

A
WORD
IN ITS
SEASON

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We have to bear in mind that both the Corinthians and Galatians had departed from the simple teaching of Romans, yet they are not turned back to it, but they are corrected by a fuller apprehension of the truth from which they had departed. They had both received the Holy Ghost, and the marvel is that they should have wandered from the simplicity of the truth. The Corinthians made their own minds the arbiter of their acts. The Spirit of God is grieved if you supersede Him. They had fallen into disorder in every circle - church, family, every where.

Now the Galatians were trying to improve themselves by keeping the law. It is very important for us to see how they are corrected. In both cases it is by giving Christ His true place. The Corinthians are reminded that they were brought to God, and hence, beholding the Lord's glory, there was no place for the natural man, but they would be transformed into the same image. Our subject now is, how a Christian is delivered from trying to improve the flesh.

Would you kindly tell us the teaching of Romans from which they had departed?

The two great things in Romans are acceptance and liberty. Romans 5 is, God cannot be on better terms with me. I do not doubt that people try to get chapter 8 before the fifth. The prodigal did not get the eighth before the fifth.

It is as much a departure from Christianity to fall into the evils that we find in Corinth as it is to improve the flesh as in Galatians.

Quite so. There are two great subjects - acceptance and liberty. Our acceptance with God was accomplished on the cross. If you believe on Him that raised up Christ from the dead you are justified. It is summed up in Romans 5: 11 - we... joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation. Our

translators could not get beyond atonement because they did not understand reconciliation. These eleven verses set forth the terms on which God is with you and how God feels toward you. Then comes another thing, and that is where the trial is, and where it was with the prodigal - I am not fit for God. How is that to be met? God has removed everything from His own eye in the cross, and as you have simple faith you see it is all gone. Now He gives you the Holy Ghost. Hence Romans 8 begins with "in Christ" - "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death". You cannot believe the number of Christians who are damaged because they seek their freedom from sin by faith instead of by the Spirit of God. It is faith in Romans 5 but it is the Spirit of God in chapter 8. Why? Because it is true to God always that the man under judgment has gone in the cross; but it is only true to me when I am walking in the Spirit.

Then is the flesh set aside in the eighth chapter? There are four operations there. In the first thirteen verses the Spirit is master of the flesh. The thirteenth verse is "if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live". It is not by resolution. Do you understand now? Do you understand the difference between the Spirit of God and resolution? Resolution is the work of your own will. The Spirit of God is God's will. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live". It is not the mortification of the body but of the deeds of the body. The Spirit in you is master of the flesh.

I cannot use the Spirit except faith is in activity?

You have to accept in faith that you are committed to death. Therefore Romans 6 and 7 is the battle-ground. You are committed to the death of Christ by baptism. You accept this first, and then it is carried out by the Spirit of God.

In Romans 6 faith could say the old man is crucified.

Quite true in the eye of God, but you cannot carry it out but by the Spirit. Galatians 2: 20 is the carrying it out.

So "I am crucified with Christ" would not apply to everybody.

It is experimental.

Paul is speaking for himself.

Yes; it is experimental. "Our old man is crucified with Him": that is the thing for your faith to see with God. But when you come to enter into the reality of it you can say "I am crucified with Christ".

Is it always true for faith?

When you lose your temper is it true to you? Is it true then, that you are not in the flesh? It is true to God but not true to you. If you were walking in the Spirit it would be true to you. Therefore in Romans 5 it is faith, because God never alters. You cannot improve your acceptance with Him. He never deviates from His acceptance. He never reverts to the old man. Now come to your side. If you could be in keeping with Him you would be all right. You have received the Holy Ghost that you may be so. In Romans 8 you are in Christ. There is no condemnation there. You have changed your man. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the "righteous requirement" of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit". That is liberty. There is first acceptance, then liberty.

What are the four sections?

The first is, the Spirit is master of the flesh; the second, your dignity here as a son; third, you are in a groaning creation, but you will have a glorified body; fourth, you have a Friend - the Spirit of God - and He knows what you want. You know not what to pray for as you ought but He makes intercession for you, and you get many things you never prayed for at all. Therefore we read: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?".

But now the apostle labours that Christ might be formed in them. Many Christians have gone to the law to try and correct themselves, and many of us have. For years after I knew everything was gone

from the eye of God, when I looked at myself it was not gone from me, because I was trying to improve it. It is a great thing to see that God has not only cleared everything away from His eye but He says, I have given you the Holy Ghost, and in the Holy Ghost you are as free from it as I am, but you must walk in the Spirit.

I suppose that is why it says "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit", Gal 5: 25.

Exactly. If the flesh be resisted, it is by the Spirit. I think we do not make enough of the Spirit. Many a one speaks of the work of Christ but little of the work of the Spirit. He is your Friend. Be sure neither the flesh nor the world is your friend. Who is your friend down here? You have only One. Do you know how to find out the good of a friend? Use him.

Well now, it is interesting to see how the apostle corrects the Galatians. He takes the type of the weaning of Isaac. Isaac and Ishmael were in the house together; one was born after the flesh, the other after the Spirit. The Galatians were like this. There was the legal man, born after the flesh, and Christ was there also, but He was not given His right place. That is the state of many a Christian. It is a wonderful day, the coronation-day, when Christ gets His place.

Do you connect it with verse 19?

Yes, because the apostle is showing the way it comes to you. He wants to get them to this point, and the way to get to it is to give Christ His place. The marvellous grace is that Christ lives in you. It is a Person lives in you. One person has gone, another has come in.

What is the difference between Christ living in us and Christ being formed in us?

He could not live in you if He were not formed in you. You see in the type that when Isaac was weaned there was a great feast; he was to have a recognised position. Ishmael and Isaac had been going on together as is the case with many believers. Ishmael born after the flesh, Abraham's son, brought up in his house, was there. While all

the 318 servants were acknowledging Isaac as the heir, this Ishmael, a youth of fourteen, mocked. That is, the cultivated man does not like Christ. It is a terrible fact - the legal man does not like Christ. Isaac was acknowledged. I believe it is a wonderful moment when Christ gets His place. The great good of it is this; once you have acknowledged Him you will not have a good conscience if you do not continue doing so. There is a moment when you have done it, but if tomorrow you are drawn away by Ishmael, until Christ be restored to His right place in your heart you will not be happy, you will be like a bird with a wounded wing.

