

## Divine Remedy for Unrest

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"For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four things which it cannot bear." Proverbs 30: 21.

How true are these words today! In every circle unrest and uncertainty seem to persist, bringing with them a pressure which is almost intolerable. Domestic conditions are estranged; industrial relationships strained almost to breaking point, as also are national and international affairs. The circle of Christian profession, alas! is not immune from these disturbing elements.

As the end of another year approaches we may enquire into the reason for these things, and enquire, too, what the divine remedy is.

The Scripture at the head of this paper cites four things which accompany unrest, and without straining the word, or importing into it the thoughts of the human mind, we believe other parts of the Scripture help us to see the bearing of these four matters upon conditions in our own day.

"For a servant when he reigneth." The occupation of a position without the necessary moral qualifications invariably results in a sense of self importance, and a disregard of true values. This is seen in the history of "Jeroboam the son of Nebat" (1 Kings 12: 28-30). He is known throughout history as he "who made Israel to sin," and we are told what that sin was in verses 28 to 30 of that chapter. He "made two calves of gold, and said . . . behold thy gods, O Israel which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." In short this was a complete denial of the sovereign mercy of God, who by the power of His own hand had delivered His people. The antidote for highmindedness is to be preserved with a deep sense of sovereign mercy in our souls. An increased appreciation of the "love," the "mercy;" the "grace," and the "kindness" of God as seen in Ephesians 2 would give us to know, with adoring hearts, the way in which our deliverance from Satan's domain has been effected. May we ever be preserved with a deep sense of sovereign mercy in our souls! Resting there, "disquietude" would give way to peace.

"And a fool when he is filled with meat." Nabal (fool) in 1 Samuel 25 would surely fit into this verse. Briefly his attitude was one of total disregard for David, God's anointed. "Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse?" He speaks of "my bread;" "my water;" "my flesh;" "my shearers," not realizing how much he owed to this presently rejected, yet anointed God-chosen king (cf. vv. 14-16). Full of what he deemed to be *his own*, and with no thought of the man of God's choice, he presents to us a striking picture of the Laodicean condition of the church as seen in Revelation 3 — "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," and yet Christ was outside! Is not this a contributory cause of the unrest in Christendom today? Beloved brethren, let us cherish right thoughts of our Lord Jesus Christ, He who has victoriously fought "the battles of the LORD;" He who "though He was rich . . . became poor," that we "through His poverty might be rich."

"For an odious woman when she is married." The history of such a woman is evident in Jezebel the wife of king Ahab. In 1 Kings 21 we have the account of Ahab's desire for the vineyard of Naboth. The movements and language of Naboth in that chapter are of deep significance for us in the present day. He *cherished his inheritance*, and although as the result of the wicked intrigue of the odious Jezebel he lost his life, yet he would not give up that of which he spoke — "The inheritance of my fathers." Ahab would have made this into "a garden of herbs;" "herbs" are for the use of men; the

vineyard is that which "maketh glad the heart of God and man." In a day when modernism, humanism, and other cults which are the produce of the minds of men, are tending to weaken an appreciation of the heavenly calling, let us hold fast to the inheritance which, having its source in the eternal heart of God, has come down to us at the cost of martyrs' blood — "reaching forth . . . towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

"And a handmaid that is heir to her mistress." Hagar is surely in view here. She was the mother of Ishmael — the son of the bondwoman. The Epistle to the Galatians shows the intolerable burden which the recognition of the principle for which Hagar and Ishmael stand involves. The purpose and counsel of God are related to one blessed Person — Christ. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, *which is Christ*". In the mind and ways of God the first man is entirely displaced by the "second Man . . . the Lord from heaven." The breakdown and failure around us today is in large measure occasioned by the prominence given to the first man with a consequent lack of appreciation of "the Lord from heaven." May our hearts be held in constant and increasing occupation with the One in whom the mind of God has been so perfectly expressed, and in whom all our blessing and joy is secured for time and eternity. From Genesis 31: 41 and Genesis 29: 26 we learn that Jacob lived for 20 years in a land where the first was put before the second, and the result was sorrow and disappointment. Spiritual enlargement and its joys are to be found only in the realm where Christ the second Man is supreme.

Is it not worthy of note that the next verses in Proverbs 30 refer to "things which are little." Dear brethren, let us be content to be small, having no high thoughts of self and seeking no position of ecclesiastical greatness. Thus the wisdom and grace necessary for the pathway which verse 29 to 31 have in mind will be ours, and we shall move through this scene of moral ruin with a "stately step" which will honour God and be a testimony to Him before men. The four things "comely in going" may be seen in the movements of Christ in the four Gospels, and He has left "us an example that ye should follow His steps."