

A
WORD
IN ITS
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Meetings were held at Brighouse, Yorkshire, in July 1894 at which Mr Raven and Mr Stoney were present. They do not appear to be included in the series of either Mr Raven or Mr Stoney. The first of the readings is printed below. (Remarks were not attributed to individual brothers in the printed edition of the notes).

EVANGELISATION, OR THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

WHAT GOSPEL DO YOU PREACH?

Acts 10: 34-44

I think perhaps it might have been expected that we should read from Paul's writings, but I propose this because here Peter is opening the Kingdom of Heaven to the Gentiles, and though I do not exclude Paul, if you see the gospel at the opening you will be prepared for the fuller development of it by Paul.

You do not get beyond resurrection here, when you come to Paul it is Christ in glory.

What do you say as to Acts 13? It is Paul there, is it not?

Yes, it is Paul there to the Jews.

You said Paul's Gospel was Christ in glory.

I speak of the Gospel given to him; first he preaches to the Jews, and then he turns to the Gentiles - "lo! we turn to the Gentiles".

What would you say as to Acts 9: 20?

It ought to be Jesus, Son of God; that as the new departure, the first time it was ever preached. The "Son of God" is an interpolation in Acts 8: 37.

That is beyond resurrection?

Yes, I quite admit that. I see in Christendom that the gospel is confined to the sacrifice of Christ, which is after the order of Judaism, i.e., His resurrection is not insisted on; we must take a different course. There was no resurrection of the victim in the Old

Testament; there was clearance of sins for the time. The great characteristic of the Gospel is resurrection. You cannot preach Christ in glory if you do not preach resurrection.

I suppose you are speaking of what is characteristic of Peter on the one hand and of Paul on the other?

Yes, but I am taking Peter first, because if we have not Peter we cannot have Paul. I look at the Gospel preached throughout Christendom, I find that it is confined to the death of Christ.

What is the effect?

The effect is that though you believe that you are forgiven today you look for a fresh application of the blood for forgiveness tomorrow.

If you preach the sacrifice without the resurrection you do not preach God's seal to the sacrifice?

Yes, but the resurrection is more than a seal or receipt. If only a receipt it practically leaves the man unremoved. You are the same man as ever you were, if there is no resurrection. God could not justify except on the ground of another man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

That goes further than the sacrifice? Yes, because the Son of man has been glorified.

Do not you get the setting aside of man in the sacrifice? You get the judgment of him but not justification until Christ is raised.

You do not get a man of another order until you have got resurrection?

Exactly. You will find when you come to look at souls in exercise that you cannot get to Christ except you part company with yourself.

You would not say that sacrifices set man aside? No; you have two parts in grace - one is that Christ is come to you, and the other that you are come to Him.

So that the Old Testament presentation of sacrifice has nothing in it in regard to the putting aside of man?

No; and you never find a man preach a full gospel exclusively from the Old Testament. I have preached the Gospel from Isaiah 6; but I connected it with 2 Corinthians 3.

There is no "live coal" in 2 Corinthians; but there is in Isaiah 6; perhaps you will say a little more about the live coal.

Judgment is not upon the believer. The "live coal" which touched the prophet's lips is now removed in the cross. There is a Man risen from the dead at the right hand of God.

That involves a real journey of the soul to reach Christ?

Yes; I judge that it is not of God to ask the new convert to sing; he must begin, as John Bunyan said, at the "bass note".

The Old Testament sacrifices in their application went only as far as sins, they did not go as far as sin?

Quite so - Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. In the case of Abel, he had faith, and hence he, according to the mind of God, sets forth that no offering could be acceptable but a victim not chargeable with the offence, bearing the judgment of it, and at the same time having a personal excellency - "the fat thereof". If you examine the history of souls you will find that many are here.

We must first see the effect the resurrection has with God, that the man under judgment has been judicially ended in His sight. That is the idea.

It is only when we see the resurrection of Christ that we see how completely the first man is set aside?

