

A WORD IN ITS SEASON

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WHAT THE LORD JESUS HAS BORNE

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AEM I wonder whether we could consider in this reading the matter of what the Lord Jesus has borne. Many here were privileged to be reading this chapter last weekend when we considered Him as the Man of sorrows, “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief”. In the Synopsis as to Isaiah 53, Mr Darby says that he need not comment on it because it should be engraved on every true Christian's heart, p236. I wondered whether, as we consider what the Lord Jesus has borne, not just for us, although that is evidently part of it, we might see what He has borne that the pleasure of God should be secured. We might see that He has borne it and was able to bear it; that what He bore came from so many directions, and through so many different agents; but also that He was *able* to bear everything that came upon Him. He was able to bear it. As I understand it, this chapter was written prophetically of a Jewish remnant who will come to see, when they see their Messiah, the One that they had persecuted and rejected. These are their words prophetically. What will enter into the heart of a saved Jew when they see the One that they persecuted? The words of the chapter take on a very personal meaning, particularly thinking of the repetition of the word “we” in verse 4, “and we, we did regard him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted”. I wonder whether, just by considering this chapter, what the Lord Jesus has borne might become engraved on our hearts a little bit more as we ponder it. The brethren will be able to contribute many thoughts. The brethren will also be aware that many things came into the occasion I mention last weekend and I have no wish, even if I were able, just to repeat that, but wondered if we could be kept in the area of what was sustained and borne by such a Man.

We see in Peter's first epistle that He bore our sins in His body; and we see in the four references to Gethsemane the way that He bore so much there. In some instances He bore it alone, in other instances it indicates that He was strengthened, but He bore it. One has said that no creature could sustain Gethsemane and the cross, JT vol 17 p4. We

might consider these chapters in the light of that.

BDW It struck me as it was being read, this thought of being “acquainted with grief”. It was not just a fleeting thing, it was day by day.

AEM I think so. Do you not think that His whole pathway was a pathway of sorrow from the manger to the cross? There was intense sorrow that God’s pleasure should be fulfilled.

BDW Do we get glimpses of this when Lazarus died and “Jesus wept”, John 11: 35? You get something of the intense feelings there, this “acquainted with grief”, and there are other incidences where you get a real sense that He endured so much.

AEM Part of what has impressed itself upon my heart is that not only was He acquainted with it because He saw it everywhere, He saw it all closely around Him. I have been thinking about all those people who were brought to Him, “sick with divers diseases” (Luke 4: 40), and their needs. He was acquainted with it; He laid His hands upon them, and He prayed with them and touched them, imparted power to them. He was acquainted with it as it was in others, but He was also acquainted with it because He took it on Himself and He felt it. One thing that comes out in Gethsemane is that there are references there to His body, His soul, and His spirit. I need to be very careful what I say about that; others maybe can help a little more, but it seems to me that the entirety of the Lord’s life, and who He was, was acquainted with grief.

JW It has been said of the Lord that He bore in His spirit what He removed in His power, JND Collected Writings vol 7 p172. I was thinking that His being acquainted with grief was more than a contact with it. He bore it in His spirit.

AEM He bore it in His spirit. The words here speak of “suffering”, “sickness” and “infirmity”, what He bore in His spirit went so deep and caused that blessed Man such sorrow, but He was acquainted with it. Would it be right to say that He saw it, and every day He was acquainted with grief?

JW He was able to remove the effects of sin but He really bore it in His spirit; He carried it in that way.

AEM I like that suggestion. He carried it with Him as He was here amongst men. We also considered last weekend a Man of joy, and that was largely hidden when the Lord was here. There will come a day

when it will be displayed and seen, “the joy lying before him”, Heb 12: 2. It was largely hidden, but I think the sorrow, being “acquainted with grief”, would have been seen.

DJW Can you say more as to His capacity to endure the suffering? I was thinking of the altar; it is quite big compared to other things in the tabernacle.

AEM What the altar was able to bear! I suppose that, in coming into manhood, the Lord Jesus came into a condition where He could feel these things as a man and we can understand how He felt them. There are evidently elements that we cannot enter into, but we can understand, as a man, how He felt these things. But there was what He had the capacity to bear.

DJW The altar was much larger than the other items in there. It has been said that the altar consumed the offering, but with the Lord His capacity was such that He exhausted the judgment, CAC vol 18 p22.

AEM He absolutely exhausted it, and in doing so the pleasure of God was fulfilled. If there were anything left it would not have been so. When you spoke of the altar, I was thinking of the ark - the acacia wood speaks of a humanity able to endure. He was able to endure. I think what you say helps as to the altar too, that when the fire came, when the offering was made, He was able to bear that. In His life and in His death He was able to endure.

DP I was thinking of, “Lo, I come ... to do, O God, thy will”, Heb 10: 7. These things were no surprise or no accident.

AEM No, a body was prepared for Him that He might take it up and become acquainted with these things and bear them. That body was prepared and He took it up to go to suffer and to go to death. What a Man He was to do that deliberately and take it up. We see in Gethsemane what that meant to Him, but He took it, and He went that way bearing these things.

DJR Lamentations gives us the expression of God's fierce anger, “any sorrow like unto my sorrow ... in the day of his fierce anger”, Lam 1: 12. Applying that to the Lord, only He could bear it.

AEM I come back to the reference: no creature could bear Gethsemane and the cross. Who could bear God's “fierce anger”? It would make a creature extinct, but there was One there who knew a

sorrow and who was able to bear what none other could. I wonder whether it has really grasped my affections that there really was, for God's pleasure to be established, no other way but that such a One should come into such a condition.

AM In taking up manhood He took up everything that lay upon man and it was His pleasure to do that in accordance with the will of God, "*he* hath borne our griefs and carried out sorrows"; but the end of the paragraph refers to what Jehovah has "laid upon him"; that was not a pleasure to Him - that was what He would have shrunk from.

AEM That is one of the reasons why I asked for the whole chapter to be read, "Jehovah hath laid upon **him** the iniquity of us all": not upon me or you. That would annihilate us. We deserved it, "the iniquity of us all". Now consider that in the light just of those of us in this room - "the iniquity of us all", Jehovah deliberately placing upon a Man, His Son, the iniquity of us all. Oh the load of it, the weight of what was laid on that Man, and He could bear it!

RDP We have spoken about the things that were upon man, but there was what was in man as well, the sorrows. I was thinking of the literal interpretation bearing on the remnant, and the tense changes here: it says, "He is despised and left alone of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief", and then it goes on to say, "Surely *he* hath borne ...". Men - man as man - have never appreciated the sufferings of Christ. "He is despised" and, despite the fact that we know Him as the One whose sufferings are over, in a sense it goes on, "He is despised and left alone of men".

