

*A*  
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*IN ITS*  
*SEASON*

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Contents

"ALL THINGS NEW"

PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD

## **"ALL THINGS NEW"**

**1 Corinthians 11: 23-26; 2 Corinthians 3: 4-11; Hebrews 10: 19-23;**

**Revelation 21: 1-6**

H.W.J. Undoubtedly each of us has had impressions as we have been together, remembering the Lord Jesus and entering into the service of God, and the brethren should be free to bring out their impressions. I had the impression, as giving thanks for the cup, that the Lord's own words as to the new covenant indicated that everything had become new with Himself, and that what He was opening up was a completely new line of things. In Revelation, where we have read, it says "the former things have passed away": finally it will be so. All the former things will have passed away and everything will be new. That is what God says: "Behold, I make all things new." But it has already begun, in Christ: everything is already new in Him, and while we are still attached to the old things here, in spirit we can get into what is new in Him. The new covenant refers primarily to Israel, but it is remarkable how Paul takes it up in the second epistle to the Corinthians as though they were ministers of the new covenant to the Gentiles. He makes so much of how the ministry of what is new is marked by glory. It is a wonderful conception that Paul had as to the things in which he was serving, that it "subsists in glory", in contrast to the things related to the old covenant which began in glory but did not subsist in glory.

D.M.W. So the new covenant pertains literally to Israel, but in spirit we can touch those things, so that in 2 Corinthians 3 it is the ministry of the Spirit.

H.W.J. Yes, and he relates it to being new covenant ministers. That is very interesting to me. Paul, as having part in the Jewish race as a Hebrew himself, would know what significance the new covenant would have for the Jews in the day to come, and yet in the spirit of it he is already ministering in relation to the presence of the Spirit here.

P.L.J. What is your understanding of covenant?

H.W.J. It is the terms on which God is prepared to be in relationship to His people. In the first covenant there were terms on God's side which were mainly demand, and the people were required to accept those demands. They said, at the beginning in Exodus, "All the words that Jehovah has said will we do!" (chap 24: 3). But they were not able for that, and we have not been able for that. It was fulfilled after centuries perfectly in Christ. But that order of things has been superseded in Christ coming out of death in resurrection, and a new order of things has been opened up. It makes way, eventually, for Israel to come in under a new covenant, which is all supply. It will not be demand for Israel in the day to come, because their Redeemer will have come. In the meantime, the Lord is working out the great matter of the assembly.

P.L.J. It is good to recognise that the new covenant is of a new kind: you could have new in the sense of starting afresh, that is that there is a covenant the terms of which seem to be unacceptable, so you make a new one, start over again, but that is not the thought. It is new in the sense of an entirely new kind because the old covenant had obligations on both sides, but the new covenant does not.

H.W.J. So God supplies everything in the new covenant.

D.M.W. Would you say that the old covenant pertained really to the old man; the new covenant pertains to the new man? There is a new order of man. You can understand, as you say, that God supplies things from the very beginning. It is all there in Christ and you can put on the new man and come into the spirit of this. I wondered too if the new covenant would speak of the love of God, His disposition towards men, and for us the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. That seems to me to go with the ministry of the Spirit and new covenant ministers.

H.W.J. I think that is very fine. It has often been said that the new covenant entails the love of God coming into expression, and He is prepared to supply everything. In the old covenant there was demand, and all the sacrifices to secure atonement and it was only provisional. But now God has come in in Christ, atonement has

been made, redemption has been secured, the ransom price paid. Everything has been supplied and we do not have to bring sacrifices of that kind. It is a wonderful thing to think that God has provided it all, because of His love.

P.L.J. So the new covenant in that sense forms the basis for Christianity.

H.W.J. I think so. It is remarkable that the Lord says in the Supper Himself: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

D.M.W. The cup comes first in chapter 10. Would you say the basis of the new covenant is what is brought before us in chapter 10? Then we come on to the value of all of the work of Christ. When we give thanks for the cup and drink into it, we are drinking into the love of God, into a new order of things. It is the new covenant, and we can enjoy His love because we have the Spirit, do you think?

H.W.J. I think that is beautiful. So in chapter 12, it speaks of drinking of one Spirit, "and have all been given to drink of one Spirit" (v 13).

D.M.W. I think those are co-related thoughts, even at the Supper.

Rem. I was thinking of the Lord in His ministry setting on what is new. His first act of public service was in regard to that. It was new wine, was it not? In His instruction as to the keeping of things, He gives us a new commandment, which is to love one another (John 13: 34). The Lord moved in that way, setting on that which was new.

H.W.J. It is fine to bring that in. You are thinking of the marriage at Cana of Galilee when the water was turned to wine. He speaks in Luke 5 of the new wine, "And no one puts new wine into old skins, otherwise the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be poured out, and the skins will be destroyed; but new wine is to be put into new skins, and both are preserved", v 37,38. No doubt the Lord had in mind that those who believed on Him and followed Him and became His disciples were going to be new skins for the new wine that was coming in Himself.

Rem. Every act of His seemed to anticipate what was new in a spiritual sense. I am sure many missed the light of that, but we have the truth of it recorded in scripture, and with the help of the Spirit of God we are able to embrace what was in His mind.

H.W.J. Very good.

D.M.W. In, your giving of thanks this morning, twice you said, 'who has died and risen.' That is important is it not? It opens up an entirely new order of things. The heavens were opened and we proceed on an ascending line from the Supper with Himself. These are real things which the Spirit of God brings out.

H.W.J. So in Himself everything was new, but it required His resurrection for us to come into what is new.

D.M.W. That is right. For Him, He was setting it all on in Himself, but for us, we come into it through His death.

H.W.J. Very good. And not only His death but His resurrection and ascension.

Rem. His ascension - dead, risen and ascended.

P.E.M. So it is good to be at the Supper, unless we are hindered for some reason, to touch what is new and fresh.

H.W.J. I think so. I have been impressed recently that it is a special occasion. We used the word 'essential' in the past, and it is that, because the Lord manifests Himself, I think, in a more distinctive way there than perhaps in a meeting like this, where the Spirit is more in control and the Lord's headship is known. (It should be at least.) But in the Lord's Supper, the Lord comes in Himself, and takes charge as we are worshipping Him?