Is not that the secret of holiness?

Unquestionably. That is the coronation day. Christ has not got His right place in the world, but, thank God He has it in your hearts. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world". There is not a word here about your sins - the old man has gone, Christ only is left. It is very simple. You acknowledge Him. If you are not true to Christ you cannot be true to anybody. I have seen it in Christians, when they were not faithful to God they were not faithful to anybody. You see, it depends upon acknowledgment. I acknowledge Him in His right place. The moment you acknowledge Him in His right place you cannot tolerate Ishmael. If Christ has His place Ishmael has no place.

Then the coronation day is to go on continually?

By the Spirit of God. You are always happy when He keeps you up to your highest point. You never see a Christian unhappy but he has let go the top round of the ladder. Mark the scripture: "whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing". Souls who are declining lose first the top shoot; a gardener knows that if the top shoot is checked the plant is not doing well. The top shoot always suffers first. You never saw a Christian declining who did not give up the best bit of truth he had. It is the very opposite to the man of the world. If there is a fire or any danger,

he makes every effort to save the best. The Christian loses his best first.

What is the secret of keeping on the top round? Christ. Christ has got His right place and the intruder is turned out. Oh, you say, the intruder can come in, for he knows the house well; if I put him out at the door, he will come in at the window. The word to you is "Stand fast... in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free".

In chapter 5:17 it is "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would". Is that translated rightly? It should be, that ye may not. This has been a great light to me. Our translators preferred their conscience to their learning. I wish they had kept to the meaning of the original. It is the very reverse. The Spirit lusteth against the flesh. I have a Friend in me now. I used to say that I believed the flesh was stronger than grace. I dare not say so now, because I have this verse to prove that if the Spirit of God is there, He is stronger than the flesh.

It is very important, that remark about losing the best bit of truth. Is the reason this - that the best truth needs full spiritual power to retain it?

Quite so. You know it in natural things. If the extremities are cold, there is a lack of vitality.

Is that why we have the warning: "hold fast"? Exactly, and therefore you will often find a believer with less light more vigorous than one with more light, because he is walking up to his light, the Spirit of God has no check; He is not grieved with the latter, for he is walking up to the measure of what he has. The Spirit's object is always Christ.

Are all prepared to make the start? Sometimes it is grievous to us to cast out Ishmael.

I want righteousness first. I am not uneasy about Ishmael if I give Christ His right place. I shall not make Ishmael first if I am making Isaac first, for then Ishmael *must* go, I cannot tolerate him.

Is it not a common snare to attempt to make Ishmael subject to Isaac?

Yes, and they think that Isaac will improve Ishmael. No! *Ishmael must be cast out*; you are doing an act of simple righteousness when you acknowledge Christ's right to all. He has the right to you, and hence Paul says "Christ liveth in me". People speak of eternal life as if they had received it independently for themselves, whereas it is the Person who is the life who lives in you.

What prevents me from turning Ishmael out?

Because you do not really desire to give Isaac his place. Ishmael was in the house fourteen years, Isaac only one year; but he was not weaned, he was not yet acknowledged. You never can displace Ishmael until you see that Christ has the right to you. He died for you. You cannot keep Ishmael out but by the Spirit of God. If we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit".

Do you call that conflict?

Yes, there is conflict to continue here practically. This experience surpasses that of Romans 7. There you learned your inability to keep the law. Here you find that the most cultivated sentiment man has does not like Christ. The greatest effort all around us is to make Adam love Christ. It is impossible.

You said that there was no use in armour if you are not in battle. There are many Christians who are not engaged in battle who would be in Galatians 5.

This is different to Ephesians 6. There it is heavenly conflict with Satan, while here it is with the flesh. I do not say Satan is not at the bottom of it; but you are not on heavenly ground here, and therefore not opposed by the seven nations. There are Amalek and Balaam and the seven nations.

Many Christians know nothing of the conflict of Ephesians 6. Could we say they do not know this?

I do not believe any Christian is exempted from this who has given Christ His place. I believe this conflict goes on, but it is a victorious conflict, because you must successful you walk in the Spirit. You cannot succeed in Romans 7. You find out your own incompetence there: "in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing". Would this be a good answer to give to anyone who says, I am so often defeated? You have not given Christ His right place. I believe it would. It is a never to be forgotten moment. I think the great question to be asked is, What is walking in the Spirit? I give the answer a sailor gave when asked, How do you get on in rough weather? He said, I do not mind so long as I can see the sun. Where is your eye? Is it on Christ? Keep your eye on Him and there is no fear for you. Perhaps you intend to visit someone. Keep your eye on Christ and you will get on very well. The next visit you pay may be quite different. Your eye is not on Christ. You are thinking of being useful.

The Spirit of God occupies you with nothing but Christ.

Exactly. He testifies not of Himself but of Christ.

Is walking in the Spirit the result of Christ having His right place?

You see that you are in liberty when Christ has His right place; therefore we read "Stand fast... in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free". The Spirit of God will never maintain liberty in you until He has put Christ in His right place.

Is Galatians 2: 20 Jordan?

No, I do not think you touch Jordan in it. In Romans you do not go over Jordan.

Is the coronation-day when Christ is formed in you?

Yes; He is formed in you when He gets His place. If you study Galatians 2: 20 you will see that nothing is plainer. The old man is gone. On the cross "I am crucified with Christ". You have changed from Adam to Christ. You do not appear in Adam before God. You appear in Christ.

Is it the same as leaving your first love?

It is leaving your first love, if after you have known Him you do not give Him His place. You are like the bride in Canticles 5, and the way you are restored is by dwelling upon the beauties of His person. (See vv 10-16).

