

"IN DUE TIME."

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Time is one of the most important factors in God's plan. The days of creation were long periods of time; the time of man's experience with evil has been six days of a thousand years each; the day of redemption and of the development of the Church has been nearly two thousand years. Time has been necessary for the accomplishment of God's great work; and it has also been necessary in proving to man the righteousness of God's character. Only time could prove to men his invincible justice. Six thousand years ago his sentence of death passed upon mankind, and during all that time he has permitted generation after generation to go down into the grave in the midst of agony and blood and tears. And though he loved men so, even while they were yet sinners, that he spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, yet he has never for a moment relented to interpose his power for the relief or release of the groaning creation: nor will he do so until his "due time"--the time which his wisdom appointed, which will be the very best time for the securing of the largest possible results to the race, both of knowledge and of advantageous experience, as well as the development of several of the most important features of his plan. But as time only can develop God's plan, so time only can manifest his love, as well as his wisdom, his grace, his power and his justice.

Time will fully manifest the divine wisdom in what seems to short-sighted humanity like pitiless delays. Already those who are privileged to view by faith the divine plan see the necessity of time for its full accomplishment. It is in view of such necessity that the children of God are frequently exhorted to patience. God has kindly brought us to his standpoint of view and bidden us look into the glorious future --to the outcome of his plan; and in proportion as we are able to comprehend and believe it, we may rest and rejoice in it. But in the meantime, being thus graciously refreshed by the cheering prospect, we must patiently wait for the end, however painful the waiting season may be.

Patience is a virtue which our Heavenly Father desires to cultivate in us; and he manifests in himself the grandest example of it. [R1375 : page 70] Through all the centuries past he has patiently endured the reproaches of those who, failing to understand the course of his wisdom in executing justice and in working out the deep designs of his abounding grace, attributed evil, and only evil, to his truly glorious and holy character. He knows that "*in due time*" his character will be fully vindicated, and so he patiently waits and works and endures. So also our Lord Jesus waits and endures. He endured great humiliation in coming to our low estate. Then as a man he patiently endured the contradiction of sinners against himself and the ungrateful persecution, even unto death, from those he came to save. And, like his Heavenly Father, through it all he was cheered in consideration of that "*due time*," though then in the far distant future, when his character, and also the Father's character, would be fully vindicated and manifested to every creature in heaven and in earth. And still our blessed Lord Jesus and our adorable Heavenly Father await with patience the grand consummation. So, in similar attitude of mind, must we wait; for the servant is not above his Lord, and our rejoicing in view of the future will, if we have the mind of Christ, be not only because of our own prospective vindication and glory, but also in prospect of the vindication and glory of God and of our Lord Jesus, and of the prospective everlasting triumph of truth and righteousness.

The waiting time is by no means a time of rejoicing, except in hope. This is a time when truth and righteousness are being humbled in the dust, when they that live godly must suffer persecution, when our eyes must look upon scenes of sorrow and mourning, when our ears must hear the wails of distress, and when our feeble flesh must experience the pangs of death. But, O! there is a glorious release to come "*in due time*." Wait for it patiently: "Let patience have her perfect work." Submit to the humbling process. The Church's pathway of present humiliation leads to the future glory.

"Humble yourselves," says the Apostle, "under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you *in due time*." Do not make the great mistake of seeking present exaltation at the expense of that which is to come "*in due time*" to those who patiently endure to the end. It is only in proportion as any turn their eyes away from the glory to follow "*in due time*," and thus lose faith in it, that they begin to prize the trifling recompenses which the world offers for the sacrifice of their birthright. Let us, therefore, beloved, keep the eye of faith fixed upon the hope set before us in the gospel, and, forgetting those things that are behind--all worldly ambitions, etc.--let us press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, which shall indeed be realized by the faithful -- "*in due time*;" for "faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it." His purposes cannot fail, nor his word return unto him void.

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