T.R.V. Would you say it is 'essential' because we are still in these old bodies? Once a week, we need that. It is a very practical thing.

H.W.J. Yes, we need to be renewed all the time. We read the scripture in Titus yesterday morning about the "renewal of the Holy Spirit." I suppose that goes on all the time by the Spirit. It says also

"regeneration": it is a remarkable word. Maybe you could read it to us.

T.R.V. "According to his own mercy he saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit." (Titus 3: 5).

H.W.J. That, in a way, goes on all the time. No doubt it refers primarily to receiving the Spirit and how that has brought in a newness of life for believers, but I think it continues on and on. The Spirit is desirous of constantly renewing in us the favour and blessing into which we have been brought.

Ques. Do you think that this renewal and regeneration is connected with new creation? It is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but a whole new order of man comes into view in new creation. "So if any one be in Christ, there is a new creation", 2 Cor 5: 17.

H.W.J. The practical working out of that is that they were to put on the new man. Colossians 3 indicates that as having died with Christ and been raised with Him we are to "put off" the old man and put on features of the new man. Ephesians says, having put on the new man, which according to God is created in truthful righteousness and holiness", ch 4: 24. That is how we have "learnt the Christ." Paul says in that chapter, we have "learnt the Christ", chap 4: 20. There is a new order of man entirely that is not like any other man that ever was. He was the Son of God, of course.

In 1 Corinthians 11, I did not think we should focus on the Supper itself, but rather on the way the Lord refers to the cup. Paul received it from the glory. Matthew, Mark and Luke bring us the Lord's own words, but Paul received these words from the Lord in the glory. This is what He had said "This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me." There are a few words added which we do not get in Luke, "As often as ye shall drink it": the Lord did not say that according to Luke, but He said it to Paul.

D.M.W. This is uniquely an assembly matter here, according to the revelation that Paul received. He does not mention the remission of sins here. So sins are not before us: we do not recall sins while we

are here at the Supper. It would not take away any impressions that persons might have at the Supper, but really it is the will of God filled out in Christ and opening up in Christ - the opening up of everything through the love of God. So we are entering into a new order of things.

H.W.J. I think that is fine. What you said about it being placed in the assembly setting here in Corinthians is important. Several of us met some devout believers some years ago, but they would not hold the Supper. They insisted that it was just a matter of what the saints did at the beginning because they were Jewish; but these are not Jewish believers in Corinth. These are Gentile believers, and Paul brought the truth of the Supper to them, showing that it needs to be held in an assembly setting and maintained there.

D.M.W. It is those of the assembly who remember the Lord, is it not? We noticed this morning in the hymn that we sang, "We Thy beloved, remember Thee, Lord ..." (hymn 311). We do not remember the Lord as individual units, but together as belonging to Himself. As I understand it, it is an assembly meeting. Is that what you understand?

H.W.J. Yes, I do. That means that our hearts are united and joined together.

D.M.W. One mind.

H.W.J. That is how they honoured David in 1 Chronicles. Their hearts were blended together. That is what the Lord should do for us, that our hearts are fully united in honouring and remembering Him.

D.M.W. Would you say that when we put our hands to the loaf, it just confirms that? We are together, we are of one mind, and we are going on.

H.W.J. Paul stresses that in this epistle, one loaf, one body, all partakers of one loaf. That is a great matter for us because we tend to be individualistic in our thinking and activities, but the Spirit has formed us into one body: everyone is essential in that one body.

That is another thing that Paul brings out to the Corinthians distinctively, that the body is here, functioning. The eye cannot say to the hand, I do not need you (1 Cor 12: 21). We need everyone: everyone is someone.

Rem. Characterised by love. The Lord says in John 13, "A new commandment I give to you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you", v 34.

P.L.J. That is greater than the love commanded in the law. In the law it is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", Lev 19: 18, but this is a greater standard, "as I have loved you."

D.M.W. Exactly. The love that our brother is speaking about goes beyond the thought in Revelation 21. There He says, "Behold, I make all things new." That is not speaking of love. Is that right? Love is an eternal matter and the love of which our brother is speaking is eternal in character. It goes beyond the love that was commanded in the law. I do not believe that God making all things new pertains to the love of which we are speaking. That is the source of everything we enjoy in Christianity.

H.W.J. God does not have to renew His love or change the character of it: it is always the same.

Ques. Would you say that the new covenant brings us into that: the old covenant was not in the character of divine love. In the new covenant we are brought into a relationship based on that love and into that sphere of love. Is that right?

H.W.J. It is a very fine thought. What our brother refers to is, I think, vital for us to get hold of and be marked by all the time, to love one another as Christ has loved us. That is the standard of love. His love meant that He would give everything, give all that He had, lay down His life for His friends. That is the standard of love. How testing that is!

D.M.W. Is that how the Supper is set on? We come and sit down - that is the first thing we do - and we look at the brethren, and our hearts are cheered because we see the brethren. Then as we

proceed it would lead us into another sphere altogether. We love the brethren: we love to see them. We have come to meet them.

H.W.J. It is good to bring that forward. I had an impression some little time ago of being joyful on seeing the brethren, but how much greater the joy of the Lord must be as He sees the saints coming together. We love one another; we enjoy one another, yet I think that at the base of much of the division that has come in and the sorrows that have erupted has been a lack of love for one another. We say, There was a principle of the truth involved. Yes, many times. Or some administrative matter that was not done as it should have been or the like. But you explore it and you ask, Why did that not get adjusted by love for one another?

Rem. The Lord is really meeting a need in man, is He not? It is a new commandment, not ten new commandments. He is meeting the sin of Cain, is He not, and bringing us back to love for one another? It impresses me that that is the sphere in which we operate. Everything should be pervaded by that divine love. It does not in anyway set aside principles and the truth but if we operated amongst ourselves as we would operate all the week in that sphere of love in our pathway, it would affect everything, would it not?

H.W.J. It surely would. We have been struck locally by the number of times John in his epistles insists on love, loving your brother, laying down your life for the brethren. It is a very high standard, but that is what Christianity should be.

Rem. Is it important to see that it is not just love for the brethren; it is love for your brother. It says "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren", but it goes on to say, "He who does not love his brother abides in death", 1 John 3: 14. It comes down to each individual.

H.W.J. That is fine. We would be tested as to it, sometimes the brother is kind of testing to you.

