

J. S. G.

L O R D ' S D A Y E V E N I N G .

5 th. A U G U S T , 1 9 2 8 .

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L Y M I N G T O N H A L L .

West End Lane, N.W.

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JOHN. Chapter, 3, verse 31,

to
Chapter, 4, verse 42.

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No one hardly can read the gospel that God has been pleased to give us without being conscious that there is a great difference in the gospel of John to the preceding gospels; and to know the difference is of great importance for our souls. Ah! it is indeed great, and, we may say, most blessed. You see in the first gospel, Matthew, you have got our Lord presented from the standpoint of "King of the Jews". He comes "according to the scriptures" and you have an unfolding of His rejection in that character. Then most blessedly, in Mark, you have our Lord as "The Servant", the One that came and served - the faithful One.. And it is most wonderful indeed that the Person of the Son Himself becomes the great servant. When you come to Luke, you have the unfolding of the gospel of the Grace of God. And in John you have GOD HIMSELF drawn nigh to man; GOD HIMSELF drawing nigh to me. It is not exactly the unfolding of the "Grace of God", but it is an unfolding, we may say, of the gospel of the "Love of God". And there is a difference in the scripture- a great difference- between the thought of "grace" and "love" "God is Love" - you could not put grace there. But He is the "God of Grace" . I will just try to make one distinction that any person can see from the word. With the case of the gospel of the "grace" of God it brings in the need of mercy according to what God is; but in reference to the deep need of man through this unfolding given. And let us, before commencing, by The Holy Spirit, there look at it in that wonderful 15th. chapter of Luke in which God finds His joy in the blessing of souls. But now, when you have love, love works for its own satisfaction. If you think of it you will easily see that God necessarily must be the centre, just because He is God. He must work for

His Own satisfaction; and it is a wonderful thing when I see that God has taken me up and blessed me and simply made me know Him to the satisfaction of His heart. And so, in the gospel of John, what you get prominent is, the blessing we are brought into. In the gospel of Luke you have, most fully, the need of man met. In the gospel of John you have, most blessedly, what souls are brought into, and I think you will easily see that you are what you might say outside the range of things. Take and turn to the 3rd. chapter; when you come down to the 14th. verse, He speaks of the serpent being lifted up. He was speaking "that which He did know". That Divine Person was bearing testimony. The Lord speaks of Himself as the One that "came from Heaven" You will remember we read this verse:- "He that cometh from above is above all". Now dear friends, let us think for a moment what a wonderful fact it is of our Beloved Lord coming from above. And all the blessedness in connection with above was brought in that wonderful Person. Hence, in this gospel, the great point really is. that souls are brought into eternal life. I will repeat, "eternal life"..... what God gives for His Own satisfaction and glory. Take that wonderful verse in the 3rd. chapter of John, perhaps it will make it plainer. The Blessed One speaks of Himself as the "One that must be lifted up", and speaks of eternal life as a "heavenly thing". Now it is clear that if the Lord brings the blessedness of above and heavenly things in, it is something far beyond any need that I have. Now after the Lord has spoken of "coming from above", He says:- "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand". Let us think for a moment of those words. Here is the "Beloved Son", the One loved by the Father, and what does the Father do? Gives everything into His hand.

Everything was committed once into the hand of Adam, and what was the outcome? - complete ruin, complete ruin. Now everything is committed into the hands of the Son, and what is going to be the outcome? - everything filled with the glory of God and everything brought about to satisfy the heart and praise of God. Now our Beloved Lord is the One loved by the Father and everything has been committed by God into His hand. And now, before we go any further, let us ask ourselves:- do we know that One? - do we know the One loved by the Father? - do we know the One who is God's centre - One into whose hands everything has been committed?. If so, then what does the next verse state? The one that believeth on the Son, that is the person that has everlasting life. The Blessed One is God's Son, the One loved by the Father, and every person that believes on that One, that person has everlasting life. The one that is not subject to the Son, that person is outside of blessing- that person will not see the life. Upon that person the wrath of God will abide. On the one hand dear friends, what a wonderful blessed statement in that verse! and on the other, what a solemn statement. The wrath of God abides, never lifted off, remains, remains eternally. I want you to keep those two or three facts in your minds. And then, look! a little on what is brought in in the fourth chapter?. I will just suggest that what you have in the fourth chapter is so that souls should come into the blessed enjoyment of that that is stated at the end of chapter three. If we know what it is to realise all that is unfolded in chapter four, then we will know the enjoyment of the blessedness in that chapter. In the beginning of the fourth chapter there is the jealousy of the Pharisees and the Lord departs for Galilee. There was no room for Him

in the great religious centre of the day. They were content with their religion and did not want the Person that was loved by the Father. They had no room for Him. Let us remember our heads may be full of religion but the question really is:- What has the Person of the Son of God come to mean to me? It is not a question of some theories, it is not a question of some system or idea. It is the question of the knowledge of a blessed Person, Who has revealed and made known the Blessed God. And as it was in that day, so it is in our day. People may have all the forms and yet lack the one vital thing, the knowledge of God's Beloved Son.

