

A
WORD
IN ITS
SEASON

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INSIDE THE VEIL, OUTSIDE THE CAMP

J.B.Stoney

(This address – on a subject always associated with Mr Stoney – does not appear to be in the collected edition of his ministry. It was given at the meetings in Edinburgh, of which the readings are in Volume 6. It is printed as published, revised, in 1897. Scripture quotations are from the Authorised Version).

The first verses I will read to you are in Hebrews 10: 19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

We will also read a passage in Hebrews 13: 10-16: "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

You see in the two scriptures that I have read to you there are two things – the one, inside the veil, the other, outside the camp. Or, in other words, in the one we are in Christ, in the place where He is, in the other we are for Christ, in the place where He is not.

I dare say some of you may find it difficult to understand this; at least those who are not accustomed to look at things in the way I have stated, and it is all the more difficult if your minds are prepossessed in favour of certain interpretations of scripture

acquired from the state of things around you, and from being in the habit of giving certain things, which are purely human inventions, scriptural names. Take for instance the word "worship": it is a scriptural word, but being constantly applied to something which is entirely foreign to what the Spirit of God expresses by the term, it is extremely difficult to get people to understand what worship is. They have preconceived notions about it, and prejudice, which is more difficult to deal with than anything, for there is nothing a man clings to more tenaciously than to his religious opinions, and there is nothing harder to give up. I mean by prejudice when a person has received a certain meaning as the divine meaning. You see this remarkably exemplified in the case of the Jews (John 18: 28); they would not go into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, and yet they could use it to crucify the Lord of glory: and, as the apostle says in Romans, they went about to establish their own righteousness, and would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. The Lord has to disentangle souls from this cobweb, just as He did with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. They had read the scriptures, but they held their own interpretation of them. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." What I want to shew you is, that just as these disciples had received a certain interpretation of the scriptures as to the Messiah as the correct one, which Christ had to shew them was all wrong, so it is with worship now. The right name has been retained, but the thing itself is not known; the name is given to a totally different thing, hence the difficulty to get people to understand the real thing. If it were called devotion, ritualism, or churchgoing, people would not have been deceived; but the application of the scriptural name to an unscriptural thing is what makes the confusion. The general idea of worship is a number of persons congregated together to call upon God.

Now, until you know your place in Christ where Christ is, you will never know your place for Christ where He is not. You must be where a person is in order to enjoy that person, and you must be in

his company to know what suits him, what would meet his mind. If I want to have everything according to the tastes of any one, I must find out what his tastes are. But how am I to find them out? By being it in the place where he is; by being on intimate terms with him and knowing his character and surroundings. Just so with regard to Christ. You must go to Him where He is. The Queen of Sheba came from the uttermost parts of the earth to see Solomon's surroundings, and when she saw them "there was no more spirit in her."

People try to make everything visible. Hence they talk about places of worship. What is worship? Worship is the heart absorbed with the presence of God, which is now tasted of in the assembly.

When you are with the Lord there you are in the holiest, and your place on earth is what Christ's place was when He died for you; and that was "without the camp." Unless you know your place in the invisible you will never be qualified to maintain the character of the visible. The apostle in chapter 13 is winding up the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In chapter 2 he introduces a new family: and "both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;" and further on he shews them in their three characters – first, as worshippers; secondly, as racers; and thirdly, as suffering for Christ. These are the three things that are to mark the saints on earth. One cannot but feel how little, in this day, saints understand what the Lord has secured for them and called them to.

The first light in which you are looked at is a worshipper. That is vertical, and the word is "*boldness*" if you look up; then you are a racer, that is horizontal; and the word is "*patience*" if you look on, straight ahead; thirdly, you are a sufferer, and the word is "*reproach*" if you take the outside place down here.

It is, first, boldness to enter the holiest second, patience to run the race, and, third: reproach outside the camp. The moment I take my place outside the camp there is reproach. That is the place where I am to be found here – outside the camp. But this place I

never can take until I know my place with Christ. I cannot take the outside place till I know the inside place.

