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## WHO SHALL ABIDE IN THY TABERNACLE?

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" – Psa. 15:1.

THE tabernacle of God is his dwelling place in the midst of his people. As the typical tabernacle in the midst of the typical Israel indicated that the divine presence was with them, so the antitypical spiritual Israel is similarly, yet even more highly, favored, as the antitype is higher than the type. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved." And "he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High [in the holy place – the place or condition of full and faithful consecration to God] shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." They abide in his love, under his protection and care, and in communion and fellowship with him.

Every "saint" has realized something of the blessedness of abiding in this secret holy place of the divine tabernacle, and with the Psalmist can say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" Wherever God is, there is his Tabernacle: wherever there is a loyal consecrated heart, there is a dwelling place of God; and wherever two or three or more such are met together in his name, God is in the midst, and there is his dwelling place. How amiable indeed are thy tabernacles; [R2080 : page 307] how blessed to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, how sweet the songs of praise, how fervent the prayers, how blessed the communion!

But only those who abide in the secret place know how to appreciate these things. With them there is a longing after more and more of the manifestations of divine favor. The language of their hearts is, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God; [elsewhere]. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." – Psa. 84:1,2,10.

Yes, "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house;" blessed are they that dwell in God, and in whom God dwells. They find in him a shadow from the heat, where the heart may rest its burdens and find refreshment, and a refuge from the storms of life (Isa. 4:5,6), and that the Lord God is a sun and shield, giving grace and glory, and withholding no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

These are some of the blessings of those who abide in the tabernacle of the Lord now, while it is pitched in the wilderness of this present life. But what pen can portray the blessedness of abiding in that glorious tabernacle, that temple of God, which shall be the dwelling place of the overcoming saints to all eternity, after we have passed through this wilderness and beyond the Jordan of death? There we shall see the Lord in his glory, and be like him; there we shall see our Father's face, and worship and adore; there we shall delight in the society of all his holy angels; there we shall be endowed with power to execute the gracious designs of our God toward all his creatures; and life and everlasting joy shall fill his temple, and thence shall flow streams of blessing to all creatures in heaven and in earth.

This is the glorious hope of our high calling to live and reign with Christ: and this will be the joy of abiding forever in the tabernacle of the Lord and dwelling in his holy hill (his holy Kingdom). With such a hope before us, and with the conditions of its attainment yet to be fulfilled, how solicitous should be the inquiry of every sincere child of God, "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?"

The answer is plain, that those so honored must be lovers of righteousness and haters of iniquity; they must be persons of uncompromising integrity, having no fellowship with the workers of iniquity; and those who, having made a covenant, do not ignore its solemn obligations, – "He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not." "He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

These considerations call very forcibly to mind the great importance which the Scriptures attach to the –

### **COVENANT OBLIGATIONS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.**

The man that sweareth to his own hurt, or, in other words, who makes a solemn covenant to present himself a living sacrifice to God, is thenceforth bound by that covenant. He cannot, by subsequently changing his mind, be released from the obligations thus incurred; and to endeavor to ignore them is to be caught in a most deceitful snare of the adversary. – "It is a [R2081 : page 307] snare to man to sanctify things hastily, and to make inquiry only after having made vows;" *i.e.*, to make inquiry in the sense of reconsidering the cost and whether or not, in view of the cost, we shall keep it, when already its solemn obligations are upon us and cannot be either repudiated or ignored with impunity. (Prov. 20:25 – *Leeser*.) Again we read, "When thou vowest a vow unto God [when thou makest a covenant or promise], defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin." – Eccl. 5:4-6.

Again the obligation was expressed to typical fleshly Israel – and if it was applicable to them, the typical people, it applies with at least equal force to the still more highly favored and enlightened antitypes of the Gospel age – thus: "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God *will surely require it of thee*, and it would be sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform, even a free-will offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth." – Deut. 23:21-23.

It is those who thus respect their covenant obligations, and fulfil them, that shall forever abide in the tabernacle of the Lord and dwell in his holy Kingdom. It is in view of these solemn obligations that the Lord counsels those who would come to him to "first count the cost"

and make sure that they are ready to assume them (Luke 14:28-32), and that on another occasion he said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62.) Again we read, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have *no pleasure* in him." And the Apostle Paul shows that some at least will draw back unto perdition – destruction. – Heb. 10:38,39.

Thus viewed, how imperative are the obligations of our covenants with God. But, on the other side of this great responsibility, are the bountiful encouragements and assurances of divine grace: – "My grace is sufficient for thee;" "My strength is made perfect in [your] weakness;" "I will teach thee and guide thee [R2081 : page 308] in the way which thou shalt go." Yes, the blessed promises stand out on every page of the sacred Word; and the spirit of God is ever ready to seal them upon the hearts of his consecrated children who continue to look to him for the supplies of grace, and who make diligent use of them.

Thus the Lord is able to carry on to completion the good work which he has begun in us; and he will do it in all who continue loyal and true to their covenant and zealous for the cause of truth and righteousness. "He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

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