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"HE THAT HEARETH YOU HEARETH ME."

– LUKE 10:1-16. – APRIL 24. –

Golden Text: – "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

THE HARVEST work during the three and a half years of our Lord's ministry seems to have been crowded chiefly into the last nine months of that period. We have followed the course of the gradual unfoldment of the Truth, then due, and now, about five months before our Lord's crucifixion, we take note of his statement that the fields were white for harvesting, and the laborers few. The first verse of our lesson records the sending forth of the seventy men, two by two, as advance missionaries to proclaim the Kingdom of God near at hand, and thus to prepare the people for the later arrival of Jesus in the various cities of Israel east of the Jordan.

These seventy were not apostles in the special sense. They were additional to the twelve apostles – they were evangelists; they had not as large experience with the Master and his teachings, nor so important a work to do as that assigned to the twelve. Nevertheless, any service to the Lord is an important service, and to the extent that they did the Lord's will they represented him. They were undoubtedly a part of the "five hundred brethren" mentioned [R3346 : page 106] by the Apostle as having seen our Lord after his resurrection. (I Cor. 15:6.) As the twelve apostles corresponded to the twelve tribes of Israel, so the seventy evangelists corresponded to the seventy elders of Israel appointed by Moses in the wilderness and afterward represented in the Jewish Sanhedrin, which numbered seventy.

As the seventy elders appointed by Moses, and their successors, the Sanhedrin, were the elders of Israel, so in a general way these seventy whom the Lord sent forth in the end of the Jewish age

represented all the leaders or elders amongst his people today. Elsewhere we have shown what are the present duties and responsibilities of elders as respects the Lord's flock;* and have also shown how at the present time these are chosen or set apart under the Lord's direction where his guidance is sought and the instructions of his Word followed. We have also shown that in a general way all of the people are fully commissioned in the same sense or degree to speak officially or as the mouthpieces of his body. To the extent of their abilities and time-given opportunities all are privileged to tell the good tidings of great joy to all who may have the ear to hear. But special blessing and special privileges in connection with the service of the Truth attach to those who in any particular manner are selected through the Lord's instrumentality for the service of the Truth – either as chosen elders of local companies of the Lord's people or as chosen pilgrims or accepted colporteurs. Each may serve according to opportunities and the divine blessing.

*See [MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. VI., chap. 6.](#)

THE JEWISH HARVEST AND OURS.

We see that the Lord designated the end of the Jewish age as the "harvest" time, for the reaping of the wheat of that people and the gathering of them into the garner of the Gospel dispensation, and for the rejection and symbolical burning of the chaff of that people in the great time of trouble which came upon them gradually after the rejection of Messiah, and was fully accomplished in the destruction of their nation in A.D. 70. We are specially interested in everything connected with that harvest time after learning that it was a figure or type or foreshadowing of the harvest time in the end of this Gospel age – the harvest in the midst of which we now find ourselves. Our Lord called attention to these harvest conditions at the same time that he sent forth the laborers, possibly indeed before commissioning them. Sympathizingly he drew the attention of the believers of that time to the ripeness of the conditions around them,

and urged them to pray to the Lord for laborers to assist in garnering the true wheat.

Apparently it was those who prayed to the Lord and felt an earnest desire for the prosperity of the Lord's work, and the finding of the Israelites indeed who consecrated themselves to this service, this evangelistic ministry. But no matter whether they were taught first and prayed first and gave themselves to the work afterward, or whether they gave themselves first to the work and prayed afterward – the praying and engagement in the service were associated in the Lord's mind and evidently in the minds of those who participated in that harvest work. And so it is today. As we look all about us we see nominal Christendom like a great wheat field, ripe and ready for the reaping. The true children of God greatly need the message which would gather them to the Lord **[R3347 : page 106]** out of all sectarian bondage, and all who have the Lord's Spirit feel drawn to render the assistance necessary, at any cost of personal inconvenience, etc.

As we think of our dear friends groping in darkness and stumbling into Higher Criticism, Infidelity, Evolution theories, Theosophy, New Thought, Christian Science, etc., etc., we cry out to the Lord for more laborers for the vineyard, knowing that he delights to see us thus interested in the work he is carrying forward. In response he is pleased to send a full company of laborers, represented by the seventy of our lesson. We may be sure that those who are most earnestly sympathetic and most earnestly praying are those who are most earnestly laboring in this harvest – whether they are permitted to labor in a public manner or are restricted to more private means of personal conversation, tract distribution and mail correspondence, whether they have the larger opportunities of the volunteer work on a systematic scale, or whether they have the still larger opportunities of the colporteur service or pilgrim work, etc.