I. INSIDE THE VEIL

must find that I have a home in the bright scene where Christ is, that I have the right of entrance to the presence of God. This scripture (chap 10: 19) gives you the right of entrance; it does not go beyond that, but it gives you that. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Here we have boldness to enter. Boldness is the word applied to an emancipated slave. The slave before emancipation could not be on equal terms with his master. The law was bondage, but Christ has made us free. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus and it is not only the blood but the new and living way. Mark verse 20 – "By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, *through* the veil, that is to say, his flesh." You may find it difficult to understand this, but when you do understand it you will understand what worship is. Not only are my sins cleared away, but I pass through to another platform and am landed upon new ground.

We have to go back to these days and be taught by the Lord the very beginnings of truth. How did the Lord teach His 'disciples? How did He teach them about the church? People are looking to their pastors, their ministers to be taught, and they do not get clear even as to the most elementary truths. I go back then to the teaching of Christ to His disciples and see how He taught. You will find it in Matthew 16. The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus tempting Him, wanting a sign. There is no sign but Himself. The disciples are with Jesus in the boat. He brings them into a position where they must find Him to be sufficient; where nature could find nothing, for they were in the boat with no bread and no means of getting any. They reason among themselves and they think of natural supply. They imagine that Jesus spoke about the leaven because they had taken no bread. He says, "Do ye not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took

up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" He turns them back to what He is in *Himself*.

In the boat there was nothing on which nature could lean. He wants to teach them that He is sufficient for them when there is nothing but Himself, no bread, no natural support, and this you realise when you come to Him – the Living Stone, Son over God's house. This is how Christ teaches. He draws us to Himself when there is nothing else to lean on, and then we are in a position to learn His mind. Now you must reach Him where He is; and the way there is through the rent veil, that is to say, His flesh. The link that bound me to my old condition is broken in the cross, and I pass through to new ground with a nature suited to it, the divine nature. You will never understand worship till you come to that. I am not now speaking of your occupation there. You will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. But what I am speaking of now is your right of entrance – of the right of sons to be in the Father's presence. You may say, Am I not hindered by my own failure? I will come to that presently, but first I want you to understand about worship and the right of entrance, for you cannot worship until you get to the place of worship. Where is the place of worship? The holiest where Christ is, for He is the Antitype of all that is in the holiest. According to Leviticus 8 you are inside the door of the tabernacle. There is no veil now. As the consecrated company you are in all the blessedness of His acceptance in the presence of God. There we have the full sense of perfect acceptance, there is not a single cloud in that bright scene.

My acceptance there cannot be improved; it is as complete as God can make it. It cannot be improved and it cannot be lost, because I am accepted in the beloved, cleared of everything, in the full delight and satisfaction of the One who brought me in enjoying all that love can heap upon me. This is how you come in. I want you to understand how you come into the presence of God, not only absolved from all your sins, your sins and iniquities remembered no more, but with a nature suited to God having on the "best robe." You enter, not only, as I have said, by the blood that has washed you from all your sins, but "by a new and living way which he hath consecrated, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. If I look to Him

I am saved but by this new and living way I get to the One who has saved me. The bond that bound me to Adam, the first man, is snapped asunder in the death of Christ, and I pass through the new and living way into the presence of God. The bond that bound me to Adam is the flesh; the bond that unites me to Christ is the Holy Ghost. I want you to see that it is a question of what suits God – a question of what satisfies the Father's heart; and He must have you in His presence according to His own thoughts. He must have you inside in His own very presence, as white as snow, and with a nature that fits you to enjoy that bright scene, and clothed with the comeliness of Christ, as the prodigal was clothed with the best robe – invested anew. You are not only cleared of your sins, but the nature that committed the sins has been judged in the cross, and you are before God in the nature of Christ. I was a brother to Adam. The bond that bound me to him – the first man, was the flesh; but God has not only cleared away my sins, He has broken the bond that bound me to that man. I am now one of Christ's brethren, the risen Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, and I have a place with Him in His place. If I go back to the first man, I not only do wrong in going back, but I am reviving the bond that God has broken in the death of Christ; and if I don't judge myself for it God will chasten me.