How could you get justification otherwise? The elder brother says, I have served thee many years and yet thou never gavest me a kid to make merry with my friends, but there is one who has been a disgrace to you and there is no end to the favour you shew him.

The prodigal has passed out of death into life?

The father received the prodigal on the ground of the Man who has glorified God.

Yes, he is received on the ground of the Shepherd that brought him in; he is accepted in the Beloved. You must read the three parables together.

The elder brother on the ground he took was not entitled to a kid?

No, he was not entitled to anything. The prodigal knew that his father could not be on better terms with him, but he was not able to enjoy his father's acceptance.

On the same principle in regard to Luke 10, where the wounded man is taken to the inn he had nothing of his own, he had nothing to pay.

Quite so; that parable is a prelude to entering the present order, which runs on to chapter 18. The prodigal son in chapter 15 is all grace.

In chapter 10, where the inability of the law is proved, grace comes in; the suffering one is cured, carried and cared for. This is not on heavenly ground.

My side, necessities?

Exactly. In this parable is disclosed the great fact that the Jewish order was not able to meet the need of man, man's misery; Christ comes in and relieves man of his misery even on the earth, cures him and carries him; and then He takes care of him as a pilgrim and stranger here.

You do not call the inn the Father's house?

No. The word for inn is not the same as that in Luke 2, it is here only a place where you go in for the night.

Was chapter 15 to be enjoyed on the earth?

Yes; but there is no earthly favour.

You would not limit it to our joy in heaven? It is enjoyed while we are on earth but not from earth.

Is it the blessing into which the soul is brought now?

Yes, the earthly side is in chapter 10 and the heavenly side in chapter 15.

You get it in Peter's gospel, do you not?

Yes; that is what I want to shew. You do not get justification, do you?

Yes, you cannot get anything without justification.

Do you get justification of life in Peter? No I do not know that you do.

We come to a great point now, and I say it with deep feeling, that in the preaching of the Gospel I am afraid the judgment of the first man is not insisted on.

Why do you say so?

How could you appeal to the feelings if you really believed that the old man was judicially ended. If I am right I am helping you; you will assuredly preach better. If you really believe that the old man has gone from the eye of God how can you try to move that man?

May it not be used to express the heart of God?

It is plain that you should address the conscience. The great power of an evangelist is light, God is light. Have you brought light to that man's soul and is he under the action of it?

Would you not say, Come, to him?

I think it is rather too soon to say, Come, to the unconverted.

We beseech you in Christ's stead?

To whom was that said? To the Corinthians.

Mark, the Corinthians though so highly gifted had to be led on to reconciliation.

Was it light or love that won the prodigal? There was both. Light acted first, he knew nothing about love until he came; he could not understand it.

You are looking at it in an abstract way. You might have people wrought upon in different states?

I am looking at the evangelist come from God, you must take that side. I come from God with a message to you, and it is that you are a lost man as you stand there. I have come with grace to you from

God. You must take into account that God must first work in the soul; as with the woman in Luke 15; your power is light, you are to find the silver piece, the work of God.

Do you think judgment on man is sufficiently pressed?

No I am sure it is not.

I believe it is a good thing to begin with, "What hast thou done?"

Quite so, but to Adam it was, "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" He feared because he was naked in the presence of God. The evangelists who are most effective are those who bring God to the man's soul.

Would you bring in the sin?

Yes, I am speaking of the evangelist. You have to preach the judgment on man; it is not simply that man is a sinner, but that he is lost.

Does Peter's gospel involve that?

Yes, the very fact of resurrection involves it.

Do you change the man in Peter's gospel?

No. That is what troubled the prodigal. His father is on the best of terms with him but he did not feel fit for him.

What do you mean by saying that you would not appeal to man?

I said, work upon his feelings; it is quite right to convict his conscience.

You would appeal to him after preaching the truth about him?

I would appeal to his conscience.

What you mean is, that the root must be reached?

Exactly.

I believe that the lack of this is why souls have not found peace?

