

May 30

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation. Romans 12:12

HERE is an important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently anticipate the victory in the

(Rom 12:11-12 KJV) "Fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; (12) Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;"

R2213 *"Fervent in spirit."*...If as stewards of divine mercy and truth we are slothful, it is because we are cool in our love to the Lord; hence the Apostle's instruction that we should be hot, fervent in spirit. The Greek word here translated "fervent" signifies to be hot, to boil... Let all who have received the Lord's spirit take heed lest they get into a lukewarm condition and lose the Lord's favor: let them cultivate rather a growing appreciation of the mercies of God, which growing appreciation as fuel will add fervency to our love and zeal for his truth, and for purity in our own hearts, and for service to others."

R4871 "Whatever we do we should do fervently.... To those who are the Lord's consecrated people it is the greatest privilege imaginable to serve the Lord. The Lord is looking to see to what extent we are willing to sacrifice earthly things, earthly approval, that we may have His approval and hear His "Well done!"

Let all who would run the race successfully look well to their zeal and activity in the Lord's work. If we bury our one or many talents under a weight of worldly cares and encumbrances which might be avoided or set aside; if we bury them under worldly ambitions for either self or family...then, as unfaithful servants, we shall sooner or later go into "outer darkness."

R2213 *"Rejoice in hope."* We are not to expect to have much in the present life to rejoice in, if we are faithful to our "calling;" because, "through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom." Our rejoicing is to be in *hope*--looking into the future. The eye of faith is to see what the natural eye cannot see, the crown of life and all the glorious things "which God hath in *reservation* for them that love him [fervently]." And here is the advantage of doctrinal knowledge: it inspires hope; it gives a foundation for hope."

R1442 "This high calling is not salvation at all, but a gracious favor of God beyond the favor of salvation; or, as John expresses it (John 1:16.--See Emphatic Diaglott), it is grace upon grace, favor upon favor."

R1262 "FAVOR UPON FAVOR"

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom, also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."--Rom. 5:1,2...

This high calling is a call to joint-heirship with Christ as his bride, to be partakers of his divine nature, to share his likeness, and glory, and honor, and to be associated as co-workers together with him in his high office, when, at the appointed time, his Kingdom shall come -- even to sit with him in his throne as kings and priests unto God.

strength of the great Captain of his Salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he

See Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 3:21; 1:6.

The human mind staggers in its endeavor to comprehend such a height of glory; yet those whose hearts are deeply in love with the Lord can appreciate the exceeding favor of the invitation to be the beloved bride of Christ, to be made like him and to be in his glorious presence forever. Amazing grace! and the wonder grows when we reflect upon the high exaltation of Christ, even beyond the glory which he had with the Father before the world was--a glory of person which is "the express image of the Father's person" (Heb. 1:3), a glory of wealth which places the whole universe at his feet as "the Heir of all things" (Heb. 1:2), a glory of power, of "all power in heaven and on earth," a glory of office, too, which is second only to that of Jehovah, the great Emperor of the Universe (1 Cor. 15:27,28), and a glory of character which shines with all the luster of unsullied purity.

To aspire to such a height of glory without invitation would indeed be the height of presumption and folly. But when invited to it, it is our privilege to accept the favor with thanksgiving and humble endeavor to fulfill the conditions of the call. This is the high privilege of the saints of the Gospel age; but strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto it, and *few* there be that find it.--Matt. 7:14."

R2213 *"Patient in tribulation."* Our word tribulation is derived from the Latin *tribulum*, the name of a roller or threshing machine used in olden times...It is necessary that each grain shall pass through the tribulation necessary to separate those qualities which, until separated, render us unfit for the future service to which we are called of the Lord. In proportion as we are able to realize our own imperfections, and the perfect will of God concerning us, we will be enabled to bear patiently, and even with a certain kind of rejoicing, all the tribulations which the Master shall see best to let come upon us. "We glory in tribulations also."

R614 "We should not expect to conquer circumstances without experiencing suffering, deprivation, and loss of earthly things; often we shall be wounded, and sometimes partially defeated and greatly discouraged. But if our purpose is founded in the truth, don't let us be deceived into the idea that the providence of God is against us, but let us look to the Captain for direction as to how we may master the situation. While thus bearing in mind the policy and deceptive arts of our great opposer, we also remember the comforting assurances that "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord," and that "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." Psa. 37:23,24."