Now the Lord "must needs go through Samaria". There was a need. He was here for the Father's sole use, He was here to accomplish His work. And there was one soul He was going to meet. And others too were going to get blessing, and so "He must needs go" - go to that one. And now He was tired. We are told that "He sat on the well" wearied with His journey, and this woman comes to draw water. And the Lord immediately takes up a most simple, a most satisfying and, we may say, very full figure, illustrating in a most wonderful and blessed way, the truth of the gospel. And now the woman, you see, is surprised because He, a Jew, should ask drink of her. How does the Lord meet her?- with what I mentioned just now. "If thou knewest the gift of God" (if you don't mind me changing this word a bit) "If thou knewest the GIVING GOD -" O! friend, just think of it. God Himself is made known, made known as "The GIVER, The GIVER". That is what I mean in connection with the Gospel of John. God has drawn near to man - but what for? - to give. He does not come demanding, or asking for anything, but just comes and calls to man - to GIVE. Think of our Beloved Lord there, weary, sitting upon a well there on purpose to meet with that dear woman.

God Himself drawn near to man TO GIVE. And, dear friends, who is it God is looking for in His wonderful grace today? Just those who will receive. God WANTS RECEIVERS. God asks for nothing. He has drawn near in His Own wondrous grace TO GIVE TO GIVE. And so Our Lord says to that woman:- "If thou knewest the gift of God" (the Giving God)- And who is that wonderful Person?. Ah! you see, it was Jesus. It was God drawn near to man, and drawn near just to give, to give. O! dear friends, just think of it. Man has departed from God, man has got away from God, man has got in a hopeless mess, but God calls to man, and He calls - to give Let me ask you for a moment:- has man ever asked God to intervene? Did the world, dear friends, ever look to God and request that God should come in in His mercy? NEVER! Nothing of the kind!. God, unasked, has come in, in the Person of His Own Beloved Son, making Himself known as the "GIVING GOD". Ah! here was that wonderful Person, the "Word become flesh" calling to man, as it were, out of the well, speaking to this dear woman of the "Giving God". "If thou knewest the gift of God-". And what is the "gift of God" in this chapter? In the 3rd. chapter it was "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" to be lifted up. But what is it in this chapter? "He gives". It is in the next statement that you see that. And the woman says:- "Art thou greater than our father Jacob"? The person that drinks of this water will thirst again, "but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well" (a fountain) "of water springing up into everlasting life". In the 3rd chapter the Son of God was given to be lifted up on that cross. In the 4th. chapter God has satisfied us. The soul knows what present satisfaction is - present satisfaction. The soul gets that, so that it thirsts not. It gets a satisfaction which is eternal - a satisfaction that will never change or alter.

Perhaps, dear friends, if we went to every christian on the face of the earth tonight, and asked them a pointed question, say to them:- "Are you disappointed in connection with your christian career?"- how many would have to say:- "Yes, I am". And suppose we do not ask that question - why! - dear friends, we have only to look at christians; (I am not doubting their christianity) and we wonder what it is they are trying to get their joy from. Ah! like you get in the Old Testament, "cisterns that hold no water". Why is that? Because what is so remarkably presented in this chapter is so little known. Now let us look. Not only is God made known here as the "Giving God", but what is it that He gives?. He gives a well of water - a well of water. Of course, that is the figure of the Divine reality. "A well of water springing up" so that the soul never thirsts. And the Lord proposes to set up this woman - and believers everywhere on the face of the earth - so that the soul is independent of the whole scene by which it is surrounded. But this joy, apart from that, was far beyond any joy that was outside it, derived from nothing that belongs to this scene. Now this woman asks whether He is greater than their father Jacob. He used to drink of this water. The best the world can give, the best the earth can give, the best that can be found anywhere in the world, and what is the outcome? - "thirsts again, thirsts again". Yes dear friends, let us take in those words. "Thirsts again" is what marks this scene. But now, let us remember that our Beloved Lord came from above and He brought the blessedness of another scene. And now, dear friends, what does this well of water do? It springs up so that the person never thirsts - never thirsts. And I daresay you have heard that the word used here is very strong - our words fail to give how strong. The person thirsts again? no, not ever again.

