

"HIS WAY IS PERFECT."

"As for God, his way is perfect: the Word of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all those that trust in him. For who is God, save the Lord? or who is a Rock, save our God?" – Psa. 18:30,31.

GOD'S way is his plan or purpose, that which he purposes to accomplish and which he is steadily working out according to the counsel of his own will. Men also have various plans and purposes of their own which they try to work out as nearly as possible. Some men purpose to amass a fortune; some to acquire a liberal education and vastly to increase their mental capacity and power; others to gain fame and popular applause, or social or political preferment, etc., etc. But to most men the way they choose proves unsatisfactory after a brief trial, and they turn restlessly from one way to another; and even when they pursue one way to the end they realize that it has been an unprofitable way – that the end was not worthy of the strife necessary to gain it.

Then again men have their various ways or theories as to how God will or ought to accomplish the world's salvation. Some claim that it will be accomplished by a process of evolution, and that it is due to the race by right. Some of these blasphemously claim that the present degradation of the world is directly chargeable to God, who, they say, is the real author of all the sin and wickedness we see in the world – that he made men so, and is therefore bound IN JUSTICE to bring them up to a better condition. There are others who claim that God has predestinated the vast majority of mankind to eternal torment without any will or choice of their own, their doom having been unalterably sealed before they were born, while a small minority were likewise unalterably elected to eternal salvation and happiness.

But these and various other incongruous theories are only the ways of men, and have no foundation in the Word of God, except as men pervert that Word. It is a serious matter for any of God's children to accept or entertain such views of his character and plan when they are so clearly stated in his inspired Word; and [R3337 : page 86] any one who can hear our heavenly Father's character thus traduced without feeling or expressing his righteous indignation is disloyal to God and unworthy to bear the name of Christ. If we have so much regard for the friendship of those who advocate such views of God's character that we cannot reprove their course, we also rank ourselves with the enemies of the Lord, and he will surely so regard us. Such indifference to God and his Truth shows clearly that there is something wrong at heart; and sooner or later such will drift into the outer darkness unless they promptly repent and resolutely determine to make no compromises with error, and to cultivate no friendships with the enemies of the Lord.

But, "As for God, his way is perfect;" and his Word clearly sets forth his way to all the simple-minded ones who take him at his word and who have no fine-spun theories of their own to establish. In coming to God's Word it is always important to remember that our attitude should be that of the disciple and not of the teacher. Such an attitude is itself a long step in the direction of a knowledge of the Truth; for it is written that God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. (James 4:6.) If we come to his Word as reverent students, expecting to find therein the delineation of the pure and righteous character and plan of our God, that plan and character will be revealed to us; but if we come to it in a captious spirit and with impure and unholy thoughts and ambitions, we have just the kind of poor, imperfect brains that can warp and twist the Scriptures to suit our own ideas. If we put on the colored glasses of prejudice we can read God's Word as seen through them only.

And this is what the Psalmist implied when he said, "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou

wilt show thyself upright; with the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward. For thou wilt save the humble people, but wilt bring down high looks." (Psa. 18:25-27.) And again we read, "A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not, but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth;" and, "There **[R3337 : page 87]** is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." – Prov. 14:6-12.

Oh, how we need to beware of "high looks" and of the pride that goeth before destruction and of the haughty spirit that precedeth a fall! (Prov. 16:18.) For if in pride we go about to establish our own ways, and do not fully submit ourselves to the right ways of the Lord, we will surely deceive ourselves and be led away by the error of the wicked, so that God's way or plan, as viewed through the colored glasses of our ambitions and prejudices, will seem to our obscured vision as the Psalmist describes – unmerciful, impure and perverse, instead of what it really is – merciful and holy and righteous altogether. There is nothing more dangerous than pride, whether it be manifested in a love of display or in ambitions to be great or to be thought well of by others. If we are ambitious to be more generous than God, and go about to establish the idea of the absolute certainty of the everlasting salvation of every individual, when God plainly speaks to the contrary; or if we ignore God's appointed means of salvation, which is by faith in the precious blood of Christ shed for the remission of sins, and endeavor to climb up to life by some other way, and to teach others to make the same effort; or if we repudiate the doctrine of the original perfection of man, who was created in the image of God, and also that of his own free will he fell into sin and thereby incurred its just penalty – DEATH, and not eternal torment; or if we seek out any other human invention contrary to the Word of God, and go about to establish it, it is pride that is asserting itself; and if it be not promptly humbled it will surely and shortly end in complete alienation from God.

Dearly beloved, let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into God's rest – into the rest of abiding faith in his way, his glorious plan – any of us should come short of it, and instead of calmly and confidently resting in God's way and in the blessed hope of its glorious outcome, we be left in confusion and doubt upon the whole subject.

But if you have thus far stood firmly in the faith of God's way we are persuaded better things of you; and if, with the Psalmist, you can say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed" (Psa. 57:7); if your heart is established in love and reverence and faith in the sure Word of God, then you may also say, "For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness." (Psa. 18:28.) Yea, has it not been even so? Surely hitherto the Lord hath led us. The language of the prophet applies to all those humble and faithful ones whom the Lord has been leading – "For by thee I have run through a troop [of opposing enemies]; and by my God have I leaped over a wall" [of bondage, into the glorious liberty of a son of God]. – Psa. 18:29.

Beloved, have you been thus overcoming? have you been following the Lord's leading? have you found, and are you still abiding in the sweet rest of faith in his plan, in his way, and not your own? "As for God, his way is perfect": it is just and merciful and benevolent and wise and practicable, and sure of a glorious termination. "The Word of the Lord is tried": when fully understood it will stand the test of every argument that could be formed against it as to its justice, its wisdom, or its benevolence. Of this we are fully assured by our Lord, who prophetically declared that the testimony of those who come to a full knowledge of God's plan will be – "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." – Rev. 15:3.

"The Lord is a buckler [a defense] to all those that trust in him; for who is God [is mighty] save the Lord? or who is a rock [a safe

anchorage to our souls] save our God?" There is no other one to whom we may anchor our faith and hope; but securely anchored to him we may trust and not be afraid, and may sweetly rest under the shadow of his wing. "The Lord liveth; and blessed be our rock; and let the Lord of our salvation be exalted." – Psa. 18:46.

