

## THE BLESSING OF THE "CUP OF SALVATION"

**"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all His people." – Psalm 116:12-14.**

TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL these words have a peculiar significance which they could not have had to the Prophet David. Nevertheless, we would suppose that the Prophet had to a considerable degree the proper thought as to the sentiment of the words. King David no doubt felt an appreciation of God's goodness. His Psalms show us that he had a very appreciative heart, grateful for the blessings that came to him from the Lord. Properly enough his heart cried out: "What shall I render unto the Lord?" What return can I make for all His lovingkindness?

David knew of God's promise to Abraham; he knew that God would sometime bless all the families of the earth, and that this blessing would come through the Seed of Abraham. The Children of Israel knew that they were Abraham's seed. King David was one of these, and he felt that in some way he would be identified with this Promise. The matter was more or less vague to him; but, nevertheless, Abraham's Seed was to bless the world.

In proposing to "take the cup of salvation," we think the Psalmist had in mind that whatever experiences the Lord might consider necessary for him he would accept; for he must have a share in that salvation. He would continue to call upon the Lord that he *might* have such a share; he would pay his vows unto the Lord "in the presence of all His people." He had made solemn vows, and he would fulfil them – he would consider this a privilege; he would delight in doing God's will. [R5538 : page 280]

## DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

To the Christian, however, all this has a much deeper significance. Beginning with our Lord Jesus, these words have a special meaning to each of the sons of God called to joint-heirship with the great Head of the Church. Having been begotten of the Holy Spirit and received into sonship, these wish to make a special return for all God's mercies. These have the actual forgiveness of their sins through Jesus, as David did not. His sins were only typically covered; and if he could say: "What shall I render?" surely much more should we say: "What shall *I* render unto the Lord?"

The Apostle Paul exhorts us: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God – your reasonable service." This is what we gladly render, then – our bodies as *living sacrifices*. In every truly noble heart gratitude is the responsive chord to kindness and love; and no harmony is sweeter or more inspiring to noble deeds and lofty purposes. God would have His children cultivate for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, all the graces of true nobility and moral excellence. It is therefore most fitting that we should note every deed of love and kindness toward us, and be careful to return the gratitude and appreciation due. How often does love go unrequited because selfishness or thoughtlessness crowds out the nobler instincts of the soul!

While human love and acts of kindness often draw largely upon us for the exercise of this grace of gratitude, appreciation, how much more does the constant loving-kindness and tender mercy of our Heavenly Father thus fittingly draw upon our inmost being to respond in grateful acknowledgment and praise! To Him we are indebted for every good that we possess. What this implies only those can know who have been brought by His love into the secret place of the Most High, and made to feast upon the "finest

of the wheat," the wealth of our Father's Storehouse. We are the special objects of His grace.

### **"HIS LOVING KINDNESS, OH, HOW GREAT!"**

And who of us cannot trace a long line of special providences on our behalf? Who of us as we take a mental retrospect of our lives cannot exclaim with the poet:

"Looking back I praise the way  
God has led me day by day!"

How wonderfully the Lord has guided His people! His children have ever been His constant care. No good thing hath He withheld from them, and all things have been made to work together for their good if they obeyed Him. Who that has trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smiles and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, has not proved the verity of His precious promises and His abiding faithfulness! Surely, "*Not one thing hath failed* of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you!" (Joshua 23:14.) In the smallest and in the greatest affairs of our lives He has ever watched for our interests. Every cloud has had a golden lining!

What, then, shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits? What have we, indeed, that we have not received from Him? Nothing! As a tender parent loves to see his child appreciatively accept his favors, so does our Heavenly Father regard our attitude toward Him, and our manifestation of appreciation of His favors and love toward us. His unspeakable gifts to us were purchased at a great cost to His heart. Then we will thankfully take the cup of salvation, through faith in our Redeemer, and pay our vows unto the Lord. We will drink this cup with our dear Master – this cup of suffering and of joy. "We will trust and not be afraid."