Can you not say a word more about restoration? You said, I think, it was by dwelling on the beauties of Christ one gets right?

You recover your lost footing. It will come out. You cannot know when there is a reserve between yourself and another but in proportion to your intimacy. If you have only a passing acquaintance with a person you do not feel casual reserve. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me".

The day comes when Ishmael is cast out. Is it not an important thing to bear in mind that he has to be kept out?

That is where the Spirit of God acts for you. A person might say, But Ishmael knows the way in. I say, If you are walking in the Spirit, he will not come in. You have One dwelling in you who is greater than the flesh. The body is the Lord's, and He directs its course throughout. If you want a sample of a man who is dead, you get it in Jonah in the whale. He was alive, but he had no will of his own. I am quite alive, but it is His will I am governed by.

Is that living "by the faith of the Son of God"?

It comes down to this, you are living as He lived down here.

Is that the faith that has Christ for its object?

Quite so. He is the object, and the example, and the power to carry you into His path. It will come out when we come to the wilderness. Practically you have not the man who is crucified living in you but Christ living in you, and until you learn this step you will not get on to the next, "the life which I now live in the flesh... ". No person will get on until Christ gets His place. You never make any progress whatever till then. You cannot have part with Him if you have not given Him His place in you. If you do not take this step we are on tonight you will never make the least progress.

Could this be called practical deliverance?

I was trying to get a word to convey it. A Galatian is one who has begun rightly, and has seen by faith the work of Christ for him, but is seeking perfection in the flesh by the law, holiness by faith, etc. Hence it is in advance of the deliverance in Romans 8: 2. It is not merely the law of the Spirit, but you can say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me".

Did I understand you to say that we do not walk in the Spirit by trying to but by being occupied with Christ?

Quite right, but we do not defer enough to the Spirit.

A person who has received the Spirit has a new power. I think the more you understand what it is to be helped by the Spirit, the more you feel that you want help.

Could you say that a person who knows this is practically delivered?

I think he could not be delivered otherwise. Still I can understand that a soul may be in Romans 8 and saying, I am free; but yourself is not personally displaced and Christ superseding you until you come to Galatians 2: 20. It is the most absolute deliverance.

Must it be a continuous thing?

It is; it is not merely that I am free from the flesh but the Person who has made me free lives in me.

"If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin".

Yes, and that is the same word as in Colossians - "Christ in you, the hope of glory", and yet it is a different side altogether.

Then you would say that Galatians 2: 20 is the same thing as Romans 8: 2, only more advanced?

Yes. Here Christ liveth in you.

Could one call the one deliverance, the other liberty? Romans was the groundwork, but the Corinthians and the Galatians had departed from it. And in our day we can see how restoration can be effected. Restoration always sets you morally higher than you were before departure.

If this practical deliverance were going on Ishmael could not get in again.

If you walk in the Spirit you are free from the flesh, though the flesh is always trying to get a place.

Can we say deliverance is practically known in the measure in which Christ is given His right place?

I should say so.

Does not Galatians 2: 20 start with death?

Yes. Until the old man is displaced Christ cannot get His place. It is by the Spirit of God that you appropriate the death of Christ. No one could put himself to death. Have you noticed that, in the first edition of the Synopsis, Mr Darby makes Rom 6 standing, while in the last he makes it experimental? People try to accept death with respect to the old man by faith. If it were always true of you, you could. It is always true of you in the eye of God - hold that by faith.

There is a positive side in Romans 6 - alive unto God.

Certainly, because it is in the same Person, by whose death you are severed from the old man, that you now live. You are to reckon yourself to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. You are committed to death in Romans 6. In chapter 8: 13 you carry it out. You must believe it though first.

I quite agree that you believe you are committed to it; but you must have the Spirit to carry it out.

Is "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus" connected with it?

Yes, it is the practical consequence.

Is Christ being formed in you progressive?

If you say growing in you, that is, getting a larger place in you, I admit it; but being formed in you is not. No doubt He does get more place. If we had another reading on this subject we should probably get more. Yet "if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know". The very thing I know

best is the thing I feel that I do not know well. If you hear one speaking of the love of God, you think - Do I know it? Perhaps it is the very truth you know most of, but it is so great to you, you think you hardly know it.

THE OBLATION

Leviticus 2: 1-10; 10: 12,13; Daniel 9: 20,21

D.J.H. I was encouraged by the hymn we have just sung (No.447) as to our food, and I have been led, in waiting on the Lord as to today, to this matter of the oblation, relating as it does to the perfection of the humanity of Jesus, the perfect evenness that was there; not a word or thought or motive that was not perfectly delightful to God or with which the Holy Spirit could not identify Himself in an absolute way. We speak of the offerings, many of them - the burnt offering, the sin-offering, the trespass-offering, the peace-offering - made available to us by way of death and speaking of the various aspects of the death of Jesus, but the oblation has a peculiar and distinctive character as relating to the life of Jesus. I felt we might get mutual help as to what it involves. The second scripture read seems to indicate that in the time of breakdown, where there had been failure in the priesthood and the two sons of Aaron had been cut off, the first positive injunction as to their food is in relation to the oblation. In Daniel's time, which is related to a day of breakdown and captivity, it seems that the test is the maintaining of this. As we know, in the law of the oblation there was the morning and the evening oblation, but Daniel's prayer is heard at the time of the evening oblation. I wonder whether that might be the time we are in now, in this dispensation. He is addressed as "one greatly beloved", one who is let into the secrets of what is proceeding in the history of the nation, but it is at the time of the offering up of the evening oblation. I wondered whether our understanding of the truth, and our consciousness of the love and interest of heaven, is dependent upon our being able in some degree to maintain the truth in relation to this matter.

J.M. At the time of the crisis in 1970 this scripture came before me very forcibly, that God can go on with His people on the basis of the oblation. We can always get back to that at a time of failure.

D.J.H. It is good at a time of failure to get back to a point where there has never been any failure. Maybe that is why we would be directed to the oblation.

