

July 17

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee. Isaiah 26:3

THIS is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ--"My peace." Looking back we can

Isa 26:3-4 KJV "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. (4) Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:"

R5431 "PEACE WITH GOD AND THE PEACE OF GOD *"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Romans 5:1). *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."*--Isaiah 26:3.

TO HAVE come into a condition of Peace with God means that one has become reconciled to God. This implies a former condition of alienation, of "enmity through wicked works." Peace with God, then, means that this estrangement from God is a thing of the past, and that the estranged one is now in harmony with God--that he has turned his back upon sin and is seeking to walk in the path of righteousness. This is a step of faith, and is accompanied by reformation of life. We rejoice with all who have come thus far...

But in our second text above, the Prophet is referring to a class who have gone further than the condition of peace with God. He is speaking of a class who have come into possession of "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," as the Apostle Paul declares. This peace can come only to those who have given themselves unreservedly to God--their time, their talents, their influence, their life, their *all*. These have a peace that none others can know. This peace of God rules the heart even amid turmoil and trouble; it is an inward tranquility and rest which is the direct result of a close, personal relationship of the soul with God. It is the peace of God because it is a peace that God only can give, a peace which only His very own can fully know.

What a precious legacy our dear Lord left with His disciples when He went away from them! He said: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.) This was truly a legacy of priceless value, and it is the inheritance of the entire Church throughout the Age, even unto its close. To the world it may seem that the course of the Christian is far from peaceful, for the Lord's saints often have a stormy voyage. But if our hearts continue to be stayed on Christ by faith, and we do not let go our anchor, we shall be kept through all the tempests of life, however severely we may be tossed, however fiercely the storms may rage.

Faith can exclaim with the Prophet Isaiah, "For the Lord will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." (Isaiah 50:7)...

PEACE IN THE LORD

The Lord does not bless His people with

see that the Master preserved His peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord's faithful--that nothing shall by any means hurt His faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that

peace in an outward sense. The Master's special associates, the Apostles, were buffeted, and so all His followers have been. The Adversary does everything in his power to make their lives anything but peaceful and happy. This is true of all who walk in Jesus' footsteps. We have *fightings* without and *fightings* within, rather than *peace* without and *peace* within. We have *fightings* with our own flesh; and it is part of our victory that we "fight a good fight," a conquering fight. We are to put forth our best efforts in fighting against the world and the Adversary, against all the things that Satan would put into our minds and hearts, and we are to get the better of these things. The Lord blesses His people with strength to surmount these difficulties.

We are not to be at peace with the flesh, but always at warfare with it. Yet there is a peace in the Lord that is born of faith in Him and in His promises. He has promised us *grace sufficient*; He has promised that we shall not be overcome through having trials and difficulties that are too great for us. We are assured that we shall have the victory if we trust in His strength. This gives us a rest and peace in all our experiences.

"Through all the tumult and the strife

I hear the music ringing!

It finds an echo in my soul;

How can I keep from singing?"

..."This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." This faith is built upon the testimony of God's Word... We learn to *know* our Father through His Word (the only way we can know Him), we come to have confidence in Him...

PEACE FOUNDED UPON FAITH

This peace of God is not dependent upon the smile of fortune, nor upon physical health, nor upon a host of friends. But it is a peace which abides even when health fails, or poverty comes in, or death steals from us the treasures of our hearts. It is a peace which none of the changes and vicissitudes of this life can take from us, and which enemies are powerless to touch."

R5878 "QUIETNESS IN THE MIDST OF STORMS *"When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"*--Job 34:29...

KEPT IN PERFECT PEACE

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isaiah 26:3.) This thought is very precious to us as New Creatures. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding," is to rule and keep our minds and hearts. (Philippians 4:7.) We are to count the things of the present life as not worthy of comparison with the glories of eternity. And so the Apostle says, "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes. Z. '99-95 R2456:6

(2Corinthians 4:17,18.) When our minds are stayed on the Lord, and we take the proper view of our experiences, we can sing with the poet:

"No storm can shake our inmost calm,
While to this Refuge clinging."

