

[R1773 : page 46]

## **CHRIST, AND THE MAN BORN BLIND.**

– FEB. 24, John 9:1-11. –

### **Golden Text – "I am the light of the world."**

THE question of the Lord's disciples (verse 2) was the expression of a common opinion among many of the Jews, and one also entertained by Job's friends, – that all suffering is the direct penal result of some personal sin. But this man, having been born blind, they reasoned, must have been so afflicted on account of some sins of his parents.

The Lord, both in this instance and on another occasion (see Luke 13:1-5), clearly disclaimed the idea. While it is true that some afflictions are the direct results of personal sins and are the promptly administered penalties designed for the warning and correction of the offender, such is not always the case. This is the age of the triumph of evil and the persecution of righteousness. (See Mal. 3:15; Psa. 73:2-17; 1 Tim. 5:24,25.) Afflictions often come upon the Lord's most devoted saints to try them and prove them, to test their loyalty, zeal and faithfulness, and to refine and cultivate the Christian graces and establish character.

In the particular instance of this lesson, the affliction is said to have been permitted for the special purpose of manifesting the power of God through Christ in his recovery. He was raised up blind for this purpose, just as Pharaoh, being a suitable character in which to manifest the power of God in another way, was raised up to the throne of Egypt.

In this illustration of the giving of sight to the blind we have a sample of the great work of restitution to be performed in the Millennial age. Then not only will the blind eyes be opened, but the deaf ears will be unstopped, and the lame man shall leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; and even all that are in the graves

shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth. (Isa. 35:5,6; John 5:28,29.) And not only will the bodies of men be thus blessed, but their minds and hearts will be similarly liberated from the fetters of ignorance, superstition and sin. This is the work of God to be accomplished when the Kingdom shall be established in the earth under the dominion of his anointed Son and Heir.

That great work of his future reign the Lord on this and various occasions illustrated, that through such illustrations the faith of his disciples in this age might be confirmed. **[R1773 : page 47]**

The statement of verse 4 calls to mind also the statement of the Prophet Isaiah (21:12), to which the Lord evidently referred. The coming night would be one when "*no man* can work;" and it behooved the Lord and all the **[R1774 : page 47]** members of his body, the Church, to make use of the opportunities in hand for doing that portion of the Father's work which is to be accomplished in the present age, before the foretold night cometh. – "The morning [the Millennial morning] cometh, and also the night [the dark night of great tribulation which shall immediately precede the dawning of the glorious day]."

Jesus said (verse 5), "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world;" and to his disciples, who were to continue his work after he should leave the world, he said (Matt. 5:14), "Ye are the light of the world." Thus through Christ and the Church the light would continue to shine in the world in the midst of its darkness until the predicted night would come, when the world that has loved darkness rather than light shall be overwhelmed by it, and, in the midst of its shadows, reap the fruit of its own sowing.

The means which the Lord used to effect the cure of the blind man had no intrinsic healing virtue, but they served to fix the attention and to test the faith of the man in the great teacher. Had he had no confidence in Jesus he might have despised the means and ridiculed the idea that the anointing with clay and the washing in the pool of Siloam would accomplish such a miracle as the giving of sight to one

born blind, and so never have been healed. But the spirit of faith and meekness led him rather to hope and obedience and the blessed result of vision.

Then followed his grateful testimony. How different from the caviling, dishonest disposition of the opposers that stood by. The account of the noble testimony of this healed one fills our hearts with warmest admiration. He bravely faced the opposition, reasoned with the opposers, boldly affirmed his own most reasonable faith, and took the consequences, being cast out of the synagogue.

It was then – in the time of his persecution for righteousness' sake – that the Lord again found him and established and confirmed his faith in himself as the Son of God, the long-promised Messiah. Thus it is ever with those who faithfully endure hardness as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus. The reward of his presence and loving approval is ever with them.

-----