J.M. The pathway of Jesus is a fruitful matter of contemplation and there is food for our souls in it.

H.F. While this offering is not connected with death, it has been said that the manhood of Jesus, of which this is a type, went right on to the cross. Would it in any way relate to the dying of Jesus?

D.J.H. In going over this, I wondered about that - "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus", 2 Cor 4: 10. It is one thing to be delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, or to die a martyr's death (and who of us would be prepared for that?) but that may involve a relatively brief period of committal. But bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus is more extended. In that sense it would be right to say, would it not, that death was always before Him? And yet, as we sometimes sing, 'Man's malice unavailing to move Thy heart to haste' (hymn 189). Whatever the circumstances in which He moved, there was never anything which diverted Him, hastened Him or slowed Him down, but perfect evenness all the way, yet involving for Him as it did that ultimately He would go to the cross. Philippians 2 would have some connection with it.

W.L. Would the oven, the pan and the cauldron bear on that?

D.J.H. I am sure it would, testing us as to how far we can enter into this, how far we can enter into the feelings of that humanity, how far thus we would be able to present it to God, because what we present we present in ourselves. How far are we formed and how far are we able to penetrate into what Scripture speaks of as a great mystery? "The mystery of piety is great. God has been manifested in flesh", 1 Tim 3: 16. How far are we able to penetrate into that mystery and to feed upon the detail of it, opened up for us to some extent in the first book of Psalms, in the Spirit of Christ - to penetrate into it and thus that these feelings should find their reaction in us? How much can we take of it? What is the capacity of our handful, as we would reach out into this holy area of the manhood of Jesus?

A.A.Sn. Each of us is to take his handful. We are intended each to have an exercise to take it as prescribed. What would the pouring of the oil on it mean?

D.J.H. It is interesting that it is the offerer who does that, not the priest. "When anyone will present an oblation to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour". It is not demanded; this offering seems to be a spontaneous response. Then it says "he shall pour oil on it, and put frankincense thereon". What had you in mind as to that?

A.A.Sn. Just to enquire as to the place the Spirit would have in the perfection of the Lord's manhood. The Spirit identified Him. The oil and the frankincense would indicate that something very precious was going to emerge, the odour of it.

D.J.H. There would be the recognition, would there not, that every particle of this was affected, which the note tells us is wheaten flour? This again has in mind the extension, for the Corn of Wheat falling into the ground and dying would give us a basis for thinking of the extension, the much fruit. So there is the recognition that in this perfect first-fruits to God there was that with which the Holy Spirit could identify Himself in such a full way. As I come before God, it is not only what I say that He takes account of, although He does take account of that, but He searches the hearts. So later we have the honey. I may be able to say things that sound very nice but basically it is what I am which I present to God. So it would have a challenging effect as I bring this, as to how far I am consistent with what I bring. That would be the salt, I suppose, that would go with it.

J.H. There is mingling with oil, then anointing with oil. I wondered if the mingling would relate to the wonderful transaction by the Spirit that led to the incarnation, and the anointing would refer to the Spirit coming upon the Lord Jesus?

D.J.H. That is, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and power of the Highest overshadow thee wherefore the holy thing also which shall be born shall be called Son of God", Luke 1: 35. You are thinking that would be the mingling, but leading on to a time of

fruition, if we might so speak, and maturity (we use these words carefully in this holy subject in which we need such care), when publicly the Holy Spirit came upon Him in bodily form, as He had never done before and never will again upon any man in the condition of blood and flesh.

J.R. The most holy character of the oblation seems to be emphasised in both verses 3 and 10. Do you think we ought to set ourselves to have an appreciation of the manhood of Jesus?

D.J.H. Yes. It says in the law of the oblation, that whatever toucheth it shall be holy (see ch 7: 18). This is not to deter us, for we have reached this point of the oblation by way of the burnt-offering; that is, there is the perfect acceptance "to make atonement". The burnt-offering has been accepted in all its perfection and we reach this by way of death, that is by way of the acceptance of the burnt-offering. Thus we are able for these things although so holy, and our selves by nature absolutely excluded. The burnt offering has come first and then we can penetrate into this holy humanity which, you might say, led up to the acceptance of the burnt-offering.

R.S.R. Can we remind God of the excellence of Jesus? In psalm 141 it says "Let my prayer be set before thee as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening oblation" (v 2).

D.J.H. That is another interesting reference to the evening oblation, not the morning oblation. It seems to suggest that the thing has gone through, and been sustained and maintained; and that is what is delightful to God. So in our day, after nearly 2000 years of attack and the tests that have come in, it is our peculiar privilege to bring this evening oblation; that is, that through all the period this has been the food of our souls. It has never failed to afford nourishment to us and to bring about in us some correspondence, according to our appreciation of it - whether we have been able to penetrate into the oven, or whether we have been able to touch simply the open side of things which is given to us in the gospels (what is for all to see) or whether, maybe not readily defined, in the cauldron, where there is

no shape exactly, but some appreciation of it. It is our privilege to bring this forward right at the end.

R.S.R. It is a triumph that we can go through the wilderness throughout the day without deterioration. In the evening we can be found before God without deterioration.

D.J.H. We need to lay hold of these possibilities. Christianity is not just a lot of theory. These things are to be worked out practically and the oblation would bring that side before us in a very practical way. John makes provision: "if any one sin" (1 John 2: 1), but there is no need to sin, for again he says "Whoever has been begotten of God does not practise sin" and he cannot sin, "because he has been begotten of God", 1 John 3: 9. We want just to read the Bible and believe what it says, These things are possible, and this is the food that would enable us to go through, not only the admission of its possibility but the experience of its possibility. Surely then there will be the experience in our souls of an inward link with God such as Daniel had, and the consciousness of God's affections drawn out towards us and our being brought into the secret of what God is doing at the present time.

W.D. As we feed on the oblation there will be a constitution formed which will be equal to everything that God demands or expects of us, whether in His service or in His testimony.

