another way to accomplish the purpose for which God sent him into the world, viz.: "that the world through him might be saved" (Jno. 3:17.)

Jesus, however, had the necessary knowledge to enable him to see that this suggestion was only to oppose the plan of God. He knew that as all human life had been forfeited by Adam's transgression, to purchase back – redeem that life – his own must be given, as written by the prophet (Isa. 53:11.) "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." In harmony with this, Peter says, (1 Pet. 2:24,) "Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree."

Jesus, knowing the Father's plan, and his own will being in entire harmony with that of the Father, went steadily forward to accomplish that will, even unto death.

There is no evidence that the adversary ever renewed the encounter of the wilderness. The "Forerunner" had given evidence that all Satan's arts were exercised on him in vain. But there was still

hope; for the "followers" could be met one by one, and might he not be more successful with them?

Jesus knew what the plan of Satan would be, for God had given him a revelation of the things that must shortly come to pass "to his servants." Jesus foreknew that taking a new departure, the wily foe of God and man would henceforth seek to turn the "followers" **[R632 : page 8]** aside from the path-way, by transforming himself into an angel of light, and causing errors to be substituted for truth.

To acquaint the disciples with these "wiles of the devil," Jesus uttered the parable recorded in Matt. 13:24-43. He knew the enemy's subtle power, and that he would "deceive the very elect if possible." He foresaw the "falling away" foretold by Paul, (2 Thes. 2:3), and that man of sin revealed, and knew the artifice by which it would be accomplished.

He, therefore, affectionately warned his followers against giving heed to doctrines of devils, (so termed by Paul, 1 Tim. 4:1), assuring them that error could lead only into trouble and darkness.

The more effectually to fortify their minds against doctrines of seducing spirits, he explains that part of God's plan necessary to refute them, and says in the words quoted at the head of this article, "Let not your hearts be troubled." We now inquire briefly, what are these errors that were so surely to cause trouble to such as should be deceived thereby, and how a belief in Jesus could save from this trouble?

The first we name is that which Satan found so effectual in Eden – "Thou shalt not surely die." Out of this falsehood Satan has made more capital, seemingly, than out of all others combined. On it he has founded all those horrible systems of religion among heathen nations, the bare mention of which shocks the sensibilities of every human being. By this he has kept his seat firmly as the ruler

of this world, and relentlessly caused his cruel mandates to be obeyed.

In Christian communities, with an open Bible where it is written, "Only God hath immortality," (1 Tim. 6:16,) this has been scarcely less prevalent; and may we not add, hardly less baneful in its effects. On it has been built the awful and God-dishonoring dogma of eternal torment, which teaches that the wicked are assigned, immediately at death, to endless torture, without a ray of hope that the wrath of God will ever permit them to relent. Strangely enough, those who teach this doctrine fix a day somewhere in the dim future, in which these millions of beings, with those who also, at the moment of death, entered the bliss of heaven, shall be summoned forth to judgment, to be rewarded or condemned to the very condition in which they have existed, some of them for thousands of years.

We can now see how necessary to Jesus' followers the many assurances of word, that all rule and all authority opposed to his will shall finally be subdued. Into what trouble, what anguish of heart, has a contrary belief cast multitudes of God's children.

To the mother who looks for the last time on the lifeless form of her wayward boy, believing him already enduring the torment of a world of woe, how like mockery seem Jesus' words, "Let not your heart be troubled."

Ask her to be joyful when one she loves better than life, is doomed to endless despair! It is impossible, and all the sophistry which theologians have made use of to reconcile Orthodoxy (so called) with the teachings of Jesus has signally failed. Happy they, who "come to Jesus" and find rest. Happy they, who so fully believe in Him as to be able to cast on Him every burden and every care.

But how can a belief in Jesus save from these errors?

We answer, a belief in Jesus comprehends a belief in Him as sufficient to accomplish the purpose of God, in sending Him into the world. A belief that He is stronger than the "strong man armed," and competent to bind and destroy him. (Matt. 12:29; Heb. 2:14.) That "He gave His life a ransom for all to be testified (to them) in due time." (1 Tim. 2:6.)

Finally, to believe the words quoted at the head of this article, that in his Father's house (Kingdom) are many mansions (conditions of being) and that what he was going to prepare for his church was not all that is to be attained by God's creatures.

On the contrary, a kingdom had been prepared from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34) for the human sons, and though forfeited by man on account of disobedience, is to be restored as taught by all God's prophets, (Acts, 3:21) and all mankind brought back to life, (Jno. 5:28), and given an opportunity to come into harmony with God's laws and need no more.

Thus, as God's children come to a knowledge of his glorious plan, and are enabled to realize that his work is surely going forward to success, doubts and fears give way, rejoicing takes the place of despondency, and with the angelic choir they sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men." – (Luke 2:14.)

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