We have peace, no matter what the outward conditions may be. The trials and the difficulties of life come to the Lord's people commingled with joys--the rain and storm, then the sunshine. They enjoy all righteous pleasures that are in harmony with their consecration. They learn to cultivate patience in trial, knowing that patience works out experience, and experience works out more and more that hope which maketh not ashamed.--Romans 5:3-5.

So, then, it is to the Christian that our text brings the assurance that when God gives quietness, none can make trouble. They "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake," said the Master, but *then* we are to "rejoice and be exceeding glad." "Let not your heart be troubled." (Matthew 5:11; John 14:1.) We think our text very precious when viewed from our standpoint.

TROUBLE NECESSARY TO OUR PROVING

Our Heavenly Father designs that various kinds of trouble shall come upon us, that these may develop and prove our characters. It is a part of the Divine Plan to permit us to have experiences of affliction. (Psalm 119:67,71,75; 34:19,20.) So when we see God's people in trouble or trial today we are not to say that God is against them. We are each to demonstrate our willingness to suffer according to His will, and often to suffer unjustly. Our Lord set us an example of cheerful, patient submission to God's will. We are to walk in His footsteps. And we have the example of the Apostles, when trials and difficulties and persecutions came upon them; and the example of other saints all down the Age.

Trouble is not necessarily a sign of the disfavor of God. On the contrary, we know that "many are the afflictions of the righteous," and that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The *Truth* will cost them something. *Faithfulness to the Lord* will cost them much. As the Apostle says, "If ye be without chastisement [discipline, training], then are ye bastards and not sons." (Hebrews 2:8.) If God gives peace of heart, who can upset the one who is thus in harmony with God, in whom this peace of heart is ruling? This, then, is the greatest blessing of all. And He grants this peace to those who are faithfully striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We have a Refuge which none but His own can know. No harm can reach us within this Shelter; no storm can shake us from our moorings, for we are securely anchored to the Rock of Ages. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to the called according to His Purpose." (Romans 8:28.) And as Job's *after*

blessings far outweighed his brief trials, so it will be with the Lord's saints today.

"What though my joys and comfort die!
 The Lord, my Savior, liveth;
 What though the darkness gather round!
 Songs in the night He giveth.
 No storm can shake my inmost calm,
 While to that Refuge clinging;
 Since Christ is Lord of Heaven and earth,
 How can I keep from singing?"

(2 Pet 1:2-4 KJV) "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, (3) According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: (4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

R1531 "GRACE AND PEACE MULTIPLIED —2 PET. 1:1-4..."

The knowledge of the truth is the sanctifying power, the peace-and-joy-imparting power, and is the precious evidence of divine grace or favor. Those who expect to be sanctified without this divinely provided agency and who expect to enjoy abiding peace without it, make a great mistake. Their peace may last while the sun of prosperity shines...but soon such flimsy structures must fall, and the transient joy end in bitter disappointment—in a loss of both joy and peace and, measurably at least, of the realization of the divine favor.

But such disappointments are never realized by those whose peace has its fountain in the perennial springs of God's eternal truth; for, the Apostle says, he "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." But this knowledge of God is not only an intellectual knowledge of his great and loving plan: it includes also a personal acquaintance with God, a heart to heart communion and fellowship with him—an established sympathy of love and common interest and co-operation. Such a knowledge or acquaintance with God is gained through the study of his precious word with reverence and diligence, through the personal application of the principles of that word in every day life and through secret prayer and communion with God...

"If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

Thus it is our privilege to know God; but only those who have had the blessed experience can appreciate how greatly the grace and peace of God can be multiplied to us through the knowledge of him thus acquired. As we draw near to him in prayer and communion and the study of his precious Word, we are made to understand the wealth of the divine love and favor toward us... If we are faithful to our covenant of entire consecration to God, we shall be made like him and see him as he is; that we may behold the King in his beauty; and that through us in the ages to come God will manifest the exceeding riches of his grace...

In humble thankfulness let us ponder these precious promises more and more as

in secret we bow at the throne of the heavenly grace; and here let the holy spirit of God apply the instruction to our hearts, and so may we be filled with the spirit, and grace and peace be multiplied unto us."