I now come to the failure. Take the case of a child brought into the house, suited and fitted for the place, with all that love can lavish on him. Supposing he goes down to the coal cellar and blackens himself. What then? Does he cease to be a child? No, he is a child still. What is to be done with him now that he has blackened himself? The water of the word must be brought to bear upon him, and he must see how incompatible this is with his position and with the scene he has been brought into. He must judge himself, and repent. Perhaps you lost your temper, and you say, I am sorry for it. That won't do. You have not only to be sorry for it, but you must put the flesh, that which is the root of the temper, as far from you as God has put it. And where is that? THE CROSS. That is repentance.

What has made much trouble with souls, what has brought in Wesleyism and numerous other errors, is ignorance of new creation

interpreting the Christian's standing by his state. Take an illustration. You may say, I know that is a goldfinch because it sings; I say, No; it is a goldfinch before it sings. The singing does not make it a goldfinch, but it sings because it is a goldfinch. There is a great difference between being accepted and being acceptable. If I call in question my *acceptance* I dishonour God, for I am as much accepted as Christ is. I am accepted in Him; but the more I am concerned about my *acceptability* – that is, about walking so as to please Him, the more I honour Him. Don't, I pray you, make your *acceptance* dependent on your *acceptability*, or measure your position by your walk. Your acceptance could not be more complete; you can neither add to it nor diminish it. The worshipper once purged has no more conscience of sins. "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." In Christ I am, in the presence of God, as white as snow. The religious world has imitated this in giving the leader of their service a white surplice. But supposing you have failed and there are spots to be got rid of, what are you to do? Come to the light. The action of the light exposes and manifests the spots, and the Lord washes your feet in order to remove them.

In Psalm 73 we get the effect of being in His presence. See how it acts on you. Read verse 17: "Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end." The new and living way was not opened up then; there was no right of entrance into the holiest. But now I have "boldness to enter." When the Psalmist goes into the sanctuary he says, "Then understood I their end." He had his own opinions about things before, but he finds his former judgment is all wrong. This is always the case. You see two men both sincere, but the one sees a thing quite differently from the other. Why? Because one is judging of it in a human way, the other in a divine way. This accounts for the difference of judgment as to the meaning of scripture, and of many things. A man may form an opinion about a certain thing; looking at it from a natural point of view; he goes into the sanctuary, a new light shines upon it, and he has to confess his

former judgment was wrong. The first effect, then, is that my wrong judgment of things is exposed, and a divine judgment given. The second, I get the sense of what God is, verses 18-20. "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How they are brought to desolation, as in a moment!

they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh? so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image." There is the distinct sense of what God is. This we get also in Philippians 4. I go into God's presence; and with prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make my request known unto God, and what do I get? Is it the answer? No; but the "peace of God that passeth all understanding." I go to God and tell Him all my troubles, trials, and difficulties, make all my requests known to Him, and I am so affected by His presence, the calm serene peace, in which He dwells above all circumstances, that I forget my own troubles, and I acquire, if I may so express it, the state in which He is – His state – "*the peace of God*." It is the most wonderful favour that God ever conferred upon a man, when He gives him the sense of what He is in Himself. The third effect of His presence is the sense of what I am myself. Read verses 21, 22: "Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee." The fourth effect is the sense of what God is to me, verses 23, 24. "Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and after wards receive me to glory." Then from verses 25-28 we get the fifth effect – that with such a God I can do without anybody else.

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works." These are the effects of drawing near – how His presence acts on us to form us in moral correspondence to Himself.

Oh, how little any of us have the sense that we have a place with Christ where Christ is! How little we enter into what is ours in that bright and blessed scene of cloudless light. There is nothing that gives such a character to a Christian as the sense that he has got a home outside this poor world, and such a home! The sense that God has brought us into His own heavenly scene, has associated us with His own Son there in everything, is what gives a character to me here. What is it that makes me a stranger here?