D.J.H. That is what is in view. The burnt-offering was wholly for God. There is that which has gone up which is entirely for God, and there is that here which is entirely for God.

J.R. It was Aaron and his sons who ate the oblation. It is to build up priesthood and maintain what is priestly and what is for the service of God. Only this character of manhood will do for God.

D.J.H. We do not exclude ourselves from that. Without assumption we have to see that that is what we are. He has made us a kingdom of priests, has He not? So we are all brought in, even the youngest who has any appreciation of the humanity of Jesus, any appreciation of that wonderful death, the shedding of, His precious blood and the

offering in such perfect acceptance and acceptability, and the atoning value of it; we are all in view as priests.

R.J.C. Is it essential that this should affect us inwardly? I was thinking of the need of the mingling in view of things being sustained vitally. It is not just what is external but the very fibre, the very constitution of the person is affected. Particularly in our day, at the end of the dispensation, there is need that we feed increasingly on this kind of manhood.

D.J.H. We get a note to one of the Psalms in relation to mingling: "But my horn shalt thou exalt like a buffalo's: I shall be anointed" - or mingled - "with fresh oil. And mine eye shall see its desire on mine enemies", Ps 92: 10.

J.R. Do you think being "mingled with oil" would refer to the Lord Jesus exclusively?

D.J.H. I think so. We would have to guard that. That would come back to what was mentioned as to "the holy thing". The mingling itself would relate to the Lord Jesus personally, but then the question is how far can we reach in that direction?

J.R. Would it not be in appreciation of His uniqueness, of manhood according to God seen in Him? As we grow in appreciation of that we would come out in His features.

D.J.H. It is the standard that we are ever to have before us. It is that which has never failed. He was in every point tempted as we; we are to see that this is the standard and this alone will do for God. So for us it must involve the death of Christ to meet everything which is contrary. Mr Taylor said that never before and never again will God have perfection in a man in flesh and blood as He had it in Jesus. We must realise the immense value of that wonderful sacrifice, that, as it says in the psalm, it must be given up for ever (see Ps 49: 8). God gave up a life in perfection in flesh and blood, that is the mingling with oil in all its absoluteness, and then the Holy Spirit descending in bodily form and abiding upon Him in such an absolute committal. God has given that up for ever. He has Jesus and, as we sing, 'we have Thee, Jesus, still' (hymn 229), that blessed Man the

other side of death, but not in the condition of flesh and blood. God has given that up for ever and He will never have again what He had when Jesus was here.

J.R. That condition; but the Lord's manhood is the same where He is, is it not? His manhood has not changed.

D.J.H. His manhood is the same but the condition is ended for ever.

W.L. Mr Taylor linked the oblation with Luke's gospel and the new oblation of Leviticus 23 (see v 16) with the Acts. There is no leaven in the oblation, but in the new oblation there is leaven and he linked that with the coming in of the Spirit as cloven tongues of fire; and we come in on the line of the new oblation.

D.J.H. There is much which we have not time to go into, but if only we are stimulated into further enquiry! It is a continual oblation. It is a question of whether we go from here with something more of a committal and a concern that this might be continued amongst us.

Jn.M. Mr Raven said that if anyone has any appreciation of Christ whatever, that man is made meet; that is, if the Spirit has worked something in us, the degree may seem to us very small, but if we have the thing, that is pleasing to God. It would be a rallying point for our affections and an encouragement to go on to have a greater appreciation of the oblation.

D.J.H. It is interesting that there is a kind of connection even with the sin-offering: "if his hand cannot attain... " (Lev 5: 11) he could bring fine flour. It has been related to the thief on the cross, that there with the Saviour beside him about to make atonement in actuality, he could just say "this man has done nothing amiss". That was his appreciation of the oblation. The, answer to it is immediate: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise", Luke 23: 41 -43.

J.H. What we have in this book is our approach to God, is it not? I was thinking of the comparison with the manna, which would be more our side. This is what is for God in our appreciation of Christ.

D.J.H. The manna is what came down from heaven and is food for us in the wilderness, but this is what has come up. It would connect

with Isaiah 53: "he shall grow up before him as a tender sapling, and as a root out of dry ground" (v 2). That would be the growing up, would it not? "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" would be the preparation in the oven and in the pan.

J.H. Is not the food of the priests the sin-offering and the oblation? I wondered if we see in Daniel the gain of both these foods: "while I was... confessing my sin and the sin of my people" and then the reference to the evening oblation.

D.J.H. I think that is right. I would say for myself that I have maybe missed out on that. We have had a lot to bear and maybe continue to bear it, the iniquity which has come in. At one time it was historical, the break-down. You could look back and say, Paul saw it all in ruins and John builds in the ruins of Paul's structure, but now we ourselves have seen the breakdown. We cannot exclude ourselves from part in it. We said at one time that if we are a witness to anything we are a witness to the breakdown, and we said it in a detached way, but none of us can exclude ourselves from our part in it. The great point is not to dwell only on that side and to bear it rightly, but to feed on this which is such positive food for upbuilding in relation to something which has never broken down.

J.R. We have not only seen the breakdown, we have had our part in contributing to it. This idea of memorial comes in more than once in the chapter: "the priest shall burn the memorial thereof on the altar,... And the remainder of the oblation shall be Aaron's and his sons' ".

D.J.H. That is what is for God, is it not?

J.R. It seems to involve a remembrance continuing.

D.J.H. Yes, that is wonderful, that the food that we are given, the manna, was the food of angels, but this is the food of God. In that sense it would be greater, would it?

J.R. That is what I thought. It is a memorial for God and it is given to us for food. It would underlie the whole service of God, an

appreciation of this kind of manhood and having some part in this kind of manhood.

D.J.H. But what I am concerned about is that it is not what we can say about it.

J.R. According to Numbers 15 every sacrifice was to be accompanied by the suitable oblation and drink-offering; that is, the offerer was to be in keeping with what he offered. If he offered a bullock there was to be a consistent oblation and drink offering and so on.