Yes. Besides, the evangelist is responsible to bring in all who belong to Christ into company with His own. The evangelist selects from the

net, and he could not select if he did not know what he was selecting for.

Put the good in vessels?

Yes. How could he know what to select if he did not know the other two parables. Christ the Head of the Church has sent the Evangelist to find out every one belonging to Him here on earth. He seeks them for Christ, not merely to go to heaven, not only to be saved, but in order that they may be members of the body of Christ here, through His grace. He has been appointed to go and search the world and bring all His to Him even now.

Does not that bring in the purpose of God? Yes; but it is Christ the Head who sends you.

Would you say that affection for souls is woven in with that?

No doubt. I do not begin at the best side; I begin with Christendom; the object there is to benefit man. It is not the benefit of man or results which should occupy you. The Apostle can say he was a savour of death unto death and life unto life. You ought to feel in preaching the gospel - I have done it badly but I have sought to get the blessed God credit for His grace to man. Do you follow me?

Our difficulty is to know how to put it. We see.

Take what is written, take the periodicals. There is very little of what you are saying now in them?

That is the very reason why you should not follow them.

I quite agree with you - a lot of narratives, they appeal to the natural man I am sure.

I am very glad to hear you think so.

Our difficulty is, we fear getting too doctrinal and leaving out God.

Quite right. But some say that the Gospels were written to prove the divinity of our blessed Lord; on the contrary, they were written to shew how He opened out the heart of God to man, and as a servant you are called to do the same, to shew out God's heart to man.

Does not the guilt come in?

Yes, but you must come to the fact that man is entirely lost. How can you bring in resurrection if the man has not gone?

I am speaking of reaching the man's conscience?

The moment you come to the question of peace, the forgiveness of sins will not assure one of it.

Your thought, I suppose, is that the way the resurrection is often presented is to shew that the sins are gone?

Yes, nothing has done more damage to souls than calling the resurrection the receipt. It shews me how you can reduce the highest truth down to the human level. Man has reduced the word of God to his own level, and left out God.

Would you not preach the gospel from the second of Ephesians?

No. That is only shewing you that you are brought from the bottom to the top.

You do not limit where or what a man preaches from, but it is a question of what is before him?

Quite so. I have no right to dictate to him what he should preach from, but I am bound to be assured that he knows the gospel. I feel that the lack is that God's present object, the church, is not paramount. The evangelist is sent to gather in the lost. I compare him to a recruiting officer who recruits for his own corps.

What place do you give repentance?

That is your own side; if you convict the sinner the work of repentance has begun.

You get the effect of light?

Yes. I challenge you to trace up the conversion of any one who has stood well who did not go through distress of soul.

Do you mean the careless or the anxious?

The question is, can he face God? If he is not brought to God he has no real rest. Repentance is toward God?

Yes, of course, otherwise he does not return to God.

God commandeth all men everywhere to repent?

Yes, but I believe conversion is a solemn work - the work of God.

Do you not think that repentance is connected more with guilt than being lost?

Yes, but I do not believe he gets the sense that he is lost until death stares him in the face. Look at the prodigal son; he would fain have filled his belly with the husks. Look at your own conversion. I look at my own; my distress was that I was afraid to die.

God had found you out?

I read in the newspaper that the cholera had appeared within six miles of me; in my distress I lay upon the floor, and I remember saying to myself, I am afraid to die, though at the time I was in the habit of reading the Bible four times a day.

The great point is conscience? Yes.

You find nothing in man to work upon?

No. I seek his conscience. I think R.E. sees what I mean.

One thing I have noticed in preaching is - if you dwell only on a man's sins you will have a hall full, but the moment you begin on man's irretrievable ruin lots will clear out.

You see now?

I have not seen that.

Perhaps you never preached it. Have you tried it?

Yes, I think so. Man is not only guilty but he is morally worthless from head to foot.

I hold that death is on every unconverted man this minute.

If you bring the light of God on the conscience it convicts.

Yes. What frightens man is that he must die. Who told thee that thou wast naked?

Where do you get Paul preaching that in Acts - death on man?

