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**"THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE"**  
**- MATTHEW 12:22-32,38-42. - MAY 15. -**

**Golden Text: – "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." – V. 30.**

SOMETIMES on a battlefield it would appear as though each man were fighting for himself. All battle lines seem lost in the confusion; yet in the end the victory will show the same clear-cut distinctions that prevailed in the beginning of the battle. According to the Great Teacher the entire human family is either on one side or on the other side of a great battle between right and wrong, truth and error, God and Satan. There is no doubt whatever as to how the battle will end – God will have the victory. Indeed the Bible assures us that at any time he could quickly put an end to the conflict, deliver his saints, overthrow Satan and his empire, etc. The Divine promise is that this will be done in God's "due time" – when the Church will be completed and changed by the power of the First Resurrection, and the time shall come for the establishment of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom for the blessing of all the nations of the earth.

Is it asked why the long delay of now six thousand years that sin has triumphed, two thousand of this since Messiah died for the redemption of sinners and their release from the death sentence? The answer is that during these nineteen centuries those whom he has favored with some knowledge of his will – testing their loyalty to him, to his Law, to his representatives – he is testing because he seeks to find amongst those professing loyalty, such as have the principles of righteousness at heart. Our present Study shows how some at the First Advent were thus tested and we know that throughout these nineteen centuries the experience of the footstep followers of the Nazarene have been

similar to his own. Frequently they have been hated without cause – maligned, misunderstood, slandered – sometimes by fellow-religionists of honorable standing. In every such instance we are to remember that there are but two sides to the conflict – the side of God, truth, righteousness, and the side of error, falsehood, Satan.

As we see how blindly scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law hated Jesus and said all manner of evil against him, we perceive that really they were on Satan's side. As we see Saul of Tarsus stoning Stephen to death and others persecuting followers of Jesus, we see clearly that they were in Satan's service, deluded by him and, in some instances, we are assured that these servants of Satan and unrighteousness verily thought that they did God service. Let us therefore be on guard along these lines, remembering the words of the Great Teacher, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "He that is not for me is against me." "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Alas, how many noble people have unwittingly been on the wrong side of the great controversy – fighting against God and the Truth, ignorantly deluded by the Adversary. By permitting this conflict and the measure of darkness, God is the more effectively trying, testing, those whom he has called to be his people. Not only are we tried directly as to the side we will take, but in a secondary sense we are tried as respects our humility. Those who are honest of heart and who make the mistake of fighting against God, when their eyes are opened, have a great test of humility in the matter of confession of their error and becoming zealous for the Truth. Those who are on the right side have also a test of humility, that they be not puffed up by their victory, but "humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time."

Satan, because created on a higher plane, is styled the Prince of demons in his relationship to the fallen angels. Judge of the

delusion in the hearts of the Pharisees which prompted them to charge the Master with being Satan himself and, on this score, accounted for his power to cast out demons! The Master took the time to philosophize with them on this subject and to show that if the time had come when Satan would work against his own associates and servants it would imply the speedy fall of his empire. He also pointed out that demons had been cast out by some whom they acknowledged and honored. If he must be Beelzebub to cast out the demons, what would their logic be in respect to their neighbors and friends who at times had exercised this power! On the other hand, if he, by God's power cast out demons, it was an evidence that God's Kingdom was nigh, just as he had proclaimed.

Having thus answered their objection he showed that they were against him and opposing his Word and that this meant that if he were God's representative, they were opposing God. Then he called their attention to the fact that their words were blasphemous in that they attributed God's spirit, God's power in him, to Satan's power. Since they did this without any real provocation and in opposition to every evidence, it implied that they were wicked at heart. Ordinary sins resulting from the fall, ignorance, superstition, etc., would all, in God's providence, be ultimately forgivable, but a wilful sin against light, against knowledge, would be a sin against God's **[R4608 : page 153]** spirit. And for that sin there would be no forgiveness, either in this Age, or in the coming Age – either during this Gospel Age or in the Millennial Age. If the sin were committed against full light, its merit or punishment would be destruction, Second Death. But very evidently it would be such a sin to only a few. With the majority there would be a mixture of wilfulness with ignorance, and, if so, the proportion of wrong represented by the ignorance could be forgiven; but the proportion represented by the wilfulness would need to be punished, because unforgivable.

The scribes and Pharisees, envious of his popularity, asked for a sign, a proof of his Messiahship – not recognizing his teachings and his miracles as proofs sufficient. He then told them of one sign which would come to them too late – his stay in the tomb would correspond to Jonah's stay in the belly of the great fish. The people of heathen Nineveh in the Judgment Age, in the Millennial Age, he assured them, would rank higher than they, for the Ninevites did repent at the preaching of Jonah, while these repented not at the preaching of a greater than Jonah. The Queen of Sheba had journeyed afar to hear Solomon's wisdom; yet these who were in the presence of a greater than Solomon realized it not and heeded not his message. Let us not be thus blinded, but, with our whole hearts, accept and follow the Nazarene!

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### **MY TRUSTFUL OBEDIENCE**

"Child of mine, I love thee;  
Listen now to me  
And make answer truly  
While I question thee;  
For I see that shadows  
Do thy soul oppress  
And thy faith so weakens  
That I cannot bless.

"Thou hast craved my power  
And presence in thy soul;  
Wilt thou yield thee wholly  
Unto my control?  
Wilt thou let me ever  
With thee have my way?  
Yield thyself in all things

Simply to obey?

"Though my presence oft times  
Seems to be withdrawn –  
Of my inward workings  
Not a trace be shown –  
Wilt thou count me present  
Notwithstanding all?  
Still believe I'm ever  
Working in thy soul?

"When I give to others  
What I to thee deny –  
Fold them in my sunshine,  
Seem to pass thee by –  
Wilt thou still believe in  
My strong love for thee;  
Yield thee to my purpose  
Whatsoe'er it be?

"When I to thy pleadings  
Seem no heed to pay,  
And thy foes grow bolder,  
Claim thee as their prey;  
Though towards thee I'm silent,  
Wilt thou stand the test?  
On my word of promise  
Lay thee down to rest?

"If to all my questions  
Thou canst answer, 'Yes,'  
Thou shalt be forever  
One that I *love best*,  
To the inner circle  
Of my favored few

Thou shalt be admitted  
And my glory view."