AEM Do you think we should still feel that? That is part of what should be felt in our hearts at the present time, "He is despised and left alone of men". The "corner stone", "The stone which the builders rejected" (Ps 118: 22), has now become the "corner stone", but it is rejected by men. There will come a time when Israel will see that; the remnant will see the One whom they rejected. The scripture as to the stone being rejected gives you a picture in your mind of His own people turning over that stone, looking at it, and throwing it away. But, this was the One upon whom Jehovah was to lay "the iniquity of us all".

RDP It says "we esteemed him not"; that is the change point I think. The Jew had had part in all that, but now there is a change. So it says, "Surely *he* **hath** borne our griefs".

JMW Did you have some thought as to the condition into which He came? It was a condition that was capable of bearing suffering. It says, "Since therefore the children partake of blood and flesh, he also, in like manner, took part in the same" (Heb 2: 14), sin apart. It goes on to say, "but tempted in all things in like manner", Heb 4: 15. He came into a condition in which He could suffer, and that these things should be laid upon Him.

AEM I think that is something for our affections to just linger on. He took "a bondman's form"; He was "found in figure as a man", Phil 2: 7, 8. He took a form in which Jehovah was able to lay these things upon Him, in which men could bruise Him and scourge Him, in which He could be rejected, in which He could be nailed to a cross; and He took that form. I suppose the wonder of the way that God has operated should fill our affections as we consider that the One who did this was none less than the Son of God, and therefore was able to bear it.

JMW I was affected by what is being said, and the fact that it is "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief". Who that Man was comes out in the last scripture that you read, "they went away backward and fell to the ground", but nevertheless it is "a man of sorrows", and we can, as helped by the Spirit, have some deepening impression of what that meant for Him.

AEM I think so; the fact that He took His place in a condition in which we partake helps us to understand that. These things have been said so many times, but I would like it to really embed itself in my heart that the Son of God came into a condition where these things could happen. As you read down the chapter, you look at the list of the things that happened to my Saviour. Look at the list of things that He suffered - stricken, smitten, afflicted, wounded, bruised, stripes laid upon Him, oppressed and so on. These things happened to One who was Himself the Son of God, but took a bondman's form, found as we are in flesh and blood.

BDW So this is the answer to those who ask why does God allow suffering, and why they think He is so cold and unfeeling? Here we have One who came here, God Himself, becoming a Sufferer. It is quite amazing.

AEM How wonderful that God should provide such a One; it says, "On the mount of Jehovah will be provided", Gen 22: 14. He has

provided the One who has done this. I think what you say as to men thinking that God is an unfeeling God is quite a rampant thought in the world at the moment, that God is a harsh God, a God of judgment in the sense of vengeance; but I think if we see what was laid upon that One, His Son, we will see that God's heart is anything but unfeeling or harsh; it is a heart of love.

JW We have considered the Lord coming into a flesh and blood condition to bear these things, He was the only One perfect in that condition, and therefore because of the perfection of His manhood He was able to be an offering for God.

AEM God's eyes did, and still do, "run to and fro through the whole earth", 2 Chron 16: 9. But, "He who, yea, has not spared his **own** Son", Rom 8: 32. This is the One He provided, because He was perfect. In Him, sin was not, and that perfection was part of what was able to bear what God brought. I suppose if there had been any sin then it would have been devoured just as you or I but there was none. Blessed Man!

PM Because of who He was, none less than God, He felt the sorrow in a way that we could never understand the depths of it.

AEM We feel sin often because of its effect on us; we are disappointed in ourselves, or we see the effect of it on us. He felt sin because He knew its offence to God. That is what He felt in His heart.

PM He felt it just as God felt it, but would He not, through a deep working in our souls, cause us to come to some appreciation of what it means to God?

AEM I wondered whether that was something this particular chapter does, that it deepens in our hearts the realisation of exactly what sin was before God. It denied Him response, it denied Him the company of His creature, it opposed everything that God had and sought to take away His pleasure; and He provided One who could bear all of that, that His pleasure might be upheld.

AJG If we are thinking of man, and Jesus Himself being perfect, we think of man being a very sensitive creature, sensitive in his feelings, and physically sensitive; but I was thinking that looking at Psalm 22, everything that was perfect was violated and every part of His feeling: "I may count all my bones. They look, they stare upon me", v 17.

AEM I think that. One thing is often said, and this is something the children are challenged with at school, that because of who He was He did not feel the suffering as a man would feel it. That was not the case; He suffered it, as you suggest. He felt, He was sensitive to it, more sensitive than we are to every blow, to every affront to God. We see here, as the prophet says, “he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities”, the writer here takes up strong words in relation to what the Lord Jesus suffered.

TJH Is it in your mind that we should see the uniqueness of the suffering as well as the uniqueness of the Sufferer, the Man of sorrows? We may get pre-occupied with our own sufferings, but these sufferings are unique to the Man of sorrows.

AEM There was no suffering like unto His. Words fail me to speak of it adequately, but we should look upon Him, by the eyes of faith. Look upon Him, the One who suffered; every day He saw the effect, the distance, that had come in between creature and His God. God was robbed of His portion through that, the pleasure of God was not there because Man was far from Him; but it was going to involve that the Saviour had to endure these things that His pleasure might be sustained. I realised as I looked into the ministry, just a small bit, exactly how much ministry there is with regard to the sufferings of Christ. I am not really able to share too much of that with the brethren because I am not formed in that very much, but what I can see is that this was absolutely unique, never before, never since, never will it have to be suffered again like this.

PM Is it affecting that He bore our sorrows when He was carrying His own? This is what Israel will come to, that He bore their sorrows, but He did it at the time when He was carrying His own sorrow, “now is my heart sorrowful and full of grief”. Think of what He carried because of who He was in His own link with His God and at that time He carried our sorrow too.

AEM What a sorrow it must have been that those to whom He came received Him not. What a sorrow it must have been as He came into His Father's house of prayer and He saw people trading there. These things He felt; only He could feel that. His own people, God's own people, saw it and partook in that with no feeling; He felt it, “My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of robbers”, Matt 21:13.

MRC You have commented that sin robbed God of a response from man, but for that response to be restored it mean that there was a break in communion between the Father and the Son; God at that point was robbed of the most choice expression of perfect humanity. There was that which was impenetrable during those three hours of darkness.

AEM It is interesting to see how the different writers present what the Lord bore. Some present the intensity of what He bore in Gethsemane, others present the effect of it, and others bring out who He was as He bore it. What He bore was relentless. I wonder about our own lives; men speak about needing down time and leisure time, we cannot always be working, and we have to have time to relax. I am not being frivolous, but the Lord Jesus was always in His Father's business, and He sorrowed in what He bore. His own sorrows and those of His people and those of the race, He bore them in His spirit. His soul became sorrowful and His grief was deep and it was constant. He bore it.