Rem. And I might be testing to him.

H.W.J. Yes, and I might be very testing to someone else. But love overcomes all that.

P.L.J. Is there not a responsibility too to be lovable? I was thinking, if you are aware that the brethren have a difficulty with you, would that not be an exercise?

H.W.J. That is a good point. Of Asher it was said, "Let him be acceptable to his brethren, And let him dip his foot in oil", Deut 33: 24? He was to make himself lovable to his brethren, dipping his foot in oil would, I suppose, be an allusion to the Spirit?

Rem. That is very testing to each of us, but, I suppose, even if a brother does not make himself lovable, we still have a responsibility to love him. I think what was said is helpful. I cannot just expect everybody to love me. I need to take it on in exercise.

H.W.J. If we are subject to Him, the Spirit normally would work out grace and beauties in us so that we become lovable. It is the features of the old man that cause difficulties and cause me to be unlovable and bring out elements of the flesh. The brethren do not love that.

P.E.M. The brethren certainly meant a great deal to the apostle. It says, "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage", Acts 28: 15.

H.W.J. Very good. How he loved them!

Ques. In 1 John it goes on to say, "and we ought for the brethren to lay down our lives", v 16. Is that making ourselves lovable?

H.W.J. I am sure it would be. You find that those who do sacrifice for the brethren, are very lovable persons. They are giving all the time in kindness and service to the saints. In our beloved sister who was taken from us, that was one of the things that impressed everyone that visited her home, that she was so kind and willing to sacrifice for everybody. We locally were the subjects of her goodness. You take that into account. That was what the Lord has had in mind to produce in all of us, the features of Christ.

P.L.J. Was that not the spirit of the new covenant, love serving and giving, not demanding? In the new covenant there is no demand: there is a supply but no demand.

H.W.J. So Paul was serving in that spirit, was he not, according to 2 Corinthians 3 - new covenant ministers? He was supplying all the time. He even used his hands to do things for the brethren. "These hands have ministered to my wants, and to those who were with me", Acts 20: 34. It is a remarkable thing to consider.

P.L.J. So "the letter kills, but the Spirit quickens", 2 Cor 3: 6. That is the Holy Spirit, is it not? It says, not of letter, but of spirit." Mr Darby has the small 's'. That is, we are not under the new covenant literally, but the spirit of the new covenant is taken up in what is ministered. It could be the small 's' which would have reference to our spirit the human spirit. But under the new covenant' the motivation is not the flesh, but the Spirit is the power and motivator.

H.W.J. I suppose it makes us competent to have part now in what is new. The Spirit has quickened our affections for Christ. and our response to the Spirit Himself In the service that He is here to perform on behalf of the Father and the Son.

P.L.J. And this is continuing: "the Spirit quickens."

H.W.J. "Quickens" is a present word.

P.L.J. So that the enjoyment of the new covenant is set out on the ground that the Spirit will be the power for it.

H.W.J. So it is called "the ministry of the Spirit" - "how shall not rather the ministry of the Spirit subsist in glory? " Paul seemed to be so full of this. At the end of this chapter he speaks of "looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face", v 18. "We all", he says. This wonderful ministry of the Spirit leads up to that.

D.M.W. Metamorphosis, is it not? I was thinking of the features of Christ coming out in the bride because of who she was engaged with, and that produces a love for the brethren and a desire to serve the brethren and to lay down your life for the brethren in a practical way.

Rem. Everything is linked together - love brought in, the Spirit brought in, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit (Rom 5: 5).

H.W.J. That is very fine: so the Lord has introduced a whole system of things. It is all linked together in the power of the Spirit. And the saints are linked in the power of the Spirit. That is what Paul brings out in relation to the body, that our links are together in the Spirit, and so we need each other. A servant, now with the Lord, said everybody is somebody in the assembly; he was stressing that as to the body. Everybody is needed. You might not be a hand or an eye; you might be a hidden part of the body and yet essential for the functioning of the body.

D.M.W. That is what the Corinthians were saying: we do not have a need of this or that. That was causing division. We do not look at one another as an arm or a leg or a toe or something else, even a hidden part. Everyone is filling out their place organically. My responsibility is to be in the Spirit to fill out that place so that love is pervading and functioning in the organism. Those kinds of thing are all for the pleasure of Christ. He is giving impulse to everything that proceeds in the body.

H.W.J. Our sisters fill out, as far as what is public is concerned, a sort of hidden part in the body and yet how essential they are. I thought that 2 Corinthians 3 would quicken us as we think of the glory of what God has brought in. That is what Paul is getting at: "For if the ministry of condemnation be glory, much rather the ministry of righteousness abounds in glory." Then he goes on to say, "For also that which was glorified is not glorified in this respect, on account of the surpassing glory. For if that annulled was introduced with glory, much rather that which abides subsists in glory." Mr Darby has inserted that word "subsists" apparently because he felt it was necessary to get the meaning, but it strikes me that what we have to do with is marked by glory because of the presence of the Spirit here, and it subsists in glory. It may not look like that publicly, but the essential newness of Christianity, all that has been

developed because of the Lord's resurrection and ascension, is continuing in glory, subsisting in glory.

D.M.W. Is it interesting that he does not use the word 'introduced' in relation to that? I wondered if it had something to do with purpose and counsel? It is all set out, of course, and established and subsists in Christ, but to me "subsists" conveys that it was always in mind, while the old covenant was "introduced".

H.W.J. That is very interesting. Of course, it was set on by Christ; it was introduced in that sense by Him. Do you have something more in your mind?

D.M.W. I wondered if this was not what was in the mind of God before time began?

H.W.J. I am sure you are right. Things were started, you might say, initiated, begun, in Christ: everything was in Him. He was the beginning. He was not only "in the beginning", but He was the beginning. He is the beginning of everything for us.

P.L.J. I think that is a good suggestion. The first was, you might say, historical, and something that came to pass in time, but the other was identified with God's purposes and counsels which were not historical.

D.M.W. It would link with His love which is, of course, His own nature.

H.W.J. I was struck as our brother read this by that word "subsists". "Much rather that which abides": everything we have in Christianity abides. It will never be changed or terminated, other than that a new heavens and a new earth will be introduced as we have in Revelation. That will augment, and provide a final setting for what is new that we touch now.

