

## PRESENT DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF THE SAINTS

**"Cry aloud and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the House of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God." – Isaiah 58:1,2.**

WE understand that the Lord, through the Prophet Isaiah, is here describing the condition of the nominal people of God. These words probably had an application in the Prophet's day, but we think they have a special application in our day. If we should view the words as a general statement, applicable at any time, it would seem to have reference to some who are truly the Lord's people and also to the House of Jacob in general. The Prophet speaks of certain transgressions of God's people, errors, and of sins of the House of Jacob (Natural Israel) – especially grievous transgressions.

Applying this to the present day, we would understand that the Lord's people are those who are in covenant relationship with God, His real people, and no others. Those in covenant relationship with God are comparatively a small number. The great mass of professed people of God have gotten into many transgressions of the Divine will and Law, many of them quite ignorantly following blind leaders of the blind, following creeds of the darker past. The term "the House of Jacob," however, is a distinguishing term, referring exclusively to the Jews, God's ancient Covenant people.

The Lord's people of the present time, those who have the Light of Truth as it now shines out from His Word, should, as they have suitable opportunity, point out to Christendom of today, and

especially to those who are the professed people of God, their error, show them where they have deviated from God's Word, where their course is not in harmony with the Golden Rule, etc. Moreover, if they have favorable opportunity, they might point out to the Jews the reasons why they are in their present cast-off condition. But it would not be well to go about berating them, or berating anybody.

Very little good is done by such a course. The Truth itself is to be the Sword. It is a sharp two-edged Sword, even the Word of God. The work that any of us could do aside from the Word of God would be but bungling work; whereas "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." We are to "cry aloud, and spare not," to point out what the Scriptures have to say – on proper occasions. This does not mean to insult people. God's ambassadors have no commission to insult any one. But with gracious words we may, nevertheless, point to the conditions of today, the dangers that are now before the world, and the proper position to be taken by those who would wholly follow the Lord.

### **A FORM OF GODLINESS WITHOUT ITS POWER**

The words of the text under consideration are along the same line as the words of the Prophet Isaiah in Chapter 29:13, quoted by our Lord. There the Prophet declares: "This people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me"; "but," as the Master rendered the following words (Matthew 15:9), "in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

The translation of V. 2 of our text is not quite so clear as perhaps might be. The thought seems to be: They *apparently* seek Me daily, *apparently* delight to know My ways. They build churches with high steeples and gorgeous appointments, at great

cost. Many churches have imposing images of the saints or great paintings which make a fine outward appearance. They have rich, melodious bells chiming out sweet hymns; such as "Nearer, my God, to Thee," "Rock of Ages," etc. They have well-trained choirs to sing anthems. They have highly educated ministers who are gifted orators and deliver eloquent dissertations. Outwardly, they have a wonderful zeal for righteousness; it would seem on the surface that they are doing well. They appoint an annual Thanksgiving **[R5631 : page 51]** Day and take up large collections for the poor; they pay large salaries to their preachers; they raise money for missions. It is very much as it was in our Lord's day, at His First Advent, when He said, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of Gehenna than yourselves"; he is far worse than before they touched him. – Matthew 23:15.

There is great zeal shown for the traditions of men, for the propagation of men's theories, for the advancement of denominational interests, for attracting the world by varied and numerous devices, in order to gain their influence and their financial assistance. For instance, Thanksgiving Day was set apart in the early history of New England. Long ago it became a custom in the United **[R5631 : page 52]** States to have the last Thursday in November appointed as a day of thanksgiving to God for the harvest of the year. The Governor of the State of Massachusetts first took it up; then the Governor of another State followed; then another; then it was taken up by the President of the United States. Finally it became the custom for the President first to make the appointment every year, to be followed by a proclamation by each of the State Governors, making the day thus a legal holiday, when banks and places of business generally would be closed that the people might be free to meet for praise and thanksgiving to God for the blessings of the year. And the custom still persists. Now this might sound to people of other nations to whom it would be told as if the people of the United States were a set of saints. These

nations might say, It was not sufficient that the general Government of the United States should make such appointment, but each State makes such appointment; and they do it every year.