JMW Can you say something in relation to the first part of verse 10, "Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath subjected him to suffering".

AEM Were it not in Scripture we might not say that "it pleased Jehovah to bruise him". My own thought is that God knew as a result of what the Lord suffered that there was One there perfect enough to establish what was to be for God's own pleasure.

JMW We hesitate to add to or seek to enlarge scriptures like this. Let it affect our souls. It struck me as we have been speaking that there was One here that could bear the bruising as none other; there was One that could bear being subjected to suffering as none other. Indeed it says at the end of the verse, "the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand". You get an impression of what it meant to God that there was One there that was able to be bruised, to be subjected to suffering, and what shone in that was a sweet savour to God.

AEM "The pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand"; never had there been a man to whom that could happen. Were Jehovah to bruise another like this, he could not bear it. He now had One who was fully able, because of the perfection of His manhood, and because of who He was, to bear such bruising.

PM And able to meet all that lay upon the human race that none other could remove; God had found a Man in whom He could work out the whole moral question and do it for His satisfaction.

AEM We can understand that His pleasure is in that. His pleasure was in this blessed One. When He says in Gethsemane that the cup should pass from Him, he adds: "but not as I will, but as thou wilt", Matt 26: 39.

DJW It has been said, 'Never was there a moment of the Father's more perfect delight in Him' than at that point when He bore sin, JND Collected Writings vol 17 p 331.

BMO We see a picture of all that we have been saying this morning in Leviticus 16 with the scapegoat, "Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the living goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, and he shall put them on the head of the goat, and shall send him away to the wilderness by the hand of a man standing ready" (v 21); then it says, "that the goat may bear upon him all their iniquities to a land apart from men; and he shall send away the goat into the wilderness", v 22. I wondered whether what we have here in this goat would speak to us about what we have been speaking over this morning.

AEM I am sure it does. It reminds you of the scripture, "their sins and their lawlessnesses I will never remember any more", Heb 8: 12. A land apart. Think of the One not only who was able to bear it, but He exhausted God's judgment. You can say in that section in Isaiah 53, what more could be added to be laid upon the Saviour? Yet there was more. There was what He suffered in those three hours of darkness.

In Peter, I thought of the expression, "himself bore our sins in his body on the tree". "Bore our sins in his body" - we are told in scripture that "his visage was so marred more than any man" (Isa 52: 14). There is an allusion which is taken to mean that outwardly the Lord aged beyond His years (John 8: 57), but there came a point when, in power - in power - He "bore our sins in his body on the tree". He was able to do that in His body.

RDP What would you understand by the model in Peter? We do not exactly get a model for us in Isaiah; it speaks about, "leaving you a model that ye should follow in his steps".

AEM There are the references in verses 22 and 23 that refer to the perfection of the way that He met what was laid upon Him, certainly as far as men went.

RDP This is not exactly griefs and iniquity; this is the spirit of the Man who bore them. We could not carry these iniquities, but then “neither was guile found in his mouth ... when reviled, reviled not again”. When you think of the catalogue of suffering and so on, you wonder at the fact that this was the kind of One that was there. There is something of a model in this.

AEM It reminds us of the brazen serpent in that sense, “I, if I be lifted up out of the earth, will draw all to me”, John 12: 32. Think of the perfection of the One whose body was lifted up out of the earth; the sight that was here at the cross was one that God could look upon. We say carefully that it was with pleasure, never more pleasurable because there was One who could bear these things. The spirit of that Man is to be with us. We could never go there; nobody could follow.

RMB There is more than one character to the Lord's suffering. I think we have been taught that the Lord Jesus suffered on account of righteousness during His pathway here; in other words He suffered because He was righteous; and then there were His atoning sufferings. He suffered for our sins in the three hours on the cross; and as we know there are other characters to His suffering too. As I understand it, we could not suffer in an atoning way, like the Lord Jesus could, they were sufferings which belonged to Him alone; but it is in suffering on account of righteousness, or “doing good”, that He is a Model for us.

AEM That is helpful. I think that clarifies what we are reaching at, that there were things which He suffered that we can never enter into. The hymn tells us very clearly:

None could follow there, blest Saviour,
When Thou didst for sins atone (Hymn 298).

But, suffering for righteousness' sake maybe is this Model: there was One “who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth ... when reviled, reviled not”. I think if the appreciation of the One who bore this perfectly was more in our hearts we would seek to be the more like Him, because there is a way in which we can be like Him.

RMB Peter brings out in the verses which this follows that there is no

glory for us in suffering for our sins because He has already done that. But he says, “but if, doing good and suffering, ye shall bear it, this is acceptable with God”. Then he gives us the example of the One who perfectly suffered for doing good, but in that He is a Model for us all.

AEM I was thinking of the words that were said in Pilate's hall, “I have found no cause of death in him”, Luke 23: 22. Perfectly righteous, the righteous One, as we had last weekend, “Jesus Christ the righteous”, 1 John 2: 1. He exemplified that in every corner, every step of His life and yet it still “pleased Jehovah to bruise him”.

TJH Whilst we do not lose sight of the uniqueness of the sufferings of Christ, there is what is subjective in what you are bringing out here as to the model. I wonder if the apostles are also a model: Paul speaks of “bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus”, 2 Cor 4: 10.

AEM I thought of the scripture you allude to: “bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus”. I wonder how much I can really say about that, whether in our pathways it is evident in testimony that something of what He has suffered is borne in my body too.

JW Peter is bringing forward here particularly, in the section that you had in mind, that He “bore our sins in his body on the tree”, that it might have a moral effect on us, that we might be dead to sin, be finished with it, see that the contemplation of what Christ bore is to affect us in that way.

AEM The hymn says:

Were borne on the cross, and are gone evermore
(Hymn 238)

“Himself bore our sins”, He was made sin on that tree; the complete removal of what was offensive to God was effected there. What you say helps, but that should form us.

JW As we see what it meant to Him, what it cost Him to bear those sins, it would have the effect upon us that we should really cease from sin, be finished with it.

AEM It says in Isaiah, “he was cut off out of the land of the living”. He could say prophetically, “take me not away in the midst of my days!” Ps 102: 24. What it meant to Him that He should go this way, but He bore that. The fact that those sins were borne in His body should cause us to

pause for a moment to contemplate that there was One who was able to bear that.

PM Is that emphasised in these words, “who himself”?

