

So they went on, and IGNORANCE followed. They went then till they came to a place where they saw a way put itself into their way, and seemed withal to lie as straight as the way which they should go; and here they knew not which of the two to take, for both seemed straight before them; therefore here they stood still to consider. And as they were thinking about the way, behold a man, black of flesh, but covered with a very light robe, came to them and asked them, "Why they stood there?" They answered, "They were going to the Celestial City, but knew not which of these ways to take." "Follow me !" said the man; "it is thither that I am going." So they followed him in the way that but now came into the road, which by degrees turned and turned them so from the city that they desired to go to, that in a little time their faces were turned away from it; yet they followed him. But by and by, before they were aware, he led them both within the compass of a net, in which they were both so entangled that they knew not what to do; and with that the white robe fell off the black man's back: then they saw where they were. Wherefore there they lay crying some time; for they could not get themselves out.

Chr. Then said CHRISTIAN to his fellow, "Now do I see myself in an error. Did not the shepherds bid us beware of the flatterers? As is the saying of the wise man, so we have found it this day: 'A man that flatters his neighbour spreads a net for his feet'" (#Pr 29:5).

Hope. They also gave us a note of directions about the way, for our more sure finding thereof; but therein we have also forgotten to read, and have not kept ourselves from the paths of the destroyer. Here David was wiser than we; for, saith he, "Concerning the works of men, by the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." (#Ps 17:4).

Thus they lay bewailing themselves in the net. At last they espied a shining one coming towards them, with a whip of small cord in his hand.

When he was come to the place where they were, he asked them whence they came? and what they did there? They told him, "That they were poor pilgrims going to Zion; but were led out of their way by a black man clothed in white, who bid us," said they, "follow him; for he was going thither too." Then said he with the whip, "It is FLATTERER, a false apostle, that hath transformed himself into an angel of light" (#Pr 29:5 Da 11:32 2Co 11:13,14). So he rent the net, and let the men out Then said he to them, "Follow me, that I may set you in your way again." So he led them back to the way which they had left to follow the Flatterer. Then he asked them, saying, "Where did you lie the last night?" They said, "with the shepherds upon the Delectable Mountains." He asked them then, "If they had not of those shepherds a note of direction for the way?" They answered, "Yes." "But did you," said he, "when you were at a stand, pluck out and read your note?" They answered, "No." He asked them why? They said they forgot. He asked, moreover, "If the shepherds did not bid them beware of the Flatterer?" They answered, "Yes; but we did not imagine," said they, "that this fine spoken man had been he" (#Ro 16:18).

Then I saw in my dream that he commanded them to lie down (#De 25:2); which when they did, he chastised them sore to teach them the good way wherein they should walk (#2Ch 6:26,27). And as he chastised them, he said "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent" (#Re 3:19). This done, he bade them go on their way, and take good heed to the other directions of the shepherds. So they thanked him for all his kindness; and went softly along the right way, singing:

"Come hither, you that walk along the way;
See how the pilgrims fare that go astray!
They caught are in an entangling net,
'Cause they good counsel lightly did forget.
'Tis true they rescued were; but yet you see
They're scourged to boot. Let this your caution be !"

Pr 29:5 Ps 17:4 Pr 29:5 Da 11:32 2Co 11:13,14 Ro 16:18 De 25:2 2Ch 6:26,27 Re 3:19

"A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet." (Pr 29:5 NKJV)

"Concerning the works of men, By the word of Your lips, I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer." (Ps 17:4 NKJV)

"A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet." (Pr 29:5 NKJV)

"Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*." (Da 11:32 NKJV)

"¹³ For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." (2Co 11:13-14 NKJV)

"For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple." (Ro 16:18 NKJV)

"then it shall be, if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows." (De 25:2 NKJV)

"²⁶ "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, ²⁷ "then hear *in* heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance." (2Ch 6:26-27 NKJV)

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent." (Re 3:19 NKJV)