

"THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE."

--[LUKE 4:8](#)--DECEMBER 18.--

THIS is the Golden Text of a review lesson intended to refresh our minds respecting the Lord's dealings with Israel, as portrayed in all the lessons of the present quarter. It is placed before the end of the three months, that the last Sunday of the period, being Christmas, may have a more suitable topic.

We recommend a general re-examination of the lessons of the quarter as a good means of refreshing the mind and the heart. Others see in the Lord's special dealings with Israel his general supervision of the nations of the world and a general responsibility of all peoples, similar to that of the Jews; but we see in all these things the very reverse lesson, namely, that the children of Jacob, called Israel, subsequent to the division into the two kingdoms known as Ephraim and Judah, were God's specially covenanted people, and were dealt with in a different manner from other nations. The Word of the Lord on this subject is very explicit. Through the Prophet he declares, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." ([Amos 3:2](#)) This nation alone had special divine supervision of its affairs and the promises and instructions, through the Prophets, the Law, etc. The Gentile nations, as the Apostle explains, were "strangers, aliens and foreigners from the commonwealth of Israel"--"without God, having no hope in the world."--[Eph. 2:12](#).

Very true, the Lord did in a general way exercise toward all nations a law of cause and effect which we still see in operation in every quarter of the world, and he did supervise the affairs of the other nations to the extent of not permitting them to interfere with the general outlines of his plan and his times and seasons. For instance, we see that at the appropriate time for the exodus God specially raised up Pharaoh to the throne of Egypt because he was a particularly headstrong man, who would resist the exodus of that people and thus bring down upon the nation the ten plagues which they well deserved and which would be typical of certain plagues in the end of this age against the antitype of Pharaoh, namely, Satan, who shall be ultimately overwhelmed, and all people desiring to be God's people shall be delivered from his yoke of bondage.

Similarly, at the time for the removal of the typical diadem from Israel, God's providences favored the exaltation of Nebuchadnezzar as a world emperor, the head, the first of a series of universal empires whose united reigns he foreshowed would constitute the "times of the Gentiles," the beginning and ending of which times are clearly marked. Evidently divine power had to do with the beginning of these times of the Gentiles and will have even more to do with their closing, at which time Immanuel shall take the reigns of government, the result being the dashing to pieces of the nations by the iron rod of his authority.--[Rev. 2:27](#).

It is interesting to note that although the higher critics of today take precisely the same grounds as the open infidels of a century ago, so far as an attempt to discredit the Bible is concerned, nevertheless they have been obliged to alter and amend those arguments to fit the new conditions. Modern excavations in Babylon and in Egypt have brought to light many interesting matters which all tend to corroborate the Scripture records which infidelity of a century ago held as unauthentic and totally misleading. But while forced to acknowledge that in a general way they corroborate the Scriptures, these modern infidels do attempt to prove by these old records that the scriptural chronology is wholly at fault. They attempt to stretch out history so as to prove that some of the records were written earlier than the date which the Scriptures assign to Adam. Their reasonings are specious, false, but nevertheless they are deceptive to some who do not discern that these learned gentlemen are striving hard to make these ancient records contradict the Scriptures.

There is a deceptive plausibility in their reasoning, too: they attempt to count up the many kings, assigning

each his period, and the sum of these reigns would indeed extend back a long distance; but do we not see that they are manifestly and willingly ignorant of the fact that probably many of these "kings" were merely under kings and princes, just as we have today an illustration in Germany: the emperors are one line of monarchs in Germany while the kings of the various states of Germany have so many other lines of ancestry. To string these all together and treat them as one dynasty would mean confusion, blindness to the truth; it would imply a quadrupling of the length of German history. We may be sure that in due time, when all the facts shall be opened up, the Bible record will be substantiated, as it has been substantiated in every contest in the past. A little history of some of the findings referred to may not be amiss here. We quote:--

SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH IN ANCIENT LANDS.

