

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

– JUNE 28. –

Golden Text: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom." – 2 Tim. 4:18.

IT will, undoubtedly, be advantageous to us to glance back in review over the wonderful experiences covered by the Sunday School lessons of the ending quarter. They extend over a period of about thirty years – from the resurrection of Jesus to the end of Paul's imprisonment in Rome, about A.D. 62. The dominating thought through these lessons is the earnestness of the early Church in the service of the Lord, that earnestness being based upon the strong conviction that Christ's death had been the redemption-price for mankind; that the Church was now being called out to be members with Christ in his Kingdom; that the necessary experiences for participation in the Kingdom would be such loyalty to the Lord and to the truth and to the brethren as, under present conditions of sin, would lead to suffering and self-sacrifice on the part of all the faithful; and that the Kingdom to be especially for the blessing of all the families of the earth would bring to the faithful suffering ones of this present time, glory, honor and immortality, which would much more than compensate them for every sacrifice, every trial and every sorrow.

Another of the important lessons of this quarter, repeatedly clinched in the various experiences of the Apostle Paul, is expressed clearly in the Golden Text – namely, the Lord's ability to deliver his people from all the machinations of the Adversary and his blind emissaries. He who was faithful in the Apostle's case is none the less so today in respect to our affairs. Furthermore, the Golden Text suggests to us the very happifying thought that our Lord is not only able to deliver us from all these human enemies and from the Adversary, but that he is able also to preserve us from the last enemy

– death. The Apostle at the time of writing these words was in almost hourly expectation of martyrdom – that he would go down into the portals of the tomb – yet he had confidence in the Lord that he would not leave his soul in Hades; he had confidence in our glorious hopes in respect to all the members of the Church, expressed in the words, "The gates of hell [*Hades* – the state of death] shall not prevail against it." The grave has prevailed against the Church, not only against the great Head of the flock, but against all the members of his body, and the Adversary has seen to it that many of them came to death ignominiously, as malefactors, as deceivers, although true. But we have the Lord's assurance for it that this was not the end – that in due time, in the resurrection morning, all who have gone down into death will be delivered; that he, the Son of Man, would take unto himself his great power, and open the prison doors and set at liberty the captives of death, his own loved ones being the first to participate in the First Resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, and then being used of him as his co-laborers in the great work of delivering all the captives of the tomb, bringing all to the knowledge of the truth, and permitting as many as will to come back to life everlasting, perfection.

In this way the Apostle expected the Lord to preserve him, to keep him unto his heavenly Kingdom: he had no thought of death being an utter extinguishment of life; he had full confidence in the resurrection promise, and that the Lord was able to keep that which he had committed unto him against that day – that **[R3213 : page 191]** glorious Millennial morning – that glorious resurrection morning when the Kingdom would be established, and when the blessings of the Lord would be conferred first upon his faithful, as shown in the parables, and that subsequently all the families of the earth should be blessed through that Kingdom. – Matt. 25:1-30; Luke 19:11-27.

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