R5802 "Sorrow and griefs may, and perhaps often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord will be our Stay and Strength in every experience which He permits. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and

allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward. Z. '95-20 R1759:3

trouble has never yet learned the joy and preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow and grief, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws especially near to us."

R2213 *"Instant in prayer."* No advice that the Apostle could give to the class addressed could be more vitally important than this. "Ah, whither could we flee for aid when tempted, desolate, dismayed? Or how the host of sin defeat had suffering saints no mercy-seat..."

People may be fervent in serving schemes or plans of their own, or human systems and theories, and have little desire for prayer; but those who serve the Lord and his truth from a hot, fervent heart, will so realize their imperfection and their own inability in the divine service, that they will desire and will continually seek the Master's guidance and direction with reference to the service they are rendering to him."

R5803 "It is when continued trust in the Lord and His many responsive providences in our lives have ripened into precious personal acquaintance and intimacy that we learn to delight in Him. Yes, it is when heart answers to heart, when pleading prayer brings recognized answers of peace, when the Divine love and care have been clearly seen in the guidance of our way, that we can recognize the abiding presence with us of the Father and the Son. Then, however dark may be our way, however severe may be the storm that rages about us...though cast down, we are not destroyed... We know our Father's hand is ever at the helm, that His love and care are sure and unfailing..."

Their fervent prayers avail much, and in the Lord's good time their righteousness, however much it may now be misunderstood, misrepresented and evil-spoken of, shall be brought forth as the light--clear, cloudless and widely manifest; and their judgment, the justice and righteousness of their course and of their hearts, shall be brought forth as the noonday. Even while we remain here as aliens and foreigners in the enemy's land, we shall be fed, nourished, temporally and spiritually, and shall rejoice and be glad in the "house of our pilgrimage." Precious indeed are the promises of God... His saints of the past and of the present all bear ample testimony to their fulfillment."

R590 "Walk with him and talk with him hour by hour, and in the freedom you have with a personal friend... Speak to him of all that you do, holding nothing back..."

R1865 "Through all the list of earth's trials and cares, its wants and its woes, its bereavements and disappointments and calamities and distresses, its failures and shortcomings and sins and mistakes, we may take them all to the Lord in prayer and receive that strength and sympathy and consolation and help we so much need. Let us live in the presence of the Father and the Son who have promised to abide with us. It will

sweeten our days and comfort our nights and ease our burdens and lighten our cares and brighten our hopes, and, in a word, it

will lift us up above the world into a higher and purer atmosphere. Such is the will of heaven concerning us: let us appreciate and

avail ourselves of the privilege. What a blessed privilege, dear fellow-disciples of the Lord, is ours, to be instant in prayer..."

R1759 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

THE MINISTRY OF EVIL

--PSA. 130--

THE life of every human being has its lights and shadows, its seasons of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up the warp and woof of experience, and the web of character that flows from the active loom of life will be fine and beautiful, or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual appropriates and weaves into it the threads of experience. In every life, under the present reign of sin and evil, the somber shades predominate; and to such an extent that the Scriptures aptly describe humanity in its present condition as a "groaning creation." Nor is the Christian exempt from these conditions that are upon the whole world; for "we also groan within ourselves, waiting for deliverance." --Rom. 8:22,23.

But while we are waiting for the deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive and use them should be a matter of deepest concern to us; for, according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or adversity and trial bears to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increase or friends multiply, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in earthly things; but, on the other hand, when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment are felt, when riches fail, and friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural temptation is to despondency and despair.

Just ⁽¹⁾here is an important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently claim and anticipate the victory in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward.

Sorrows indeed may, and often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord is our helper in all these things. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow, when we draw near to the Lord, that he draws specially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when, in deep affliction, he cried to the Lord and reasoned of his righteousness, saying, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications." Feeling his own shortcomings, and longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying the bountiful provisions of the divine plan of salvation through Christ, he adds, "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared [reverenced]"

How blessed are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities and of its inability to measure up to the perfect law of righteousness. When the heart is true and loyal, God does not mark our infirmities in a record against us. They are not imputed to us, but are freely forgiven through Christ in whose merit we trust and whose righteousness is our glorious dress,--arrayed in which, we may come with humble boldness, even into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If God thus ignores the infirmities of our flesh and receives and communes with us as new creatures in Christ, his children should also so regard one another, considering not, and charging not against each other, the infirmities of the flesh, which all humbly confess and by the grace of God strive daily to overcome. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are cultivated, indulged and justified that the errors may be continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily "judge ourselves," the Lord will judge and chasten us.-- 1 Cor. 11:31,32.