AEM I wonder at the enormity of the fact that it was Himself. When Simeon took that babe in his arms when the Lord Jesus came into the world, he could see the salvation of his people. He saw it there, he held it in his arms, and we find now, thirty three and a half years later, that there is One, “who himself bore our sins in his body”. The wonder of the fact that there was such a One!

I have never in quite this way read the four instances of what took place in Gethsemane all together before. I trust it may be of benefit to the brethren. The first two, Matthew and Mark, are very intense; they deal with the pressure that bore on the Lord Jesus. It might be interesting for the young people to know that Gethsemane means 'wine press'. There are two things that come from the wine press, first is the pressure that is applied and the second then is the wine, which is typical of the pleasure for God. These things occurred in Gethsemane.

RWMcC I wondered about the threefold repetition of the Lord's prayer - it is not that the Lord questioned whether the cup could be removed - but if it was a witness to the fact that it could not.

AEM There was no other way. This was the way that He had to come. He came to this place. John says it was a garden, and that He was used to coming there. He had known communion with His Father in this very place, and now pressure came to bear upon Him like never before. Think of the things that came. We spoke last week of Goliath, the weapons of the enemy; they came to bear upon the Lord Jesus at this moment. This was not the suffering for sin here, but facing the meaning of what He had to pass through, that He would have to go into death to remove sin. Satan brought it to bear in all its awfulness upon His Holy Spirit at this point, but He was able to bear it.

AM He accepted it from the Father; He did not accept it from men. He did not accept it from Satan; He accepted it from the Father.

AEM That is beautiful. The pressure is so great here. We remember before in the Lord's life, Satan had had forty days to tempt Him and he had failed utterly. He “departed from him for a time” (Luke 4: 13), and

now he returns; and so much pressure is brought to bear. Speaking reverently, the Lord Jesus does not speak to Satan: He accepts it from His Father, “not my will, but thine be done”.

JW I think what has just been said as to that is very touching: He says, “the cup which the Father has given me, shall I not drink it?”, John 18: 11. He treats Satan, if we can use that word, almost in a derisory fashion. The feet of the priests dipped into the Jordan and it fled back as far as Adam, Josh 3: 16. His power was more than sufficient for Satan and overwhelmed him. But He accepted this cup from His Father.

AEM It is beautiful to see. You might say this was the worst Satan could do, and the Lord does not even acknowledge from whence that was coming; He says, “my Father”. There is not a recorded answer to that here; He was suffering in anticipation of what He was to be made, and that suffering here is unremitting. His disciples could not share it; no one could share it.

JW It would have been a sorrow to the Lord that His disciples were not able to enter into it here. He tells them about it, but there is none to sympathise with Him or comfort Him at this point.

AEM He had told them about it; He had forewarned them about it, “it is written of the Son of man that he must suffer much”, Mark 9: 12. They were “about a stone's throw”; they could see and yet there was also the two thousand cubits, Josh 3: 4. There was One who was suffering alone.

DJW “If it be possible”, was that a review of the whole of divine ways and His purpose? I was thinking of what Paul says, “how unsearchable his judgment and untraceable his ways!”, Rom 11: 33.

AEM I think we have to be preserved in looking at this moment in Gethsemane; we have to be preserved from looking at it with fleshly thoughts at a worldly level, or with our thoughts even. It reviews the whole of God's purpose, “if it be possible”. What is possible? Was there any way in which it was possible that it would be removed from Him? No. You might say the whole of what was to be for the pleasure of God was going to be secured by this blessed Man.

BDW Reference was made earlier as to a model for us, is this not one? He says, “but not as I will”? Man exerts his own will, but here was

One that yielded to the will of Another.

AEM Even though that meant that He should go into death. He says, “My soul is very sorrowful even unto death”. How the Lord was able to express what He was feeling. It is a wonderful thing to see that as He accepts this.

BDW He was the One who was, “obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross” (Phil 2: 8): a remarkable Model for us.

AEM He accepted it unquestioningly; this was not a question of looking for a way out, this was to emphasise the bitterness of what it was He was facing and yet there was that there that could bear it.

TJH He taught the disciples how to pray: “Our Father who art in the heavens”, Matt 6: 9. This is coming out here, “thy will be done”; He is bowing fully to the will of the Father in His sufferings and His death.

AEM Yes. Not that He ever did anything else, but this was the most intensive suffering and He bows to it. It is interesting to me that He speaks of His soul, “My soul is very sorrowful”, and then in Mark, “My soul is full of grief”, but it also says, “he began to be amazed and oppressed in spirit”. I hope I am saying what is right, but it just seems to me that every fibre, every part of the Lord Jesus, was under the enormous pressure of what was bearing down upon Him. There was no part of that blessed, holy Man that was not enduring such suffering.

RDP It is remarkable the words used, “deeply depressed”, and “oppressed” in Mark is a similar word. I was thinking of His manhood, it is almost like the limit of human capability, deeply depressed. It is almost the end of every resource; He reached to the limit of what was human.

AEM We have in the next scripture that His sweat, “became as great drops of blood”. The pressure that wrought that, again to quote Mr James Taylor's thought, was such that no creature could sustain it. This was beyond what a creature could bear; this was the holy One of God.

DJW The soul would involve His feelings in regard of it, but does “depressed” in spirit indicate to us that He intelligently entered into in a full way all that was coming upon Him? When we think of all the depravity of man, but also the reference in Isaiah to our iniquities, would that involve all that has come into the public profession, and all the

scope of what He entered into intelligently? He knew every kind of character of sin that was obnoxious to God; He felt it.

AEM He intelligently suffered this. Sometimes we enter into suffering and we just want to get through it. If you have a bad headache you take something to get through and come out the other side. The Lord Jesus intelligently entered into every part of suffering. There was not only what Satan was bringing here, but as our brother has said, the fact that the disciples were not here, "all left him and fled". In another gospel it says specifically, "the disciples left him and fled", Matt 26: 56. Judas, His own familiar friend, betrayed Him - what a thing that was; the nation betrayed Him, and then there was what He was to suffer at the hand of God. These things pressed in upon His spirit.

HTF The Lord's perfect knowledge and intelligence is seen as to what was before Him. Genesis 22 was alluded to: Isaac had questions - where is the sheep for the burnt offering? - and he carried the wood. The Lord has borne it, but you cannot go to the type to find the intelligence because it was not there in Isaac.

AEM That is helpful. There was nothing that was going to come upon the Lord that He had not already felt in His spirit. He had borne it in His spirit already; He knew fully what was to come even as to Judas. It is interesting, as far back as in John 6 He says as to the twelve, "of you one is a devil", v 70. He knew what was coming upon Him, and He carried it all the time that the twelve were together. Then there came the moment, which we read of in John's account, where Judas came to betray Him. What sorrow! Well can we apply that scripture in Lamentations, "any sorrow like unto my sorrow", Lam 1: 12.