The fact is, the moment you preach resurrection you admit that ground; how could you have resurrection if one man was not dead?

If you preach resurrection you must add that man has gone?

You cannot preach resurrection without doing so; your statement shews how little resurrection is known; there could not be justification apart from resurrection.

Is it not looked at as a receipt in 1 Corinthians 15 - "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins"?

Where is the receipt there?

If Christ is not risen there is no truth in the gospel.

If I understand resurrection it is co-relative to death?

Of course it is.

Jesus is the One that has died? Yes.

When you say that death is admitted when you speak of resurrection, that would be true of the apostle, and he would have that before him?

He did preach it. I think it is of all moment to see that in preaching the gospel the apostle always has in view the gift of the Spirit, and I do not see that it is possible for a man to receive the Holy Ghost unless he is clear of the judgment on man, that is, clear of death. I believe that the judgment on man - at present on him, is not sufficiently preached. "God testifying of his gifts" - Where is the testimony now?

It is the Spirit of God.

Would not the one who had received forgiveness of sins receive the Spirit of God?

Yes, if you believe in Him whom God has raised from the dead. See Acts 10: 43. "Through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins".

How could any one receive the forgiveness of sins unless he believed in Him?

Many believe in Him only as the sacrifice. Still you must have the blood before you have the Spirit?

Yes, you must begin with the sacrifice - we are not contending about that.

And does not resurrection declare the value of the blood?

Yes, but it is more; God raised Him from amongst the dead.

No person can possibly teach the resurrection without the sacrifice?

It is impossible, and that comes in with, as I understand, the gospel of God. God has removed from His own side the distance between Him and man in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. No one could receive the value of the resurrection of Christ who had not seen Him as the sacrifice.

I cannot understand how a man can have forgiveness if he does not see that God has been met in the cross.

Certainly not. If sin is not removed the judgment has not been executed. He that is dead is justified from sin.

You could not say that God has been satisfied unless you see resurrection. You have passed out of death into life. Is not a risen Christ set forth in Romans 3?

It has often been said that Romans 3 answers to Exodus 12.

If the soul receives what you are speaking of, is not that a ground upon which the Spirit is given?

If you have passed out of death into life you are before God clear of the judgment; but I repeat, I do not believe that sufficient prominence is given to the fact that man as he is is under the judgment of God.

What do you mean?

He is under the judgment of death. That man will die?

No, but that if he were in the presence of God he would fear greatly. Those who have been brought up by godly parents are more affected by the fear of death than by the burden of their sins.

What does the Lord present in John 4?

He takes there the divine side, the greatness of the gift. The woman does not apprehend the greatness of the grace, and then the Lord touches her conscience. Take the case of Adam, he was under the judgment of death as soon as he sinned, he was afraid of God because he was naked - "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked". The devil told him he would not die. He knew that he was naked - without his body in the sight of God.

The moment the act is charged upon Adam he excuses himself. In Romans 5 we read that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which He has given us. Forgiveness of sins and justification are reached through a risen Christ. Would you delay the reception of the Holy Ghost until souls knew that the old man had gone?

No, I should not. Remember that the first eleven verses of Romans 5 set forth the terms on which God is with you justified, the Holy Ghost sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. You may have the Spirit of God and know your acceptance though you do not enjoy it. I remember that for years I knew it was all settled and bright with God, but I was not happy as to my own state; I was not in Romans 8, in measure I was in Romans 5. We end Romans 8 enjoying Romans 5?

Quite so.

It is important to keep prominently before us the fact that the Holy Ghost is given on the ground of the accomplished work of redemption?

Yes, you believe that God has raised Christ from the dead. There are two things - He was delivered for our offences, and was raised for our justification.

You must have forgiveness, then?

You must have forgiveness together with justification. Peter said in Acts 10: Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins - that is the testimony. It is a simple statement. You could not be sealed by the Holy Ghost until you believe in Christ as He is; you are

then bound to Him who saved you. You get patterns of this in the New Testament. Take the woman who touched the hem of His garment, and subsequently fell down before Him and told Him all the truth. You are now assured that you belong to Him who effected your salvation, you are now on the new ground.