As a matter of fact, if the President of the United States were an infidel he would be expected to follow the custom and make the same proclamation. Or whether the Governor of a State were a Catholic or a Protestant or an atheist, he would be expected to do likewise. It has become a custom, just as the hands of a clock go around. But very few of the people think of the day in any other light than as a pleasant holiday, when they can enjoy a fine dinner and have a good time generally. Very little attention – in fact, none – is paid by the great majority to the real feature, of *thanksgiving to God*.

It is the same with other customs in other nations of the world. If we were in a Mohammedan country, we would see, at twelve o'clock, every Mohammedan, no matter what he was doing, stop immediately for a moment of prayer to Allah. One who did not know might think from this that the Mohammedans were a most saintly people, who would be very honest and upright in all their dealings; better keep your eye open, for all that. So a great deal that we have everywhere today is a mere mechanical form, an outward display – a form of godliness without its power.

## **PATENT FACTS IN CHRISTENDOM TODAY**

In our text the Prophet was declaring that God's true children should lift up their voice and cry aloud, and tell God's professed people their transgressions. The implication seems to be that there is a very special need of public expression on the matter of calling attention to the fact that there is a great deal of hypocrisy practised in the name of religion. If we consider the British people, or the Russians or the Germans, they all have very strict religious laws. They used to be even more strict – so strict that we who proclaim Present Truth would not have been permitted to live there; so strict

that we would have been in danger of our lives. Yet how many of the people of these countries really serve God and follow the instructions of His Word as given to the children of the Lord? Which of these governments in its dealings with other nations has followed or is now following the Golden Rule taught by the Savior? What does history, past and present, show along this line?

It is not now considered necessary or proper to cry aloud in the streets – the public are no longer ignorant. All these things of which we speak are criticized in the newspapers and elsewhere. As to religious intolerance, nearly all denominations have done their share in persecuting others. But it does not seem that there is any more heart-loyalty today than formerly, even though violent persecution is now seldom practised. If we have the right conception of the matter, only about one-tenth of all the ministers have any faith in the Bible as the Word of God. If that is the case, they are simply living on a high moral plane, though we do not know that this is true of ministers any more than of the world in general. But there is a great deal of religious formality. Those one hundred and eighty thousand ministers still take their texts from the Bible, as they formerly did, but they merely sanction those features of the Divine Revelation which they think comport well with Higher Criticism and general intelligence. It would seem that the Lord through the Prophet is referring to these conditions.

We do not understand that we should cry out in any unseemly manner – not go to the churches and cry aloud. Those in the churches have a legal right to meet there, and to be as honest as they please or as hypocritical as they please. Neither would it be seemly to go along the streets crying aloud. There is a more fitting and effective way of sounding the alarm.

As a notable instance of the present attitude of the nominal church ministry, we cite the case of the Rev. Dr. Aked. Our mention of this is not a divulging of any private matter; for Dr.

Aked took it out of the personal list himself, by publishing the matter in the newspapers. Not long ago this minister disproved to his own satisfaction the virgin-birth of our Lord Jesus and made light of the whole matter. Rev. Mr. Aked is a very able man – stands high with the people and with the colleges and with the ministers. There is a branch of the Federation of the Christian Churches in San Francisco, and the Rev. Mr. Aked was chosen as President. Some one attacked Rev. Mr. Aked through the newspapers and said that he should be "churched," "unfrocked," etc., for his statements. Dr. Aked said that he thought everybody understood his position. He offered his resignation as President of the Federation of Churches. The man who thought that he should be called to account for his statements was treated as the offender, and Rev. Aked was requested to resume the presidency. Yet this minister publicly declared that he did not believe one word of the story of the Redemption of mankind – did not believe that Jesus was *ever* a superhuman being; and the fact that he was supported in his position by his fellow-ministers, with but very few exceptions, proves that the body of the ministry today have sadly fallen, and are "blind leaders of the blind."

