

THE CLASS TO BE HONORED BY THE LORD

"Them that honor Me, I will honor." – 1 Samuel 2:30.

THE words of our text are found in conjunction with the story of Eli and his family. Eli was God's representative in a very special sense – a priest and a judge of Israel. Eli's sons were also priests; yet they seem to have been egregiously wrong in their course of conduct, living in licentiousness, favoring injustice, taking advantage of their own position and that of their father to do violence to the principles of righteousness. Eli was reprov'd of the Lord because he did not maintain a proper control over his sons and prevent their doing the things that were unjust, unrighteous, contrary to God's will and a disgrace both to His Cause and to their priestly profession. These words of reproof were uttered to Eli, through the boy Samuel, as an indication of what was God's mind and to show him why the honor that had been given to him and his family would be taken away. The Lord's view of the matter is shown in the words of our text, "Them that honor Me, I will honor."

RESISTING THE PROUD, GIVING GRACE TO THE HUMBLE

We believe that this is a principle that holds good always. Now, today, those who are seeking to honor God He will be sure to honor. Those who are seeking merely self-honor may obtain some of that honor, may glorify themselves to a certain extent; but it will not be the Lord that will glorify them. In the service of His Cause, His Truth, they will not be honored by Him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, and giveth grace [favor] to the humble." The way to honor God is to seek to know His will and to do it from sincere hearts, to have God first in all our affairs, to show forth His praises. We are to never mind ourselves, our own honor. We

are to serve in accordance with the principles which the Lord is promoting. To seek the glory of God is the proper course for us who are His children and whom He has blessed.

It might seem as if our text is in conflict in some sense with the words of our Lord, "Love your *enemies*." When we come to analyze the text carefully, we perceive that although the Lord says that He will honor them that honor Him, and declares, "They that seek Me early shall find Me," yet He does not say that He will *do harm* to those who do not love Him and honor Him. On the contrary, the Lord's provision is so comprehensive as to include "all the families of the earth." God thus *loves* those who are His enemies – loves them to the extent of providing a Sacrifice for them and a reconciliation with Himself. But He does not *honor* His enemies.

HATING THE SIN, LOVING THE SINNER

We may well believe that God loves those especially who seek to do His will. We are commanded to love our enemies, but this does not mean that we are to love our enemies in the same way that we love the members of the Body of Christ. The difference is that we would love our enemies with a sympathetic love, while we would love our brethren in Christ with a holy love, a love of kinship, of comradeship. Sin is not lovely to God; or to any one else who is in relationship with God and is possessed of His Spirit. Sin is a deformity, an enormity, displeasing to the mind, the Spirit, of God. But God has a sympathetic love for the sinner; and He wishes us to have the same, to be ready to do good to those who would do us injury, who would treat us unkindly, who would persecute us. We are thus to be imitators of God.

God has been pleased to choose certain ones of the human family to be His ambassadors. Instead of speaking to humanity directly, the Lord speaks through these representatives, His children. These are the ones He will be pleased to honor, to make

His representatives – these who seek to do His will, who are loyal to His Word. Would God choose ambassadors who would not properly **[R5703 : page 174]** represent Him? Surely not! We, His children, can enter into the spirit of the Lord's testimony here; and it is for us, therefore, to seek to honor Him by showing forth His praises to others, both by proclaiming the pure Message of Truth and by our exemplary lives, that we may have His blessing now and may have the great honor that He has promised His faithful in the Kingdom, so near at hand.