P.L.J. I think he puts the word "subsists" there in brackets to give it the sense, but Paul says, it is not merely the thought of continuance. The thought of "subsists" involves substance: something without substance might not continue. That which abides has substance.

H.W.J. "Grace and truth subsists through Jesus Christ", John 1: 17. There is a footnote of Mr Darby's concerning that word "subsists". I wonder if it would apply to this word in 2 Corinthians also. It speaks about beginning to be and being set on. It says " 'has come,' that which, not having actually been in being before ... now begins to be so ... 'began to be', through Him." It is a very interesting footnote.

D.M.W. That goes with verse 14, "And the Word became flesh"; so that which is substantial, "grace and truth", actually subsists.

H.W.J. And the ministry of the Spirit, as Paul says, the ministry of righteousness, subsists. It will never fade in that sense. Hebrews says it is a "better covenant" we have to do with. The writer is speaking to the Hebrews, of course, but the "better" involves that the old has been set aside. He says in Hebrews, "But now He has got a more excellent ministry by so much as he is mediator of a better covenant which is established on the footing of better promises", Heb 8: 6.

P.E.M. The note in John says also 'But its so taking place supposes its continuance.'

H.W.J. That is good. That links with what our brother was saying.

D.M.W. 'Supposes its continuance', I suppose, implies its continuance in substantiality. The word the Spirit uses here is translated "abides".

H.W.J. So he speaks of what is annulled, but, in contrast, of what abides. Certain things have been annulled. The Jews continued to maintain in their public service the things that had already been annulled, ignorant as to what has been introduced in Christ.

D.M.W. Public profession has gone back to them.

H.W.J. In Hebrews, I thought we would be impressed by "the new and living way." I think Hebrews is a great help to us in seeing the contrast between the old and the new. That apparently was a great matter for the writer of the Hebrews to try to get across to the Hebrew brethren that a whole new line of things had been introduced that was better and was perfect. He says "better and more perfect"

in one place, chap 9: 11. So in this chapter where we read he says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness for entering into the holy of holies by the blood of Jesus, the new and living way which he has dedicated for us through the veil, that is, his flesh." The Hebrews would understand a veil and how it was impossible for anyone to go in inside the veil in the old economy except for the high priests once a year. But a "new and living way" has been made available for us to have boldness.

Rem. Under the old system of things there was much fear and trembling, but now we have the thought of liberty and boldness.

H.W.J. Very good. John says, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear", 1 John 4: 18. Somebody said recently at home that we probably do not use this boldness enough, because it is available to us all the time. We can go into the holiest at any time, not just on Lord 's Day morning, and serve God, worship God, that is individually. But we have the great privilege of doing so collectively on the Lord's Day.

Ques. Would perfect love casting out fear result in a true heart? That expression is used here, "let us approach with a true heart."

P.E.M. This is not fleshly boldness. This would be a reverential boldness.

H.W.J. Yes, very good. I suppose it is related to the fact that we realise the favour in which we stand in Christ. There is no fear with Christ in the presence of God and we stand in the same favour. It is wonderful to think of that: in the presence of a holy, almighty, supreme God, but He has been revealed and revealed in His love, so we can be there in restfulness and in favour. It is a wonderful thing to think of that!

Rem. Boldness is "by the blood of Jesus", so that we are perfectly suitable and acceptable to God and the result is this boldness, which is really liberty, is it not?

H.W.J. That is very fine. It links with the Lord's own words about the cup, concerning His blood.

Rem. I was noticing what it says here as to "the new and living way" and wondering if there might be something especially in the "living way". In the old covenant there was not life in the sense that we have it now.

P.E.M. Is it living because He lives?

H.W.J. I am sure you are right - and because of the Spirit being here. So there is life in the saints, not only as trusting in the Lord Jesus and believing on Him and being under the shelter of the blood, but also because of the presence of the Spirit. There is life that has been quickened and it is a new kind of life entirely.

P.L.J. This refers primarily to the service of God. It is contrasted with the old covenant. The service there became stagnant and lifeless, but in Christianity the new and living way is fresh and vital. The thought here of 'new' is 'fresh'.

Rem. That is what I thought. We had that hymn "perpetual freshness".

P.L.J. That is the thought of "the new and living way" in contrast to what was stagnant.

H.W.J. Eternity will be marked by constant freshness. It will never grow old to us. We handle things now, and increasingly, as they grow old, we discard them in our practical affairs, but not in assembly matters. They never change; they never grow old. We come back to the Lord's Supper week after week and it is fresh.

P.L.J. And Christendom has taken up the old way, stagnant with no vitality.

Rem. Without the Spirit.

D.M.W. There is really no thought of improving our state in the presence of God: everything is new and living. I am not speaking from much experience but it is a matter of what is spontaneous, not of thinking of form or conjuring up something, not a matter of improving our state or anything of that kind.

Rem. That is old covenant. The whole operation of sacrifices was with a view to bringing state up to the point where they could enter in. The new covenant, "the new and living way" is linked with what goes beyond that.

H.W.J. So we are not trying to turn over a new leaf every Lord's Day to improve ourselves.

Rem. You are not working up to the point of entering in but you are actually entering into the enjoyment of the place, the sanctuary.

P.L.J. I think too this is an exhortation. It is true that the Spirit helps us, but our feeling is that we cannot sit back and wait for the Spirit to move. I mean by that that you have an exercise and then the Spirit sustains you,

H.W.J. He comes right into it and empowers you.

P.L.J. That is right. But the exercise comes first. These exhortations are given and we find that the Spirit helps us, but you do not sit back and wait for the Spirit to move, so to speak.

H.W.J. Verse 23 says, "Let us hold fast the confession of the hope unwavering." That is our responsibility. The Spirit will help us but He is not the one holding fast the confession: it is ourselves.

P.L.J. We have "boldness for entering." It is our state. We should be in a state where we have this boldness to enter.

K.A.K. In the Lord's service at Cana, He moved in relation to that. There was what was in the stone water vessels for the purification, and there was no good coming out of it but the Lord's movement is to direct the servants to prove in regard to this water, which may be a type of the Spirit of God.

H.W.J. They said the wine was deficient. It had become deficient in the old order of things. It is remarkable, in that instance, how John says at the end of it, that the disciples were the ones who believed on Jesus as a result. There must have been many others there who were not disciples, but it is the disciples who got the good of that wonderful testimony to the greatness of Christ.

