God Calls for Repentance and Holy Living

For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him. Genesis 18:19, NKJV.

God's plan for our salvation is perfect in every particular. If we will faithfully perform our allotted part, all will be well with us. It is our apostasy that causes discord, and brings wretchedness and ruin. God never uses His power to oppress the creatures of His hand. He never requires more than they are able to perform; never punishes His disobedient children more than is necessary to bring them to repentance; or to deter others from following their example. Rebellion against God is inexcusable.

The judgments of God quickly following upon transgression, His counsels and reproofs, the manifestations of His love and mercy, and the oft-repeated exhibitions of His power--all were a part of God's plan to preserve His people from sin, to make them pure and holy, that He might be their strength and shield and their exceeding great reward. But the persistent transgressions of the Israelites, their readiness to depart from God, and their forgetfulness of His mercies, showed that many had chosen to be servants of sin, rather than children of the Most High.

God had created them, Christ had redeemed them. From the house of bondage their cry of anguish went up to the throne of God, and He put forth His arm to rescue them, for their sake, bringing desolation upon the whole land of Egypt. He had granted them high honors. He had made them His peculiar people, and had showered upon them unnumbered blessings. If they would obey Him, He would make them a mighty nation--a praise and excellence in all the earth. God designed to magnify His name through His chosen people, by showing the vast difference existing between the righteous and the wicked, the servants of God and the worshipers of idols.

Joshua sought to show his people the inconsistency of their course of backsliding. He wished them to feel that the time had come to make a decided change, to put away every vestige of idolatry, and to turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart. He endeavored to impress upon their minds the fact that open apostasy would not be more offensive to God than hypocrisy, and a lifeless form of worship.

If the favor of God was worth anything, it was worth everything. Thus Joshua had decided; and after weighing the whole matter, he had determined to serve Him with full purpose of heart. And
more than this, he would endeavor to induce his family to pursue the same course.--The Signs of the Times, May 19, 1881.