

causes or effects, is, I think, *persecutions*; but tribulation in the scriptural sense is an inward conflict incident upon spiritual causes and effects: it works patience and results in hope, and the more abundant than heretofore love of God shed abroad in the heart. I think its power must be driven, for like faith, hope and love it draws to God as its centre of gravity (if I may so illustrate,) none of these can rest upon or find a place on earth; they repulse and are repulsed. They are irresistibly attracted and drawn to Jesus. They come from and go back to God. That peculiar, indescribable distress and anguish of soul, that knows no outward or earthly cause (and which I distinguish as tribulation,) that only knows its anguish and bitterness and thirst for the living God; desires nor seeks anything of earth, the *living God* is its centre. This tribulation results in hope, and if we hope we patiently "wait all the day." "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." Whoever can say this knows a spiritual refining process, begun in tribulation; and however terrible the process in beginning, yet when ended, like the "man that had seen affliction by the rod of God's wrath," and who had been "compassed by gall and travail" (Sam. 3:25,) can say "it is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Let all who have been in the furnace "rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." We wait for we scarcely know what, but we feel that to awake in His likeness will satisfy. None know "O God beside thee, what He hath prepared for them that waiteth for him." (Isaiah 24:4.) We know His promises are exceeding great and precious, and we wait all the day of this life.

There is something beautiful, glorious and sublime beyond expression in these five first verses (I read not the balance,) and in fact all the Psalms. David represented Christ, and there is not a sentence in the Psalms but what is witnessed by Christ as the *Head or Body*. When Christ was actually in the flesh, he responded to the words of David, and "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" now actually in the flesh still responds. Truly "God was manifest in the flesh," and is still manifest in the flesh. Oh His grace, how boundless in richness and fullness, and His love passes knowledge! There is a

life in this earth to-day that knows a fountain head—a hiding place in God! There are desires in earth to-day that are lifted to God in the silent strength and power of the "life of Jesus made manifest in our body" (not *bodies*.) The life thus breathing to God is the life of Christ lifting our soul up to God. The faith that says "thou art the God of my salvation," is "the faith of the Son of God." And the sufferings—oh how shall I express it!—there is a sad sacredness in it—there are sorrowing tears of joy mixed with it—is it possible that sufferings that weighs so low that the soul in desire must be *lifted up* to God, has any part of Christ in them? "If we be dead with Christ" we have a *oneness* and a fellowship in his death.

"If we be risen with Christ" we have a oneness and fellowship in his life, and if we suffer with him we "know him in the fellowship of his sufferings;" that is, if we have attained to this knowledge. We may breathe his very life and not "know him in the power of his resurrection," and also suffer with him and not "know him in the fellowship of his sufferings." If we be dead with Christ we were virtually recognized in the "one offering for sin," and that, as the price of redemption, "is finished." But eternal life is a gift, and sufferings a test or proof of its application. Neither of these last have *actually* accomplished their ends, nor will they till the topmost stone is laid, crying grace, grace unto it, else Jesus would not occupy the mediatorial throne; else the eternal Spirit of life in Christ Jesus given to the saints in time on earth, would not lift their souls up to God in intercessions with groanings which cannot be uttered. Ah how consoling the thought that these silent unutterable desires are as well pleasing to God as the offering of the body of Christ, for this is also the offering of the body of Christ; for, as I said, the manifestation of the life of Christ is not yet actually accomplished to its full end. And the sufferings of Christ are not yet completed. And the same flesh that God is made manifest in, or that receives the gift of eternal life in Christ, will the sufferings of Christ abound in, and will "fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ," "always bearing about in the body the dying of our Lord Jesus that the *life* also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

(See Col. 1:24, 2 Cor. 1:5, Phil. 3:10, Gal. 6:17.)

Is there not something glorious and sublime beyond expression in the thought of the close relation we bear to Christ (if we be His?) we were with Him in eternity—in His sufferings in the flesh—on Mount Olive—on the cross—in the grave—in the resurrection, and are with Him in the heavens. And He is with us, even when we lift our souls to God. He lifted up His soul to God when in the flesh, when we were with Him as the weight that sunk Him down to die. He is with us in the flesh as the power and spirit upon which we arise up and live. How near we are to Christ when in spirit we utter the prayers of David! How near we are to Christ when with one of His children! Do we realize being at the feet of Jesus when at the feet of one of these? Do we realize subjection to Christ when subject one to another? Do we realize the fact that in refusing to administer to the necessities of the saints we refuse Christ, as if in person? Do we realize the fact that in offending one of His little ones we "sin against Christ?" I must stop, but my soul goes out, as it were, with the subject and seeks communion and companionship. Shall it seek in vain?

My dear sister, this letter has taken quite an unexpected turn. When I began it was with a heavy heart, and a certain premeditated letter. I lost them both. I intended to notice some delightful points in yours. I bear testimony to their beauty and truth, at least. Will you accept this very imperfect letter, my beloved sister, as a feeble return for yours? I know nothing better ever was penned by a mortal than the *subject* I have tried to present, but my imperfections, I fear, have rather marred it. I would like to hear from you on the same. Let me hear from you very soon.

When you lift up your soul to God in prayer remember one who feels less than her "little sister," and who subscribes herself your unworthy sister (I hope) in Christ.

R. A. PHILLIPS.

Election redounds to the glory of God's grace, as it secures the salvation of a multitude, which no man can number. It claims no merit of its own, but gives all the glory to God. From the denial of this doctrine is always derived the awful fear of being finally cast away, for if

Election be not true, however assured the believer may be at the time his sins are forgiven, he cannot say that to-morrow he will not be engulfed in bottomless perdition.—How a rational being with such a contingency before him, can be otherwise than perfectly miserable, I cannot see. But established in this truth, we can say with Paul: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And while Election secures the salvation of countless multitudes, it ascribes all the glory of their salvation to God. This to the Christian is the most endearing feature of the whole subject. And it constitutes one of the many proofs that the doctrine is divine.—Hence just views of Election heighten in the minds of believers the conviction of the obligations to glorify God.

We are bound, brethren, to render thanks to our heavenly Father for the gift of his Son, for influences of his Spirit, and for his word. But this is not all. But we are bound to render thanks for the additional expression of his love towards us in the conversion of our souls. Had God left us to the inclination of our own wills, we should have lived and died in our sins, in full view of the atonement of Christ; but when we are rejecting the offers of mercy and going further, and yet further from the heavenly road, he pitied us, and turned our feet from the way that leads to death. We should adore and praise the goodness of God, brethren, for the provisions of grace, for the invitations of the gospel, and especially for the disposition imparted to us by divine grace to comply with those invitations.—"By the grace of God we are what we are;" and in eternity if we should be found among the redeemed of the Lord, we shall most willingly cast our crowns at the feet of Christ and ascribe, "Blessedness and honor, and glory, and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever."—*William W. Wildman, 1845.*