The sense that I am from home. A stranger is one absent from home; a pilgrim is one who is *going* home. Unless I am at home with the Lord I cannot feel from home here. God has brought me into the best, the highest place, and how does it affect me? The Queen of Sheba had everything that this world could give, but when she comes to King Solomon, and sees his surroundings she is lost in them, entranced, "there was no more spirit in her." Were you ever lost in the things of Christ? Were you ever entranced with the blessedness of what is yours in Christ at God's right hand in heaven? This is the true state for worship, Paul says, "To God I am beside myself." – he is in an ecstasy. Were you ! ;! Ver in an ecstasy? Were you ever so filled with the sense of what Christ is that you could not contain yourself, so to speak, could do nothing but praise Him? This is the true state of a worshipper. There are two things that a man has, his *home* and his *business*. So with a Christian; he has his home with the Lord, and his business is to live Christ on the earth. But he comes from his home to his business.

This is the divine order. This is the order of Psalm 84 – "How amiable are thy tabernacles,

O Lord of hosts." "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee." Do you know what it is to dwell in that blessed place, to have your home there? My home is where Christ's home is. What could exceed that. Well, as I have said, this is the order, first the house of the Lord; dwelling in the house of the Lord, then you come down to "the valley of Baca." Where do you come from? I come from the brightest scene, from the presence of God, from the happiest place ever known. "Blessed are they that dwell in

thy house;" there I can praise continually, for everything there awakens praise. "They will be still praising thee." Where do you come to? Down to the valley of tears, to live here for the One whom I know up there. I come from my home to my business. A good nurse, one who knows how to take care of a child, in cold weather takes it out warm. As they say in Russia, the English get on better there than the Russians themselves, because the Russians trust to their fur clothing, whereas the English take care to go out warm. So, if I am to be for Christ here, I must first know my place in the bright home in which He is, and then I can come down to the valley of tears with the full consciousness and warmth of the scene I have come from. Knowing my place with Christ where He is, my business is to be here for Christ where He is not.

I turn now to chapter 13 – and we see what is

II. OUTSIDE THE CAMP

The idea of Christendom is to *exhibit* worship. A person comes to me and says, *There* is the place of worship, and you will find worship going on there, come and see it. My answer is, Worship is not a visible thing, it is an invisible thing. There is a desperate effort in the present day to bring flesh into worship. It will never do. You must pass through the rent veil, and there is an end to flesh. Therefore worship is a solemn thing. Those who have made worship a visible thing have lost the meaning of this chapter altogether. They know not what it is to be outside the camp.

Let us read verses 10-16. It is as simple as possible. Having my place in the holiest I am to be here for the Man who is not here.

Where shall I be found? Outside the camp. Where is that? The place that Christ took for me here. Now, do you understand that?

The spot where Christ went to for you is the spot where you are to be for Him. Take an illustration. There is a chair in the house, and you see a child very fond of it. You ask, Why are you so fond of that chair, Oh, that is the chair where my mother sat, where she nursed me many a weary day and many a weary night. I love that chair. It is the dearest thing in the house to my heart So, beloved friends, the

spot on earth most dear to my heart is the spot where Christ suffered the judgment for me. If you don't take that place, you are not occupying the spot that Christ occupied for you, that is outside the camp. The camp was the thing of power and order on the earth.

See Leviticus 4: 12. "Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and *burn him on the wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt.*" That is where Christ was for us. "That He might sanctify the people with his own blood He suffered without the gate." Not only did He go there in grace to die, but man put Him there, for by wicked hands He was crucified and slain. He suffered from man; that is reproach. He was disallowed indeed of men, and the builders refused Him. People often say the Jews did it, but the Jews handed Him over to the Gentiles. God gave man two things, a law and a sword, and he used them both against God's own Son.

The Jews said, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die." The Romans had the sword, and they put Him to death. The Jews condemned Him by the law that God had given them and handed Him over condemned to the Romans who used the sword that the government of God had put into their hands to crucify Him. I do not believe we can form an adequate idea of the amount of reproach Christ had to bear here from the hands of man. And what was the cause of it? Because He was displacing man, and this is what man cannot stand. If you don't displace man he will let you do anything.

Christ came into this world to set forth God and man did not like Him. He did not take the severe line of John the Baptist. He came in grace and yet He was refused. They all rose up against Him, and He bore reproach.