Psa 91:4) "*He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*"

R3331 "*Verse 4* "...His truth shall be thy shield and buckler"—thy protection. 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 the 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."

(Psa 119:111 KJV) "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart."

R5437-5438 "The Almighty here represents Himself as a mother-bird. The patience of the mother-bird with her young is remarkable, and she would sacrifice her own life for her little nestlings. So the Lord represents that He is ready to do anything for the protection of His own, who are under His care..."

We might exercise a particularity of inspection of our text, and say that the word *feathers* might carry a little further thought than the word *wings*. "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." The soft, downy feathers under the mother-hen's wings serve to keep the little chicks warm and to shield and hide them from enemies that would attack them. Not only the strong sheltering wings, but also the feathers of the hen-mother's breast are used to protect her young. We have seen alarm on the part of a mother-hen at the approach of danger, and heard her cluck to her little ones. Then they would run to her, nestle under her wings, and seem perfectly satisfied and free from fear in their place of safety. Presently you would see the little heads or eyes peeping out; but the chicks felt perfectly secure.

We are, however, to remember that the promise that God will make all things work together for our good is a promise to the New Creature, not to the old creature. Oftentimes the interests of the New Creature and of the old creature are diverse. God has an interest in all that concerns us, but He overrules our temporal affairs for our best spiritual interests. If we were too prosperous, it might not be of advantage to us as New Creatures.

Our temporal affairs may be permitted to go awry. We are not wise enough to know what is for our own best interests as New Creatures, and what would help us the most in our fight against the world, the flesh and the Devil. We are, therefore, to flee to the Lord and accept whatever experiences may come, as those which will be best for us; and we are to seek to get the designed lessons of faith and obedience from them."

R1787 "COME, MY PEOPLE"

"*Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.*"—Isaiah 26:20...

Through his prophet, taking the standpoint of the end of this age, he is forewarning us of a great time of trouble which is just imminent (*verses 5,6,21*)—"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation," when the whole present order of things, civil, social and religious, shall be swept with the besom of destruction. Yet in the midst of it all he would have his people in rest and peace in him, as saith the prophet, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."—*Verses 3,4.*

And again the Lord had another of his prophets put into our mouths those beautiful words of trust and confidence—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth [the present social order] be removed, and though the mountains [governments] be carried into the midst of the sea [overthrown by the turbulent sea of worldwide anarchy]; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swellings thereof..."

The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." (Psa. 46.) Surely, "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."—Psa. 103:13.

But while appreciating very gratefully this special love and care for us as his people, in the comfort, encouragement and protection afforded us by our Heavenly Father in the midst of the world's great tribulation, we would come far short of having his spirit if we should regard the matter with self-complacency, forgetful of his great love for the whole world also, which, veiled behind the clouds of his righteous indignation against their sins, in wisdom strikes the heavy blow which will shatter all their idols and humble their pride in the dust, that so the sore wounds of his wrath may prepare for their everlasting healing. If God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish [eternally], but have everlasting life," he loves them still, and it is his love that wields the rod for their correction...

But who are those whom the Lord is pleased to designate by the endearing name, "My people?" Does this class include every one upon whom his name is named? No, for that would include a great number of false professors. As the Psalmist expresses it, it includes all those who have made a covenant with God by sacrifice (Psa. 50:5)—all the consecrated and faithful children of God, however young or weak they may be, whose hearts are fixed firmly and resolutely to be true loyal and obedient children by his assisting grace.

To be numbered among the people of God is a very great privilege; but it means much more than many seem to understand—much more both on their part, and on God's part... They have become sons and heirs of God through Christ, that they have fully consecrated themselves to God to follow in the footsteps of his dear Son, that they have renounced the vain pomp and glory of the world and have solemnly covenanted to live apart from its spirit, ambitions, hopes and aims; and not only so, but that, in pursuance of that covenant, they are striving daily to be faithful, and meekly to

take up their cross and follow their leader and head, Christ Jesus.