"HOW SHALL THEY PREACH EXCEPT THEY BE SENT?"

Our Lord intimated that it would be a great honor for any to be sent forth, and intimated also that none could engage in the service unless they were sent forth by him – the Lord of the harvest. We are not then to consider that any and everybody may engage in this work today any more than in the harvest of the Jewish age. We are to pray for the privilege and opportunity of service, and when it comes to us are to seize it and use it with zeal, as appreciating the privilege of being co-workers together with the Lord in the greatest and grandest work imaginable. There is a distinctly drawn line as to who are privileged to engage in this work. The harvesters acceptable to the Lord can surely be none others than those who are fully consecrated to him and accepted as members of the body of Christ. If others engage we cannot expect for them the success and blessing that we are authorized to expect for such as the Lord sends forth. In harmony with this suggestion we find that unbelievers, book agents and book stores are not successful in handling our publications. The blessing seems to go only with those who are consecrated to the Lord and with those of their families who are pleased to cooperate with them in this harvest under their direction.

AS LAMBS AMONG WOLVES.

Our Lord's illustration, that his representatives sent forth would be as lambs among wolves, seems a very strong and almost overdrawn statement of the case until [R3347 : page 107] we get the proper standpoint of observation. Those represented as wolves were Jews, Israelites, nominally God's favored people for centuries – the natural heirs of the Abrahamic covenant and promises. They were the people who according to the flesh were the Lord's sheep, as represented in the twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd." Yet how grievously they had lost as a whole the proper sheeplike characteristics is clearly indicated by our Lord's words

likening them to wolves. The sheep is an innocent and almost a helpless creature, harmless; the wolf is ravenous, destructive, selfish. Doubtless, our Lord's words seemed harsh even to his disciples, who, accustomed to the selfishness of the world, failed to see it from the same standpoint as viewed by our Lord, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, in the most absolute sense and degree. Our Lord, however, "knew what was in man" and judged not by the outward appearances. What, therefore, might have been an uncharitable judgment and saying on the part of the apostles was not so on our Lord's part. His own experiences less than six months afterward, and the experiences of his faithful disciples, all attested the wisdom and justice of the term "wolves" as applied to the self-righteous, Sabbath-keeping, street-corner praying, tithe-giving scribes and Pharisees, who had the form of godliness but not the power of it in their hearts and lives.

Continuing to draw lessons from the Jewish harvest and to apply them in this harvest, we begin to realize that nominal Christendom of today is likewise wolflike rather than lamblike, and that those who receive the Lord's message and go forth in his name now are similarly as lambs amongst wolves. The Apostle draws a picture, not of the heathen world, but of the nominal Christian Church of today, when writing to Timothy he prophetically described the conditions in the end of this age. His words are, "In the last days perilous times shall come." "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but having itching ears will gather to themselves teachers after their own desires; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." – 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 4:3,4.

A GREAT WORK SOON DUE.

As the principal part of the Lord's work at the first advent was crowded into the closing six months, so we anticipate that the principal work of the present harvest will be crowded into the last

six years. Already we see evidences that the work of harvest here is broadening. Many more have the hearing ear for the Truth than had it a short time ago, and many more are praying for the outcome of the harvest and cooperating with their prayers by presenting themselves, all of their opportunities and talents available, to the Lord's service in the various departments of the work. It should not surprise us, therefore, if in the closing six years the evidences would be far stronger than ever before of the wolfish disposition of many who have a form of godliness and outwardly claim to be the Lord's sheep. Should the sheep suffer at their hands, we may be sure that it will not be permitted until the due time. It will not be permitted to interfere with the harvest work, and none can be seriously molested except by the permission of the great Chief Reaper, and until his time shall be fully come. All such trained in the school of Christ will be ready, we trust, to say as did the Master at the close of his career – "The cup which the Father hath poured me, shall I not drink it?" – and rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer for the name and for the cause we love.

"THIS ONE THING I DO."

