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"I HAVE CHOSEN HIM."

– 1 CHRON. 28:1-10. – NOVEMBER 29. –

GOLDEN TEXT – "*Trust in the Lord with all thy heart.*"
– Prov. 3:5.

WE have already noted the fact that in King David's seventieth year, when it was evident that he was nearing the close of life, one of his elder sons, Adonijah, following the example of Absalom, attempted to seize the kingdom, evidently surmising or perhaps knowing that his father had already determined that Solomon, his younger brother, should be the successor to the throne. We saw how, under the Lord's guidance, Adonijah's plans were frustrated and Solomon was duly anointed and proclaimed King of all Israel before the conspiracy had hatched. Solomon at this time was about twenty years old, a very young man to succeed to the throne, but evidently the best qualified of all. Of his elder brothers Farrar says, "They were men of fierce passions and haughty temperament, and would be singularly unfitted to carry out the peaceful and religious designs which David wished to bequeath to his successor." King David had evidently been an over-indulgent parent, and, occupied with the larger affairs of the kingdom, he probably had neglected the training of his children in the ways of the Lord. Solomon, born after his legal marriage to Bathsheba, and at a time when the King's misguided course had brought him to a very humble position before God and man, and educated at a time when Absalom's rebellion had perhaps taught the King a great lesson, we may reasonably suppose that the education of Solomon and his younger brothers was along different lines from those previously pursued with their elder brethren. In line with this thought we find that Solomon's education was under the care of the Prophet Nathan and in every way characteristic of him. [R3276 : page 427]

Not content with his own appreciation of Solomon as the most suitable heir to the throne and the one approved by the Lord, the King gathered a great assembly of the chief men of the nation to, so to speak, ratify Solomon's appointment and anointing. These princes represented (1) the heads of the families, in the twelve tribes; (2) the captains of industry and their subordinate officers; (3) in a word he gathered all the influential representatives of the nation, civil, military, and commercial. This was evidently a wise course, and points a lesson to the Lord's people of the Church of this Gospel age. It is not sufficient that those who serve the Lord's flock shall be sure that they understand the divine will in respect to the general interests of his work; it is expedient that they seek the cooperation of the entire congregation either directly or through their chosen representatives. David's assurance that God had chosen Solomon was a guarantee to him that the Lord would so overrule and influence the nation that they would gladly accept the divine choice. At the same time, the course would have been the wisest one in any event, because it is an element of human nature to prefer to be considered rather than to be ignored.

Notwithstanding the King's age and decrepitude, and the fact that it was usual to sit in such assemblages, he stood upon his feet as implying the importance of the matters to be dealt with. His salutation to the officers and representatives of the realm was a gracious one: "Hear me, my brethren, and my people!" King David was not evidently of the dictator class, and all noble men and women will appreciate him all the more because of this. Notwithstanding his greatness, his success as a soldier in establishing and enlarging the kingdom, and his eminence as a poet, and his evident favor with God, he was not by any or all of these things made haughty, domineering, tyrannical, but even in speech was a faithful, humble shepherd to the people over whom God appointed him. No wonder his name is revered to this day not only by the Jews, his countrymen, but by all who love the Lord and the principles of righteousness.

With full candor the King related to his princes his own desires for the glory of God and the nation in connection with the building of the Temple, and with equal candor he explained why the Lord rejected the work at his hands – because he had been a man of war and had shed blood. Herein we see a wide distinction between the character of our God and his Temple and that of other gods and their temples. The gods of the heathen are gods of war and their mighty ones are their bloody ones. One is impressed with the same thought in connection with some of the homage given to war heroes in the nominal Christian church. For instance, in Westminster Abbey the names of generals and admirals and men of the world in general are almost the only ones made prominent. Nor was this an exceptional matter in David's case: we see the same principle pointed out in the Law. (Num. 31:19.) Those who participated in battle were unclean and required purification for seven days before participating in the privileges of citizenship.

David called attention to the fact that the Lord had chosen him to be their King; that he had decreed that he should be their King forever – that is, that the kingship should be in the line of his posterity. He called their attention to the fact that the tribe of Judah was the tribe of royalty by divine appointment, and that in the tribe of Judah the house of Jesse had been chosen by divine direction through the Prophet Samuel, and that in the family of Jesse, above all of his sons, the Lord had chosen David to be King over all Israel. In this speech the King was not attempting to defend his position on the throne, for that was conceded by all the tribes; but he did wish that the people should recognize the matter in a still higher light – that it was God who was their real King, and that God had taken the supervision of the affairs of the nation and had ordered and directed matters up to that juncture. It is well that spiritual Israelites should refresh their memories similarly; that they should call to mind that God, who was the King of typical Israel, is specially the King of spiritual Israel, and that being our King the affairs of his Church are not left to chance or haphazard, but are, in their largest interests at least, under divine supervision and care. The Apostle points this out in respect to our Lord, the great High

Priest, saying, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God." So our Lord Jesus called not himself to a position of headship in the Church, but was evidently appointed to that position by the Father, as the Apostle declares, "God hath given him to be the head over the Church, which is his body." – Eph. 1:22,23.

