
 THE LORD'S PURPOSES.

"For the Lord of hosts hath purposes, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Isaiah xiv : 26.

God has never failed, nor will he ever fail to accomplish his purposes, one of which is to restore sinful men to his own image. This purpose he proclaims thus: "Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord ; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1: 18 "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. . . . And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Ezek. xxxvi: 25, &c. "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver." Mal. 111: 3. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Math. vi: 48. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." John 1: 9. It is true, that the accomplishment of the purpose thus proclaimed, is conditioned upon man's acquiescence. Hence God appeals to our reason, and "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth *himself*." So that to whatever extent this purpose of God may be frustrated it will be by failure on the part of man, and not through God's lack of power or faithfulness. His plan for accomplishing this purpose, which is under the direct supervision and operation of the Holy Spirit, embraces and utilizes human agency. Christ said to his disciples just before leaving the earth, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Acts 1: 8. The effect of whose testimony on men was, "to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me." Acts xxvi: 18. The revised version says, "by faith in Me."

With these, and many other equally authoritative and explicit declarations of God's purpose in this matter, before us, and the knowledge we have of his faithfulness and power, and together with the testi-