The seventy were sent out without baggage. They took no changes of clothing, they wore only sandals, and took no house shoes or slippers; their journey was to be quickly made and all attention was to be given to their missionary duties; they were not to attempt to make themselves specially comfortable. It was the custom of the time to entertain travelers, and especially such as had a religious mission, prophets, etc.; and these evangelists were not to take up any collections, and hence were to take no pocket-books with them. They were to ask nothing for their services, but wherever they went they were to heal the sick, cast out devils, and proclaim their mission to the people as heralds of Jesus, declaring to them that the Kingdom of God was near at hand, soon to be established. The command to salute no man by the way did not signify that they might not say "Good morning," but that they were not to follow the custom

of their time of stopping by the way to discuss whatever matter of news might be carried from one village to another. They were not news-gatherers, nor news heralds, but the heralds of the Lord, ambassadors of the Kingdom, and were to give their time and attention specially to that one service.

We might draw a parallel between these representatives of the Truth in the end of the Jewish age, and similar ministers of the Truth in the present harvest time. We might note that the Pilgrim brothers go from place to place, taking up no collections, engaging in no other business, and declaring the same message – that the Kingdom of God is near at hand. We might note the same in regard to the colporteurs: they, too, have the one mission, and while their message is delivered through the printed page, it is the very same message – the King, the Kingdom, are at the door. And although the message is sold for a price that price is no more than the seventy received as they went from place to place. Neither do these laborers lay up treasures on earth, but are content merely to meet their daily expenses, and glad that thus doing they can feel that they are giving more than material value for every penny that they receive, besides the incalculable spiritual blessings which will go with the matter they are circulating to those who [R3347 : page 108] have the ears to hear and the hearts to appreciate the tidings of the Kingdom. The volunteers who scatter the tract matter in every city and village similarly are bearing the message that the King is at the door, and similarly are laboring without remuneration, and similarly are content with such things as they have and are not seeking for earthly reward. The spirit of the work now going on and that which was carried on in the close of our Lord's ministry have a noticeable correspondence.

BLESSED THE PEACEMAKERS – CHILDREN OF GOD.

Each laborer in the present harvest should note well the Lord's instruction in verses five and six. Wherever the Lord's

representatives go peace should go, not strife, confusion, turmoil, quarreling. True, the Truth will prove to be a sword that will arouse opposition, yet it should be the Truth that causes the opposition and division and not any rudeness or unkindness of word or action on the part of the Lord's representatives. There are plenty of things to aggravate mankind in this our busy day, and all who have received the Truth should receive also its spirit, "speaking peace through Jesus Christ." The "peace of God which passeth all understanding" should have control of each one who would represent the Lord and his message, that a hallowing influence should **[R3348 : page 108]** go with each, especially in every service and word spoken in the name of the Prince of Peace. The true character of his people is described by our Lord: they who would be properly termed the children of God should be peacemakers and not peace disturbers. "So far as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." It is not possible to live peaceably with all and yet be true to principles, but the interest of peace should be conserved in any and every proper way by the Lord's representatives.

According to the customs of our day it might be considered extreme if we were to apply the Lord's words literally and say "Peace to this house," before entering; and so also it would be considered extreme today if, not being welcomed, we were to stamp the dust from our shoes in departing from the house. However, the spirit of both these matters should be with us. On entering any house our thought should be to do good, to carry blessing, to exercise a favorable influence for peace, joy and blessing to those within; and if we, as the Lord's ministers, were rebuffed and disdained, not wanted, we should be careful not to intrude ourselves further, and, in that figurative sense of the word, we should wipe off the very dust.

"If a son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him." If at any place we find one having the same spirit of the Lord, desirous of knowing and doing the Lord's will, we should rejoice to meet him

as a brother and communicate to him the harvest message as he might have ears to hear it, and thus a blessing would be his; otherwise we should not remain. The Lord's people should never intrude themselves further than to make known briefly their message and work. If these be properly presented and meet with no response, the Lord would not have us violate the proprieties of courtesy by imposing ourselves or our teachings upon those who are unappreciative. Our Lord set us a good example in this matter.

BEGGING FOR THE LORD NOT AUTHORIZED.