There are two things I want to point out to you in connection with this. Christ not only bore the reproach of men, but He bore the Judgment of God. There was a spot on earth which Christ occupied for me, and in that spot He not only bore the reproach of men but He bore the judgment of God. He bore the judgment of God that I might have the joys of God. I have no sufferings from God. Christ bore all that for me. He exhausted the judgment, but I have reproach from

men. Am I, then, to shrink from occupying the spot that Christ occupied for me because of the reproach of men? If there was a spot in this city where you knew Christ had suffered for you, there is not one of you who love Him but would visit that spot. Many think that going outside the camp is going outside the religious systems.

Now it is not merely that; it is – first, that I occupy the spot here that Christ occupied for me; that the place that Christ took for me here is the place in which I am for Him here; and just in proportion as I do this shall I have reproach from men; secondly, I have nothing to do with organisations here, I have done with earth and earthly systems. "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." A person comes into the assembly, and he says, What are these people about? They are outside the camp bearing reproach, and they are praising God (v 15), and then comes "But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. (v 16).

To sum up, I have a right of entrance into that scene of unclouded joy which gives a tinge of beauty and depth of character to all who do enter; and, being with Christ inside the veil, having His place *inside*, I take His place *outside* the camp, bearing His reproach; and while bearing His reproach I have two things to do – to praise God continually, and to do good to men. I am to be like a fruit tree planted in the Master's garden. I am there for the benefit of others. It is not communism; it is practically what I am to be for the Lord; a fruit tree in His garden, with all the fruit that grows on me at the disposal and for the benefit of any whom the Master may send to pluck it. I am there for the express purpose of being plucked – I am there for the good of others; and I am not only enjoying my own portion with Christ, but I am evangelical. See how the bride in Revelation 22 descends, in the most lovely way, from the highest occupation with Christ Himself, step after step, till she becomes evangelical to the utmost extent – "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." This is occupation with Christ, and this is the first thing; then she descends a step – "let him that heareth say, Come;" then another step – "let him that is athirst come;" and last of all she is

evangelical to the largest degree – "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

May the Lord lead our hearts, really to understand what it is to be with Christ where Christ is, now in the presence of God. I am very anxious about this, because I am satisfied that when once the soul comes to taste what it is to be with Christ inside the veil, and to know his place in that bright scene, he will be a worshipper in spite of himself, so to speak, and the more the light of that glory bears upon you the more will the soil you contract as you go along be detected, and you will be cleansed; and just in proportion as you morally enter into your place with Christ inside the veil, so will you practically take your place for Him outside the camp, the spot where He bore the judgment of God for you, that you might have the joys of God. But while you have the joys of God you have the reproach of men. If I look up then, to that bright and beautiful scene where I have my home in the place where Christ is; I look on as I run the race through difficulty with patience in the place where He is not, but maintaining my ground and going onward to the place where He is, I occupy the spot here that Christ occupied for me, bearing His reproach, praising God, and serving man.

THE PATTERN

D.A.Burr

Ezekiel 40: 1-3; 43: 10-12; 2 Peter 1: 16-1 to "made surer"

These two servants had a vision: I might have read of others who also had visions, such as Moses, David, Isaiah, Paul and James, and John of course. My impression is that the substance of the visions of Ezekiel and Peter was the same, and that we may – should – have some sight of it too.

Ezekiel says his vision was on a very high mountain. Peter, agreeing with Ezekiel, speaks of a holy mountain; it was on a mountain apart. God would elevate our minds from the course of things down here – not just from what is going on to destruction, but from circumstances. God would give us something above all that.

"Seek the things which are above where the Christ is... have your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth", Col 3: 1,2. Of course there are things on the earth that we have to be occupied with – our way is on the earth; but we are to have our minds on things above, where the Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Our calling is on high in Christ Jesus (see Phil 3: 14). We are not to be earthbound, or bound by circumstances. We are to seek God's grace and the Spirit's power, to visit this very high mountain apart. It says that "the hand of Jehovah was upon me, and he brought me thither". We may count on God, if we are available, to bring us to this.

