

THE REWARD OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."
– Dan. 12:3.

IN CONSIDERING who are the wise here referred to we are forcibly reminded of Paul's significant inquiry – "Where is the wise? where is the scribe [who boasts of his wisdom]? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching [*i.e.*, the preaching of this foolishness] to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1:20,21.) And these believers are the truly wise ones to whom the Prophet makes reference.

Those who so thoroughly believe the testimony of God as to yield themselves fully to his will are wise indeed. They have prudently chosen that good part which shall not be taken from them. In this present evil world, it is true that, like their Lord, they have tribulation; but if they endure it as good soldiers, faithful unto death, their eternal reward is sure. The reward promised is beyond this vale of tears, and the valley of the shadow of death. Then these that suffered here, meekly bearing the reproach of Christ; who took up their cross daily, and followed him; who nobly adhered to the principles of truth and righteousness, and faithfully conformed their lives thereto; who delighted themselves in the Lord, and daily meditated in his law; who devoted themselves faithfully to the doing of his will, sacrificing their own, – these shall by and by shine forth as the sun, as the brightness of the firmament, in the Kingdom of their Father.

O, weary ones, look up; sad hearts, be glad; for even now your deliverance is nigh, even at the doors! Soon the sorrows of this earthly pilgrimage will be ended, and your glory will appear.

It is a very noticeable fact, that the nearer we approach to the consummation of our glorious hopes, the opposition of the powers of darkness grows more and more severe as well as more subtle. And those who walk by faith alone must indeed have a very strong faith to be able to wage a successful warfare to the end, and win the victor's crown of glory. To this end, dearly beloved, let us keep these precious promises of God ever in mind. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

While this glory that excelleth is to be manifested by and by in the overcoming gospel Church, there is a lesser, [R1955 : page 66] but nevertheless a great, glory to be manifested in all the lovers and doers of righteousness in all the ages past. Faithful Noah, a preacher and doer of righteousness; faithful Abraham, with whom the Lord's will was always paramount; faithful Enoch and Elijah and Moses and Aaron and Joshua and Caleb, and a host of others, of whom the world was not worthy, shall by and by gleam forth in the earthly phase of the Kingdom of God, as the stars forever and ever.

When righteousness is finally established in the earth, and men have learned to appreciate the pure, the beautiful and the good, when generous love shall have displaced all selfishness, then indeed will the good deeds and blessed influences of those who, in the midst of sin and wickedness, sought to turn many to righteousness, come into remembrance and receive from all men their just reward of appreciation and praise. They shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

How refreshing the prospect of the glorious consummation of the divine plan! Let us rejoice and be glad, and daily strive to prove ourselves worthy of the glory promised to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose.
