

## THE WORLD'S HATRED

**"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you"; "Ye know that it hated me before it hated you." – 1 John 3:13; John 15:18.**

HERE the great Teacher seems to show that the kind of hatred that would come to us would be the same that came to himself. Looking at his experiences we see that he was hated chiefly by the most prominent, the most influential amongst the people. The Scribes specially hated him; but the Pharisees, the Chief Priests and the Sadducees also hated him. In time their hatred extended to the common people. The lower classes are always led by the superior classes; the lesser Pharisees by the greater Pharisees; the lesser Sadducees by the greater Sadducees, etc. Probably the common people could not give an intelligent reason why they hated the Lord. Accepting the presentations of their leaders, they assumed that he was a fraud and an impostor, and hated him as such. In proportion as they esteemed their leaders, they were inclined to disesteem whomsoever these disesteemed.

So it is today. We can see that there are motives behind the hatred manifested toward the Lord's people. No prominent person poses as being wicked. Hence, there is a general disposition on the part of all to justify themselves (politically and religiously), as moved by noble sentiments, as either the supporters or originators of high standards. But we see the hypocrisy which is made manifest by the lies and the procedure of those who hate the Lord's people without a cause. When, therefore, the Truth comes to any of those who have error and pride mingled with worldly religion, it becomes a rebuke to them. As the Apostles went from one place to another it was said of them, "These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also." – Acts 17:6.

The thoughts of Jesus are so deep and touch so upon the heart that everything not fully in accord with them appears worthless in comparison. Hence, many of those who have been teachers of religion find themselves impelled, through hate and envy, to try to crush, to blacken, to defame that which is true. But these teachers are being tested; they are being proved. To the Lord, at least, their hypocrisy is manifested, whether others be deceived by it or not. It is, therefore, today as it was in our Lord's day – "The darkness hateth the light."

**"WHOEVER WILL LIVE GODLY IN CHRIST JESUS SHALL  
SUFFER PERSECUTION"**

As our Lord explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism to the light of Truth, and consequently when his people lift up the light – "Let their light so shine as to glorify their Father which is in heaven," who has called them "out of darkness into his marvelous light" – the effect upon the darkened world is to awaken opposition, antagonism, and thus to disturb and make uncomfortable those in sympathy with darkness. Consequently, those who love darkness, those who love evil, those who love sin in its varied forms, hate the light, neither come to the light; but either publicly or secretly oppose the children of the light, the enlightened ones, the light-bearers. And even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into a kind of twilight of civilized reformation and moral reform, cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel. They much prefer a measure of darkness. – John 3:20.

In consequence of this conflict between light and darkness, our Lord suffered at the hands of those who professed to be children of the light, children of God; and who had, at least, a little light. Our Lord was not maltreated by either the Roman Governor or the Roman soldiers, of their own volition; for they were so totally blind as not to appreciate the light which he displayed. His persecutors were those who had some light, but who hated the brilliancy of the great Light shining upon them.

Similarly, all down through this Gospel Age, those who have been burning and shining lights in the world have been hated and persecuted chiefly (almost exclusively) by those who had some light, but whose light was *darkness* in comparison with the great light of the holy Spirit shining in and through the Lord's fully consecrated ones. Thus was fulfilled our Lord's testimony, "If they hated me they will also hate you"; "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (John 15:18; 1 John 3:13; 2 Tim. 3:12.) The Lord's followers in the present time are called upon to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, not because it is either reasonable or proper, but because the Lord, wishing to test, prove, and polish his people, is willing to permit the evil, opposing influences to prosper and to persecute and oppose his "members," and thus to serve his cause in the preparation of his Elect for a future work of service. Thus the persecutors of the Body, as did the persecutors of the Head, are co-operating to fulfil the Divine Plan in a manner they little suspect.

### **"MARVEL NOT IF THE WORLD HATE YOU"**

When the Lord's followers take a firm stand for Truth and righteousness, as did their Leader, the results are the same. Satan is their implacable opponent; he will see to it that they suffer, that there will be opposition, not only by himself, but by the world, which is largely under the influence of his spirit in various ways. Having taken this stand, the Lord's people must not marvel if the world hate them and say all manner of evil against them falsely, for Christ's sake. The more prominent they may be, as in our Lord's case, the more virulent will be the attacks against them; the more interested will be the great Adversary in overcoming them.

This thought that Satan opposes us, and that we are contending not merely with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high positions of power (Eph. 6:12), would be appalling to us did we not, on the other hand, realize that by this same positiveness of decision for Truth and righteousness we acquire great

help and assistance by other unseen powers. From the moment of our positive resistance of temptation and positive standing up for the Lord and his cause, we become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his [R4814 : page 142] might. Let us remember that "greater is he that is for us than all that can be against us." – Matt. 5:11; Eph. 6:12; I John 4:4.

The chief opposition to our Lord came from the religious leaders and professors. The union of the worldly and the semi-religious is sometimes complete, as in the union of Church and State in foreign lands; in other instances, it is incomplete, as in this country, where the Church and State are not fully united. Nevertheless, the politician desires the support of the professors and supporters of religion. These, in turn, plume themselves on their political influence and seek to use this influence for their own advantage, or, as they would say, for the "good of the cause." So, where there is no *direct* union between Church and State, there is an affiliation, an *indirect* union. The politician wishes to have the support of the moral and religious leaders of the community and others. Thus drawn together, the princes of this world, both religious and secular, uphold one another. Their interests are one. Hence, the Lord and all those who are his "members" and followers would be unsympathetically viewed, hated, persecuted; for the presentations of the Truth make manifest various errors and hypocrisies in contrast with Divine standards.

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