Likewise throughout the Gospel age we may be sure that the affairs of God's Church have not been overlooked by him – that at all times during this age he has had the care of the interests of his people, and has raised up for them such helps and teachers as he saw best. Similarly, we may know that he still has the supervision of Zion's interests, as the Apostle declares, "God hath set in the body the various members as it hath pleased him." (1 Cor. 12:18.) If this thought were more in the mind of the Lord's faithful they would be more on the lookout to note the will of the Lord in respect to the affairs of the Church – whom he sets and where. With this thought in mind the choice of elders would not be conducted along lines of earthly preference or family kinship or selfish ambition, but instead the Lord's preference, the Lord's choice, **[R3276 : page 428]** would be sought. And, so far as the Lord's mind would be discerned, none other than his choice would be recognized by any of his faithful ones.

David had no doubt whatever respecting the Lord's choice for his successor. How he knew the mind of the Lord on the subject we are not informed, but evidently he had assured Bathsheba years before that her son Solomon should fill the throne, and now he probably announced the matter, declaring that God had given him assurance that Solomon should build the great temple which King David had not been permitted to build, but for which he had accumulated great stores of gold, silver, iron, marble, precious wood, etc. The word of the Lord, "I have chosen him to be my son and will be his Father," we are not to understand as meaning that Solomon was lifted up from the house of servants, of which Moses was the head, and made a member of the house of sons, of which Christ is the head – "Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence of our rejoicing **[R3277 : page 428]** firm

unto the end." According to the Scriptural record, the first opportunity for any members of the house of servants to become sons of God was granted at the time of our Lord's first advent, and in view of the fact that he had already made consecration of his life as man's redemption price. (John 1:12,13.) Solomon was God's son in a typical sense – he typified God's great Son, the Christ.

That Solomon was a model young man at the time of his induction into the kingdom, is evidenced from the statement of verse 7: "If he be constant to do my commands and my judgments as *at this day*, I will establish his kingdom forever." Here again, however, we see how the Lord, while making certain definite promises sure to be fulfilled, attaches them to certain individuals only upon conditions of their loyalty to him. As a matter of fact we know that Solomon did not continue in divine favor, but was led astray by the dangers of his lofty position and forfeited for his posterity their share in the Levitic promise. Hence it is that our Lord is not of Solomon's line, but a descendant of another son of David, Nathan. – See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. V. – pp.145-150.

Having thus set forth the reasons guiding him to the anointing of Solomon as his successor in the kingdom, the King charges responsibility upon the chief men of the nation – that they should maintain their relationship to the Lord and his arrangements faithfully; that they should not only observe the commandments of the Lord as already understood by them, but that they should continually seek to know the divine will in all things. He points out that as a nation this would be necessary to them if they would continue to possess the goodly land of Palestine. We know that they did not continue faithful to King David's exhortation, and that as a result the goodly land was lost, first by ten of the twelve tribes going into captivity, and subsequently by the two tribes being transported to a foreign land as prisoners. Nevertheless, God's promise to David still stands sure, and, like the promise made to Abraham, can have its fulfilment only when the greater than Isaac, greater than David, greater than Solomon, the

antitype of these, shall take the throne and inaugurate the Millennial reign.

Turning to Solomon his newly appointed successor, the King exhorted his son, "Know thou the God of thy father and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." Here knowledge is given its proper place. First, it is only in proportion as we come to know God that we can properly trust him or faithfully serve him, and the Christian's course should be a progressive one in these respects. To the first knowledge of God and the first faith on that small knowledge and first obedience following, come in God's order increased knowledge, increased faith and increased obedience. We are to remember, however, that the range of knowledge and faith is limited to natural things until the full consecration of heart is made and the begetting of the holy Spirit received, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of God neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." God hath revealed them unto us [begotten of the Spirit] by his Spirit, which searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.

Solomon is exhorted to remember that God not only knows the outward things which man can see and of which they can imperfectly judge, but that he knows also the heart, the intents, the thoughts. The antitypical children of God need continually to have this in mind, for we walk by faith and not by sight. To us, too, the exhortation applies that we are to keep continually seeking the Lord if we would be continually finding him more and more precious, and that if we forsake him and break our covenant with him he will cast us off forever.

The last verse of the lesson refers to the typical Temple which Solomon did build as God's sanctuary. He was strengthened in wisdom and in power and did accomplish that work. The antitype of Solomon, the Christ, has been strengthened, has been faithful, has been an overcomer, has been approved of the Father. He already has nearly prepared all the living stones which will constitute the living Temple

of God for the coming age, through which the divine blessing will be administered for the restoration of the groaning creation. The building of the house, the growing together of the living stones, is already in progress; soon the capstone will be brought on with shoutings of grace, grace, unto it! **[R3277 : page 429]**

WHAT A TRIUMPH OF HIS GRACE IT WILL BE.

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When the King shall take me home, even me;
Lifting me from low estate,
Passing by the wise and great,
What a triumph of his grace it will be!

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When at last he saves, through faith, even me;
Faith that he, the work begun,
Will watch o'er me till 'tis done,
What a triumph of his grace it will be!

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When, my sad mistakes all ended, I am free;
Free at last to do the right,
All my weakness turned to might,
What a triumph of his grace it will be!

What a triumph of his grace it will be
When he says, "Well done!" at last to even me;
When in glory he shall own me,
And with my Lord enthrone me,
What a triumph of his grace it will be!

C. J. W.

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