On God's part it signifies the fulfilment of all his gracious promises to such through Christ, both for the life that now is, and for that which is to come. It signifies that in the present life we have his fatherly love, care, discipline, counsel, teaching, protection and encouragement to the end, and that afterwards we shall be received into his glorious presence and everlasting rest and joy and peace. Oh, how blessed to be the people of God! even in the present life the reward of his favor is beyond computation. Through all the age God has permitted his people to be scattered as sheep in the midst of wolves, and as wheat in the midst of tares; but now the harvest of the age is come, and their gathering together unto him is due. They have been growing in the midst of that great organization, the nominal Christian church, which God calls Babylon (confusion)... God is about to pour his indignation, which will involve the whole world with it; but before doing so, he forewarns his people to come out of her (Babylon), that they be not partakers of her sins, and that they receive not of her plagues. (Rev. 18:4.) But while calling them thus to come out of Babylon, he calls them also to come into another place, or condition rather—"Enter thou *into thy chambers* and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself...until the indignation be overpast."

The place of hiding is the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty. (Psa. 91:1-9.) This secret place of the Most High, Beloved, is the place of intimate communion and fellowship with God, through the blessed privilege of prayer and through faith in his precious Word and his promised providential care.

"When all around our souls give way,
He then is all our hope and stay."

Oh, how precious is this hiding place! What rest and refreshment we find in the midst of the commotion that is even now bestirring the whole world, but especially the nations of Christendom—rest from the pride and folly of man in their abortive efforts to re-

adjust the present unsatisfactory social order; and rest from the strife of tongues in an equally vain attempt to evolve the clear principles of truth and righteousness from the present confusion of human traditions. (Psa. 31:20.) Here we find rest, peace, light and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away...

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?... Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident... In time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me upon a rock... When my father and my mother [my most trusted human friends] forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want..."

"Hearken unto me, *ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law*; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings... I have put *my words* in thy mouth, and I have *covered thee in the shadow of mine hand*, that I may plant the heavens [establish the new heavens], and lay the foundations of the earth [the new earth], and say unto Zion [the people tried and proved by these afflictions to be the worthy heirs of the new Kingdom—the new heavens and earth], Thou art *my people*."—Isa. 51:7,12,13,16...

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," and "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another." Thus every individual in Christ is reminded of his own personal responsibility in matters of faith and conduct. Not until he has proved what is truth and righteousness, accepting the Word of God as the only standard of authority, is it proper to take a resolute stand; but, having proved "what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," nothing should be able to unsettle his faith or turn him from the line of duty, and no fear of man should bring him again into the snare of bondage to superstition or human

traditions or opinions of others. If each individual prove his own work—his faith in the doctrines and his conduct in life—by the square and compass of God's Word, "then shall he have rejoicing in himself and not in another"—*i.e.*, his faith, no matter through what privileged human agent or agency it may have been received, will be so established by the Word of the Lord that it will be *his own*, and in no sense dependent upon another.

It was the neglect of this principle, of the right and duty of the individual judgment in proving all things by the inspired Word, that brought upon the Church the snare of the great apostacy, which set up infamous popes to dictate in matters of faith and conduct and subvert the consciences of men. Let us remember the command, "Sanctify *the Lord of hosts himself*, and let *him* be your fear, and let *him* be your dread." Let us fear and dread to displease him; let us see to it that we know and love righteousness and that we have the law of God, not in our heads only, but also in our hearts, for so shall we ever find acceptance with him; and to such, who in faith continually rely upon the Lord, who go forth, strong in the strength which he supplies through faith, to do valiant service for truth and righteousness, comes also the blessed assurance, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

...While the storm of trouble that is to engulf the whole world will affect all men, both individually and collectively, the Lord's people, who seek only to draw yet closer to him, entering more fully into the secret place of communion and fellowship and rest in him, and shutting the doors of faith about them, will there be safely hidden from the alarm and fear and trembling that will take hold upon all other classes...

"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Oh blessed invitation! Lord, we will trust in the covert of thy wings."