DP Had you some thought as to the Lord saying, "Abba, Father" in these circumstances? Is there something for the Father in that expression, "Abba, Father", even in these most trying circumstances? The whole course of the life of the Lord Jesus was absolutely pleasurable to God.

AEM Think of the Father looking upon what was going on here. There has been reference to Genesis 22, "they went both of them together", v 8. Think of the Father's own feelings as such a One endured this. One whom He loved as He had loved no other, One who lived with Him, who committed everything to Him, who only did what He heard from the Father, whose ear was opened every morning.

PM Is it affecting that even at such a moment the Lord Jesus is really in adoration of the Father, “Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee”? He moves forward in such pressure in a spirit of adoration of the Father.

AEM To take up what we have referred to, what a pattern that is in the time of the greatest pressure; no trace of bitterness, no trace of turning aside, He had set His face.

BHC I was thinking of how the Lord could say, “this cup” - it was an intelligent thought, that He identified what was to be His own, what He was to take upon Himself. All that had led up to that point was in that cup, all man's failure, all that had been offensive to God was measured and He was to take of it and drink of it.

AEM Maybe we have spoken in quite a general way in this reading as to the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, but that cup was measured. He knew every ingredient that was in that cup; He knew He would have to drain it. He knew that there would be nothing left for us, every last drop drained by the Lord of glory. He says here, “take away this cup”.

JW It was part of His perfection of manhood that He shrank from it: not that there was any question that He would go through with it, but because the matter of being made sin was so abhorrent to Him. He had a perfect judgment of it, so that in His holy soul He shrank from it, but there is no question that He would not go through with it.

AEM No question at all. Praise God for that! There was One here who was the Sin-bearer and He would go through and drain that awful cup:

Wrath's awful cup He drained (Hymn 13).

What a cup it was.

RWMcC Divine Persons in principle have sat down and counted the cost - if They were able, to speak reverently - but in the ways of God this is the actual working out of it, and it is really the consummation of the ages.

AEM We get some sense of that in John 18 as we see the glory of the One who was taking that up. He was in the garden - it is not referred to as Gethsemane here - and He says to those who come, “Whom seek ye?”. Then it says, “I am he, they went away backward and fell to the

ground". He could have walked away at that moment, naturally speaking. He had done so before: they had come to take Him before, and they had fallen away back, but this time He was taking that cup.

Spaldwick

3rd November 2012

Key to initials:-

R M Brown, East Finchley; B H Clark, Tunbridge Wells;
H T Franklin, Grimsby; A J Gray, Spaldwick; T J Harvey, East Finchley;
R W McClean, Grimsby; A Martin, Buckhurst Hill; P Martin, Colchester;
A E Mutton, Witney; B M Oliver, Spaldwick; D Patterson, Spaldwick;
R D Plant, Birmingham; D J Roberts, Gillingham; R Walker, Spaldwick;
J M Walkinshaw, Maidstone; B D White, Spaldwick;
D J Willetts, Birmingham; J Wright, Witney

WAITING

T David Beveridge

1 Peter 3: 17-22

Titus 2: 11-14

Psalms 27: 14

Isaiah 40: 28-31

I am thinking about the matter of waiting. Sometimes we have to wait for things to happen in our lives. We would like them to happen soon or immediately, but sometimes we have to wait. Once when Paul was in Athens he had to wait for some of his brethren coming. As he was waiting he looked around at what he saw in the city of Athens and as he looked around, he saw an altar "To the unknown God", Acts 17: 23. What need there is amongst men and women and boys and girls, even to hear a verse of scripture. God's word is living and God's word is powerful and mighty. The God I know is mighty. I was impressed with that at the Supper. We thought of the death of Christ, and it speaks about the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the theme of the gospel, tasting death (Heb 2: 9): the awfulness of it, the reality of it. He felt that pressure of death on His spirit. How real death was to the Lord Jesus, my friend!

Now, He is the theme of the gospel, and if you are a sinner here tonight I have good news for you. We cannot wait any longer, because I cannot tell you about tomorrow for myself or for anyone here. I cannot tell you about tomorrow. You might say, 'I have important things to do tomorrow'. God knows what is ahead of everyone in this room, the preacher included. He knows what is ahead of us in life. Do you know He is the very God in whose hand our breath is, Dan 5: 23? Do you ever think about that, your breath being in the hand of God? As a young boy or girl, you think you can just do everything you please and you can indulge in all that you want to indulge in. Remember that! You have a God to do with, and, tonight in the glad tidings, He is waiting on you, waiting in grace. Probably the first hymn we sang -

God waits in grace with hands outstretched to bless (Hymn 123)

- gives you a full gospel. Read it through after the gospel. Maybe, if you have time, sit down alone. I will tell you one thing, this world is so busy, and persons are so busy. There is so much to take up time that persons do not take time to sit down and think about their never-dying soul, and the fact that they will have to do with a blessed God, a

Creator-God, who we read of in one of our scriptures. Oh my friend, you will have to do with God. I can tell you that God commends His love to you even if you are a sinner. He does not love your sin; He does not love the sins that you and I commit. I remember being very upset about some of the things I had done as a preacher spoke about sin and the awfulness of it. There is no escape, friend. All are conceived in sin, Ps 51: 5. And God now in the glad tidings is waiting on men. What a God He is! How patient He is!

The first scripture I read speaks about Him being "longsuffering". If you are a child, and you have been naughty, and you keep being naughty, you can see how it is trying your parents, maybe burdening them; they are concerned because you keep wanting to do wrong things, and being disobedient, and they bear with you and desire to help you. There is a God who is patient and He is longsuffering. What a God He is! He loves you, and tonight I want to tell you He may be waiting for you. He is waiting in grace. What a God He is! Blessed God! We had an old brother who used to tell us the word 'blessed' simply means 'happy'. God is happy, He is ready, to dispense infinite blessing.

What a person Peter was! He really loved the Lord. Maybe you really love the Lord. Peter loved the Lord. He said, "Lord, with thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death". Do you know what the Lord Jesus said to him? "Peter, the cock will not crow today before that thou shalt thrice deny me", Luke 22: 33, 34. Peter had just said 'I am ready to die with you, Lord'. Before that evening had finished, he had denied Him; he had sworn; he had cursed. Oh, the awfulness of the human heart! Who knows what is in my heart and your heart? God knows, my friend, and, in spite of that, He is a longsuffering God. He bears with us. How He bears with His preacher! Now nearly two thousand years have passed since the Lord Jesus was here. Think of the generations that have been in this world since the apostles were here. In the Dark Ages, think of the persecution of many Christian persons in Europe and in other parts of the world! What events have taken place in this world! The blessed God has waited right down through these years, and He is presenting glad tidings concerning His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and I trust that all here have a link in faith with Him, have come by way of repentance towards God about their sins, and put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to say tonight: God is waiting. He waits in grace. What a God He is!