The Father has made a special provision for those who have made a full surrender of themselves to Him. The experiences which He has arranged for them constitute "the cup of salvation." And in accepting this cup from the Lord, we are accepting all the experiences that come to us in His providence, whatever they may be – joy or *sorrow*, pain or *pleasure* or *anything*. As Jesus exclaimed: "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" so should this be the language of our hearts. It had in type been foretold of our Lord that He should be lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. He knew that He was to be the great antitypical Sin-Offering; that He was to be "made sin" for fallen man. Yet this cup that the Father had poured for Him He declared Himself very willing to drink. And this is the cup which He has given to us.

Our Savior said to His disciples who desired to sit next to Him in the Kingdom: "Are ye *able* to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" He Himself continued to drink of that cup until the end – He drank the dregs of the cup. And so it will be with His followers. We are to drink of this same cup. It is our individual cup, and yet it is *His* cup. If we be truly loyal we will accept our share of the cup thankfully, gladly. And we know that as we drink of it *He* will be with us; we shall not be alone. He supervises the experiences of each of His members; and with every temptation and trial He will provide some way of escape, if the trial threatens to become too severe.

## **THE CUP OF JOY IN THE KINGDOM**

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial of His death, the Master in His conversation with the Apostles said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that Day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom." (Matthew 26:29.) Our Lord was here contrasting two great Days – the Day of *suffering* and the Day of *glory*. This

Gospel Age has been the Day of suffering. The Millennial Age will be the Day of glory, and is especially spoken of as "the Day of Christ."

The fruit of the vine, the literal cup, represents two thoughts. The cup of *wine* is produced at the cost of the *life* of the *grape*. The grape loses its own individuality. The juice is pressed out, and thus the fruit of the vine is made ready for use. The cup of wine – the juice of the grape – represents, however, not only the crushing of the grape, but also the exhilaration that comes as the result. So in our drinking of this figurative cup. To us it symbolizes our Savior's sufferings and death, and our own participation with Him in these sufferings. But wine also represents joy, gladness, and is thus used in the Scriptures. So in the sense in which the Lord used the words "fruit of the vine," quoted in the preceding paragraph, the cup represented the joys of the Kingdom.

In the earthly experiences of our Lord Jesus the Father marked out for Him a certain specific course. This course constituted His cup of suffering and death. But the Father promised Him that after He had drunk this cup faithfully, He should be given a different cup, a different experience – glory, honor and immortality. And then the Savior was authorized by the Father to make the same proposition to those who might desire to become His followers – that if they would suffer with Him, would drink His cup of death with Him, then they should participate with Him in His future cup of joy.

### **"NOW IS THE ACCEPTABLE TIME"**

Our cup is a cup of joy and also a cup of bitterness. But when we are called upon to drink a bitter draft, let us remember Him who bravely and faithfully partook of this bitterness, rejoicing to do the Father's will; and let **[R5539 : page 281]** us take courage, and likewise rejoice that we are accounted worthy to *share* this cup with our beloved Lord. And as He who was *perfect* needed strength

and help Divine in connection with His experiences in the drinking of the cup, as He sought the Father in earnest prayer for the needed assistance, so must we do. We should also be continually on our guard lest we enter into temptation, lest we look away from Him from whom alone cometh our help.

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now*," said the Psalmist. And "now is the acceptable time – *now* is the Day of Salvation" – for the Church. *Now* is the time sacrifices are to be offered – *not by and by*. The Lord has so arranged that this Vow which we take upon ourselves, this Covenant of Sacrifice, must be fulfilled by us. The flesh which we consecrate must be consumed. If we seek to withdraw the sacrifice from the altar, we shall be dealt with in such a manner as to destroy the flesh; else we ourselves shall be destroyed. If we faithfully drink of the cup which the Father has prepared for us, we shall afterward receive the blessings which He has promised to those who thus drink. Therefore, now, in the present life, we drink of this cup He has given us; for unless we do this *now*, we shall have no share in the Kingdom blessings in the life to come.