D.M.W. Is that to bring before us the character of persons, followers, and they are attached to the Lord? He becomes their life and their object, so He comes to where the disciples were. The emphasis is not so much on the place in John 20; the emphasis is on the character of persons that were there. He came to where the disciples were.

H.W.J. That is an excellent thought.

We should just touch Revelation. I thought that this was the culmination, that we can have a view in the Revelation of the way everything new will be brought in in eternal character in "the holy city, new Jerusalem." The Lord had already spoken about new Jerusalem to John in the address to Philadelphia, and He promised that the overcomer would have "the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem" imprinted on him. That is our privilege now. What does it mean that the Lord is going to write that name? I think it means persons in the good and the gain of the light of the assembly have it imprinted on them. How many believers fall in ever coming to any knowledge of the assembly! We are greatly privileged that we have the Lord's writing in our hearts as to the new Jerusalem, but here at the end of the book, it is still the new Jerusalem and it will be so eternally.

D.M.W. I think what you are saying is very good. I have also enjoyed that impression of how this first verse goes with the address to Philadelphia, so the assembly, even though it is a creature vessel, has in view what is eternal and that is what is here in these opening verses of chapter 21, what is eternal. It switches from what is now to what is millennial. It is very good to think about that.

H.W.J. And then God says in verse 5, "Behold, I make all things new." That is, He is going to have not only the assembly in newness and freshness eternally, but everything in relation to creation is going to be new also, "a new heavens and a new earth." We can hardly take it in but it is what God has said He is going to do and He will do it.

D.M.W. It seems to be a central thought here as to "the holy city, new Jerusalem." That is what seems to be introduced here. And then, "Behold, I make all things new." I do not know how to take that in. The assembly has a unique place in eternity. As we sang in the last hymn, it is the vessel of praise, but it seems to me - and I would like some help about it - that everything is in relation to Christ and the assembly, even in the new creation.

H.W.J. I think you are right that everything in God's mind is centred in Christ and the assembly, and so everything that is made new according to verse 5 will then become, you might say, in accord in its newness with what God has been pleased to bring out in the assembly. The whole universe will be in that sense new, fresh and vibrant to God.

D.M.W. That is what He has already brought out in the assembly.

H.W.J. I think so.

D.M.W. And everything will be in relation to that, take its character in one sense, as I understand it, from God, but also from what He has brought out in the assembly.

H.W.J. That is a beautiful thought to consider.

Rem. I wondered if we could make a connection between this and what we had before us yesterday about the faithfulness of God because He says, "these words are true and faithful."

H.W.J. From the divine side, it is done, and we can rely on these words, "true and faithful." It is a wonderful thing to think of a time when God himself "shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall not exist any more, nor grief, nor cry, nor distress shall exist any more, for the former things have passed away." There is a lot of grief among the brethren, and crying and distress, but God Himself will come in and wipe it all away. We will probably not think about that much any more. We will be occupied with Christ and the glories that are His and all that has been introduced by God as a result of His purposes and counsels and eternally involved in the perpetual freshness.

P.E.M. So newness permeates this whole scene. The new Jerusalem will come down from a new heaven.

H.W.J. Very good, so there will be no trace of what is old. All things will be new. It is the thought of perfection going through. It should give us an incentive as we see what God's mind is and what He intends to have for Himself eternally, to put on the new man and see that that is marking us all the time, the new man in our links together. "Newness of life", Paul says in Romans 6: "Walk in newness of life", v 4. I have often been challenged by that. As I walk among men, do I walk in the sense of "newness of life", entirely different?

## **DENTON**

**5 January 1997**

### **Key to initials**

*(Not all speakers were identified)*

T.R.V., T VanderHoek, Denton; H.W.J., H.W.Jensen, Los Angeles;  
P.L.J., P.L.Johnson, Denton; K.A.K., K.A.Knauss, Indianapolis;  
P.E.M., P.E.Munn, Barnet; D.M.W., D.M.Welch, Denton

# PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD

James Alex Gardiner

**Genesis 37: 3,4,15,31-33; 44: 18-26,33,34; 45: 1,25-28; 46: 1-3**

It is a very fine scripture in Matthew in which the Lord Jesus is spoken of as "a friend of tax-gatherers, and of sinners", Matt. 11: 19. He came here and identified with the race. How blessed that is! He was "found in figure as a man", the scripture says (Phil 2: 8). The One who was in Himself, and is and always will be, God, "did not esteem it" Paul says, in that beautiful scripture in Phillipian; "an object of rapine to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking a bondman's form, taking his place in the likeness of men; and having been found in figure as a man, humbled himself", v 6-8. This, beloved, is true greatness. He identifies Himself with the race in such a way that it can be said of Him that he is "a friend of tax-gatherers and of sinners."

Well, this is a room that is full of sinners: every person ere in this room is a sinner. The scripture tells us, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1 John 1: 8) so we do not want to deceive ourselves, but we want to be open before God and acknowledge the fact that we are sinners. I will admit and agree, thankfully, that we are *forgiven* sinners. I hope we are all *repenting* sinners. But the fact remains that we are all sinners and Jesus is still "a friend of tax-gatherers, and of sinners." We would look to the Lord to come into the preaching and touch us in our hearts with the warmth and blessedness of the love that He manifested in securing us. There is the full expression of divine goodness on the one hand and the full expression of man's enmity and wickedness on the other. And man's enmity and wickedness in no way diverted the Lord Jesus from His path of love in which He pursued the pleasure and will of God right into death for the accomplishment of redemption. Think of the wonder of that, beloved - that precious, perfect life, flawless life, of Jesus here, a different kind of man altogether. In him sin was not: he knew not sin. There is nothing whatsoever faulty about Him. He

was here amongst men surrounded by the influences and the power of evil, a concentration of the devil's attack upon Him, to seek to divert Him from the accomplishment of God's will. And all it did was to bring out His power, His depth of wisdom, His committal to His Father, and the manifestation in His pathway here that He was "a friend of tax-gatherers, and of sinners."

