

September 6

There shall no evil befall thee. Psalm 91:10

NOTHING shall by any means hurt us. Things may interfere with our fleshly interests or comfort or course of affairs; but when we remember that we are not in the

flesh but in the spirit, that it is as New Creatures that the Lord has promised us the Kingdom in His due time, we can realize that no outside influence can interfere with our real interests, our spiritual interests, nor hinder our attaining to the glories of the Kingdom which the Lord has promised to

His faithful ones. Only our loss of confidence in the Lord and our unfaithfulness to Him could separate us from His love and His promises. Z.'03-331 R3232:1

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CAN EVIL BEFALL THE NEW CREATURE?

"There shall no evil befall thee." (Psa. 91:10.) "Pilate took Jesus and scourged him....They crucified him and two others with him; on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."--John 19:1,18.

SUCH combination of Scripture, apparently contradictory, is quite a stumbling-block to worldly people; and some of those who have inclinations toward the Lord, but have not much knowledge of his Word and Plan, experience all kinds of trouble in a vain attempt to reconcile them. To these God's Word is apparently proven to be untrue. Only from the standpoint of faith can it be recognized as always true and harmonious. Yet the standpoint of faith may not always be exactly the same. We might use the word "thee" in the text, as applying to the Lord (the New Creature) and the members of the Body (the New Creatures) and consider that the flesh is the great enemy, the great opponent, to be gotten rid of. Or we might think of the flesh as their earthly tabernacle for the time, and take the matter in a more figurative way.

We, however, prefer to consider the New Creature entirely apart from the flesh. "No evil shall befall thee." Applying this to our Lord, we see that no evil befell him as a New Creature. All the things that happened to him were necessary. Without these he could not have fulfilled the calling that was given him. Similarly we, as New Creatures, as his followers, could never have attained to this calling except by the crucifixion of the Lord. "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth." --Col. 3:5.

Our Lord's followers have to some extent lost the esteem of their friends and neighbors; they have been counted as the offscouring of the earth. They have been tested in every possible manner. These things were necessary for them; therefore, they were not evil.

"THE CAPTAIN OF THEIR SALVATION MADE PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERINGS"

Our Lord asked, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26.) To be fitted for the priestly office to which he was called, our Lord must be proved beyond all peradventure. His loyalty was put to the extremest test in the Garden of Gethsemane. Possibly he himself did not realize the strength of his righteous character until brought face to face with this last trial. There he was tried and proved to the uttermost, and under the trial his character--always perfect to the full measure of its testing--gained, by Divine grace, its glorious perfection of completeness.

Thus, through suffering, he learned obedience to the perfect will of God, down to the lowest depths of self-abnegation; and God permitted it so to be, because such proving was necessary, both for the development and the manifestation of that perfection of character which would be worthy of the high exaltation to which he was called.

And so we also must suffer if we would be footstep-followers

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"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,

of the Lamb. Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant; at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of his grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of his character, as a foundation for faith and an inspiration to obedience. Then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, more beauty, more grace, until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected through suffering. Thus we learn to realize that "All things work together for good...to the called according to his purpose," to those who are to be members of his Body.--Rom. 8:28.

DELIVERED OVER TO THE ADVERSARY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH

But some one may ask, "We see how these experiences of life are working out good for the New Creature; but is there no way in which experiences could work out evil things that would be bad for them?"

We are to recognize that there are two classes of spirit-begotten ones, and that our text has reference to only one class of these. There is the Body of Christ, representing the priestly order, the antitypical Melchisedec --Jesus the Head and the Church his Body. They have kept nothing back of their love and devotion; things may happen disastrous to their fleshly interests; but they remember that they are "not in the flesh, but in the spirit," and realize that no outside influence can mar their real interest as New Creatures, nor hinder them, if faithful, from attaining to the glories of the Kingdom with their Lord and Head. They have entered into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and do not withdraw; they "abide in the secret place of the Most High"; they will continue unto the very end. It is to this class, and to all the things that may befall them, that the assurance is given --"There shall no evil befall thee."