What is the exact meaning of "He was raised again for our justification"?

The man under judgment has gone in judgment, and He who suffered has so glorified God that He was raised from the dead.

Is it the man or the offences?

The offences are gone with the man.

Does it go further than justification for offences?

Oh, yes. It is on that account you are cleared.

Does it mean because Christ is raised I am justified?

No, but for your justification. He was raised. He was delivered for your offences. You could not be justified if He were not raised.

Am not I justified because He is raised?

No, you are not justified except you believe on Him who raised up our Lord from the dead.

Those who believe are now justified? Yes, quite so.

Do you mean that the resurrection supplies the ground of justification?

Quite so, and therefore the first great thing is the great position in which it puts the believer with God. You may be a long time before you get to your own side.

I was going to ask - in 1 Thessalonians 1: 10 we get Jesus raised from the dead, but it is in connection with our deliverance from the wrath to come?

That proves that we are free from the wrath to come.

But you were speaking on the judgment on man?

Yes, but you are cleared from everything.

The Thessalonians were taught that He is our Deliverer?

Yes.

When Philip announced the glad tidings of Jesus to the eunuch did he speak of resurrection, or would it not be involved in his preaching?

In Acts 8 it is more historical. The great point there is that Christ is no longer here; He is seen in glory in chapter 7; consequently He is no longer here; this leads the eunuch to say, "what doth hinder me to be baptised? "

The eunuch must have had the Spirit?

I do not say he had not. He went on his way rejoicing; then came out the gospel of the glory, the gospel in connection with the church. (Chap 9).

May there not be faith in Christ received and yet a soul be not able to put the truth clearly?

I quite admit that. The change of man is learned experimentally. You must first settle the ground you are on with God, you must learn Romans 5 before Romans 8. With many the question is, how the sinner feels, but when I come to Scripture I find it is how God feels. The one great thing with the prodigal was how his father felt.

He began to tell his feelings and he was stopped?

When he knew his father's feelings he saw how unfit he was.

Do you mind telling us how you got rid of the fear of death?

I thought I was dying and I partly fainted; as I laid down I remember saying, "Jesus will have me". In a few minutes I revived; all my thoughts about things were changed; I felt I must serve the Lord. I was but a youth.

As to resurrection?

I knew nothing about it except as a creed. Still it is evident I believed that Christ was risen or I could not say He would have me.

The judgment of God has to be preached - what about the remedy?

Ah! the remedy is Christ risen, and therefore it is not a question of preaching judgment; if you preach resurrection you must preach judgment on man; it involves it.

What I mean is that resurrection makes the preaching more real.

You are right, if you are to be freed from the blood of all you must preach to every man in the place. I heard of a brother who set himself to visit every house in the town - he was right. It is when the evangelist settles down in a place permanently that he departs from his calling. There is no greater gift than that of an evangelist, but he must exercise it.

I suppose when that word came to you, "Jesus will have me", there was something in your mind that you had heard about Jesus? Yes I had heard religious men and had been to religious meetings.

The person of the Lord came before you?

Yes.

You came to Him because He had come to you?

Yes. I was at church four times the Sunday before - it was on Monday morning.

How far do you think the course and path of converts is the result of the character of the preaching they have heard, with regard to the camp and following Christ?

I believe it is of all importance the first revelation presented to an awakened soul; hence Paul said to the Philippian jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved". You have to present that God has found a Man who has done all His pleasure, who has removed all on our side which was against Him. The evangelist presents to the soul the revelation of God's grace at the present time. Once souls get upon the right line they are sure to move on.

As an illustration a number of young evangelists some years ago in Ireland, were given the schoolroom on condition that they would not speak against the church services; they kept their promise, but they

preached such a full gospel that many left the church, and then they were upbraided with not keeping their promise.

You are used instrumentally to put the soul on a line where the Spirit of God is? Yes, quite so.

