

## **SHALL ACCOMPLISH THAT WHICH I PLEASE.**

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off." – Isa. 55:9-13.

It will be observed by reference to the preceding verses of this chapter that the world, and not the saints, are here addressed. Their ways and thoughts are not as God's ways and thoughts. But it is the privilege of the saints, the meek and fully consecrated children of God, who have laid aside their own ways and their own thoughts, to both know and walk in God's ways, and by thus knowing and coming into sympathy and harmony with him, and viewing all things from his standpoint, to thus think his thoughts. Thus it is written (Psa. 25:9) "The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way."

Some accept this text as unquestionable proof of the Calvinistic, or rather fatalistic doctrine of unconditional election, claiming it to be a part of God's plan that the eternal destiny of each individual was unalterably fixed, long before any of them were brought into existence. Those who hold this opinion differ to some extent as to what that destiny may be; but this is no part of the question under consideration.

Those who so confidently quote the above words – My word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, etc., should very carefully study God's purpose and see what it is that God designs or pleases to accomplish by sending forth his word. Though the assertion is true of God's purpose or plan as a whole, the part of his purpose to which particular reference is made in this connection, is clearly shown by the following verses to be the great restitution – "For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace, etc." No special reference is here made to his purpose for the church, since the world, and not the church, is here addressed through its type, the nation of Israel. As surely as the Lord hath spoken it, his word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish his purpose in sending it. God nowhere says that he sends his word to individuals with a determined purpose to accomplish their conversion to him; and that because he sent it for that purpose, the conversion of those individuals is sure to follow sooner or later. Nor does he say that he sent it to some other individuals with a determined purpose to accomplish their eternal ruin. Read the parable of the sower: The seed was sown abundantly, and for a particular purpose; but that which fell by the wayside and was quickly devoured by the fowls, did no injury to the wayside: it left it just as it found it. That which fell on stony ground, where because it had not much depth of earth it withered away, did no injury to the stony ground. And that which fell among thorns and was choked by them, did no injury. Neither did the seed sown do any good in such places. It simply left them as it found them. But the sower should spend no special effort to sow the seed in such hopeless places. As the parable indicates, he should be sowing it in prepared ground so far as he is able to judge. Otherwise, his first efforts should be to help to prepare the ground preparatory to the sowing of seed, and this should be done in the seasons most favorable – while most impressible.

But though the seed did no harm where it brought forth no fruit, the good and prepared ground which received it was richly blessed with an abundant and glorious harvest; and in this, the purpose and only expectation of the husbandman was fully accomplished. He did not

expect a harvest from the rocks, among the thorns, or on the wayside. Nor was the seed of truth so scarce that he needed to order the sower to sow with such scrupulous care that not a grain of it should fall in such places – "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. 11:24,25.) So then neither the seed nor the sower has anything to lose by the scattering broadcast: nor is the untilled ground injured. And this applies to the sower of truth, as well as in the figure to the sower of grain. We know that the truth will bring forth good fruit only in good hearts, yet we are to preach the good tidings to all who are willing to hear.

"Do not cast your pearls before swine," one quotes. No, of course not: Do not give the precious pearls of deep spiritual truth which none can receive save the consecrated, for whom it was designed, to those who love to wallow in the mire of sin, and root after that which will satisfy the cravings of their fallen nature. To do so is only useless, and they will turn and rend you.

God's word shall not return unto him void. It shall accomplish that whereto it was sent in this age, viz., the gathering out from among the mass of mankind a peculiar people – the meek of the earth, a little flock begotten by the word of truth, that they should be a kind of first fruits of God's creatures. (Jas. 1:18.) By the sending out of his truth during the prevailing darkness and opposition with which it meets on every hand, God seeks out, develops, tests and separates this peculiar class, which is to be a peculiar treasure unto him above any fruit which shall be gathered in any other harvests. They are his jewels, the chaste virgin of Christ, and soon shall become his glorious bride. And this purpose shall be fully accomplished within the appointed **[R1024 : page 3]** time, in the end of the Gospel age; for it was the work mapped out for this age only.

But this age is not the only sowing and reaping time: another plowing with the plow of trouble, and harrowing with the harrow of affliction and pain, has during our time of development been making the world ready for a grand sowing and growing during the Millennial Age, with a great and good harvest of ripe and fully developed *human* fruitage in the close of that age. Just as surely as the mouth of the Lord hath spoken that his word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that whereto it was sent, so surely shall that harvest yield abundant fruit. Has He not said as forcibly and as clearly that "The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the sea," that "All the families of the earth shall be blessed" through the Christ, and that "all nations shall come and worship before him;" as that during the Gospel age his purpose has been to "take out" of the world a peculiar people – a little flock? Can one part of his word fail more than another? Surely His word shall not return void, but shall accomplish all his glorious purposes.

In the great and unparalleled time of trouble by which the Millennial age is introduced, the whole field, "the world" (Matt. 13:38), will receive its final and most effective harrowing, after which will follow the sunshine – for the Sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings – and the refreshing showers of divine grace upon penitent and contrite hearts. Thus prepared, the whole world will be good and hopeful soil. That will be the grandest sowing time the world has ever seen, and as a consequence, the world will soon be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Mankind shall spring forth and grow up in restitution from death to life; they shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace by the "Prince of Life," the "Prince of Peace." Redeemed of the Lord, they shall return, and come to Zion [The Church – the Kingdom] with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads – they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shalt flee away. In coming they shall say: "Come! let us go up to the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord, and he will teach us his ways and we will walk in his paths." (Isa. 2:3.) They shall be led forth from sin, condemnation and death, with peace, from grace to grace, and from

victory unto victory, along the grand highway to perfection, to the glorious inheritance redeemed for them by the precious blood of Christ.

The mountains and the hills [the ruling powers] shall break forth into singing; and all the trees of the field [the people] shall clap their hands. (Isa. 55:12.) The accomplishment of this glorious purpose of the restitution of a fallen race to perfection, and crowning them with eternal glory, "shall be to the Lord for a name, and for an everlasting sign" of his justice, wisdom, love and power, which shall not be cut off.

Throughout all the intricate workings of this divine plan, not a single principle of the divine character, nor of human free agency, has been or will be violated. Herein consists the glory of that plan. Had God designed to ignore human free agency, it would have been much wiser to have done so in the very first instance – in preventing man's fall into sin. Or had he designed to let his love override his justice, it would have been better had he excused the sin at once, without a redeemer and the long six thousand years of human suffering and death, and begun the work of restitution at once.

But such was not God's purpose, and the glory of his plan consists in the vindication of his righteous character, the display to all his creatures of the harmony of his various attributes and of the firmness of those principles of justice, and righteousness, and love, and power, in which all his *willing* creatures may eternally rest; and in the joy and blessing of all creation and their establishment in righteousness for the eternal ages to follow.

Let praise and honor and glory and power and dominion be unto our God forever and ever. His thoughts are not as men's thoughts, nor his ways as men's ways; but thanks be unto God who hath brought us to his own glorious standpoint of observation, and is teaching us his ways.

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