R2455 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2008)

"HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER"

--APRIL 30.--JOHN 14:15-27--

CONTINUING his discourse to his troubled disciples at the time of his instituting the Memorial of his own death, our Lord not only promised to come again and receive them to himself in due time, but additionally he promised the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, during the interim of his absence. Since he was about to lay down the human nature he could no longer be with them as the man Christ Jesus—in his resurrection he would become again a spirit being like unto the Father, and could no more be seen by his disciples than the Father could be seen by them, until the time would come when the entire Church, complete, would be "changed," made "like him" (and like the Father) and see him, and be with him, and share his glory. His resurrection "change" made necessary either the leaving of his disciples alone, without any help or aid during the Gospel age, or else that help be granted them in some other manner. The few occasions on which our Lord appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, for a few moments each, were miraculous manifestations, simply for the purpose of assuring them that he was no longer dead, and that having risen from the dead he was no longer controlled by human conditions. Hence, as a part of the lesson, the flesh bodies in which he manifested himself appeared miraculously and disappeared likewise—he came and went as the wind.--John 3:8; Luke 24:26,31; Acts 1:3,4.

The holy spirit would be another Comforter, but the comfort would be of the same kind. Indeed, our word "comfort" does not properly represent the thought of the text, which rather is, to strengthen, to sustain: the holy spirit would not be merely a consoler of woes, a soother of fears, in the sense of our word comfort, but it would quicken their understandings, strengthen their zeal, and energize them for doing and enduring such things as divine providence might permit to come upon them for their correction in righteousness, and in order to make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The holy spirit or holy influence that should come to the Church and abide with it through the age, to supervise and direct in the interest of the faithful, was to be a representative of both the Father and the Son. Indeed, the thought that the holy spirit is the representative of the Lord Jesus with the Church is so strongly put that sometimes the Lord himself and his spirit or influence are spoken of interchangeably; as for instance, when he said to them, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." (Matt. 28:20.) And again, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you [through the holy spirit]." And again, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I [through the holy spirit] in you, ...and I will manifest myself to him [through the holy spir-

it]...And we [the Father and the Son] will come unto him, and make our abode with him [through the holy spirit].--Vss. 18,20,23.

Thus it is that those who receive the holy spirit, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, the spirit of the Father, the spirit of Christ, are enabled to *see* Jesus, and have a new life begun in them. (Vs. 19.) They *see* with the eyes of their understanding, and do not walk in darkness. They *hear* the voice of the Lord, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." They *taste* the good Word of God, and realize that he is very gracious. They *feel* the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, producing in them love for the brethren and all the good fruits of the spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love.--Isa. 30:21; 1 Pet. 2:3; Rom. 5:5; Col. 3:12,13.

These experiences, however, are promised conditionally --they are not promised to those who have never heard of the grace of God, but to those who have heard, to "as many as the Lord our God shall call," who, hearing his commandments, are moved by responsive love to do them. Such have the Father's love, such have the love of the Son, and such shall have the fellowship both of the Father and the Son through the medium or channel of the holy spirit. This is declared in the *15th and 16th verses*, and again in the *21st, 23d and 24th*. Not only are faith and obedience of the heart necessary, before any can come into the spirit-begotten condition, but a continuance and growth in faith and in obedience are necessary in order to a continuance and growth in the spirit of holiness, or the holy spirit, the spirit of fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

It is one thing to have a begetting of the spirit, and quite another matter to attain to that condition urged by the Apostle, saying, "Be ye *filled* with the spirit." (Eph. 5:18.) ^{1}The measure of our filling will correspond with the measure of our emptying of the spirit of selfwill, and filling with the spirit of faith and obedience. And altho the obedience cannot do otherwise than manifest itself in the daily life, nevertheless it is the obedience of the *intention*, of the *will*, of the *heart*, that the Lord regards in his consecrated people, and not merely the control of the earthen vessel. Hence, some whose hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord may be pleasing to him, while not the most pleasing to some of those with whom they come in contact; while others, "highly esteemed amongst men" because of outward moralities, may be an "abomination" in the sight of God, because of coldness or dishonesty of heart. (Luke 16:15.) Nevertheless, he that hath the new hope in him, and the new spirit, will seek to purify himself, not only in his thoughts, but also in his words and deeds and all his affairs, inward and outward.-- 1 John 3:3.