### **KINGDOM WORK THIS SIDE THE VEIL**

We are not surprised at these conditions; for long ago they were foretold in the Word of God. We were assured that our day would witness the fulfilment of the prophecies along these lines. Wherever we look, we witness the disintegration of the Present Order, whether we view the conditions from a social or a religious or a financial standpoint. The lease of power to the kingdoms of this world has expired. It was foretold by the Prophet Daniel that "in the days of these kings," before their utter overthrow, the God of Heaven would set up a Kingdom which should smite and break in pieces all the kingdoms of men, the beastly kingdoms of Daniel's dream. When these kingdoms would be given to "the people of the saints of the Most High," they were to "smite them

in pieces as a potter's vessel." This intimates that in some sense of the word the Lord will take possession of these before they have been completely overthrown; that some of the kingdoms represented in the Gentile Image will be remaining at that time.

What time, then, is signified by the expression "in the days of these kings," when the Kingdom of God was to be set up in power? To our understanding the first step in the setting up of this Kingdom was the raising of the sleeping saints of the Gospel Age, which we believe was **[R5631 : page 53]** in the spring of 1878. Then began the glorification of the Church. The work of setting up the Kingdom has, we understand, been progressing from that date, and is now merely lacking the last members of the Church class. When these shall have taken their places as members of the Church in glory, the Kingdom will be fully set up.

This does not signify that there may not be a part of the Kingdom work begun while some of the members of Christ are still in the flesh. Indeed some Scriptures seem to imply that there will be a Kingdom work done this side the Veil, while a work of still greater magnitude and authority is progressing on the other side of the Veil. We read, "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds." This seems to imply, as we have mentioned before, that there is a special work to be done while these saints still have beds, while they are in a condition of repose – not "tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine," but fully at rest in God's great Plan. The Scripture goes on to say that they have a two-edged sword in their hands – this is the Word of God. They use it as the Sword of the Spirit. This would not be true of them on the other side of the Veil. They would have no use for a sword there. The Scriptures also declare that the high-sounding praises of God are upon their lips. This, too, seems to be applicable to those this side the Veil. **[R5632 : page 53]**



The final phrase, "to execute the judgments written," would seem to imply that there would be something for the saints on this side of the Veil to do in connection with the execution of the judgments upon the nations. As to just what this means, we have not yet fully learned. But we see nothing here to conflict with the thought that the Lord's Kingdom may be properly understood to have begun operations and that the present smiting of the nations is under Kingdom control. The fact that some of the members of the Kingdom class are still in the flesh does not militate at all against this thought. We see the kingdoms of this world now being dashed to pieces, and we are expecting to see the process continued until they are completely ground to powder. They shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind shall carry them away. Then shall they be found no more at all. – Daniel 2:35.

### **THE KINGDOM OF GOD SET UP**

Because certain important things are to be accomplished, we see that God is permitting what to others might seem to be purely human devilishness. For a wise purpose He permits this reign of lawlessness, this condition which evokes universal odium. Our thought is that we should look for still further evidences day by day that the Gentile Times have ended, and that God's Kingdom has begun its work. We are expecting to see multiplied proofs of the Kingdom power, though the world will not recognize it as such until it is manifested in the flaming fire of Anarchy, which is still further along. The present step is the war of the nations. The next step will be Socialism – an attempted Socialism – among the people. Then the third step, Anarchy, will gradually come on. When this symbolic fire shall prevail, then the world will realize what we are trying to tell them now; namely, that God's Kingdom is taking control, and that these various demonstrations are evidences that our Lord is taking His great power. But the many will not begin to see until the flaming fire is revealed. When we



endeavor to tell them now they will not receive it, but they will be thoroughly convinced when they see the destructive fire of Anarchy.