Some people - in fact a well-instructed christian called on me a little while ago, and he wanted to make this fourth chapter teach that it is something in the future, but it is not that. It is something it is our privilege to know now, and will last through eternity. But in the 3rd. chapter, here is our Beloved Lord (the One from above), He brings all the blessedness of above, and thus, a fountain of water within the believer springs up into that region so that the soul does not thirst, and enjoys the blessedness in connection with God Who is the source of all blessing. And you know, look! there are certain things that hinder, and the living water springs up so that those things are left behind and God is enjoyed, God, revealed in the person of His Own Beloved Son. Now just notice two or three things left behind. Remember, this woman is brought in in the scripture as representing the misery of this scene. I am not forgetting she was what we call "a Samaritan" woman. This scene brings sorrow, and this woman had had a sorrowful life. Thus Our Lord's Own words:-

"Thou hast had five husbands". What a tale of woe! Five husbands she had had. And what was the present? She had sank and settled down to a life of sin. And now what is it that the Lord does so that she may come into blessing? He just touches her conscience; and that is why He said:-

"Go, call thy husband". And now, what does she realise? There is now a person, and One that knows all about her. Have you ever been in the presence of God? Do you know what it is to be in God's presence- conscious that He knows all about you? And what a comfort it is. I don't know all about myself, I don't know the sin of my own heart. I don't know the depths of the sin; but what a comfort it is, what a blessed thing it is, that God knows it all. It is God that knows it, and He has drawn near on purpose to give, and to give such a gift that the soul is set up- never to thirst again - never to thirst again. Now when the Lord has touched this

woman's conscience, and that is laid bare, as is often the case, she hides now behind her religion. So now, in one moment, what does the Lord do? Swept the whole thing away. "There was one true centre and now that centre was Jerusalem. Salvation was of the Jews. The Samaritans were out of it". Ah! the temple, it was a sham, a mere sham, that is; was of the name but not of God. "Woman, the hour comes when you will neither ~~worship~~ in this mountain nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father -" Jerusalem, where there was a place of worship - but only a material place of worship - was set aside, and God was going to take the place, through His gift, through the "Giving God", giving the soul this fountain of water, and it would spring up to the Blessed God Himself in worship, in adoration and in praise. Ah! dear friends, do you know the "Giving God"? - the God that has drawn near just to give. We have nothing more blessed; we might say too, we have nothing more profound..... And it is not providence. Some say, "how good of God!" and speak about "providence". But it is not to know God, simply speaking of providence. God Himself has drawn near, and drawn near to give so that your soul may be brought into eternal blessing and find its delight in God Himself - made known as the "Giving God" in the Person of His Own beloved Son. Ah! dear friends, let us remember, every person that is lost eternally - why will they be lost? - because they would not have that which God has drawn nigh to give. Oh! I press it upon you, I press it upon myself, it is a blessed and marvellous fact that God is now the "Giving God". God cannot be closer to man. God cannot draw closer to you than He has drawn; and what for? - just to give. Oh! dear friends, are you going to refuse the gift of God, the gift that He would give you so that you may find your joy and your eternal blessing and daily continue in God Himself revealed in His One Beloved Son, the One that came from above?

Now I must close, and I will close by just repeating the last verse of the previous chapter. "He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life". Oh! dear friends, just think of it. Are you one of those that believe on the Son, the loved One of the Father? And if so, what does it say? HATH everlasting life - the life inseparable from the Son - the life that unfolds the eternal blessedness of God in the Person of the Father and the Son - That is the life that the believer has. But let us look for a moment on the other side "He that is not subject to the Son shall not see life" - "Shall not see" it. Not only will not have it, but will "not see" it. And then, dear friends, you have one of the most solemn statements in the New Testament, and it is more a statement to press the eternity of punishment - perhaps more strongly than the direct statement "the wrath of God abideth" - abides - abides - "on him".

Is there anything of life in that? Nothing! Why? God's beloved Son has been lifted up and there, the full work by which God can bless, has been accomplished and God calls to man as "the Giving God" and if, dear friends, that heart remains unwon, if the person remains unsubdued, then there is nothing but for the wrath to remain on that person - Remain. Could you have anything more solemn? Could you have anything more terrible than such a statement "the wrath of God" abides on them for eternity. If you are a stranger to God, we press it upon you:- Never lay your head upon the pillow until you know Him. Never lay your head upon the pillow until you know what it is to receive that gift which God Himself has drawn nigh to give you. And if we have received that gift, let us each one see to it that we know the reality of passing along this present scene with that fountain springing up above everything so that we may each enjoy all the blessedness of the results that the Son of the "Giving God" has brought

to us from above. Now I must stop. But just once more I appeal to you here in this hall tonight. God knows where we will be tomorrow; tomorrow may never be. To-night friend, which are you ? Are you one brought to know the God of grace, or are you a stranger to it ? Speaking with all reverence, God could not do more to win man. If man remains unwon, there will be nothing but wrath abiding on him. Let me repeat that verse:- "If thou knewest the Giving God and who "it is that says to thee Give me to drink thou wouldst have asked of "Him and He would have given thee living water". If you knew the One speaking to you - you would have asked Him and He would have given you the living water. Oh ! Friend, be wise, receive Him , that your soul might be filled with heavenly joy and you may be to His praise and glory the little while we are left to sojourn here.

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