It should not be overlooked that, altho the holy spirit, like all other favors, is of the Father, it, like all others of his gifts, comes to us through the Son, and not by any direct relationship between the Father and us. As we saw in our previous lesson that our prayers addressed to the Father are to be answered by the Son, -- "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it;"--so we see in this lesson that the gift of the holy spirit comes to us, not because of any direct relationship between the Father and us, but at the instance of our Lord Jesus. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter"--at my request and my account the Father will do this for you. (Vs. 16.) The same thought is again expressed in vs. 26, "The holy spirit whom the Father will send in my name."

The lesson to us here is, that our only standing before the Father as yet is a *reckoned one*--in Christ, as members of his body,--our Lord Jesus represents the Father to us and represents us to the Father. The comfort and strength of the holy spirit imparted to us is the Father's, the spirit of truth, all of which emanates from the Father: it reaches us not directly, but only through our Lord and Head, Jesus. In a word, we have no standing whatever with the Father, and will not have any, until by his grace, through our Lord Jesus, we shall have been "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," and by the "change" of the first resurrection shall be perfected in his likeness, which is the divine likeness: then and thereafter,

being actually perfect, and not merely reckonedly perfect, we may have an individual standing with the Father, but not before.

Hence it is that if any one lose his relationship to Christ through the loss of his faith in the precious blood, or through the loss of the holy spirit, through wilful sin, such an one falls out of the protection, the care, the covering of Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant,--and falls into the hands of the living God, --which means a judgment according to facts and works; and to all imperfect creatures this means death. (Heb. 10:31.) Hence also the exhortation of the Scriptures, that we abide in him, that we remain under the blood of sprinkling, that we abide in his love.-- John 15:4,6,10; 1 John 2:24-29.

Our Lord pointedly declares that he who does not seek to please him by conforming to his instructions, thereby manifests that he does not love him. (Vss. 23,24.) Surely there can be no better test of love than devotion, and no better test of devotion than obedience. Our enlightened consciences render hearty assent to the Master's words, and with the Apostle we exclaim, "The love of Christ constraineth us, for we thus judge that, if one died for all, then all were dead, and that he died for all, that they who live [justified and begotten to newness of life] should henceforth not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again." --2 Cor. 5:14,15.

The Master pointed out to us distinctly that in keeping his sayings we are not merely pleasing and obeying him, but that he is in all this matter the mouthpiece of Jehovah, the Father, and consequently that in pleasing and obeying him we are pleasing and obeying the Father. This much he could tell them while still with them, but he had many things that he desired to make known to them, and that were necessary for them to know, but that they could not receive as yet, because the holy spirit had not yet come upon them, and could not until after the ransom sacrifice had been made at Calvary and offered in the Holy of Holies, after he ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us.--John 7:39; Heb. 9:24.

Our Lord's assurance is that this Comforter or strengthener, the holy spirit of the Father, sent on account of and at the instance of Jesus our Redeemer, Mediator and Head, will be our instructor--using various instrumentalities for bringing the instruction to us -- the Word of truth, the writings of the apostles, and the various helps and agencies which the Lord, through the holy spirit, has and shall from time to time, as needed, provide to his flock.

How beautiful, how consoling to their troubled hearts, and how refreshing to ours, is the legacy of love and peace left to us by our dear Redeemer, as expressed in the *27th verse*! "Peace I leave with you, *my peace* I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This peace and joy which surpasseth human understanding, was not given to the world, nor is it given to the nominal Christian professor, nor to the formalist and ritualist, however zealous they may be. It is intended for and can be had only by those who receive riches of grace through the holy spirit--those who by obedience to the truth and its spirit grow up into Christ their living Head in all things. Such have peace, deep and abiding, and ever increasing proportionately as they come to comprehend with all saints through faith and obedience the riches of divine grace--the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God.

^{2}This is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference and carelessness, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ--"my peace." Looking back we can see that the Master preserved his peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord's faithful--that nothing shall be any means hurt his faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes.

^{1} Jul. 16 Manna, Eph. 5:18

^{2} Jul. 17 Manna, Isa. 26:3