And so Peter speaks in his epistle about God's "longsuffering". He bears with us. I think of my own history, things that have been in it that I would not like to go over. You would not like your history to be revealed, even before your parents, would you, or before the brethren, or before the authorities? "All things", the scripture says, "are naked and laid bare to his eyes, with whom we have to do", Heb 4: 13. Proverbs says, "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, beholding the evil and the good", chap 15: 3. Think of this world, and all that is proceeding now in the Middle East and some of the great countries of the world, China, South America; the awful events that are taking place. Think of the blessed God taking account of all of these things and still, my friend, He waits in grace that men and women may be aware of His existence, even if it is only the creation they have to look at. Man can see much in the greatness of creation and, as the Psalmist says,

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the expanse sheweth the work of his hands.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech and there are no words, yet their voice is heard,
Ps 19: 1-3.

God speaks in these things. How great He is! What a Person the blessed God is! He speaks to all men, women and children. What a God He is! He is waiting, waiting tonight. Maybe He is waiting on you if you have not trusted the Lord Jesus. It is a good thing if you become concerned as to what the preacher has been speaking about, speaking about sin and the awful things that would bar you from divine blessing, my friend, if you die in your sins. Think of the simplicity of these scriptures! If you die in your sins, you will be lost. But then death is not the end. Men believe that death *is* the end. What a delusion of Satan that he would cause a man to believe that death is the end! Scripture speaks even about the "second death" (Rev 20: 6); so that men will be raised and stand before the great white throne, Rev 20: 11-15.

This is not the time to speak more about that, but I just wish to convey to us all that God has power over death, and I know the One who has been into death. His name is Jesus. He came here as a babe. If you had been in Bethlehem at that time, you could have seen the Lord of glory as a babe lying in a manger. Think of the wonderful way that He came in! Think of that man, Simeon, who had some light as to who was there, taking the Lord Jesus in his arms in the temple, Luke 2: 28! Then

the Lord Jesus as a boy of twelve years was found in the temple, “in the midst of the teachers and hearing them and asking them questions”, v 46. And then there is a large section of the life of the Lord Jesus about which we know little or nothing, from when He was twelve until He was about thirty. Think of the secret life of the Lord Jesus! I suppose His mother must have known remarkable things about Him. If you had been able to speak to Mary, his mother, no doubt she could have told you many things about the Lord Jesus. How precious was His life! But as far as God was concerned, all that God looked for in man, He found in perfection in the Lord Jesus.

Now, I stress that, if your sins and my sins were to be met, it was necessary that Jesus should die; it was necessary that His precious blood should be shed so that there should be a basis in divine righteousness whereby the blessed God I am speaking of, who is waiting for you, could extend to you forgiveness, and your sins could be washed away. You know what the burden of sin is. I remember going about with something on my conscience I could not get rid of. Have you known that? Nobody else knew about it. God knew about it, of course, but because we cannot see God, people think He is not there. My friend, “the things that are seen are for a time, but those that are not seen eternal”, 2 Cor 4: 18. It says no-one has seen God nor can see God, 1 Tim 6: 16. How great He is, and we can have to do with Him, and tonight He is waiting, maybe He is waiting for you, maybe you do not believe, maybe you spurn the glad tidings, but God is appealing. The glad tidings, if it is anything, is an appeal on God's part as He waits for you in patience and long-suffering that you might yield. As disturbed, perhaps, under the sound of His word, you realise that you are lost and undone. To be lost is an awful experience. I can remember as a boy once in Edinburgh being with my parents in the street and I lost them with many, many people going about. O the awfulness of that experience, to be lost, and how much more, my friend, if you do not have a link with God, to know what it is to be lost, “having no hope, and without God in the world”, Eph 2: 12. How real it is; how real these things are! They have to do with our souls. You have a never-dying soul. God is interested in it, and in the glad tidings He is waiting in grace that you might come by way of repentance and faith to the Lord Jesus Christ.

So I read these other scriptures. The first one was in Peter. That was “the longsuffering of God”. Titus says, “the grace of God

which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared". That is in the Person of the Lord Jesus. And then he speaks about "the present course of things". We are in that just now. When the Lord was here, there would be a certain course of things going on; in the Middle Ages there was a certain course of things going on; but "in the present course of things", that is what we are in now, and we are "awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ". That is what the believer is waiting for. The believer has a wonderful future. Anyone without a knowledge of Christ as Saviour has no hope and is without Christ. Paul says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are the most miserable of all men", 1 Cor 15: 19. The Christian, the believer in the Lord Jesus, can see beyond this life. This life is important. You have been born into it. We are all here sitting, breathing, alive. God is addressing us and He is speaking to us about how we stand before Him. I do not know how you stand before the blessed God. Maybe He is not in your thoughts, but He is waiting that you might become aware that He is interested in you. God is interested in you. Maybe you go through life and you think, 'No-one is interested in me. No-one has any interest in me'. Oh, my friend, God is interested in you. In the glad tidings I can tell you that the Spirit of God is here, indwelling those who believe, and He is interested in persons as they come under the sound of the Word. When Paul preached in Athens he spoke about persons who "might feel after" God, Acts 17: 27. Think of that kind of experience, a person feeling after God. Perhaps he sees the creation and something dawns in his soul: how did all this come about, but how did these worlds come into being? Who brought them into being? The blessed God would address Himself and make the creature aware that he is having to do with Him.

I often think about the soldiers in Afghanistan. Every time a soldier is told to go out on a patrol, he does not know what is awaiting him. Life is very uncertain, even at its best. Scripture says, "thou knowest not what a day will bring forth" (Prov 27: 1), and it says, "So teach us to number our days, that we may acquire a wise heart", Ps 90: 12. Oh, my friend, in the waiting time, this waiting time, you need to have a wise heart about what you engage in, and God is addressing us in this waiting time, and He is giving us a wonderful, glorious opportunity to be saved. So if you are lost tonight, I can tell you, not on my authority, but on the authority of Scripture, if you are convicted as to your sins, if you come by way of repentance and faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, you can be saved. "The blood of Jesus Christ his

Son cleanses us from all sin”, 1 John 1: 7. How valuable and precious is the blood of Jesus! In fact there is a hymn that says that:

Precious, precious blood of Jesus. (Hymn 167)

No blood like that, the blood of the spotless Victim! There was a life in this world in flesh and blood conditions never seen then, now, or ever.