As for the other of the two classes--the "Great Company" -- some evils do befall them. They will be put into great tribulation. It was an evil on their part that they neglected the Lord's Word and the privileges of the "high calling." This coolness brought them into a condition which must be made right. They loved "father or mother or houses or lands," or something else, to such an extent that they failed to keep their covenant of sacrifice, and will be accounted unworthy of a share in the Kingdom, and will, instead, be subjected to the great time of trouble--"the day of wrath." It will be necessary that these evils come upon them to bring destruction of the flesh.

which we believe is a picture of the Church in the end of this Gospel Age--a picture of the Christ. Harken: "*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 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.

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 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 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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STRONG CHARACTERS IN CONTRAST

--1 SAMUEL 18:5-16.--AUGUST 16.--

Golden Text:--"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."--Psa. 46:1.

SAUL and David were both men of strong character, but the former neglected the divine word and counsel and undertook the management of his own affairs, while the latter accepted the Lord and his leadings and by faith sought to follow him. The results showed in both cases: Saul came to an ignominious end. David prospered and exhibited a wisdom and strength of character quite beyond his times. We are not to forget in this connection that David's discreetness and obedience to the Lord kept him from the throne of Israel for years--years of trouble, privation and wandering, whereas the following of worldly methods might have led to much greater prosperity so far as outward appearances would be concerned. Nevertheless, we are to remember also that the nation of Israel had been adopted by the Lord as his chosen peculiar people, with whom he would deal, whose course he would supervise, and in respect to whose rulers he would decide. Neither are we to forget the

great difference between the Jewish age, with the divine arrangements and regulations of the same, and this Christian or Gospel age, with its different regulations and its law of love, patient endurance and spiritual instead of carnal warfare. Those who consider the course of David and other faithful ones of the Jewish epoch to be patterns for the Church, the body of Christ, show thereby that they have a total misunderstanding of the divine Word on this matter. To their mind David's battles and victories and slaughters are figures illustrative of spiritual battles and victories on the part of the antitypical David, the Beloved,--head and body--the Christ.

Although Saul had already been notified by the Lord through the prophet Samuel that the kingdom should be taken from his family and given to a neighbor more worthy of the trust than he, more faithful to the Lord, nevertheless he had been given to

understand that the kingdom might endure in his hands for a considerable time. We may assume, therefore, that Saul was on the lookout for one to rise to prominence who should ultimately become his successor,--although we have no reason to think that he understood that David had already been anointed to this position, for David's anointing was kept secret.

Saul, although appreciative of David's prowess, was, nevertheless, jealous of him because of the prominence to which his noble course brought him in the eyes of the people. This jealousy was accentuated as he heard the praises of David sung in grander terms than his own were lauded. Jealousy is always an evil quality--no part of the Lord's Spirit, the holy Spirit, but a strong ingredient in the spirit of evil. Hatred, envy, malice, strife, works of the flesh and devil, are all closely related to jealousy, and often spring from it. Saul should have resisted the envious suggestions which came to his mind: he should have allowed his mind to rise above all personalities and to rejoice most sincerely, most heartily, in the praises of his young general. Doubtless it was in part his remembrances of the Lord's declaration that he should be bereft of the kingdom that made him look with jealous eyes upon David from thenceforth.

Jealousy is one of the great foes that confront every Christian. It should be slain on sight as an enemy of God and man and of every good principle; and to the extent that its presence had defiled the heart even for a moment, a cleansing of the spirit of holiness and love should be invoked. Jealousy is not only a cruel monster of itself, but its poisonous fangs are almost certain to inflict pain and trouble upon others, as well as to bring general woe and, ultimately, destruction upon those who harbor it. Jealousy is sin in thought, wickedness in thought, and is very apt to lead speedily to sin and wickedness in action, the probable result being the defilement of men. The mind, if once poisoned with jealousy, can with great difficulty ever be cleansed from it entirely, so rapidly does it bring everything within its environment to its own color and character. This sin, when it is finished, if it is allowed to grow, if it is not routed, if it is not overcome, bringeth forth death. All of the Lord's followers should be on guard against this sin, and none need it more than those whom God has greatly honored as his mouthpieces or servants in any capacity. Had David and Saul not been in such high positions, jealousy and rivalry and enmity would have been comparatively impossible.