You could do with a friend, could you not? There is nobody in this room but could do with a friend, somebody whom you could really trust, not that you could maybe just trust for a week or two or for a year or two, but whatever circumstances happen, whatever comes upon you, whatever it might be, you would really like a friend whom you could trust implicitly. He would never let you down. He would never betray your confidence. He would sustain and support you, whatever happened. He would be faithful to you, and if He thought you were wrong, He would certainly tell you, and all that would be for your good. But overall He would be your friend for ever. That hymn says,

"I've found a Friend, Oh such a Friend! "

That is Jesus, and He wants to be your friend, beloved.

Now, let us look at the scripture about Joseph. Chapter 36 is Esau. There are all these generations of the man who despises the birthright, who wants nothing to do with God, who has no love for the brethren, who pursues his brother with a sword, who despises the brotherly covenant, who has nobody before him but himself, and he is murderous in his pursuits to attain his own ends. You would not want him for a friend. You can understand why the scripture says "friendship with the world is enmity with God", Jas 4: 4.

Now, here is Jacob. This is the man that God loves. At the end of the Old Testament we are told, "I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau", Mal 1: 3. So here are Jacob's generations and all it says about his generations is: "These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph..." Christ! That is what is in mind here! The type is bringing out the intensity of the Father's love for the Son. Jesus here, beloved, in the pursuit of God's will moved every step, every moment

of the day, in the blessed consciousness of the warmth of His Father's love and His Father's approbation. God was with Him. That is what the scripture says. Whatever He did, God was with Him: "who went through all quarters doing good, and healing all that were under the power of the devil, because God was with him", Acts 10: 38. Every minute God was with Him. And this coat, this vest of many colours, is a typical evidence of the love of the Father for the Son. How distinctive Jesus was! It is most abnormal for an old man to knit a coat for a young boy of seventeen. You do not hear of that happening very often, if ever. But it is recorded here to bring out the distinctiveness of the Father's love for Christ.

And he sends him with this coat. Jesus came here with the consciousness of the Father's approval, the Father's approbation. He was of a different colour, many colours; these are His glories. The antitype of Joseph, He comes, He is sent out of the vale of Hebron. God is sending him out, the Father is sending him out with nothing in His heart but desire for the blessing and the welfare of his brethren. That is God for you, beloved; that is God for me at the present time. He has nothing in mind for us but to look after our welfare, concerned about our well-being. Do you believe that? There is nobody more concerned about your well-being than God. There is the expression here in type of the goodness of God. He says, "Go, I pray thee, see after the welfare of thy brethren, and after the welfare of the flock; and bring me word again".

That is how Jesus was here, looking for His brethren. The Jews were His brethren. The way that He came was in total accord with God's will and pleasure. "Jesus Christ", it says, "became a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises of the fathers; and that the nations should glorify God for mercy", Rom 15: 8,9. Think of how He came in! There was Israel, that was that nation, and it was put on responsibility: "He came to his own, and his own received him not", John 1: 11. Nevertheless that is how He came. He "became a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God", and God is glorified in Him. What did Israel do with Him? They betrayed Him; they handed Him over to the

Gentiles. Listen to this, because this is important, because you are guilty. The Jew is guilty. He is more guilty maybe than you are, but, as a Gentile, you are guilty. The Jew, the chief priests, handed Him over to Pilate. That was the governor. He is responsible. He is representative of the Gentile nations. It is the times of the Gentiles, the times of the nations, and he listened to them. Pilate had a right judgment. He said, "I find no guilt in this man", Luke 23: 4, but he came under influence. He was political, did not have the power to maintain the judgment, and so he delivered up righteous blood. This is very solemn because the nations will have to answer for this in the day to come. So will the Jew. Pilate, in delivering up Christ as he did, has been likened to Moses casting his rod, his authority, on the ground, and it became a serpent. If you look through the end of the gospels, you can see how the devil got into that whole area, and Christ was crucified. He was here in the expression of the fulness of divine goodness and man's answer to it was, We do not want Him. Away with him! Crucify him! And the voices of the chief priests prevailed. The devil got into the whole situation. Pilate had the authority to let Him go and he could see that there was a tumult arising so he says, Well, we will sacrifice this Man. It did not mean anything. There was the Son of God. The whole world is guilty before God. That is the side of responsibility. You are a Gentile: there are no Jews here, I think. Nevertheless, the whole world is guilty before God of the death of Christ and will have to answer for it. But God overruled man's folly, overruled his awfulness. He does not excuse him, but He overruled it and Peter tells us the day of Pentecost that He was taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain. How awful that is: that is your heart and mine, to save ourselves, to save a tumult, we will expose somebody else! Somebody else will carry the load, not me. Here is the Friend of tax-gatherers and sinners, and He is given over into the hands of lawless men to crucify and slay.

But there is something greater than that, beloved, and this is where your blessing comes in. It says, He was "given up by the determinate counsel", Acts 2: 23 - you see how God overrules

everything. That is what was in mind here when, in the type, He was sent through the vale of Hebron. Hebron relates to a system of things that was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt. Jesus was moving in relation to the purpose of God. He came here to die. Think of the immensity of that! He came here knowing full-well what was going to happen, and He came to accomplish this great work of redemption, to pay the price that God demanded for the intrusion and the incoming of sin. He came here to pay the price for it, to glorify God in relation to it so that, God being glorified, He can come out in blessing to men. God can give Himself a free hand. That is divine love, beloved, in its fulness. "No one has greater love than this, that one should lay down his life for his friends", John 15: 13. "For perhaps for the good man", Paul says, "some one might also dare to die", Rom 5: 7. But he says, in contrast to all that, "we being still sinners Christ has died for us", v8, the Friend of tax-gatherers and sinners.

Think of what they do to Joseph here! (It is only a type, I know.) They cast him into a pit without water. They take his vest. This is the callousness of man over against the absolute goodness of God. They say, Is this your son's vest? "Discern now whether it is thy son's vest or not." Think of the enmity, the distance! All that has been taken account of in the death of Christ. I wish I was able to convey in some way in spirit the greatness and the glory of the love that is shining out here in type. It shone out at the cross. There Jesus had everything under control. He was going to be crucified. He could have walked away. "If therefore ye seek me", He says, "let these go away", John 18: 8, and they went away. He says, "I am he, they went away backward and fell to the ground", v 6, and then He gives Himself up. As the psalmist says, He "gave his strength into captivity", Ps 78: 61. Think of the wonder of Jesus giving His strength into captivity! Then they bound Him. They did not need to bind Him! They tied Him up and they come with sticks and other things and they have a mob to capture Him.