In our Lord's case, literal crucifixion was necessary. He must bear the fullest measure of the Law's demand; He must bear the penalty of its every violation, even as in the case of the vilest criminal under the Law; otherwise He could not have redeemed every Jew. He must bear the curse of the Law – He must hang on a tree. But in our experiences, the cross will not be a literal cross of wood; the nails will not be literal nails; but bitter words and slander and misrepresentation will surely be our portion – and perhaps physical violence in some form to some of the last members of the Body. We do not know.

## **BY WAY OF THE CROSS**

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are all to pass through the trying experiences represented by the *wine-press*. We

are to lay down our lives in the Divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as individuals, in the human sense, and to become New Creatures. "If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him" – not otherwise. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of His cup. And not until the cup has been drained to the last shall we receive the other cup – the cup of Kingdom joys. While our Lord had a great blessing in the obedience which He rendered to the Father, yet it was a trying time for Him down to the last moment, when He cried, "It is finished." And so with the Church. We must drink *all* of the cup; none of the contents is to be left. We must endure *all* of the experiences.

All the sufferings of Christ will be complete when the Body of Christ shall have finished its course. The new cup of joy was given our Lord when He was received up into glory. Then all the angels of God worshiped Him. Soon our cup of joy will be given to us. No doubt it was a glorious time when the sleeping saints were awakening in the spring of 1878, and entered into their reward and received the cup of blessing. And one by one, those who were alive and remained at the Coming of the Master are being gathered Home. Undoubtedly we shall all partake of this joy with them soon, if we are faithful. We believe the fulness of joy will not be reached until all the members of Christ are with Him beyond the veil. Then we shall share His Throne and partake of His glory. Then with our beloved Lord we shall drink of the "new wine" in the Kingdom; for the promise is to all His faithful saints.

### **"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH"**

The concluding statement of the Psalmist as given in our text is that he would pay his vows "in the presence of all His [God's] people." It is not enough that we shall be loyal in our hearts; but the Lord desires a public confession, a witness before men. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth



confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10.) And all the witnesses for the Truth must be martyrs for the Truth. They must, in other words, be willing to suffer for it. And so it will be to a large extent with those who are faithfully, courageously, holding up the banner of Truth. They will be targets for the Adversary.

Our Master said that whoever would not confess Him before men, He would not confess before the Father and before the holy angels. Only those who are thoroughly loyal are to be of this very select company of which our Lord is the Head, and which is soon now to be gathered into the Heavenly Garner.

Then let us appreciate more and more this "cup of blessing" which we are privileged to drink with our blessed Master; and let us "call upon the name of the Lord" for grace to help in every time of need. We need Him daily, hourly, momentarily. And we may come to the Throne of Grace at any time in the name of our great Advocate.

Our Father's ear is ever open to the cry of His children. They are as dear to Him "as the apple of His eye." They "are graven upon the palms of His hands." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," is His promise to His own. All that we can render will be at best very, very little in return for all His bounties, for all His matchless grace toward us. But the measure of love and zeal that accompanies our little all will indicate the measure of our gratitude to our Heavenly Father and our great Redeemer.

"What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?  
Thy love surpasses all my thought!  
What can a fitting tribute be  
To Him who my poor life hath bought?

"Who sought me in my low estate,  
And raised me up to heights Divine!  
What words can fitly sound Thy praise,



Or thought encompass love like Thine?

"What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?  
My heart, my strength, my life, I bring!  
My hands, my voice, in service glad,  
To Thee, my Savior and my King!"

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### **DAY BY DAY, HOUR BY HOUR**

"God broke our years to hours and days  
That, hour by hour and day by day,  
Just going on a little way,  
We might be able all along  
To keep quite strong.  
Should all the weight of life  
Be laid across our shoulders, and the future, rife  
With woe and struggle, meet us face to face  
At just one place,  
We could not go.  
Our feet would stop; and so  
God lays a little on us every day.  
And never, I believe, on all the way  
Will burdens bear so deep,  
Or pathway lie so threatening and so steep,  
But we can go, if by God's power  
We only bear the burden of the hour."  
Anon.

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