

## "THE FEET OF HIM"

IT IS NECESSARY for the discipline, trial and final proving of the Church of God that they should be subjected to adverse influence; for "to him that overcometh" is the promise of the great reward. If we would reign with Christ, we must prove our worthiness to reign, by the same tests of loyalty to God, of faith in His Word, of zeal for the Truth, of patient endurance, of reproach and persecution, even unto death, and in the unwavering trust in the power and purpose of God to deliver and exalt His Church in due time. To such faithful ones are the blessed consolations of Psalm 91, which we believe is a picture of the Church in the end of this Gospel Age – a picture of The Christ. Hearken:

*"He who dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High [typified by the Holy of the Tabernacle] shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."* We thus place ourselves under the Divine protection when, having come to a knowledge of God's willingness to accept us as His children, we gratefully accept the invitation and approach in His appointed way, through Christ our Redeemer, and consecrate ourselves fully to His service. Such may sweetly rest in the precious promises of God, all of which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. (2 Cor. 1:20.) The world does not see the overshadowing wings of Divine protection, but the faithful have a blessed secret realization of it. Praise the Lord!

*"I [Christ Jesus, whom David here, as elsewhere, personifies, and who thus addresses His Body, His Church] will say of Jehovah, He is My refuge and My fortress, My God; in Him will I trust, that He will surely deliver thee from the snare of the Fowler and from the noisome pestilence"* – from the deceptions of Satan, into which all those not protected shall stumble; for our Lord said that so subtle and deceptive will they be that, if it were possible, they would deceive "the very elect." But this is not possible; for those who are making their calling and election sure abide under the protection of the Almighty. Such [R4926 : page 437] shall be delivered, not from the destructive pestilence of

physical disease, but from the moral and spiritual pestilences of destruction – from the sinful propensities of the old nature, which in unguarded moments are liable to assert their mastery and overwhelm the souls of those who are not abiding under the secret protection of the Most High; and from the spiritual pestilences of false doctrine which, with subtle sophistry, destroy the faith of the unwatchful.

Such pestilences are already abroad in the world in the shape of so-called Christian Science, Spiritism and the various no-ransom theories which take the name of "The Larger Hope," and which bid fair, both from present prospects and from the prophetic outlook, ere long to become epidemic. From all these pestilences the Lord's elect shall be protected, resting safely and sweetly under the shadow of the Almighty.

***"He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His Truth shall be thy shield and buckler."*** So close to His heart does Jehovah gather His loyal and faithful children that they feel the warmth of His love; and the responsive language of their hearts is, "I will abide in Thy tabernacle forever; I will trust in the covert of Thy wings; for Thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong Tower from the enemy; for Thou hast heard my vows; Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name." (Psa. 61:4,3,5.) Yes, His Truth – that grand system of Truth comprised in the Divine Plan of the Ages – is an ample shield and buckler to all who in simplicity of heart receive it and prove faithful to it. It is ***the armor of God***, which the Apostle urges all the faithful to put on – to appropriate, to meditate upon and to store up Truth in mind and heart – that they may be able by its use to withstand error and evil in every form presented to them in this evil day.

## **JEHOVAH SHALL KEEP THE FEET OF HIS SAINTS**

***"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday."*** This is the ***"night,"*** the dark night of which the Prophet Isaiah spoke and to which our Lord also referred, "The morning cometh, and also the night";

"The night cometh when no man can work." (Isa. 21:12; John 9:4.) The Millennial morning comes, and just as surely the great time of trouble will immediately precede it – the night wherein no man can labor for the dissemination of Divine Truth; so great will be the "terror," the tumult and trouble and persecution of that night; the arrows – "even bitter words" of the opponents of the Truth – will fly by day – at the present time, which in comparison with the dark night that is coming, is called day. The various besetments and difficulties from infidelity, Higher Criticism and other false doctrines are pictorially represented as the shooting out of arrows, as pestilences, as stumbling stones. None of these are to injure the "elect," of which Christ is the Head and the Church His Members, as specially indicated in this Psalm. The Church shall be immune, and nothing shall in any way hurt them. As the Lord said, the difficulties of this day would, if possible, deceive the very elect; but this will not be possible, for "the feet" class shall be *kept*. No; the Church need have no fear of the moral and spiritual pestilences that walk in darkness, spreading and making their victims amongst those who are ignorant of the Truth, or who are unfaithful to it and are, hence, unworthy of it, and who, therefore, lack the Divine protection and are subject to the "strong delusions" of error that subvert the faith and hope of many, just when the light of Divine Truth is shining clearest upon the faithful, as it is shining upon us today.