Under the circumstances we are not surprised to read (*v. 10*) that jealous Saul was troubled with an evil spirit--an evil disposition. Perhaps the language should be understood as meaning that an evil spirit--in the sense of a fallen spirit, a demon--troubled him. We certainly know that as love, patience, joy and peace are elements of the holy Spirit--God's disposition--so a spirit of hatred and jealousy is an evil spirit or disposition "from God,"--that is, away from God, to the contrary of God. We may recognize the fact, too, that such an evil spirit as here took possession of Saul was not only a spirit far from God, or anything that he could approve, but we may even assume that, since Saul was God's anointed representative in the throne of Israel, the evil spirit could not have gained control over him without at least divine permission. As holy men of old were moved by the holy Spirit to speak and write matters of divine inditement, so men have been moved and are sometimes moved today by evil spirits to speak and to write perverse things. This is the thought contained in the word "prophesied" in this verse. Saul spoke unwise things, improper things, spoke foolishly while he had his javelin in his hand. The spirit of evil was upon him, leading him to make a motion with his javelin as though he would do violence to his faithful and humble young general who, as a friend and companion, played for him upon the harp with a view to dispelling his melancholy. The word "cast" (*v. 11*) is a stronger one than is borne out by the original, which seems simply to signify a motion--although subsequently he did actually hurl the weapon.-- 1 Sam. 19:10.

David seems to have been quite intrepid, fearless, and again and again exposed himself to Saul's power when the latter was under the influence of his melancholia. There is no mention of David's fear, for although he felt it to be propriety and duty to escape as he did, he seems to have had continually the memory of God's power for his preservation, and the fact that God had already anointed him to be the king in due time. Such faith and courage points a good lesson to all the members of the antitypical David. ⁽¹⁾ Nothing shall by any means hurt us. Things may interfere with our fleshly interests or comfort or course of affairs; but when we remember that we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, that it is as New Creatures that the Lord has promised us the Kingdom in his due time, we can realize that no outside influence can interfere with our real interests, our spiritual interests, nor hinder our attaining to the glories of the Kingdom which the Lord has promised to his faithful ones. Only our loss of confidence in the Lord and our unfaithfulness to him could separate us from his love and his promises.

Saul's jealousy of David was supported by his fear of him. Doubtless he wondered often that the fearless youth who attacked the lion should spare himself--even when he, Saul, had manifested openly his hatred and opposition toward him. He perceived that the Lord was with David and not with himself. David's presence became distasteful in the palace, and, as he could not be ignored, he was put into the army and various commissions given him in connection with the interests of the kingdom, Saul evidently hoping that through some indiscretion David would give an excuse for a turning of popular sentiment against him--perhaps hoping also that in some of the forays he would be wounded or killed. But the Spirit of the Lord, as the Apostle explains, is the "spirit of a sound mind," and in proportion as David trusted the Lord and was guided by that trust he was enabled to do his part with wisdom, winning the approval of the people and all the more the fear and awe of Saul.

This lesson to some extent illustrates the relationship between the Lord's consecrated people and the world at the present time. The worldly are in power, in influence, and yet they are conscious of the fact that divine favor is no longer with them; that a change of dispensation is about to be determined in the divine program; that the Laodicean stage of the church is to cease to be the Lord's mouthpiece, and to be spewed out; that the faithful little flock--of whom not many are wise or great or noble according to the course of this world--are to inherit the Kingdom with much power and glory. They do not indeed realize that the anointed class is in their midst and mingling with them day by day; nevertheless they feel a jealousy in respect to those who have more of the Lord's Spirit than themselves, and hate that which is purer and higher and better than they themselves possess. At times their jealousy would almost lead to murder; but they fear and hate the David class because of their closer relationship to the Lord, and because of his blessing manifested in their hearts and lives. Our Lord referred to such a condition of things in the end of the Jewish age, which was certainly a type of the end of this age. He said of the religious people of that time: "The darkness hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest its deeds be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." Thus, as a separation was made between Saul and David, and between those who loved the darkness and those who loved the light at the Lord's first advent, so a separation is rapidly going on today between those who love the light, the truth, and who are guided by the holy Spirit, and those who are of a different mind or disposition.

Our Golden Text should be borne in mind as a comforting and sustaining power to the Lord's faithful. It is in full harmony with the words of the Apostle in the New Testament, who declares that "all things are working together for good to them who love God, who are the called according to his purpose."

⁽¹⁾ Sept. 6 Manna, Psa. 91:10