D.J.H. The salt involves that. "Every offering of thine oblation shalt thou season with salt" (v 13) would be the committal on our side that this should be maintained.

R.S.R. What would be the point of the instruction "with all the frankincense"?

D.J.H. There is that which is absolutely for God, is there not? It connects with prayer. In Luke's gospel, which has been referred to, you get Jesus in prayer. It says, when in the garden, rising up from His prayer (see chap 22:4 5). There has never been a prayer like that. Is not that the frankincense which only God can appreciate?

R.S.R. It would suggest the fragrance and the excellence of that life which God alone could assess.

D.J.H. Yes, because among other things it was dependence upon God. Therefore the One upon whom He was dependent in such holy perfection is the One who alone could appreciate that dependence.

R.S.R. It appears that the priests did not partake of this; it was all for God.

D.J.H. And yet we ourselves are privileged to bring the continual oblation in.

J.C.W. The first mention of an offering is the same word 'oblation', where "Jehovah looked upon Abel, and on his offering", Gen 4: 4. Do you think He saw some compatibility between the two?

D.J.H. That has often been drawn attention to, that He looked on Abel and his offering. It is interesting that it is put that way round. The first thing God looks upon is the person. "Who is this that engageth his heart to draw near unto me?", Jer 30: 21. We may be concerned as to what may be said but God's first look is on the person.

J.C.W. It seems also to be related to the kind of offering that is brought.

D.J.H. The first reference to anything in the Bible is always instructive for us. I think what you refer to would provide a key to what is in view in what is opened up later as to this word.

S.Y. Would you say something about the power Daniel had with God.

D.J.H. It seems as though he had to wait. Is that all with a view to bringing to light those features which were set out so perfectly in the Lord Jesus? We speak of those features of dependence and obedience, so delightful, that were seen in Him - made to trust upon His mother's breasts, going down to Nazareth and being subject to His parents - but then we sometimes refer in song to the patience of Jesus, and He speaks to Philadelphia of keeping "the word of my patience", Rev 3: 10. There is that side as to the evening oblation, that this feature has come to light, has been worked out, has been tested and now comes forward, and it is this consistency which would give us power.

S.Y. It is something which marked those men of the Old Testament - Nehemiah, Ezra and others. These men all had power with God.

W.D. Do not Leviticus 10 and Daniel raise the question as to the spirit in which these men faced the crisis in which they were? Paul says to Timothy "The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit", 2 Tim 4: 22. Does not the oblation link with a person's spirit in a way?

D.J.H. The mingling with oil was unique in relation to the Lord Jesus Himself, but would that be the connection in us?

W.D. It is the spirit of things that counts, is it not, in times of crisis? What we have had to face in conflicts is the question of the spirit in which the conflict has been conducted. The oblation is the great source of food in that connection.

D.J.H. Say more as to that, particularly in relation to Leviticus 10 - the spirit in which this crisis was faced.

W.D. It would be contrasted with the spirit that would burn the sin-offering, the judicial action. The spirit of Jesus in the oblation as fed upon was in contrast to that.

D.J.H. It seems that it is the first positive injunction. There is the matter of strong drink, a negative injunction in verse 8, after this failure, but then the taking the oblation that is left. That is a remarkable expression. It seems as if this is anticipated in chapter 2, "the remainder of the oblation", and here it says "the oblation that is left". Does that suggest that there is always, and always will be, something left for us of food value, however dark the day, however long we may go on?

J.R. That should be a comfort to us in the midst of such, almost remnant, conditions. "His sons that were left": there were only two, but they are still "Aaron and his sons". It is the oblation that is left of Jehovah's offerings by fire. It is that remainder that is referred to in chapter 2, is it not? As long as the service of God goes on there will be what is available for us in the oblation.

D.J.H. These are the things we need to encourage ourselves in. We are so apt to take account of what is negative, and what is gone, but this is not what is gone, this is what is left.

J.R. One of the remarkable features of the truth of the recovery is that there is a right appreciation of the manhood of Christ. The manhood of Jesus is not appreciated rightly around us by many, but it is one of the features which has been in the revival of the truth.

D.J.H. Our concern would be that that might be continued; not an appreciation of it in what we can say about it, but an appreciation of

it demonstrated in our lives and as to how far they are consistent with what was seen in its unique perfection in Jesus.

J.R. We would not have followed another kind of manhood had we been maintained in an appreciation of the oblation.

D.J.H. Therefore to be preserved again (hades' gates have not signed a truce, we are aware of the activities of the enemy in further divisiveness and we can thank God for the unity of the Spirit which we are able to enjoy together and eternal life conditions in an occasion like this) we must not be off guard. But we are not to be occupied with that side of things, the negative and the attack. It is this which is going to build us up so that we shall be able to meet whatever test may come.

J.R. In Leviticus 10 it goes on to speak of other parts of food for the priests, as if in time of breakdown food is a most important thing. There is "the oblation that is left" and the breast of the wave-offering and the shoulder of the heave-offering and so on.

D.J.H. Those offerings were connected with the consecration. There is no failure from this point of view, relating to what is dedicated at the outset and the committal that was there, and there is room for it and power for it right at the end,

J.H. Paul approaching his militant ministry (2 Corinthians 10) begins "But I... entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of the Christ" (v 1). That would be the gain of the meat-offering.

D.J.H. That is how things would be met among us, is it not? This is over against the sin-offering being burnt up, the judicial side of things; but over against that is the meat-offering, the oblation, and feeding upon it.

Jn.M. Has what you are saying anything to do with the peculiar character of the end of the chapter, where Aaron does not eat the sin-offering, as if he implies that he is not equal to it. But it says "Moses heard it; and it was good in his sight", as if what had gone before, the eating of the oblation and the other parts of the offering that were left, in a sense made up for it.

D.J.H. Yes, that is a touch of grace. Moses would take account of Aaron's feelings and how this had borne in upon him, the occupation with the judicial side, the need for it, but how it had affected him. But as you say, there is what comes before initially.