Then, what we will see is the pattern. The pattern has been shown in different forms, it has various representations. There is the tabernacle in the wilderness; there is Solomon's temple; there is Ezekiel's house and his city, but they all have something very important in common; what speaks of Christ at the centre. He is the centre of everything for God. We will never understand the pattern if we do not see Him as its centre. God would have us to understand it. Unless we do, we will be deficient in spiritual things, and in the testimony as well. It is so easy to let other things dominate our

hearts, so that Christ, the centre of God's thoughts, loses His place. God's desire is that we should have such a sight of Him in His place that it will change our lives. Paul says "we all, looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed", 2 Cor 3: 18. It has often been remarked that we never change back. We know that from experience. We can look back on impressions of the glory of Christ and say that they have changed us. I believe that the change will be as profound as the impression we have.

The circumstances in this scripture in Ezekiel, chapter 40, are impressive. It is a time like our own, in which things have broken up publicly. The people of God were in captivity and the city had been taken; not the city on the mountain, of course, but Jerusalem had been taken fourteen years before. Most of us can look back like Ezekiel here over twenty-five years. How much sorrow has marked them. Look back over the last fourteen years, when there was division among us and things were reduced to the present proportions. What a sorrowful time that was! That is the kind of day in which Ezekiel had this vision, when he saw something from this mountain to which the ruin of the public profession, with which he was identified, had had nothing to say. It subsisted in its beauty and its integrity before God. There was a man at the centre of it. It does not say the man was Jesus but my impression is that it speaks of Him. I say that because he had this measuring reed with which to measure the city. The city is not measured by any human standard of measurement. The standard of measurement that is used to measure the city must be the divine standard, and the divine standard is Christ. It could be no-one else. Therefore, I believe that the man that Ezekiel meets in the city, standing in the gate, represents Christ. Perhaps there might also be some suggestion that what God is looking for in relation to His things is what is patterned after Christ, which is to be seen in every one of us. Nothing else will do, but if Jesus is the centre of His pattern, then He wants others who are like Him. The way we will become like Him, beloved, is to see Him. It says, of the coming day, "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is", 1 John 3: 2. Once "he was

manifested in another form", Mark 16: 12; but we shall see Him as He is, and we shall be like Him. Beloved, I believe that is a principle: the more our eye is fixed on that blessed Man the more there will be that is like Him, that is according to the pattern.

How much detail is given in these chapters of this wonderful city that Ezekiel saw. But let us understand what is at the centre. He said "he... set me upon a very high mountain; and upon it was as the building of a city, on the south. And he brought me thither, and behold, there was a man" – *there was a man*. What a thing to find a Man at the centre of everything for God. That Man must be Christ, and He would have our eyes upon Him; He would have us take up these other things, the gate and so on, and what they all speak of, with Him, so that we are governed by the pattern. In chapter 43 we have the same thought. There has been failure, not only in the profession, but we ourselves have failed sorrowfully. God says to Ezekiel, Do they feel these things? Surely we do. We should feel them more perhaps. If we had a greater sense of what the pattern was I believe we would all feel the decline from it. God says "if they be confounded", but He does not say, occupy them with the discrepancy. He says, show them the pattern! Bring them back to My level of things, bring them back to the law of the house. The mountain and all that is around it is holy, there is a sanctified and elevated place in which the fulness of God's un-trammelled thoughts may be enjoyed.

I read the scripture in Peter because it is a New Testament scripture which seems to give us the same thought. What is so striking here is not a geometrical pattern as in Ezekiel but we have Christ in display; and we have the Father's voice. I believe that these are things we need. We do well to see the pattern, but I believe we also do well to hear the Father's voice. The Father's voice is drawing attention to Jesus. "This" He says "is my beloved Son". We have here a Man in glory; not the sorrow and poverty into which He came, but His majesty. Although His kingdom was not publicly displayed, Peter says they were "eyewitnesses of his majesty". The glory was not only official; it was personal and moral.