***"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."*** Great will be the falling away from the Truth, even amongst those who, like ourselves, received it once with joy and who did for a time run well; but the Church, because of their loyalty and uncompromising faithfulness and because of the ample armor of Truth and righteousness, shall stand and not fall.

We are not to think of those who will be injured and who will fall ("A thousand at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand") as of the *world*, but rather as being *friends of the Church; closely associated with the Church*. The world could not fall from Divine favor, for it has not been in Divine favor. The whole "world lieth in the Wicked One,"

and, therefore, could not be overthrown. This verse seems to apply to those who were actually begotten of the Holy Spirit or who have assumed a position such as those begotten of the Holy Spirit; as, for instance, the tares which affect to be wheat. They never were wheat, and will not be garnered with the wheat class. Time will show that they are not of this class. So in this picture we see the fall of these in general and of the consecrated in particular. There is a distinction between *the thousand* falling at the *side* and the *ten thousand* at the *right hand*. We might infer that the one thousand may fall into total unbelief, and the ten thousand, the "great company," into the great time of trouble to wash their robes white and to purify themselves. They will be partakers with Babylon in her sins and have part in her great fall. – Rev. 14:18; 18:10. [R4926 : page 438]

None too extravagant is the prophetic declaration, "A thousand shall fall at thy side." Only the sanctified in Christ Jesus, copies of God's dear Son, will be able to stand complete in Him. These will be the very elect, and it will not be possible for them to be deceived and ensnared; for God will give His messengers a charge [message] for them ["present Truth"] and thus these "feet" of the Body of Christ shall be upheld that they stumble not.

*"Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked,"* who reject the Truth or prove unfaithful to it. We know that we are already passing through the beginning of these troubles (the troubles upon the nominal church incident to its testing), and that we are escaping, while many on every hand are falling into error and infidelity. We escape, not by being taken away from the scene of trouble, but by being supported, strengthened and kept in the very midst of it all by the Word of the Lord, our shield and buckler.

### **"NO EVIL SHALL BEFALL THEE"**

**"Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling"**

– no evil of the kind referred to; and any other *seeming* evils shall, under Divine providence, work together for your good. – Rom. 8:28.

God has so arranged that only the truly consecrated will be kept from stumbling into error in this evil day. Every day we learn to appreciate more and more the Divine favor which has anointed the eyes of our understanding, and permitted us to see the internal strength and beauty of the Divine Word and Plan. If, then, we are thus, by Divine favor, made strong in the Lord, and enabled to "stand fast" while thousands are falling from their faith and steadfastness, let us "rejoice with fear" (reverence). Let him who feels strong and well supported "be not high-minded," but "take heed lest he fall." Humility and zeal for the Lord are the terms upon which we received the great blessing, and are also the terms upon which we may retain it to the end – until our "change" comes and establishes in glory what grace began in our weakness.

***"For He shall give His angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."*** That is, God will raise up some faithful pastors and teachers who will "watch for your souls as they that must give account." True, there shall arise false teachers, perverting the Word of the Lord, and seeking by cunning sophistries to subvert your souls; but if in simplicity of heart the Lord's children require a "Thus saith the Lord" for every element of their faith, and carefully prove all things by the Word, they will be able readily to distinguish the true from the false. And having done so, the Apostle Paul (Heb. 10:35) counsels us to have confidence. The Lord, our Shepherd, will care for the true sheep.

The Apostle Paul assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of this Gospel Age – not only the overcomers of the "little flock," but also the overcomers of the "great multitude." Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in His declaration, "Their angels do always behold [have access to] the face of My Father." (Matt. 18:10.) The Master's words seem to imply, at least,

that one or more angels have charge over the consecrated ones, the "very elect." Nothing can by any means, therefore, harm these, except as the Heavenly Father sees that the earthly injury or disadvantage would prove profitable either to the individual New Creature or to the Lord's general cause. This is in full accord with His general assurance that all things shall work together for good to those that love Him. – Rom. 8:28.