I meant to speak about Noah too. We cannot be sure how long he was in building the ark. I understand it was about 450 feet long, about 75 feet wide and about 45 feet deep. It was built with three storeys. There might only have been Noah and his sons helping him to build the ark. It must have taken a long time and all that time Noah was preaching, to convey to his fellow men that God was coming in to deal with the whole situation. It says “the earth was full of violence” (Gen 6: 11) and I have thought about that as coming to this preaching. Have you ever known a time like the present day, “the present course of things” when there has been so much violence, everywhere you look, in every city? Take this city we are in, the awful events that take place. How real these things are in the cities of Britain, Europe, the whole world, “full of violence”. It says that in Genesis: “the earth was full of violence”, and still the blessed God that I know is causing that the glad tidings be preached, sometimes in rooms like this, sometimes in the streets of the city, sometimes by those who love Christ and are willing to speak to their fellow men, to their neighbours, about Christ in order that they might be enlightened to the wonderful opportunity in this waiting time to make a decision for Christ. I trust all here have decided for Christ. You will never regret that decision. There may be decisions in your life that you regret. You might think, 'I wish I had never done so-and-so'. I can tell you if in this waiting time you decide for Christ, it will be the greatest and most blessed decision you can ever make.

So I just want to go on to the Psalm. I recommend to the younger brethren that you read the Psalms. I did not read them much when I was young because I did not value what was poetic. But the Psalms, as we all have been taught, are the fruits of experiences. Is it not fine to sit down beside an old brother and he can tell you what his experience has been, maybe in his job, in his household, or some experience he has had in life? You can learn from that. Read the Psalms, and look on them as experiences! There are lovely things said about David, the Psalmist. What a person he was! - although he did not always do everything that he should. Psalm 51 records the appeal he

made to God after being convicted of his sin. Oh the power of sin! Satan is a powerful, a subtle, foe. He knows how to attract us. He knows my weakness; he knows your weakness; and he knows how to seduce the hearts of men. In his experience here in this Psalm 27: 14, I was thinking of what he says here at the end of the very last verse: "Wait for Jehovah; be strong and let thy heart take courage: yea, wait for Jehovah". I would just like that word to come to all of our hearts. I remember a brother giving a word on courage. I have never forgotten it. Sometimes you need courage. I have spoken about these soldiers going out: they need courage to go out and face the uncertainties of war. My friend, you need courage. "Wait for Jehovah; be strong and let thy heart take courage". If you are an unbeliever, take courage tonight. This is the waiting time. You can have Jesus; you can make Him your own Saviour; you do not need to tell anyone; but, nevertheless, it is good to confess Him, confess Him as your Saviour.

I just want to refer briefly to that scripture in Isaiah: "Dost thou not know, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God ...?" It is a lovely scripture. The scripture conveys more, far more, than the preacher can because the scripture is God's word, and God is saying here, "Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not nor tireth". What marks this condition that you and I are in? It speaks of the youths tiring. It does not matter what age you are. You can prove the frailty of human life. It is very real. Death is very real. God speaks to us in that way. Some of us are older: we have lost parents. That made a deep impression on us. Death is meant to make a very deep impression on us. One man was at a preaching but, yes, he thought he would have to make a decision for Christ, but then he thought, 'Not tonight; I will just put it off'. We used to announce sometimes at the preaching that you could come back next week. I cannot say that. I cannot say that you can come back next week. This person who had been listening to the preaching decided to go out, and what happened was he was struck by a vehicle of some kind and killed. I do not wish to be dramatic, but that actually happened. He maybe made a decision for Christ. I trust he had made that in his heart, but he thought he would put it off for another week. That is why I say God is waiting now. "Behold, now is the well-accepted time; behold, now the day of salvation", 2 Cor 6: 2. So we do not wait any longer. This is the accepted time. It is a good time. Tonight is a good time. If you are without Christ and without hope, you can put your claim in tonight and put your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus.

I trust He belongs to all here, and then, as here, that you may also receive the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit. I suppose persons who are not Christians know very little of the presence of the Holy Spirit. They might see Christians living a certain way, and wonder why they do certain things, because if you are indwelt by the Spirit there is no doubt you live a certain way. I found certain things I did before I was converted I cannot do now. I am not saying the desire is not there to do them, but if the Spirit is indwelling, He would give us to feel His presence. Have you ever felt the presence of the Holy Spirit within you? I think the scripture about sowing to the Spirit (Gal 6: 8) means you give Him room in your heart, room in your life, so that whatever you are doing, you refer to the Holy Spirit. What a gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit is! Do you have Him? You can have Him, if you are a believer, by asking. Think of the wonder of that! In simplicity ask the Father that He might give you the Spirit. God gives "of his Spirit", 1 John 4: 13. Think of the wonder of that, a human creature, feeble and failing, and God is prepared to give of His own Spirit.

And then Paul in his preaching speaks about "inheritance among them that are sanctified" (Acts 26: 18); so not only has He given a Saviour, One who has died and suffered. Oh, that I could speak more feelingly of the sufferings of Jesus! It is worth taking time to contemplate them. See Him as entering into Gethsemane. He took some of His disciples with him but then they fell asleep. He went and prayed "Father, if thou wilt remove this cup from me: - but then, not my will, but thine be done.", Luke 22: 42. What we like best in life is our own wills. If I want to do something, I want my own will. Scripture says the Lord Jesus did always the things that pleased the Father, John 8: 29. What a Person Jesus is; so I say what a Saviour He is! And then the gift of the Holy Spirit, how wonderful! Then to find an "inheritance among them that are sanctified". I often used to wonder about that. Was it preaching 'brethrenism', or saying that we are the people, and so on? There is great safety in being amongst those who are the Lord's, wherever it is. There is salvation in the assembly. I say that because I have some members of my own family, my natural family, who, having gone out, have begun to slip, begun to allow certain things that they would not have allowed before. There is salvation in being preserved amongst the saints. Beloved young people, find your place amongst them! Commit yourself to that! It is all part of the glad tidings. How full the glad tidings are! We are in the waiting time and you have to decide now in the waiting time. "Behold, now is the well-accepted time;

behold, now the day of salvation”.

These scriptures would maybe just encourage us. “Wait for Jehovah”. Maybe some things are before you and you are uncertain: “wait for Jehovah” and He will give you the word. What a God He is! He loves us in all our circumstances. May you not wait any longer! If you do not know Him as Saviour, make sure He is your Saviour tonight!