Suppose a great work of God is going on, you would not be an advocate to hurry souls.

I would, I trust, be the last to hurry souls into fellowship.

It becomes a practical difficulty. Souls ought to be exercised about it.

If souls were brought in through exercise would not the difficulty of choosing the company be diminished to a minimum?

Yes. To judge of the state of things look around at Christendom.

You will see that the more you reduce the truth you have to man's level, the more popular you will be. I often say, If Moody and Sankey were to come into our rooms they would have many converts.

KNOWN OF GOD

J.Renton

Genesis 18: 17-19; Exodus 4: 14; Daniel 9: 20-23 (to 'beloved')

Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, said "if any one love God, he is known of him", 1 Cor 8: 3. God knows those who love Him, who consider for Him; He has a special interest and has confidence in such persons. So we have these three men, Abraham, Aaron and Daniel, (no doubt there are more) whom God knew and whom He could trust. Surely we all would like to be men whom God could trust. Abraham believed God and obeyed. When the call of God came he "went out, not knowing where he was going", Heb 11: 8.

He was a man of faith, and here we find that God will not hide from Abraham what He was doing. God found a confidant in Abraham.

What a wonderful thing that is! God is looking for such persons today. It may be that they are comparatively few. Think of the great number of believers there are in the world today; we need to think about and to pray for all our fellow believers, but it may be there are comparatively few whom God can trust and who could be initiated into God's present mind. "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing?" God is looking for persons He can confide in, make His mind known to. It requires faith and obedience on our part. There was a consistency with Abraham. "For I know him", God says. God knew Abraham and could trust him. "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him"; that is, he could trust Abraham to pass on the testimony to the next generation unimpaired. That would be an exercise, especially with those of us who are older. Abraham was at a good age here, and he was thinking of what was committed to him as we have to think of what is committed to us: what has come down to us by the faithfulness of those who have gone before us in the testimony. Is the truth going to be passed on to the next generation without any impairment? That is what God could trust Abraham with. He knew him: "I know him", I know he will do this. There will be no impairment of the testimony as far as Abraham is concerned. It will be passed on to the next generation in its fulness. That is a word for all of us who are older, I am sure, because there is always a tendency for a gradual deterioration to take place. "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice". We would like to be

assured that these features will be passed on, for they will only be passed on if we ourselves exemplify these very features: "keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice". That would be a responsibility on every one of us. We need to desire that God would know us and trust us that such may be the case, not only in what we say but also in what we are, our conduct, as Abraham in his conduct exemplified the truth, the testimony, at that time, and would pass it on to those who would follow him. We look for the Lord to come very soon; nevertheless we have to think of the testimony continuing if the Lord is pleased that the testimony should continue.

So with Aaron, Jehovah says regarding him; "I know that he can speak well". There was the need for one to strengthen Moses who felt his weakness, but he went too far in feeling his weakness.

Jehovah called him to do something and he felt how weak he was, how unsuitable he was, and no doubt it would be good if we all felt our weakness. It is not good to feel we are able for anything, but Moses felt that he was not the one to be called for the responsibility that God was putting upon him. He went too far, the length to which Moses went protesting how unsuitable he was amounted to unbelief, for God knew what He could make of him; yet in consideration for him He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well". Moses thought he could not speak well enough, but God knew one who could speak well. No doubt Aaron was a man of prayer and God heard him speaking. How important it is that we should be men of prayer, men of dependence. Aaron the Levite thy brother must have known what dependence upon God was. He appears suddenly on the scene here but he no doubt had had a history with God in his 83 years. God says "I know that he can speak well " . No doubt He had heard him consistently speak in prayer. How much the feature of prayer is needed at the present time! It says "Persevere in prayer (Col 4: 1), and pray unceasingly", 1 Thess 5: 17. Expressing our dependence to God pleases Him; He takes account of it and He appreciates it as he does with Aaron here. "Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also behold, he goeth out to meet thee; and when he seeth

thee he will be glad in his heart". Then it says of Aaron: "he went and met him on the mountain of God and kissed him (v 27). His heart responded to Moses, it is the brotherly covenant, the brotherly relation, two working together. How important that is, Moses and Aaron working together, two brothers working together; in fact, in this case, the one being the complement of the other. This is important if we are to be trustworthy. They were regarded as trustworthy by God. He kissed him. That is the relationship between these two brothers who are right. They represented one thing. How important that is! Moses and Aaron are often spoken of as together; two persons able to work together in view of what God had in mind.