It was merely during the interval between the destruction of the kingdom of Israel and the setting up of the Kingdom of the Heavens that the opportunity was given to these Gentile kingdoms to see what they could do toward establishing a righteous government on earth. Now the time has come for God's Kingdom to displace them; but they will not *willingly* resign their crowns and scepters; they are in defiance. Therefore force is required to destroy them. Their 2520 years of rule are in the past, and they must now submit to a complete overthrow. We are expecting that the work of their crushing will steadily continue until its full accomplishment. "A short work will the Lord make upon the earth," is the Scriptural declaration. – Romans 9:28.

At the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet Messiah was to take unto Himself His great power and reign. That Trumpet is now sounding! "And the nations were angry and Thy wrath is come." (Revelation 11:18.) Surely the nations are angry now! They act as if they were bereft of common sense. We see readily enough that the spirit of selfishness has prevailed there right along; but that some hindrance or fear heretofore held them back. But finally, when the Lord's "due time" had come to permit it, they broke through their restraint. The Lord has at this particular time especially to do with the affairs of the nations. And this war was allowed to occur at about the end of the Times of the Gentiles, at the appropriate time when they are to be dashed to pieces with the iron rod of the Iron Rule. (Psalm 2:6-12.) It is our judgment that we shall see more of this iron rule and its breaking influence, not only upon the nations, but upon society at large. Now in this great Day of the Lord everything that can be shaken is to be shaken to pieces and shaken out, to the intent that nothing unrighteous or unworthy shall remain. God Himself is doing the shaking.

## FINANCIAL SHAKINGS

For our own part we are looking for great shaking in financial matters. There has never before been a war that has shaken the world as this war has done. This effect is largely because of money conditions. The only thing that is current is gold. Silver was demonetized forty years ago. The results of this we are just feeling now. At the present time stocks, bonds and all other kinds of securities are largely built on *confidence*. As soon as confidence begins to shake, all these securities decline in value. With such a lack of confidence among the people, we can readily see that there is good ground for the bankers to have a great deal of trepidation – "men's hearts failing them for fear." – Luke 21:25,26.

Since the beginning of the war there have been bonds and stocks sold as low as thirty per cent. less than those of last July. But the Exchanges did not recognize these sales. Why? They wish to keep the prices up. The banks have their vaults filled with stocks and bonds. If the Government Inspectors should come in to take stock, they would count the stock up at the price of the last sale; and the Government officer's duty would be to say, "You must make this right before you enter into business tomorrow morning." They would reply that they have any amount of securities. But the answer would be, "We do not want securities; we want gold." There is not enough gold in the world to pay the debts. These debts are put into gold bonds. The interest on all the debts is represented by gold bonds. But everybody is going to say, "I do not want bonds or stocks; I want gold."

The business people of today who are feeling the strain most are the wealthy. They have the stocks and bonds, but they have not the gold, the money. If you demanded gold at the banks in exchange for something else, they might give it to you, but unwillingly. Gold **[R5632 : page 54]** notes are the same as the

gold, because the Treasury must, according to law, have that gold on hand to exchange for them when presented.

This matter is causing trouble, not only in the United States, but down in South America and Central America. They would like to buy goods. And the question comes, "Have you the money? Have you the gold?" "No, we have no gold. Sell to us in the same way you have sold heretofore." "No, no, we cannot do that; something has stopped. We do not know what is the matter." The wheels have stopped, and the people who have their fingers in the way are getting them pinched. There is not enough money; and the very people who destroyed silver money forty years ago are the ones who are now getting pinched.

