

THE PLOWMAN SHALL OVERTAKE THE REAPER.

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt."

– Amos 9:13.

What a wonderful day is this Day of the Lord. During the long centuries of the Gospel age the appointed work of the age has been steadily and quietly progressing; the message of salvation and the high calling have gone forth; the called who have heeded and answered the call have been tried, disciplined, developed and tested, and one by one laid to rest until the appointed time for the gathering and rewarding of the whole body of the Anointed. And while in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation the body of the Anointed has been developing, evil has been permitted to flourish and to exalt and spread itself, while the (embryo) kingdom of heaven has suffered violence. Tares have been permitted to overrun and almost take possession of the wheat-field, and the mystery of iniquity has wonderfully developed and prospered. By sure and steady steps, and unhindered by divine interference, the powers of darkness have strongly entrenched themselves, and have long been regarded, both by themselves and all mankind, as immovably fixed.

But now the Day of the Lord has come. Earth's rightful King takes his great power and begins his reign, while yet the powers of darkness hold their places – "In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom" (Dan. 2:44) – and the two cannot long stand together. Already the thrones of earth tremble to their very foundations; the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together, and statesmen and thinking men in general begin to realize that a strange, strong power is at work in every direction.

All organizations, whether civil, social, or religious, however old, or wealthy, or formerly esteemed among men, feel the disturbing shock of a mighty tread hitherto unknown. It is none other than the Son of God, under whose power all must shortly fall, and above their ruins shall be established his own glorious kingdom.

True to every jot of prophecy concerning this day are the events as they now transpire. The harvesting began with the presence of the Lord of the harvest (in 1874), who at once began to appoint and direct the reapers, sending them forth with the sharp sickle of truth. Wonderful has been the work since that time. While the church nominal has been sinking lower and lower in the mire of worldliness, the saints, the true wheat, are being gathered out of her and fed and strengthened and set to work among the harvesters; and thus the Lord of the harvest is daily sending forth more laborers into his vineyard. The saints are seeing their privilege, hearing and heeding the Master's directions, and taking hold with a hearty good will, and the results of their labors are even now largely apparent.

As a result of the united labors of the consecrated ones in hundreds of ways, as varied as are their circumstances and talents, hundreds of cases come under our own observation, of saints who are encouraged, strengthened and stimulated to make their election sure, of backsliders reclaimed, of worldly people turned to God, and of honest skeptics now established in the true faith of the gospel.

While the harvest work goes steadily forward, we need but to cast our eyes about us, when we see another portion of the work going on preparatory to the speedy establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom. Not only is the harvesting of the fruit of the Gospel age being accomplished, **[R1162 : page 8]** but the plowing and seed sowing for the Millennial season is already begun, as foretold by the prophet – "Behold the days come that the plowman shall overtake the reaper."

Various agencies are now at work plowing the field – which is the world – and preparing men's hearts for the reception of the truth. And many of the poor, distracted world, even now, show a willingness to receive a little of the balm and consolation which the truth affords.

The troubles coming upon the world and upon the nominal church, the distracting questions that are stirring up thought, and the opposing forces that are everywhere developing, are already doing the plowing; and these plowers are close upon the heels of the reapers now reaping the harvest of the Gospel age – gathering God's elect together; and soon the treader of grapes (the forces engaged in the final combat) shall overtake the sowers of the seed of truth; and the great trouble will close the door of all opportunity for either seed-sowing or harvesting.

But though such is the calamitous outlook for the near future, there will be a blessed outcome to its short work; for in the midst of it the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord's house shall be established and shall be exalted above the melting hills (kingdoms) of the old dominions; and its blessed re-invigorating influence is significantly referred to in the prophet's statement – the mountains shall drop sweet wine.