The disciples were not to go from house to house as beggars, to get a meal here and a lodging there but were to expect that if the Lord had guided them providentially to those who had received them, the Lord meant to give their hosts through them a blessing proportionate to the cost of their brief entertainment. They were not to consider these hospitalities in the light of alms, for as the Lord's representatives they were there to confer blessings more than they would receive, and as common laborers even the service they rendered should be worth at least their keep. This principle was to apply not only to a house but to a city. They were not to be fastidious, but to accept such hospitalities as were proffered them; and if this meant no hospitality, they were to leave the city and go to one that would receive them and their message more cordially.

Verse 9 might at first appear to be a special message applicable in the Jewish harvest yet not applicable to the Gospel harvest; but not so. There is spiritual as well as physical sickness, and the Lord's ambassadors of today should consider it to be their mission, their business, to open blind eyes and unstop deaf ears, and generally heal the sick in a spiritual way with the balm of Gilead, the good tidings of great joy now due to be understood. Moreover, it is our privilege now as it was their privilege then to declare, "The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." This announcement has not been a proper one all down through the age but merely in the ends or harvests of

the two ages. After our Lord's death and resurrection the apostles no longer preached, "The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." On the contrary, they declared that the Kingdom of God, which had been offered to Israel, had passed away from them now to be given to a spiritual Israel which should be selected from all the peoples and kindreds and nations. But now we have come to the end of this period of selecting spiritual Israel, and in the harvest time of this age the proclamation again goes forth, Behold, the King is at the door, the Kingdom is at hand, and the wise virgins are preparing and will enter into the marriage, as the Lord represented in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. (Matt. 25:1-12.) It is still true that in some places the Lord's representatives will be unkindly received no matter how wisely and kindly they seek to proclaim their message, and they should heed this same injunction.

A MERE "FORM OF GODLINESS" WORSE THAN NONE.

Then the Lord calls the attention of his disciples to the cities in which his principal works were done, Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, declaring that if the same works had been done in the heathen cities of Tyre and Sidon, or even in the city of Sodom, which was destroyed in Abraham's day, such works as he did would **[R3348 : page 109]** have been sufficient to have aroused the heathen inhabitants of those cities to repentance and seeking the Lord's favor. He then points out that when the great judgment day shall come it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and more tolerable for Sidon and more tolerable for Sodom than for those who had received favor in so large a measure and yet were not moved to repentance and obedience. These words suggest several important thoughts.

(1) Why was it that these Jewish cities, so long under divine instruction through the Law and the prophets, should be more dull, less ready to hear the good tidings than the heathen? We can only account for it on the general lines suggested by the Apostle when he

declared that all the knowledge any of us may receive is either a savor of life unto life or a savor of death unto death – either affects us favorably to draw us into accord with the Lord and the principles of righteousness, or unfavorably, so as to alienate us the more from him. This is a general principle, and we can readily see that the Truth coming to the fallen man under present conditions would to the few work a great blessing, and to the many would in a measure result in hardening of heart.

(2) We say to ourselves, What is to be the fate of the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum in the day of judgment, in the Millennium? We see that, so far as the present life is concerned, they have shared the same fate as the cities – all of the six cities mentioned are utterly destroyed and their inhabitants are all totally dead. Will those people have an awakening in the future – will they arise from the dead? Our Lord answers the question, saying, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth." Well, then, we ask, for what will they be brought forth? Our Lord answers that their coming forth will be in that day – the Millennial day, the day of the world's judgment, the thousand years of Messiah's reign – when Satan will be bound and when, as the seed of Abraham, Christ and the Church will reign as Kings and Priests to bless all the families of the earth. – Rev. 5:10.

"MORE TOLERABLE FOR SODOM."

Our Lord's declaration is that it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for the cities of Galilee in that Millennial time. What can this mean? It means that under that blessed arrangement conditions will be favorable or tolerable even for those people who witnessed the Lord's miracles and yet were not moved by them to repentance and discipleship; and it will be still more tolerable for the heathen peoples of Tyre and Sidon – yes, for the degraded ones of Sodom, who never heard of the grace of God, who never tasted of

the divine favors, or witnessed divine healings, or had opportunities of being taught of the Lord, or being accepted as disciples of Christ.