Glasgow

24th June 2012

“HEARD BECAUSE OF HIS PIETY”

James Alex Gardiner

Mark 14: 32-42

I should like to try to say something about piety. It says in relation to the circumstances here that the Lord Jesus was "heard because of his piety" (Heb 5: 7), a very wonderful consideration. "He learned obedience from the things which he suffered", v 8. We have piety here, and obedience, and dependence. This is, of course, special, unique to Him, but the *character* of it is the same with the saints in whatever circumstances they may be passing through. We speak about piety as bringing God into our circumstances. I am not too carried by that expression. We bring our circumstances to God; they are ordered of God. It is a marvellous thing to think about that! Whatever happens, God is over all, and we need to be related to Him, consciously and constantly.

Think of the intensity of the relationship here between Christ and the Father! "Abba, Father", He says. How unique that is! He is the Servant in this gospel, but He is the Son of God. It is the "Beginning of the glad tidings of Jesus Christ, Son of God", chap 1: 1. We find here the greatness of divine love, divine grace in all its fulness. Here we can see that God is not going to spare His Son. What a consideration that is, beloved! What a sacrifice that was on the part of God the Father! Think of what it meant to Him to be without Christ for three hours, three days and three nights. How deeply He must have felt that! But here the Lord Jesus is facing up to the circumstances. How awful they were! No preacher could ever enter into the depth of all that these circumstances meant. He says to the Father, "all things are possible to thee". He had said that before in the gospels: "with God all things are possible", Matt 19: 26. "If ye have faith ... if ye should say to this mountain, Be thou taken away and be thou cast into the sea, it shall come to pass", Matt 21: 21. He says, "if it were possible ... take away this cup from me". And then He qualifies that. How beautiful this is, beloved! "But not what *I* will, but what *thou* wilt". How much there is in this! Think of the obedience, the committal, the devotion, and it depends upon what the Father wills, what He wishes to be done. The Lord says He would like it taken away, but not what He wills, but what God wills.

Now, this is piety, beloved. He is "heard because of his piety". "The mystery of piety" is a wonderful thing to think about. It applies to

Christ essentially because "God has been manifested in flesh", 1 Tim 3: 16. But "the mystery of piety" can be entered into and understood currently as we can see in persons overcoming circumstances. How are they able to do it? You wonder what Caesar thought when Paul stood before him. He says, "But the Lord stood with me ..." - there was piety in Paul; think of these circumstances in which he was - "and I was delivered out of the lion's mouth", 2 Tim 4: 17. "The mystery of piety" is in operation; it is to be seen. Caesar never heard a defence like that in his life. "At my first defence", Paul says, "no man stood with me ... But the Lord stood with me, and gave me power", v 16, 17. See how we overcome in circumstances, beloved! Circumstances are not always adverse but we need to be with God in them.

The Lord goes on here. He comes and finds the disciples sleeping. Well, we do not want to be sleeping, beloved. If we are sleeping, we learn nothing. We are quite out of touch with whatever is going on. We can sail through things and we can carry on and so forth, but piety is bringing them to God and being with God, not just when something happens. That puts pressure on us, and we run to God.

The Lord Jesus has left us a Model that we "should follow in His steps" (1 Pet 2: 21), and this is part of the steps. This is how we go through exercises. He says to Peter, "Simon, dost thou sleep? Hast thou not been able to watch one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh weak". How salutary that is for all of us! When we come through, when we come to adverse circumstances, naturally, we want the Lord to bring us out of them, to deliver us from them, and quickly too. That is not what God has in mind. He wants us to go through the circumstances. He will not change them, but He will be with us in them, and you will find there will be support, the priesthood of Christ. "But the Lord stood with me". How wonderful to find the Lord with you in your circumstances as you move on this pious line.

The Lord goes three times to the Father, and He says the same thing, and finally He says to the disciples, "Sleep on now, and take your rest. It is enough; the hour is come". Mr Darby says that He gently rebukes and excuses Peter, as if walking in Galilee, Synopsis, Matthew - John, p284 (note). How precious and beautiful that is! He has overcome the circumstance and He goes into it in power. This was the Ark going into Jordan, two thousand cubits (Josh 3: 4), quite a distance; nobody is with Him; He is alone. That *may* have to happen to you. You

may have to go through the thing yourself. You might not be able to carry people with you, but if the Lord is with you, you are consciously triumphant. Paul says, "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in the Christ", 2 Cor 2: 14. Very wonderful scripture! And that is because he was with God. He prayed three times that the thorn might be removed, and then the Lord says to him, "My grace suffices thee", 2 Cor 12: 9. 'This is for your discipline.' He learned that it was because he might be puffed up by all the revelations he had had. We have come to understand why the discipline comes upon us. It is necessary; it is all training; there is no school like the school of God; it goes on all your life.

I just think this is very wonderful, beloved, the awfulness of what was before Jesus: He was going to be made sin; and the greatness of the love of the Father that He is prepared to give up His Son, to not withhold Him. We need to be careful the language we use, but the language of scripture is that: "He who, yea, has not spared his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him grant us all things?", Rom 8: 32. The whole of heaven, beloved, is available to us; the wealth of heaven is available; the wealth of the truth is available; but if we are not moving in a pious way, we will not get anywhere. It is moving with God in the wilderness. You will not need piety in heaven; you will not need piety sitting in the meeting although you need to be with the Spirit in the meeting; but facing the various circumstances of life, you need to walk with God. We can speak for long enough about Enoch and all those who walked with God. That is piety. And God came in and sustained them. You think of Enoch with his house. He walked with God and then he had a family and all the exercises and concerns that family brings; and God says, that is what is meant to be, Gen 5: 22. So you learn. If you are a father, you will learn fatherhood; if you are a mother, you will learn motherhood. What you find is yourself coming out in the children, and it is not what you may think are your best qualities either. All that is true, and God knows it and He means that to happen. Then, if you are with God, you can see, as Enoch did, he had a family and he still walked with God and he was conscious in himself that he had divine approbation.

These are wonderful things, beloved, and they are available to us, and we will be "heard" - think of the blessedness of that - if we are pious. It is very wonderful that it says that of the Lord Jesus! You would not think it was necessary to say that, but that is what the scripture says, "having been heard because of his piety". How real and practical and

genuine and true the humanity of Christ is!

Well, that is all I can say, but I think it is very wonderful to think about, because immediately Judas comes, the Lord is in charge. He is in charge all the way through, the One who was crucified on the cross and who suffered; He is in charge of everything because He has gone through it with God. May the Lord encourage us, beloved, - He would do that - and may we prove the immensity of divine resource that is available to us! Every hour of the day God is available to us. How wonderful that is! The Spirit never forsakes us. How well equipped the believer is to go through the wilderness, 'this desert dry' (hymn 228). There is nothing in the world to minister to us. Why should we in any way seek to appropriate what is in the world? May the Lord preserve us from it for His Name's sake!

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