J.S-n. It was to be eaten with unleavened bread. We can only come to a right assessment of ourselves as feeding on the perfection of the humanity of Jesus in all its evenness.

D.J.H. That is interesting; "Take the oblation that is left... and eat it with unleavened bread". We might have thought the oblation itself would have been sufficient food, but say more as to eating it with unleavened bread.

J.S-n. In a time of breakdown you can be very occupied with the breakdown and form an assessment or judgment of things connected with that, but you have to get back to the divine standard of perfection, the humanity of Jesus, to come to a right assessment.

D.J.H. It is all to bring us to that positive side. Whilst we are speaking of the oblation as food, we must remember that the first thing is what was for God.

R.S. Is the thought of the memorial, the principle of it, seen in Cornelius: "Thy prayers and thine alms have gone up for a memorial before God", Acts 10: 4? How God values it!

D.J.H. That was even before his conversion, but it was no doubt the fruit of the Spirit, the operation of new birth. God had gone before in the Spirit, evidenced by the fact that the Holy Spirit was prepared to identify - Himself with him even before he was baptised. It would be something peculiar at that time in the dispensation, but I think it would certainly be these features wrought by the Spirit in him which were delightful.

H.F. In stressing the matter of our compatibility with our words regarding this perfection, you may have whetted appetite and desire for this. How do you see the answer to that, in our collective ways, or in our individual ways, feeding on Christ, so that we might have this for God?

D.J.H. I would like to know more about it for myself. It is noticeable that it is brought to Aaron's sons, the priests, and presented. What is brought is related to what is collective, is it not? Then there is what had gone before, that is, "if thou present an offering of an oblation baken in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour". He did not make the cakes at the entrance to the tent of meeting. That would be something that had gone on in secret, an appreciation of and a penetration into this humanity in its most intense way, but the result was that something was formed and the cakes could be brought. It says "unleavened wafers mingled with oil", the thing had taken shape. With the pan it is not so fully developed, there is no shape given to it. With the cauldron there would be even less shape, showing the various degrees in which we may appreciate it. But it is noticeable that, if we do speak of the oblation in the pan as not being so mature as baken in the oven, still the word says it is an oblation. There is no diminution in what it is to God. He takes account of it on account of what it is to Himself in its intrinsic worth, irrespective of our appreciation of it. Whatever we feel our measure may be, however small, let us be encouraged to bring it, to bring it here, and as we bring it in relation to the service of God, that is the place where it is going to find its true level and where we are to grow in the appreciation ourselves. The preparation of the cakes and wafers was at home, the secret side.

H.F. Yes, and someone had to make that flour fine. It was fine flour. All that lies behind it, the preparation of it and the bringing of it. God appreciates the presentation of Christ, at whatever stage of it we may be and the saints appreciate it too.

D.J.H. It affords food thus for building up one another in our most holy faith. What you say is important as to the individual side and the collective side, because this is where we are tested out in relation to the oblation.

D.M. After the breakdown in the beginning of the Acts, Stephen comes on to view. He says "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit", chap 7: 59. Then does the secret and collective side come in when the Lord

says to Saul: "I am Jesus, whom *thou* persecutest", chap 9: 5? There was that which was representative.

D.J.H. When you look at the literality of that, what can we say? "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit": is my spirit such that I could ask the Lord Jesus to receive it, as it is now, at this moment? The word of God is living and operative, sharper than any two-edged sword. If we are here it is not just a way of spending a very happy afternoon together; it is that the word might penetrate into us. Could I say at this moment "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"? As you say, in a man like Stephen the oblation was seen in expression in continuation. He was not ruffled by what happened. He could stand before the council. As Mr Darby said, Never shun persecution; it will make your face shine like an angel's. That is how Stephen was before the council, and he could go on steadily. There was power in that long narration of the history of the nation up to a certain point; all that antagonism, what was murderous was restrained by the power in that man until the full testimony was rendered. Then calmly, without any haste or murmuring, he could go right through, kneeling down and praying. How wonderful! - a man like that, a man who could say "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit". But let us remember that this was a man who had once been a sinner; he had been saved by grace; his sins had been washed away in the blood of Jesus, the same as ours have been; he had received the Holy Spirit the same as we have. This was a man of like passions to ourselves. Let us not look at him as a man in the Bible of some peculiar character, though he was that, but let us see that this is the possibility in persons like you and me, and then see how far we come up to it. So it has its challenging effect.

J.R. It is normal Christianity, is it not?

D.J.H. That is what we want to get back to. We have become so used to abnormalities. It is interesting that so many references have been made to the early chapters of Acts. We used to say, Oh, that was a transitional time and things were different then. That is true, and there was that which was transitional in the movement from Jerusalem to Antioch, and the lingering of the glory, and Jesus

standing at the right hand of God ready to return would they have received Him. But what was seen in Stephen was really normal, was it not?

J.S-n. He was a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit. Both these things are available to us.

D.J.H. It also says he was full of grace and power. All these things are available.

R.J.C. The kind of manhood that was seen in the Lord uniquely was in some sense represented in Stephen. He goes as far as he can in likeness to Christ, even in asking for his persecutors to be forgiven. So this kind of manhood can be continued in so me measure in us. Daniel was "one greatly beloved". In some sense, typically, was the life of Jesus seen in measure in Daniel ?

D.J.H. Right from earliest times (reference was made to Abel) God was looking forward. He can do that, and we can look back.

O.M. There is encouragement in the very first words we read: when any one. We should all be feeding on Jesus in this way and have something to present.

D.J H. Yes. Our brother referred to our appetites being whetted. We would seek that there might be some stimulation, that perhaps someone who has not felt this way before (and I suppose with all of us there must be room for more) someone may have been stimulated. If only one, our being together this afternoon would not have been in vain. We need to see the possibilities. There is nothing impossible about these things. All the power that was here in the time of Stephen is here now. There has been no diminution in the power. It may be "a little power" (Rev 3: 8) but it is power, and it is available to us. There is no reason on the divine side why what came into expression in those men in the early Acts should not come into expression in the time of the evening oblation.