It is like the ark in the hands of the Philistines. He can take care of Himself but He has time for other people. There Peter

denies Him and He feels for poor Peter. Think of Jesus turning round and He looked at Peter. Maybe He is going to look at you tonight. Maybe He is looking at me. Have I denied the Lord? Peter did. No matter what happens, he says, I will never deny you; I will always be with you. Peter did not know exactly what was in his own heart. We have to have our own hearts exposed to us. He really meant it: He really was committed. I will never deny you, he says. They will all deny you and not me. Jesus says, Well, "the cock shall not crow today before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me", Luke 22: 34. And he does. He is under pressure. He is not dependent. Jesus turns and looks at him. What grace in that look! "And Peter, going forth without, wept bitterly", Luke 22: 62. That is repentance. That is Peter brought down. As we said yesterday,

'He will break your will asunder  
Though your heart in twain be rent.'

That was Peter's heart, a broken heart. I did not really mean to do this. Look what I have done. What have I done? I have denied the Lord. Is he being condemned for it? Is he being set aside for it? Is he being condemned for it? Whenever Jesus arises from among the dead, the first person who knows is Simon: "The Lord is indeed risen and as appeared to Simon", Luke 24: 34.

What grace there is in that! That is a friend. What a friend Peter had in Jesus! What a friend we have in Jesus! You have the callousness of man crucifying Christ. This vest! Is this your son's vest? A glory attaches to that vest, beloved, with blood upon it that never attached to it before. There is a glory of redeeming love in the vest of Joseph. It is a type, I know, but it foreshadows the real thing. Think of the wonder, the marvel of the work of redemption, that Christ has redeemed to God what was His in the first place. You cannot redeem something that does not belong to you. The whole of creation belongs to God. You think of the mighty power of God manifested in creation, what He does! I think it says somewhere in Job, "He stretcheth out the north over empty space, he hangeth the earth upon nothing", chap 26: 7. That is God's power. "He hangeth the earth upon nothing": that is the power of God. And the Creator of

it, the One who did it all, who made it all, who created all, is the Lord Jesus. And He was "upholding all things by the word of his power", Heb 1: 3. The sun was darkened. When He rose, the rocks were rent: that is creation. There was the manifestation of divine power in the bodies of the saints who were sleeping, some of them rising up from the grave and going into Jerusalem. It is called the holy city. It is not the Jerusalem of Herod. It is the holy city. It is the manifestation of divine power. And so Christ has finished the work. Marvellous matter, beloved! He has shed His blood and every person who is under the shelter of the blood of Christ is saved for eternity. It is a very serious matter because judgment and death and mortality are upon the race. You thank God for all the alleviations that medical science can bring in. It is part of His mercy to His creature, but mortality is upon the race. You are going to die. If the Lord does not come, you are going to die. The Christian goes to be with Christ. If you are not a believer, if you are not a Christian, if you do not belong to Christ, you need to think about this very seriously, because to die without Christ is to be raised without Christ and there is nothing for these persons but judgment, not a thing. Where will the Pilates be? Where will the Herods be? Where will that unrepentant thief be? You see on the cross Jesus the Friend of tax-gatherers and sinners. Here is one of the biggest sinners, probably a murderer, he may have been in Barabbas's band, I do not know the other thief. And Jesus has time for him. He repented. Very blessed matter! They both maligned Him. They both said, bring us down, you can do things, you can come down yourself. An awful situation to be in, to be nailed to a wooden cross! And that was the due reward. This thief says to his fellow. This is what we deserve, "but this man has done nothing amiss", Luke 23: 41. And then he says, "Remember me, Lord, when thou comest in thy kingdom", v 42. Is Jesus suffering too much? Is he too self-occupied? Is He too concerned to take any notice? He says, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise", v 43. What a friend, beloved, of tax-gatherers and sinners!

Now, we need to think about it because these are persons who have gone on without any evidence of repentance. I was speaking to the port missionary a few weeks ago. He has to bury people, and he says, 'I never say that anybody is in hell because I do not know how they have finished with God, but I always warn persons when I am having a burial service that unless you are under the shelter of the blood of Christ, there is nothing for you but hell'. Thank God for every Christian, beloved! Thank God for every person who has come under the blessing of the glad tidings! There are many of them. They may be not in the light - and many are not in the full light of Paul's gospel - but there are many persons, the thousands of those that love Him, and they have all come the same way and they have been drawn to Christ by the Father: "No one can come to me except the Father who has sent me draw him", John 6: 44, and "Him that comes to me I will not at all cast out", v 37. What good news is this, beloved, if you are convicted of sin. If you have a conscience, if you have a problem with your conscience, you can be relieved, that burden can be taken away from you if you take up the responsibility.

Joseph's brethren go on and life goes on and they sell him to the Ishmaelites. There is the caravan of the Ishmaelites in the eighth chapter of John's gospel. They claim Abraham for their father, and you see how they behave, these Ishmaelites. Then he is in Potiphar's house and there is lawlessness and the mystery of iniquity working proves his purity. And then he is in prison. And then it says in the Psalm, "The king sent and loosed him - the ruler of peoples - and let him go free", Ps 105: 20. That is Jesus raised from amongst the dead. What power there was in that manifestation, in the resurrection of Christ! Nobody else is raised. God had not raised others, millions of believers their bodies in the grave. There is one Man out of the grave. God has manifested His pleasure and His delight in Christ in raising Him from among the dead and it was only righteous that He should do so and he did it by His glory! What a matter, beloved, the Father's glory, the Father with His glory going to the grave and raising Christ from it, not one iota of evil to be judged. Christ had finished the whole work. He finished it in power and He

finished it triumphantly and He is raised from amongst the dead by the glory of the Father.