So with Daniel, he was not only known but he was greatly beloved, greatly beloved in heaven. Why was he beloved? Because he was exercised to represent the state that God was looking for at the moment. In chapter 9 he "understood by the books that the number of the years, whereof the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, the prophet, for the accomplishment of the desolations of Jerusalem, was seventy years" (v 2). He was intelligent as to what Jehovah was doing. He was exercised to represent the secret, humble state that what God had in mind should be accomplished.

Then in verse 3: "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes; and I prayed unto Jehovah my God, and made my confession, and said, Alas Lord! the great and terrible God". He takes this place of repentance and supplication and humility. How much we need that at the present time! God is pleased with this condition. I remember a word given in this area on Isaiah 57: 15; "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, and with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones". Daniel takes a low place here. It would become us at the present time to take a very low place. We ought to be the humblest believers in Christendom.

Then we find in the portion read that he was strengthened: "And whilst I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and

the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before Jehovah my God for the holy mountain of my God; whilst I was yet speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, flying swiftly, touched me ... And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, Daniel, I am now come forth to make thee skilful of understanding". Daniel was exercised to be in the current of what God was doing at that particular moment, therefore he received great light. The book of Daniel is full of instruction as to what God will do after the church is taken. It was all opened up to him because of the suited state of humility. He is spoken of as one greatly beloved.

We need on the one hand to be with God, entrusted by Him to maintain the testimony un-impaired. We need to be in prayer and work together as Moses and Aaron worked together. And we need to be suitably humbled because of the ruin of things publicly and also the way in which we have contributed to the ruin. Such persons are known of God, appreciated by Him, and are trusted by Him, and loved by Him. May it be the portion of each one of us!

PLAINFIELD

24 April 1984

THE CHILDREN'S RADIANCE

One of the Bible descriptions of the gospel is that it is "the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ". We know, of course, and enjoy in our spirits the fact that the gospel has brought tidings of salvation and the forgiveness of sins through the shed blood of Jesus. As is often said the gospel meets all the needs of our souls however young or old we may be. We find in Christ a righteousness suitable in every way to a holy God. Yet a further wonder of the gospel is that our gaze is directed away even from our needs and our own selves to be occupied with the outshining of the One who has died for us and lives again.

This radiancy may be likened to a sunbeam which falls with golden light upon even the vilest object on earth. If traced back to its source it brings us to the glorious sun in the heavens. Thus the gospel is a blessed beam of heavenly grace shining into our hearts to lead them to the place whence it comes - from the Lord Jesus Christ at the right hand of God. We cannot look upon the sun itself but we know it by its radiance. Likewise we cannot comprehend God Himself but know Him by the "radiancy ... of the glory of the Christ who is the image of God". A child indwelt by the Holy Spirit is able to know God far better than an unconverted person with the greatest mental power.

A precious gem, seen in sunlight, has a reflected radiance of its own as a product of the Creator's workmanship. The Scripture speaks of "a bag of gems". Over twenty precious and rare stones are mentioned in God's word, so if we had all these in a bag together it would be a valuable possession. Yet this is just what we have in the Scriptures! Each verse like a stone reflects heavenly light in some beautiful colour which often changes as the gem is moved in the sunbeam. Thus we may at different times see unexpected radiancies in a few words of the Bible. Believers too are precious gems of divine handiwork and differ in radiance as the stars differ in glory. Those who know the stars tell us that many that look small are really the great ones! Divine wisdom has placed us all where our

radiance will serve His purpose best. Can you trace the gems in the Bible?

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