

THE FATHER'S WISE COUNSEL

"My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways." – Proverbs 23:26.

SOLOMON, the wise man, had many wives; we may therefore reasonably suppose that he had sons. Yet to suppose that he addressed these words to one of his sons or to each of them in succession would not, in our judgment, seem reasonable; for we can scarcely think that Solomon would wish to call special attention to his own ways – "Let thine eyes behold My ways." He was not always a good pattern for a son to follow. It seems to us that we must look further for the meaning. We remember that Solomon was early granted special wisdom from the Lord, because of his earnest request in that direction just after he had become king. We might understand that he was personating Wisdom, that Wisdom was saying, "My son [whoever desires to be a son of Wisdom], give Me thine heart." Since Wisdom would be only another name for the Creator, we might understand that God is giving an invitation to His sons to give their hearts to Him and observe His ways. This, at all events, seems to be the good lesson that we may gain from this Scripture.

HOW SONSHIP IS LOST OR MAINTAINED

We see that God, who was the Father of our race, gave us our being, made us perfect, at first, in our father Adam. He also gave perfect life and being to the angels, and He wished that all these give their hearts to Him. They were His sons from the time they were created. Lucifer was a son of God. Adam was a son of God. The proper course for a son of God would be to turn himself over entirely to do the will of his Father. But in the case of Lucifer, we find that instead of turning his heart over to the Father, he was self-seeking and attempted to do his own will; and he miserably failed.

In the case of some of the angels who kept not their first estate, though they were sons of God they did not give their hearts to the Lord; and *they* miserably failed. In sinning all these lost their sonship. Only by continued loyalty and obedience can sonship be maintained.

God has arranged that humanity may come back to Him. Likewise we understand that any of the fallen angels who repent may in the great Judgment Day come back into fellowship with God. His message would in due time be, to as many as desire to return to Him, "If you would be My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways."

Not until since the time of the First Advent of our Lord Jesus, had this opportunity of becoming sons of God been given to any of His fallen creatures, and then only to a certain class of the fallen race of Adam. These were called to be sons on the Divine plane of being, an offer never before made by Jehovah to any of mankind. Our Lord Jesus as a Son had wholly given His heart to God. And although when He came to earth this course of loyalty and obedience led by the way of tribulation, it led to glory, honor and immortality. Those who have since then sought to become sons of God, hear the message that the Father will not receive any except those who come through His Son Jesus as their Redeemer, and then make full consecration of themselves to do God's will.

We see that any who have attempted to be people of God and have stopped short of meeting these terms have made a serious mistake, and have not attained that which they wished to attain. We are to hold back nothing. We must yield full allegiance to the arrangements which God has made for our salvation. Our hearts must be brought into this attitude of full consecration, and held there. To those who in loyalty of heart meet all these reasonable requirements of the Lord He says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." – Rev. 2:10.

GOD'S WAYS AS SHOWN IN NATURE

Those who give their hearts to the Lord are exhorted further to observe His ways. What does this mean? Are we to attempt to do all that we see God do? It is proper [R5703 : page 173] for the Lord to execute judgment and to lay penalties upon those who are out of the way, who need chastisement. Would it be proper for us to judge or condemn in this way? No. It is not ours to condemn, to pass sentence, on any. We may condemn sin, and may disapprove of what appears to be sin in act or word, and may kindly point out what we believe are good reasons for thinking it is sin. We may rebuke in love. But we are very liable to mistakes in such matters; and to condemn a person as unfit for the Lord's family, etc., is not our province. So we are not to follow the Lord's ways in this respect. But we see in the Lord's ways illustrations of His character – His Wisdom, His Justice, His Love, His Power. We note these qualities of His character by observing His ways; and they call forth our admiration and reverence. All God's ways will be ours sometime, but not yet; for we are not like Him, perfect, and not yet in a position of responsibility.

The world does not, perhaps, realize that they are copying the Lord's ways in very much that they are doing in this wonderful day – making force-pumps, engines, dealing with electricity, etc. Very few realize that they are attempting to follow God's ways. For instance, in the human body there is a wonderful mechanism by which the blood is pumped through the arteries and veins and by which the blood is checked. This mechanism is only copied in the best engines in the world. If men had only known how to copy from the nerves of the body, they would have known long ago how to run trunklines by electricity, etc. Any one who will observe God's ways will be much wiser than those who fail to do so. But the world knows not God. The people of God, however, even though they may not be inventors, may gain great blessings by observing God's ways in nature.

Note further the wonderful and superior wisdom manifested in the human body – a machine run with a very small amount of supply, which it takes at intervals and by which it is enabled to keep up the energies of life and its strength. And consider the horse. The amount of oats and hay that the horse will eat is comparatively small, yet the amount of energy and strength this will produce is wonderful. But with the human being there goes with this strength and activity an intelligence, a power to think and reason, which is very wonderful, and the more we examine it the more wonderful we find it.

GOD'S WAYS AS SEEN IN HIS WORD

When we become sons of God and begin to observe His ways, we begin to get faith, knowledge, the spirit of obedience, more devotion to God. All who are sons of God will study His ways. We especially learn of His ways from the study of His Word. This does not mean merely reading or memorizing the Bible. There are people who can quote whole chapters or books of the Bible, and yet do not understand what they read. In thinking that in the reading of so many chapters we are doing a meritorious thing we are mistaken. It is not the mere reading of the Bible that is helpful to the Lord's people, but with it the renewing and strengthening power working in us to will and to do His good pleasure.