Now, that is Goshen. God not only wants you, beloved, to be relieved of your sins and of the burden of them. What a burden it is! It can be so awkward. You try to hide it. You try to forget about it. You think you are getting on fine and then something happens and the whole thing comes up again and God speaks to you and wants you to accept what He has in mind, accept your guilt. He is ready to forgive. And up comes this awful thing that is called will, self-will, and there is a clash of personalities, you and God. Beloved, let this be the time when you are not going to fight against the will of God. He ordered circumstances: "And he called for a famine upon the land; he broke the whole staff of bread", Ps 105: 16. What are Joseph's brethren going to do? They cannot do anything about that. They cannot make bread. You need the basic materials. There is no corn. Where is the corn? The corn is in Egypt. God will arrange circumstances so that you go there. You have to go where Joseph is. How good God is! You see how He orders the affairs of men, sets the boundaries of the habitations of men that they might seek him: "And has made of one blood every nation of men to dwell upon the whole face of the earth, having determined ordained times and the boundaries of their dwelling, that they may seek God", Acts 17: 26. God has set you in your circumstances that you might seek God. He is very easily found. It is not difficult to find Him. And He is concerned that you might be forgiven. He wants your company. He is not arbitrary. We are inclined at times to judge God by ourselves, but God is away above the finest judgment that nature could bring out. God has expressed His goodness in its fulness and now He is ordering circumstances. He hedges people in. He says, You have to go this way, and you say, No. Well, something else will happen. Eventually you have to go that way because God has in mind your blessing. You cannot run away from it. It is a terrible thing if you do and you do and you do, and God has to say, Well, if you want to go that way, off you go! It says in the scripture, "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck..." - do not let anybody here be like

that! - "shall suddenly be destroyed and without remedy", Prov 29: 1. We have examples of that in Scripture.

But I just wanted to speak about Judah because he eventually takes the responsibility. Is anybody in this room going to prevail amongst their brethren? That is what it says of him. This is royalty. This is princeliness. This is somebody taking responsibility for what happened. Are you going to take responsibility for the death of Christ? He says, Yes, I am to blame and, he says, I am prepared to be a bondman for the lad. You know Benjamin is Christ over again, the same mother, born in the land. The silver cup he has put in Benjamin's sack. I think the silver cup really relates to the brethren. Where does He find His refreshment? Where does Jesus find His satisfaction? It says, "Is not this it in which my lord drinks, and which indeed he divines?", chap 44: 5. He finds his satisfaction and his joy amongst the brethren, and that is Benjamin, and he is working to set Benjamin free. He wants you and me not only to be relieved of our sins but to move in the enjoyment of new creation. Here is Judah and he is setting out the features of the kingdom and taking responsibility. It says he "prevailed among his brethren, and of him was the prince", 1 Chron 5: 2. The birthright was Joseph's, but here is Judah taking responsibility feelingly. He feels in type how the Father would feel, how God would feel, how Jacob would feel if Benjamin was in this position, if he has to lose Benjamin. You see how governmentally the wheel goes round: instead of Joseph, now it is Benjamin. How marvellous, beloved, are the ways of God! And in this situation Joseph cannot control himself any longer. It says, "Put every man out from me! And no man stood with him when Joseph made himself known to his brethren." How full the heart of Christ is as the situation arrives at normality! This matter, had been going on for seven whole chapters up to here. In chapter 38 the awfulness of the flesh comes out in Judah, but what is developing in him is family feelings, and it is coming out here, and he is thinking about his father. His confession, his outline, is such that the heart of Christ is full and Joseph makes himself known to his brethren. He felt it. See how he weeps! He could not control himself, there is nothing

arbitrary. It is the depths of divine affection in Christ as He opens up His heart and can open up His heart in this situation to His brethren.

I just want to speak of Jacob because they have all received help now, not only relief. He does not want you only to be relieved and come down for a bag of corn and then go away home, and once that is finished, come back and get some more. Jesus wants His brethren to live with Him where He is. There are two sides to the gospel, two wonderful sides: one is the relief side; and the other is the side of fulness of blessing, so you are sustained in life. He is the Sustainer of life and He is the Revealer of secrets. What a situation to be found in! The famine is all round - it will be for so many years - but the food, the supply, the maintenance of life is where Joseph is. They go up for Jacob, an old man, and he does not believe it is happening. He could not believe it. It says, "And his heart fainted, for he did not believe them." Is that you? Is your heart fainting? Is it too good to be true? That is what Jacob thought. "His heart fainted, for he did not believe them." There they were, they had wagons, food, all that was needed. They had come up there and they were beginning to be conscious that they are "complete in him": "For in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily", Col. 2: 9. He does not need anything from you. He says, I am going to supply everything, and I can do it. And here is this old man and he does not believe it is true. There was a great work of God in Jacob. "And they spoke to him all the words of Joseph, which he had spoken to them. And he saw the waggons that Joseph had sent to carry him. And the spirit of Jacob their father revived." Is that you, beloved? Is your spirit being revived in the preaching? Is your unbelief being dispelled? You are in faith, active in faith. You are coming back to the height of the calling. How wonderful that is! It is not Jacob now. It is "Israel took his journey with all that he had." How fine that is! How beautiful! Think of the skill and wisdom of Christ in the type of Joseph as he brings them all round so they come and live where he is. They are going to come into the enjoyment of eternal life. All their cares, all their worries, everything gone! He supplies everything. That is Christ. That is Christianity. And as he moves to

Beer-sheba, he is touching the inheritance. How fine that is! He came to Beer-sheba and God speaks to him. He is coming into divine communications. There were no divine communications where they were in that land of barrenness where the famine was. One of the hymns speaks about "sin's distant land of famine" (No 154). I am not saying that Jacob was in "sin's distant land of famine", but he was not where the food was. Joseph wants you to be where the food is. He wants me to be where the food is. So the waggons are there, the Spirit of God's power is there available to take us to where He is. How blessed that is! All divine provision, the whole of the glad tidings, is on the line of gift.

Now, may the Lord help and encourage us, beloved! The Friend of tax-gatherers and sinners is available to us. What a Friend He is and will be for ever and ever! May He help us to prove it increasingly and be concerned that we find our life where He is! Think of Him, made Lord and Christ. He is lord of his house, it says. "He made him lord of his house, and ruler over all his possession", Psalm 105: 21. He puts the whole thing into his hand. "To bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his elders wisdom" (v 22): he is running the country for Pharaoh. He is the chief minister. Think of how God has put everything into Christ's hand! And he wants to put you into His hand too. Do you want to go into the hand of Jesus and be sustained, be supported, be with him, be amongst His friends? What a situation it is, beloved! May the Lord help us in it for His Name's sake!

**REDBRIDGE**

**8 December 1996**