J R. The scripture in Daniel says "whilst I was yet speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, flying swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening

oblation" - at the beginning: it is the same man Gabriel, the same kind of support that is available, is it not?

D.J.H. Yes. In connection with Gabriel it is interesting that he was the one who spoke to Mary at the beginning of Luke's gospel.

J.R. It is a credit to Daniel that he is called "the man Gabriel"; how near he was able to come to Daniel. There would be an affinity in a sense between Daniel and the man Gabriel.

D.J.H. Yes, and it would also be like Stephen's face being like the face of an angel.

W.L. Would Paul's reference in 1 Corinthians 10 to "upon whom the ends of the ages have come" (v 11), as preceding the Supper, link on with your thought as to "the evening oblation"?

D.J.H. Yes; as he says there, "all these things happened to them as types".

A.A.Bn. Would this be what would sustain us? We have referred to it being the first thing that is drawn attention to after the breakdown, but it will go through, will it not? Daniel went through and he stood in his lot at the end.

D.J.H. There is an interesting reference in Ezekiel to these three men - Noah, Daniel and Job (see chap 14: 14). I suppose Daniel was alive then. He would be a man in whom this was expressed. He would not be inflated by that, would he? Noah and Job had long since gone. They all arrived at the end, did they not? Noah was with God when God said "The end of all flesh is come before me", Gen 6: 13. Job arrived at the end of the Lord. Daniel stood in his lot at the end of the days. Daniel was alive but he could be trusted to be included in the current prophetic word, you might say, without fear of elation because this had been his food all the way through.

J.W. In chapter 5 of Matthew the Lord says "leave there thy gift before the altar" (v 24). If something abnormal comes in, "leave there thy gift... and then come", as though the thing has to be maintained in spite of conditions which might have to be adjusted.

D.J.H. That is interesting. There it is a question of being "reconciled to thy brother", is it not?

A.A.Bn. Does not the Supper maintain us on this line? Our appreciation of that One who went into death - that kind of life, the life that was given up.

D.J.H. It comes in there, does it not? It must stand related to the Supper which always brings in a distinct way forcibly before us the life of Jesus, and His death particularly, but we cannot but be reminded of the perfection of that life as it was for God. The thing is to maintain it all the way through.

J.S. It says "who by the eternal Spirit offered himself spotless to God", Heb 9: 14. Would that show how this matter of the oblation runs right into the offering of Himself to God?

D.J.H. Yes, that would all be part of the absolute identification of the Spirit with Him in everything He did. Even out of death, it says "having by the Holy Spirit charged the apostles", Acts 1: 2.

P.G. Does Psalm 16 give prophetically the language of the manhood of Jesus? "To the excellent thou hast said, In them is all my delight" (v 3).

D.J.H. Yes, the excellent. That would connect with the oblation. He would be viewing the saints in the light of what was coming into expression. "To the saints that are on the earth, and to the excellent" not 'of the earth' but "on the earth". It is what is down here, corresponding to what grew up before God as a tender plant.

P.G. You can understand the word excellent being used in regard of the Son, as the Father does, but it is attractive that the word is used regarding the saints, is it not?

D.J.H. We are to distinguish and discern the things that are more excellent. These are the things we are to go in for.

R.S.R. In Psalm 16 it is: To the saints... In them is all my delight - a very excellent distinction. It is the extension of what was in Jesus.

D.J.H. "In whom I have found my delight" is Jesus but it makes room for the extension in the saints which would really be the full answer to what we are speaking of.

GRANGEMOUTH

27 July 1974

Key to initials

A.A.Brown, Grangemouth; R.J.Campbell, Glasgow; W.Dickson, Edinburgh; H.Fentiman, Grangemouth; P.Grant, Dundee; D.J.Hutson, London; J.Harthill, Glasgow; W.Lamont, Cumnock; D.Melvin, Kilmarnock; James Munro, Grangemouth; John Munro, Grangemouth; O.Mair, Cullen; J.Renton, Edinburgh; R.S.Renton, Edinburgh; J.Spinks, Grangemouth; J.Strachan, Dundee; R.Swan, Edinburgh; J.C.Walker, Dundee; S.Young, Lochgelly

THE CHILDREN'S WARNINGS

I recall that in the early days of aeroplane travel there used to be a three-fold command system to 'fasten seat belts'. First of all a passenger entering the cabin was confronted with a red light warning to this effect. Is this not like a bad *conscience*? Especially for unbelievers the conscience is a reminder that not only hour by hour safety but also the eternal destiny of the soul need immediate attention. The gospel calls upon the sinner for repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning work. We give thanks for the many who have heeded this call. The believer need therefore have no more conscience of sins because they have been borne by Jesus at Calvary's cross. Sins may still be remembered by us to preserve us in some way. They would however never be on the conscience which should always be kept good and clear through obedience.

On taking his seat in the plane a passenger would hear an insistent voice saying the same two words as the red light warning with the addition of 'please'. It was a command by the captain and yet it showed respect for the traveller. It is like the *preaching*. This is a chosen way by which a God who is love shows the value to Himself of every human passenger on life's fleeting journey. His word "Come" is both an invitation and a command. He invites so as to attract us into all the blessings of the gospel, and He commands us lest we should think that we could please ourselves whether we accept or refuse that which is our only hope.

After a few minutes a stewardess would come and speak to every passenger in turn asking 'Is your seat belt fastened?'. She would not go away until assured that it was. Even if you said that you were too big for what was provided she would still ensure that you were made safe! That is the *evangelist*. O, that we were more filled with God's love for His creatures - men, women and children! Philip, an evangelist, preached the glad tidings and many believed and were healed; he preached the name of Jesus Christ and many

were baptised; he preached Jesus to one man who learned to know the Lord and went on his way rejoicing. Do you rejoice likewise?

J.C.Evershed