The Apostle tells us that as soon as this Gospel age is completed, the Lord's favor will turn again to natural Israel, and that as a result blindness shall be turned away from them – Israel shall be saved from their blindness. (Rom. 11:25,26.) He goes on to explain that this will not be for anything of merit on their part, but because of the Lord's mercy, compassion, forgiveness through Christ. The prophet takes up the matter at the same point and declares that Israel shall look upon him whom they have pierced and shall all mourn because of him, and that the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and of supplication in connection with that mourning. Thus the blessing shall come again to those who rejected the Lord and crucified him, and with eyes opened still wider under the favorable conditions of the Millennial age, under the wise administration of the Lord himself as the great King over all the earth in that day, and with the influences of Satan bound and restrained that he may deceive the nations no more by "putting light for darkness and darkness for light," the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum shall have a further blessing, though a somewhat different kind from that which they rejected. They rejected the privilege of becoming disciples and joint-heirs in the Kingdom. That will never be offered to them again, because when next divine favor is exercised toward them it will be with the privileges of restitution to human nature – to that which was lost in Adam and redeemed by the death of the one whom they crucified.

"THUS IT IS WRITTEN."

The Lord through the Prophet Ezekiel (16:48-60) tells us particularly about the Sodomites, explaining the reason why they and their city were blotted out, and explaining also why the Israelites were rejected from his favor; but further explaining that when he shall have compassion upon Israel for the fathers' sake, and,

according to his promise, bring them back again to their own land and to greater privileges under the Millennial Kingdom, then also he will have compassion upon the people of Sodom and recover them also to their former estate, to all that was lost, [R3349 : page 109] to restitution privileges. O, how grand are the divine arrangements and plans! Some may say, these are blessings that are coming; but our Lord intimated that certain great tribulations were coming upon the cities of Galilee. What were they? We have already referred to these. The people of the cities of Galilee and of all Palestine were involved in the great time of trouble with which the Jewish age was wound up and that nation blotted out of existence as a nation, its members being scattered amongst all nations. This was a great tribulation and sore loss to the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum – especially when compared with what they might have enjoyed if they had become obedient to the Lord's message – had they become disciples and thus attained joint-heirship with the Lord and the apostles and all the saints in the Kingdom.

But how will it be more favorable in the Millennial age for those people of the heathen cities named than for those of Galilee? Will not the terms of the Millennial age be equally open to all the world of mankind? We answer, Yes, but all mankind will not be in equal [R3349 : page 110] readiness to profit by those blessed conditions of the Kingdom. It is a law of nature that a blessing having been once despised, and Truth having been once rejected, is on that account more difficult to be grasped if offered again. This our Lord intimated when he said of the efforts of the Jews to make proselytes amongst the Gentiles, "Ye compass sea and land to make a proselyte, and when he is made he is twofold more a child of destruction than he was before." Truths received under unfavorable conditions and into unready hearts are not really blessings but are sometimes injurious. When the Kingdom conditions shall be made known to the people of Sodom and Tyre and Sidon, they will doubtless be more ready to bow to them, accept them and conform to them than some who already have had a measure of light but have

been unfaithful to what they did see. Hence we may expect it to be more tolerable in the Millennial age for many of the heathen peoples – more favorable for them to fall in line with the Lord's gracious arrangements – than it will be for some who have enjoyed high place and position in the Jewish and Christian systems, but whose hearts have been far from appreciative of the principles of righteousness, etc., involved.

"AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST."

The last verse of the lesson is most impressive, most encouraging, most stimulating. The Lord would have us know that when sent out with his message and under his direction we fully represent him, so that he that heareth us heareth him. What a wonderful honor is thus conferred upon the most humble of the Lord's mouthpieces, "He that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." If as the Lord's people we could always have this thought with us, it would certainly be a blessing to us in two ways:

(1) It would prompt us to feel the dignity of the smallest service rendered to the Lord's cause. It would banish fear of man and all feelings of weakness and trepidation. Recognizing ourselves as the Lord's representatives we would be courageous to go anywhere, to do any service called for in his commission and providential leading.

(2) This thought would bring to us such a sense of our responsibility that all the affairs of the present life would seem trivial and insignificant in comparison to the one great thing that we do – our heavenly mission and commission. We would be more dignified in manner, more earnest in our service as well as less careful of what man might say of us. Our whole concern would be that we might please him who hath chosen us to be soldiers in his Royal Legion, to be ambassadors and heralds of the Kingdom and of its terms and conditions.

