

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12

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“WALKING WITH GOD” (Page 82)

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IT is said of Enoch that he walked with God, and that he was not, for God took him. Gen. 5:24. It is said of Noah, that he "was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Gen. 9:6. St. Paul says of Enoch, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him, for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Heb. 11:5.

Enoch and Noah were eminent for their piety. But we must not suppose that they were thus eminent in piety because the circumstances by which they were surrounded were favorable to piety. We know from the sixth chapter of Genesis, that the age in which they lived was remarkable for its wickedness. A general apostasy took place in those days among the sons of God, that is, among those who were his people. Polygamy was the sin which constituted this general departure.

We know from Jude 14,15, that Enoch was a prophet, and that he warned wicked men of the punishment which Christ will inflict upon them when he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. And we know from 2 Pet. 2:5 that Noah was a preacher of righteousness. We can well understand the opposition which these two men had to meet. They stood up to maintain the truth of God, when the sons of God generally were trampling that truth beneath their feet. They had to meet the charge from the professed people of God that they were sectarians, and that they sought to found a new sect.

But we can well understand their reply: "We seek to found no new sect. We seek to walk in the old paths ourselves, and to induce our fellow-men to do the same thing." But their adversaries no doubt replied: "We have the whole church on our side. And do you think it very modest to stand up against the entire church, as though a few individuals could be wiser than all the sons of God?" But to this the servants of God replied: "You know the commandments of God, and you know that you have departed from them, and you know also that it is unjust to call us the founders of a new sect, when we only invite you to return from your apostasy and to obey the commandments of God." But these exhortations were unavailing. Enoch could not convince those whom he addressed, but he told them that the Lord would convince them of their error when he should come in his glory. Jude 15. And Noah, in like manner, failed to convince his own generation. Himself and family were saved in the ark, but all the rest of the world perished in the waters of the flood.

We are called to walk with God like these two ancient patriarchs. Our circumstances are not more difficult than were theirs. It was the grace of God which enabled them to walk with him, and it is our privilege to receive the grace of God in as large measure as it was received by them. The prophet Amos says that two cannot walk together except they be agreed. Amos 3:3. If we desire to walk with God we must be in agreement with him. If we have never repented of our sins, then repentance toward God is our first duty. Our will must be lost in the will of God.

We love that which is evil, but God loves only that which is pure and good. Our nature must therefore be wholly changed by the grace of God. This is what the Bible calls conversion.

When we are converted to God we receive, through the merit of the blood of Christ, the free pardon of all our past transgressions, and we receive grace from him by which our nature is changed so that we cease to love evil and learn to love that which is only good. Many suppose that the work of Christian experience is now finished, but in truth it has now only commenced. We have begun to walk with God. We are henceforward to walk with him every day and every hour of our lives. We must watch unto prayer (1 Pet. 4:7); and we must pray without ceasing. 1 Thess. 5:17. We must walk with God in our public acts and also in the most secret acts of our lives. We must walk with God in our families. We must walk with God in our business transactions. We must be patient in tribulation. We must be honest not only in great things but in those which are small. We must speak the truth. When we do wrong we must confess that wrong, and if we have injured others we must make reparation. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Micah 6:8.

If we seek to walk with God, Satan will most certainly come to hinder us. He will seek to irritate us so that we shall become impatient and speak bitter words. If we are in the service of others, he will seek to make us unfaithful. If we have others in our service, he will seek to cause us to oppress them in their wages, and to be cruel toward them in what we require. He will seek to make us dishonest in things that may not be readily discovered, and which may seem to us to be small things. If our time belongs to others, he will tempt us to waste it. If our work is done for others, he will tempt us to do it in an imperfect manner. If we can change a poor article for a better one by a little misrepresentation, or by taking advantage of the confidence which others have in our honesty, Satan will tempt us to do it. And when we have done wrong in any or all of these things, he will tempt us not to acknowledge our faults, and not to correct them, lest we should hurt our influence.

If we walk with God, we must not listen to Satan. At every step we must inquire whether what we propose to do will please God. And in every act we must seek the honor of God and not our own selfish interest. The grace of God is sufficient for us. If we follow on to know the Lord, we shall find that our light will increase like the light of the morning. And when our course is finished our end will be like that of Enoch, who was not, for God took him.—J. N. Andrews.