"I wait for the Lord," the Psalmist continues, "my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." How necessary is this patient *waiting* for the Lord! In the midst of cares, perplexities, difficulties

and infirmities we may remember that all the jarring discords of life are working together for good to them that love the Lord, to the called according to his purpose. But for the consummation of this purpose of God toward us we must "wait," and, while waiting patiently, endure hardness as good soldiers. "Trust in the Lord, and wait *patiently* for him, and he will bring it to pass." ⁽²⁾Time is an important element in all God's plans: we are not, therefore, to be disappointed when the test of endurance is applied while the blessings we crave tarry long. God took time to frame the world and to fit it for human habitation; time (6000 years) to give the world its necessary experience with evil; time (4000 years) to prepare for the advent of Christ as the world's Redeemer; time (2000 years) for the preparation of the Church to share in his glorious reign; and time must be allowed for the shaping and adjusting of the individual affairs of all his people. God has not forgotten when the answers to our prayers seem to tarry long. He who heeds the sparrow's fall and numbers the very hairs of our heads is not indifferent to the faintest call or the smallest necessity of his humblest child.

O, how blessed is the realization of such care over us.

"MORE THAN THEY THAT WAIT FOR THE MORNING"

"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that wait for the Morning.--I say *more* than they that wait for the Morning."

The "brethren," are not in darkness respecting the dawn of the Millennial Morning, because taught there of by the Comforter (See 1 Thes. 5:4), and because to their eyes of faith the Day Star (the Day-bringer--Christ) has already appeared, and they rejoice in the inspired testimony that although "weeping may endure for the night [of sin's predominance] joy cometh in the Morning" of the great day of the Lord. And as the dawn of the new day, "the day of Christ," becomes more and more distinct, many besides the "brethren" can and do see signs that "the night is far spent and the day is at hand;" and by and by, notwithstanding the dark clouds and terrible storm of trouble that will temporarily hide the signs of morning from them, all the world--even the still sleeping nominal church--will awake to the fact that "The morn at last is breaking."

But many of those who are now watching for the Morning from the standpoint of Socialism, Nationalism, etc., are not waiting for the Lord--in fact, they do not know the Lord, his character and his Kingdom having been so sadly misrepresented by those who claimed to be his mouthpieces. They rejoice in the Morning, because it ushers in the golden age of human equality, general education, decreased toil, and increased privileges, comforts and luxuries. "God is not in all their thoughts," when they look for the Morning. Looking from a more or less selfish standpoint, and unguided by the divine revelation--for no man knoweth the mind of God save he who has the spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:11,12) --they fail to see the real object and chief characteristic of the coming age of blessing, and are merely championing the interests of the masses as against the present special advantages of the wealthy. They see not the greatest blessings of the dawning day;--that with earthly comforts and privileges it will bring the great blessing of a trial for everlasting life;--that it will be the world's Judgment Day, to determine who, under those favorable conditions, will develop characters in harmony with God's character.

But with the "brethren" it is different. While they appreciate the coming earthly blessings none the less, but the more intelligently, the Lord, his character and the work which will be accomplished for men by the great Physician --as Prophet, Priest and King--these more weighty and more valuable considerations outweigh by far the earthly favors which will attend his Kingdom's rule. Yes, the "brethren" wait for the Lord himself, longing to see the King in his beauty--the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. Yes, truly *our* souls "wait for the Lord *more* than they that wait for the Morning."

Then let all the Israel of God hope in the Lord (*verses 7,8*), for with the Lord there is mercy; mercy not only in dealing with our infirmities, but also in shielding from overwhelming trials and in granting grace to help in every time of need,--to those who abide in the Vine by faith and obedience. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

⁽¹⁾ May 30 Manna, Rom. 12:12

⁽²⁾ Jan. 4 Manna, Psa. 27:14