“Helps in Things Concerning Himself” — Vol. 3, 1893

“That Waited upon Me”

Zechariah 11:11

W. T. Turpin

have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beast of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them."

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It is with the *moral* teaching of the passage, rather than with its dispensational and primary application, I am now dealing. With regard to the latter, it may be well to say that the subject evidently is the history of Israel in connection with Christ. Jehovah takes up the case of His desolate people and flock. There was no compassion in their own shepherds towards them; it is very blessed to see that while the nation is handed over to reap the fruit of its own ways and sins, Jehovah, in the infinite compassion of His heart, cares for the poor and oppressed of His people, but the nation as such are left to themselves, Jehovah gives up for the time being the inheritance of the Gentiles, it is in His earthly people He is to possess it. Then it is we find that the poor of the flock are they who recognize the fulfillment of the prophetic word in those ways of Jehovah. So much for the literal application of the passage. Now the moral bearing of this is of the deepest moment for our souls in these days, for there are now morally as then in the history of Israel, "the poor of the flock." How blessed to think of this divine characteristic! It carries one's thoughts at once to Matt. 5, the very first mark of that which meets the much of God in a world where all has departed from Him, is poverty of spirit -- that which is in no sense indigenous to man on the earth, that which so far from being promoted, is suppressed and hindered by all that obtains amongst men and in the age.

Poverty of spirit is only found in those who are broken, those who are down in the dust before the Lord, as their rightful place. Alas how little of it is to be seen, how much of the opposite; self-elevation and self-assertion, a determination to maintain self at all costs; lowliness of mind and humility of mind are not virtues of the present moment or age; on the contrary, high-mindedness amid pride, alas! prevail to a sad extent. How blessed to dwell upon that which is kindred to the thoughts of God, that which He takes pleasure in, and that which has ever met His mind from the very first. But, further, this spirit has, as it were, its own surroundings and atmosphere; it grows and flourishes far away from that which is found amongst men. It is impossible to maintain poverty of spirit if men and the world are mingled within. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world." These are the principles and objects governing in the world, and none else beside. It is a solemn question for conscience and heart, how far apart from such a sphere do we walk? May the Lord exercise each of this before Himself as to this.

But not only do we find here "the poor of the flock," but we also find their *attitude* -- "*that waited upon me."* This is ever the attitude of the soul where poverty of spirit is the characteristic, confiding dependence and expectation mark them at all times, whether the remnant in Israel, or the few who to-day in loyalty of heart cleave to the Lord: hated, reviled, slandered, and despised, they ever have been, and will be, yet He knows them as trusting in Himself and waiting on Him.

But not only is there in this attitude a very marked dependence on, and expectation from the Lord Himself, but there is an active exercise of heart implied in the words, *"waited upon me."* How unlike the busy restlessness of the moment we are in, amid the scene we are passing through! The moral magnificence of one who waits on God simply is beyond all admiration. How blessed to be brought to this simply, so as to say, "Thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day"; or again, "This is our God, we have *waited* for Him"; or again, *"Yea,* in the way of thy judgements, O Lord, have we *waited* for thee."

It was this which marked the Lord Jesus in all His blessed perfection as a man on earth; how blessed to hear Him speak, as in Psa. 40:1. He takes the place of patience *without failure,* "I waited patiently for Jehovah": it is exactly opposite to what man is as man, with his will and all that belongs to it. Observe it is "for Jehovah," that is, until He came in; His own will never moved; Christ would have no other deliverance than Jehovah's. That which was found in the blessed One in His own perfection, is by grace wrought in the poor of the flock, and in feebleness and imperfection still is exhibited in some small measure by them. Oh, may it be ours more and more to be known, simply as a poor and an afflicted people who wait on the Lord and trust in Him.

Then, lastly, observe here how the Lord says "The poor of the flock that waited upon me, knew that it was the word of the Lord." This shows very blessedly the connection between the *state of soul* according to God, and the discernment of His mind through His word; and may we not ask, Is it not ever so? The *wise and prudent* on the one hand, and the *unseparated* on the other, never discern His will; it is *hidden* from the former (very solemn reflection this); it is revealed to babes. As to the other class, those who are separated and consecrated to God, it is written, "The knowledge of the *holy* is understanding"; and further, "Do not drink wine nor strong drink . . . when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation . . . that ye may put a difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean" (Lev. 10:9, 10). May the Lord apply His own word to all that needs its piercing light at this moment, so that there may be, by its divine acting, formed in our souls that capacity and ability of His Spirit, to know what is the word of the Lord in its application to all the difficulties and exercises of the way at this present moment.