They were in the presence of the glorified Man. If we dwell so much upon His manhood, let us never forget who He is. If we bring Him down to our level of things, we lose the pattern. It is on the mountain, and we must be exalted in the thoughts we have about Jesus if we are to understand the pattern. He would not be the centre of all God's thoughts if He was not who He is, which must regulate our thoughts about Him as He was. I think that was the purpose of this vision. These three were with Him in His tribulation; in rejection and weakness. They were approaching times of acute testing and difficulty; and they needed this secret in their hearts. It was not to be shared by those who were not eye-witnesses; it was for eye-witnesses only: the Man whose company they kept was glorious. And they had been told who the Person was whom they had seen. I do not think anybody else could have been the Man He was. Only the Son of God could be the Man of sorrows: Paul says, "for your sakes he, being rich, became poor", 2 Cor 8: 9. The very becoming poor showed the riches He had. Those are the riches which we may see. We will see His majesty, and we will see honour and glory.

If you want to have a look at the pattern, you must go up the mountain. It is a holy mountain, and it is a very high mountain, a mountain apart. God didn't bring the pattern down and spread it out in the wilderness, and let people come and look at it. It was shown to Moses on the mountain even if the construction was down here.

But Jesus came down the mountain, and need rolls in like the next tide. As soon as they come down the mountain there are cases to be met, but those three would see Him taking up those cases in a new light. They would see His sorrow over the man and his boy, affected by the devil himself, and the feeling way in which He helped them. They would not see the glory but they would know it was there. They had seen His countenance. They could not look Him in the face again without remembering the glory. We need a secret like that if we are to bear what lies before us.

Finally, it says, "we have the prophetic word made surer". The prophetic word is the present mind of God. It is about the future, but

in the first instance it is about the present. It is His present mind. What fills the present mind of God? I believe that what fills His mind is the pattern. That ought to come out in the prophetic word. If the prophetic word does not engage us with the pattern, and the Man who is the centre of it, I wonder if it fully reaches what God has in His mind.

These things are very testing, beloved. So much of our need is practical. So much exhortation is needed by believers about their walk, but let it be by those who see and can show others this wonderful pattern on the mountain. The ruin outside has not changed it. The pressure and difficulty of the way does not debar us from it. It was seen in these two scriptures in just such circumstances, and I believe we may see it now. I wish I could describe it, but we know where it is.

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EXTRACTS

Now it is the word of God alone which should guide me, and my conscience ought not to be satisfied unless I am assured that everything I teach and adhere to is scripturally true. To say that this or that is the definition given to any doctrine by the most devoted man is really no warrant to my conscience. Such comments may help me to understand the doctrine, but I am bound to understand it in the light of Scripture before I teach it. Scripture must be my guide, and not my conscience or the comments of my brethren.

J.B.Stoney

Volume 9, page 76

I have thought that the intention in speaking at a funeral is to encourage the hearers in a heavenly course.

J.B.Stoney

Letters, Volume 3, page 191

THE CHILDREN'S FAITH

The apostle Paul wrote of the Son of God that He "has loved me and given himself for me". He had a personal faith in a personal Saviour. It was not just believing in his mind that Jesus died, but it was a belief much deeper in his soul and in his own affections. A young Japanese convert put this matter in a very interesting way. She said that 'believing that Jesus died will save nobody and is history, but believing that Jesus died for me will save anybody and is faith'!

In writing to Timothy the same servant of the Lord reminded the young believer of the "unfeigned faith" of his mother and grandmother. No doubt these were godly women who received for themselves the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning work. It could also have been that in those early days some persons might pretend to be Christians just to get advantages such as help or friendship. To that extent their faith would be feigned. All soul-exercise in these matters is good for believers, but older children especially should be watchful that the enemy of souls does not stir up doubts as to whether faith is real or unreal. The gift of the Holy Spirit confirms faith.

Read chapter eleven of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which gives much instruction as to faith and its evidences. The chapter describes faith and illustrates it. However it has been said that a fuller definition of faith is that a believer receiving the witness as to the Lord Jesus "sets to his seal that God is true". From very early times people have used a seal to give personal proof of something.

Each person would have a distinctive mark or symbol to stamp on hot wax upon a document. The wax would dry hard and prove to everyone that his word was also his 'deed'. Whoever believes the gospel takes it thus as God's word and finds that every blessing in Christ is 'in-deed' his by faith. A Christian sets to his seal that God is true. Thus you can become in yourself a proof that blessing is real and living. Are you such a proof?

J.C.Evershed