"Many discoveries in the temples of Egypt and the ruins of Assyria, buried for twenty-five hundred years, throw great light on the Old Testament Scriptures. There has been discovered at Karnak, near Thebes in Egypt, a splendid structure erected by the very Shishak, king of Egypt, who conquered Rehoboam ([1 Kings 14:25-28](#); [2 Chron. 12:1-12](#)), for the purpose of commemorating his victories. On the walls is sculptured the giant figure of the great conqueror, standing erect among the thirty-eight kings and rulers he has subdued. Among these captives stands a Jewish figure, distinguished by his beard, with a rope around his neck to indicate that he has been conquered. The Egyptian king is represented as striking down the Hebrews with a colossal club. The name of Judah appears on the sculptures.

"The Moabite stone, discovered in 1868, in Dibon, east of Jordan, and now in the Louvre, Paris, contains an inscription by Mesha, king of Moab, recording events in the reigns of Omri and Ahab, and reads almost like a chapter of [2 Kings](#). The black obelisk discovered by Mr. Layard in Nineveh, describes the campaigns of Shalmaneser, and mentions Jehu and his tribute to Assyria. Royal tablets from the stone libraries of Nineveh mention Uzziah, [R3468 : page 364] Pekah and Hoshea. On one slab from his palace Sargan tells the story of the capture of Samaria. The Taylor Cylinder, found in Nineveh in 1830, and now in the British Museum, describes Sennacherib's conquest of Judah in the time of Hezekiah. The stone records of Assyrian history, called the 'Eponym Canon,' discovered in 1862, in Nineveh, by Sir Henry Rawlinson, help us to gain a more exact knowledge of the dates of this period."

Our Golden Text, which constitutes the caption of this article, contains a valuable thought for any occasion, but one especially suited to this review. Looking at the history of God's earthly people, Israel after the flesh, we can readily see that all of their difficulties and failures to attain to the blessings that were before them, were closely associated with neglect of the truth set forth in our Golden Text. They did not sufficiently sanctify the Lord God in their hearts and let him be the only fear and only dread --fear to displease him, dread to come under his reproof. On the contrary, they were prone to forget the Lord and all the blessings and mercies they had received from him and the obligations they were under to him.

They forgot, too, that a part of the Covenant entered into between the Lord and them was that if as a people they would honor him and serve him he would bless and honor them, but if as a people they rejected or neglected him, they were to have special disciplines and corrections. Their neglect of the Lord, their seeking without the Lord to establish themselves and to have the assistance and co-operation, and to adopt the manners, customs, etc., of foreign nations, all these were a part of their failure to properly worship the Lord and serve him alone. How great was their mistake! And yet we are to remember that a remnant did not make this mistake, though they were few. This remnant already received a blessing in the present life and are to have a still greater share in the favors of God in the coming age.

Similarly nominal spiritual Israel has neglected the counsel of this Golden Text, and, instead of having the Lord first, has been disposed to forget the Lord and to affiliate with the world, to seek worldly favor and co-operation. Fear to displease the world has largely controlled Churchianity; desire to have the world's favor and approval has apparently been more important before the mind of Churchianity than the approval of the

Lord and a fear of the loss of his favor.

As a result we see today worldly customs in the professed Church of Christ, and note that these worldly customs have drawn into the nominal Church, as they were intended to do, large numbers of the world, unjustified, unsanctified, "tares," and that these now quite overwhelm the few who are loyal to the Lord and the spirit of his Truth. Nevertheless there is today, and has been all throughout the Gospel age, a "little flock," a "remnant," which did indeed trust the Lord, and which did indeed sanctify the Lord God in their hearts and make him alone their fear and him alone their dread --fear to displease him, dread to lose the light of his kindness, his favor. We trust, dear friends, that the majority of those who read these words are of the latter class. If so all things are working together for good to such, because they love the Lord and have been called according to his purpose, and are seeking to make their calling and election sure by so running as to obtain the prize.

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