### **THE TIME FOR JUDGMENT IS RIPE**

We believe that the Times of the Gentiles ended just on time, as shown in Volume II. of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. The hand of Justice is now doing the breaking – the nations shall be broken as "a potter's vessel." The whole cataclysm of trouble may be upon the world during the next ten months or it may be longer deferred. We believe that the time for the setting up of the Kingdom was on September 21, 1914. At that time, when it was due for our Lord to take up His great power and reign, the nations were already angry. They were at war over a month in advance of the time, because so angry.

The due time for the "wrath" was September 21. We are expecting to see this wrath still more manifest. The nations have been in just this same unloving spirit one toward another for a number of years, but apparently they have been under some forcible restraint. We believe that God's time had not yet come. We wondered, and many people wondered, how their anger could be restrained much longer; much has been written about it in the newspapers. When the Balkan war came, it was because the nations were angry; and it very nearly led to this conflagration.

Austria tried to precipitate the trouble at that time, but the German Kaiser held back. Now the restraining hand has been removed. The time is ripe.

## **"WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS OUGHT WE TO BE?"**

Seeing that we see all these things with such clearness, and realize what it all means to the Church, how soberly and carefully and faithfully we should live! Never were the words of the Apostle Paul – "Let us watch and be sober" – more applicable than now. Accompanying the momentous events that usher in the New Dispensation are special trials and difficulties, not only to the world, but also to the Church. The Apostle says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." But "as a snare will it come on all them that dwell on the earth." All except the *brethren* will be surprised, disappointed, chagrined, found unprepared and more or less overtaken. But the brethren, because they have been feeding at the Lord's table, and are strong in His might, will not be overtaken unawares. The Apostle urges that because the brethren are "children of the light," "children of the Day," they shall not act as children of the darkness, "children of the night."

In the New Day that is just dawning we shall have the "Reign of Righteousness." We belong to that New Dispensation. While living in the flesh, we are not of the flesh; while living in the world, we are not of the world. Our minds are clarified by the light of the New Day. We are not interested in the things of this world, but in the things of the Lord; and because of our special relationship to the Lord, as His Elect, we are not left in the darkness of the world.

Above all others, then, we should be sober. When the Apostle enjoins, "Be sober," he is not referring to the use of intoxicating liquors; for those who have the Lord's **[R5633 : page 54]** Spirit,

the Lord's mind – the Truth – do not so indulge. Neither would we understand him to mean that we should always go about wearing long faces; for the children of the Light should of all others be happy, cheerful people. But we should be sober in the sense of being of serious mind, thoughtful, not given to frivolity or levity, but earnestly watching our thoughts, our words, our doings, that we may in all things bring honor to our King whose name we bear. We who have our eyes open see what sin is and how the reign of sin is about to culminate. We see God's arrangements; and having entered into a Covenant with God, we surely must be sober, vigilant, realizing the great battle now on between Light and Darkness, between Truth and Error; realizing that faithfulness in this "evil day" will require all the soberness of mind, all the fortitude, that we possess. We shall continually need the wisdom from on High. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5.) It is only those who are using to the best of their ability the power and the talents already given them who have any right to ask for further wisdom and who are prepared to use more.

### **THE "CUP" OF THE APOSTATE "WOMAN"**

The Scriptures speak of various kinds of intoxication. We can be intoxicated with the spirit of the world. But it would be impossible for true children of the Heavenly King to become thus intoxicated. We have a new wine which the Lord gives, and we should be fully satisfied and not seek the intoxication of the world. Then there is a spiritual intoxication, the spirit of error. All the world are intoxicated with this spirit. All Christendom has been made drunk with the wine which comes from the Golden Cup mentioned in Revelation, which the Apostate Woman has held out for all to drink. This Cup is filled with false doctrines. These false doctrines were *her* mixture. Thank God! the intoxication of these

is passing away, and we are able to see more clearly than ever before. But we see many who are still intoxicated.