Such a use of the heavenly messengers by no means invalidates the thought that the Lord's earthly children are frequently used of Him as ministers, servants, the one to the other. Indeed, we may be assured that the invisible messengers or servants, generally, if not always, are required to act through human instrumentalities – preferably through "the very elect." Of this kind of service done by the brethren, one for the other, we have illustrations in the Harvest work, for instance – supervised by our present Lord and His heavenly hosts, yet in the main [R4927 : page 438] carried on by the members of His Body still in the flesh.

### **THE HARVEST MESSAGE GOD'S KEEPING POWER**

*"They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone" – "thee" – all the members of the Body of Christ, individually and collectively, using all their strength to protect against any stumbling-stone of false doctrine, and especially that great fundamental Rock-Doctrine of the redemption through the precious blood of Christ; that "Rock of offense and stone of stumbling" to both the houses of nominal Israel. (Isa. 8:14.) "The feet" of the Body are its last members; the saints now living are members of "the feet of Him" (Christ), the ones who are now in danger of being stumbled, as the feet of the Jewish house of servants were in danger in the end, or harvest, of the Jewish Age.*

How do such messengers *bear up the feet of Christ?* By helping them to a clear understanding of the Truth, and teaching and encouraging them by word and example how to be faithful to the Truth, and how to run so as to obtain the prize of our high-calling.



While doubtless the heavenly messengers are connected with this work, yet it is surely done through the Church in the flesh, as already intimated. The Lord in this present Harvest time has given His messengers, the leaders of His consecrated people, a "charge," a message, a word of warning, counsel, advice – an opening of the Word of Truth, an enlightening of their understanding – that they should bear up all the members of "the feet" class, all of "the very elect" in this time of serious trial, testing and stumbling, lest at any time any of this class should stumble through the peculiar trials of the present time. How manifestly this is fulfilled! The Harvest message in its various features, bearing on every phase of Truth now due, and every phase of error now brought forward, is God's keeping power by which, according to His guarantee, we know that nothing shall by any means hurt "the feet" members of the Body of Christ.

It is for us to rejoice in these blessings and favors of the Lord and to increase our faith; and we remember that even before the "House of Sons" was organized the Lord had power and exercised it in the "House of Servants" in a way that illustrates to us the abundance of that power.

Satan would like to have us walk by sight, not by faith; he would like to have us continually tempting God, and demanding some ocular demonstration of His favor and protection, instead of accepting the testimony of His Word, and relying thereupon implicitly, in faith. In the light of the unfolding of the Scriptures we see that Satan, probably unwittingly, quoted this passage of Scripture wholly out of its proper meaning and interpretation, a passage which referred, not to the literal feet of Jesus and to literal stones and to literal angels, but to the symbolic feet-members of the Body of Christ today, and to the stones of stumbling, doctrinal and otherwise, which are now permitted in the path of the faithful, and to the angels, or ministers, of Divine Truth, who in the present **[R4927 : page 439]** Harvest time would be commissioned to bear up "the feet" members with such counsels, admonitions and expositions of Scripture as would be necessary for them.

***"Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon thou shalt trample under feet."*** Thus borne up in the hands of the Lord's faithful messengers and guarded by their vigilant watchfulness, and under the constant protection of the Most High, God's trusting, faithful children shall triumph over every device of Satan either to overpower or to beguile them – whether he goes about like a roaring lion, or whether, serpent-like, he stealthily lurks about to insert his venomous poison.

***"Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known [appreciated] My name."*** On account of the love and loyalty of each individual composing "the feet" class, the heavenly Father will deliver him from the pestilences, etc., and will exalt him to joint-heirship with Christ, make him a member of the "Royal Priesthood" and a partaker of the divine nature.

***"He shall call upon Me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation"*** – He will make him understand His Plan. As individuals they are known unto the Lord, who judges not merely by the sight of the eye and the hearing of the ear, but who discerns and judges the thoughts and intents of the heart. And, however widely they may be scattered, whether standing alone as "wheat" in the midst of tares, or in company with others, God's eye is always upon them. Dwelling in the secret place of the Most High (sanctified, wholly set apart unto God), they shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, while the judgments of the Lord are experienced by the great religious systems that bear His name in unfaithfulness. They have no share in the judgment of Great Babylon, but are previously enlightened and called out of her.

Praise the Lord for such assurances of His loving care! ***"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, praise His holy name!"***

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