

“I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof. And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle within: for I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her. Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: FOR HE THAT TOUCHETH YOU TOUCHETH THE APPLE OF HIS EYE. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: And I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the Holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.”
(Zech. 2:1-13.)

This text from the prophet Zechariah supplies New Testament saints with a glorious doctrinal statement pertaining to every true New Testament Church, which may be articulated as follows; to wit: "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto my little churches a wall of fire round about, and heavenly glory in the midst of them. The church's Safety and Security is in her God. In other words, the Lord says, I will securely guard and defend Westboro Baptist Church; and I will consume all those who attempt to destroy WBC; and in the process I will fill WBC with the glory of the risen Savior."

Beloved, let no man despise you in your confession of faith and love for your Savior. History and experience have alike taught us that the true church could not have survived in any age or nation, unless divine power – supernatural and miraculous – had been exerted to support and protect her at all times. The feeble people of God are not in a Capacity to defend themselves, or maintain their legitimate and holy interests, against the violent assaults of their Satanic enemies. Consider these things:

1) The people of God are but a small collection of persons out of the numerous crowds in the world; hence Christ declares that His followers are a Little Flock; to wit: *“fear not, Little Flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.”* (Lk 12:32.) The enemies of real religion are far more than its true, hearty, and constant friends; it is the multitude that oppose the cause of God, and only an inconsiderable few who appear in its defence – when the chips are down, as they say.

2) The true church, in general, is composed of persons lowly and contemptible; and there is but a small number of the wealthy and powerful that have humility enough to espouse and defend the despised and rejected Redeemer; to wit:

***“Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”* (Isa. 53:1-12)**

Few there are indeed among the wealthy and powerful willing to identify themselves as fervent followers of the Lamb withersoever he goeth. The Apostle's observation holds true to this day, *“that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.”* (1 Cor. 1:26.) Some, indeed, of a higher rank are instances of sovereign grace; and, consideration of that solemn fact should inflame all such scarce, highly-favored few to love and serve the dear Lord Jesus with uncommon zeal and fidelity. *“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;”* — (Psa. 8; to wit: *“O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the earth ! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest*

still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Psa. 8:1-9.) — *"And God hath chosen... the base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence. (Recap: The saints in the church are foolish, weak, despised nobodies.) But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (1 Cor. 1:17-31.)

Beloved, let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due season; for God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble. Secondly to this point, it must never be lost sight of, that the enemies of the church are ready to seize every opportunity to disturb and distress her. The carnal mind of man is filled with a fixed aversion to God, and all spiritual good. As the apostle affirms, *"the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."* (Rom. 8:7-18.)

And, therefore, Beloved, the closer any saint gets to manifesting the imputed righteousness of the dear Lord Jesus, the greater wicked men hate that good man, and the more such, they make him the target of their venom. Thus, Cain slew his brother Abel, *"because his own works were evil, and his brother's were righteous."* (1 John 3:12.) The Third glorious point in support of this divine truism goes like this: That Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, has sworn to defend and avenge every drop of His people's blood – to the exclusion of every other consideration. Therefore, a regard in God to His own honor will influence Him to protect the saints. It is written:

"He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." (Psa. 105:14,15)

“Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.”(Psa. 90:16,17)

Beloved, this is a serious and eternal business. Recall our text: *“For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.”* (Zech. 2:5.) Christ Jesus — throughout all ages, world without end — will destroy those who seek the ruin of His church. None can afflict the saints without the greatest injury to themselves, since God is as tender of them as a man is of the apple of his eye. The church is called a Burdensome Stone, and all that Burden themselves with her shall be cut in pieces; to wit:

“The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a Burdensome Stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord of hosts their God. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.”(Zech. 12:1-6)

In a word: Don't Mess with the Lord's people! To be sure, God, — for infinitely-wise and inscrutable reasons — sometimes permits the enemies of His beloved people to harass and distress them; yea, He may even use them as His rod for the correction of His children. But, make no mistake about it: such cases do not excuse the malicious conduct of His enemies in mistreating His loved ones. Nor excuse them from His most severe resentment, revenge and condign wrath; to wit: *“...Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem, and for Zion, with a great jealousy; and I am very sore displeased with the Heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.”* (Zech. 1:14,15.) To the saints the Lord is a wall for their security, and round about them, so they are not any way open to invasion. As He is a wall of fire, it is most certain that He will consume and burn up those who attempt the destruction of His church, which is the City, around Her is a wall of protection and defense. However formidable her enemies may be, and though they may imagine it is an easy thing to devour her, because she is weak and defenseless in herself; yet they will find it absolutely impossible, and will eternally sink under the intolerable weight of divine vengeance. They are but as combustible matter before devouring flames, they are comparable to briars and thorns, not only on account of the grief and pain which they occasion to the church; but also because they will be consumed in a moment by the burning wrath of a provoked God; for to them he will for ever be a consuming fire, without any intermission or allay.

“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.”(Heb. 12:28-29)

I love you. Amen.