The most stupefying potion is the doctrine of eternal torment. It gives people the impression that after they have heard of Christ, have turned from outward sin, and have professed His name, that is all there is to it, and now they should go out and try to induce others to turn from a life of sin. They verily think that there is nothing more to do, not recognizing that there is an important work of grace to be attained in their own hearts, and that they are to be upbuilt in the knowledge of God and in obedience to His will; and that is His will, "even their sanctification." As a consequence of this, many of them are mere babes in Christ; and many more are not even justified to life, having never made a full consecration of themselves.

Many professed Christians of broad mind and of good influence are thoroughly confused with this wine of false doctrine. They are content to give some money to the Church system and to engage in some works of benevolence. It does not occur to them to seek for further knowledge of God or of service for Him. How much these need to be delivered from the enslaving influences which are binding them hand and foot! How glad, how thankful we are that the chains of bondage will soon be broken and the captives all set free! The children of the Light, however, are properly on the watch all the time. They are not influenced by the deluding, false doctrines. We rejoice that the Morning is about to dawn, the time when all will be awakened and see the light as it will then **[R5633 : page 55]** be streaming from the Sun of Righteousness, risen with healing in His beams.

We who are now awake should be very active and energetic in the service of God; for we have a hundred-fold more opportunities than those of other days – by telegraph, by telephone, by mail and by newspapers, by rapid and convenient

train service, through the printed page, etc. This is pre-eminently the time for the Lord's children, "children of the Day," to be sober, vigilant, active. In the presence of so great opportunities, who should not be sober and vigilant.

And we are to *watch*. What should we watch? Pre-eminently we should watch *ourselves*, to keep ourselves from the snares of the present time, which are more insidious and entrapping than ever before, so that we do not endanger our peace with God nor lose our enlightenment. The Adversary is on the watch, and it is necessary that the Lord's people be especially alert and watchful. In the past there was little opportunity for the Lord's people to watch the fulfilments of Scripture; for these fulfilments were far apart. But now is the time for us to watch particularly along this line. The Times of the Gentiles have ended, and the nations are now disintegrating.

There are certain indications that the Lord has a great work for all His people, His watching saints, at the present time. Unless we are on the alert, we might go to sleep. In our Lord's time the disciples were disposed to go to sleep, and to go back to the fishing business, instead of doing the work the Lord had outlined. We should all be fully awake and watching to see what is the duty of the hour and then to be diligent in doing it.

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE NEVER BEFORE SO GREAT**

There are some of the Lord's children who seem possessed with the idea that "the door is shut," and that there is no further opportunity for service. So they become indolent in regard to the Lord's work. We should lose no time dreaming that the door is shut! There are people who are seeking the Truth – people who are sitting in darkness. There never was a time like the present. Never have so many people been ready to hear the good Message. In all the forty years of Harvest there have not been such



opportunities to proclaim the Truth as now present themselves. The great war and the ominous signs of the times are waking people up, and many are now inquiring. So the Lord's people should be very diligent, doing with their might what their hands find to do.

Business men are greatly troubled. At the present time there are thousands of business men who scarcely get a night's rest. "Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." (Luke 21:26.) They do not know what to do. They thought they were secure; for they had large bank accounts and stocks and bonds. Now they say they do not know what these things are worth. "We had some insurance too," they say, "but we do not now know whether the Insurance Companies can pay." Their stocks and bonds are not salable. Their holders are therefore in perplexity. They have not had the security of God's promises, and they have nothing on which to rest. But the Lord's people have the full assurance of His Word that "*all things* shall work together for good to those who love God" – love Him supremely.

Then let all of us whose eyes have been anointed with the "eye-salve" of Present Truth, who are loyal to the Lord, lift up our voices and point the way to those who are bewildered and troubled, who know not which way to go, nor where to seek for comfort, who long for something substantial upon which to rest, when everything seems to be slipping from beneath their feet. Their religious teachers have failed to be true to their commission, and they have been left to grope in darkness. Some of these may be helped by our efforts and led to the "green pastures" and "still waters" of the true Shepherd's Fold, before the dark night is fully upon the world.

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