

# ACCEPTANCE AND DELIVERANCE

READINGS AT EDINBURGH AND  
CARLISLE  
SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 1895

WITH  
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# READINGS AT EDINBURGH

## SEPTEMBER 1895

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### ACCEPTANCE AND DELIVERANCE

Luke 15: 2-14

J.B.S. Our subject this evening is our acceptance with God, how we are received, and our enjoyment of it. You find many who know their reception and yet do not enjoy it. Could the prodigal doubt his reception when his father covered him with kisses? It was so great that he did not make the proposition he had intended—"Make me as one of thy hired servants." You are justified when you believe that God has raised Christ from the dead. In the eye of God the man under judgment has gone in judgment in the cross, and you are not in Adam but in Christ risen from the dead. But you are not in liberty until you are delivered from the body of this death. It is when, like the prodigal, you are oppressed with your unfitness for God that you cry out from the inner man, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and then by the Spirit you know that you are in Christ, and there is no condemnation there. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

John's gospel begins with the brazen serpent, not with Exodus 12, because, though God's grace is accepted, there is not generally in believers a freedom from the old man in the life of Christ. They see that the old man is removed from God's eye in the cross, but they are not practically set free from the old man in themselves, unless they know they are in Another—in Christ Jesus.

"They began to be merry" is heavenly enjoyment; you are on divine ground. If the Shepherd had not gone out,

the Father could not have come out, and the prodigal could not have gone in. The Father's heart can now come out in all its mighty volume, as we see in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. We get the doctrine of it in Romans. The first impression the Holy Spirit makes on your soul is that God loves you. Romans 5 is acceptance, and the Holy Spirit given. The one impression made on the prodigal by the father's reception of him was—I love you. No one is in the happiness of acceptance till he knows liberty. John's writings set forth our resources. Israel had to learn that they were unmendably bad. They were redeemed out of Egypt, but they had not learned themselves, and they really never accepted the wilderness until after Numbers 21. The Holy Spirit, who tells me that God loves me, is the same who tells me that I have life in Christ. Romans 8: 2. I remember before I knew deliverance I have said, when I looked up to God, I was unspeakably happy; but when I looked at myself I was like the prodigal, conscious of my unfitness; I was not enjoying the great supper. When I had learned "That in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," then I cried "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." I wanted to be freed from my old self. This, the brazen serpent typically sets forth; your eye rests on Christ made sin and you are free. You might, like Israel, take thirty-nine years in learning the wretchedness of yourself.

REM. There are four types in the Old Testament—the blood, the Red Sea, the brazen serpent, and Jordan. What are the four points?

J.B.S. The blood is shelter from judgment. The gospel in Christendom does not go beyond the blood on the lintel, and though the believer is thereby sheltered from judgment, yet he is harassed by Pharaoh and the Egyptian—Satan and the flesh.

In the Red Sea you appropriate the death of Christ for you; you see the water on either side of you, but God has made a way through it for you by the death of Christ, of which the water is the type. When you come to Christ risen you have peace with God, you enjoy your escape, but you are not in liberty yet—not consciously

severed from the old man, knowing that you are in Christ. This you get in type in the brazen serpent. In Jordan you are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world.

Would you be glad to be severed from the old man—to be morally apart from that man in another Man—Christ risen? You will not seek this until you are sick of your self. Then the Spirit will invest you with ‘the best robe,’ set you in Christ, and in His life you are free. “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” It is very blessed that we can be free of the old man—the body of sin.

REM. Do we get all in the story of the prodigal?

J.B.S. We get the line of it. The prodigal is in liberty when they began to be merry. Peter calls it ‘joy unspeakable.’

REM. I wish for it.

J.B.S. Then you will surely get it. “He satisfieth the desire of every living thing.”

REM. In Luke 15 we see the work *for* us and *in* us.

J.B.S. The shepherd brought the lost sheep to the house. The woman with the lighted candle represents the evangelist’s work. The prodigal came to himself when the light had entered him; then he arose, and his father ran to meet him, and covered him with kisses. Finally, the best robe is put on him, and they begin to be merry. The heart of God can now fully express itself to a thief or to a Saul of Tarsus.

REM. Do you say that peace is not enjoyed till we know that the old man is crucified?

J.B.S. You could not enjoy God’s presence, that is, the great supper, nor can you make merry until you are in liberty. You require not only to be clear of the old man in the eye of God but for yourself. You are not free from the old man until you know you are in Christ. At the end of Romans 8 you are established in the love of God which was made known to you in chapter 5. You cannot enjoy the great supper until you are out of Romans 7. You must know in your soul “That in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.”

There are two parts in the natural man, one his mind, the other his body. The snare of the Corinthians was with the mind, and the apostle shews that the way to be diverted from their own *wisdom* would be by beholding Christ in glory, while the Galatians would renounce the religion of the flesh which they were seeking to build up, by giving Christ—the greater than Isaac—His true place in their hearts. Then Ishmael would not be tolerated.

REM. How can I always be living in the Spirit?

J.B.S. I give you an illustration. A sailor said he did not mind any weather so long as he could see *the sun*. You must keep your eye on Christ. You will find that when you visit anyone with the Lord before you you get on well.

I asked a young man occupied with holiness by faith—Do you believe that the old man has gone in the eye of God in the cross? He said, 'Yes.' Then I added—If you were walking in the Spirit of God, would you not see that man gone from your own eye too? He was obliged to say 'Yes,' or he would have made the Spirit of God not to be one mind with God. Many a soul is not properly started by the gospel that is preached. It is of all importance that a soul should be directed to the One whom he has offended. Supposing I go to a house where I am intimate, and see a child in the corner in disgrace. I do not ask the child how *he* feels; I speak to the parent to see whether I can bring good tidings to the child. The father tells me that he has broken the clock, but that as he cannot mend it he will mend it himself. I have now good tidings for the child; not only does the father effect reconciliation, but it must be to his own satisfaction, because he has done it himself.

REM. Do you distinguish between what the soul accepts in faith, and what the Spirit makes good in you?

J.B.S. Yes; for instance, to say you get holiness by faith is not true. By faith you are assured that God *sees* you in Christ, but you do not *know* that you are in Christ but by the Spirit. The objective side of truth which has been brought out so fully has done harm to souls when the Spirit's work in you, which is the subjec-

tive side, has been overlooked. The late trouble was connected with the objective side; they would not have the subjective. All is yours before you enjoy it, but you only enjoy it when you possess it. The legacy is yours, but to enjoy it you must get possession of it. The man who is only on the objective side loses sight of the Spirit; the man who is only on the subjective side loses sight of Christ, and that all is in Him for you. It is *for* you before it is *in* you. You do not get to heaven by attainment but by union with Christ.

REM. Can you get higher than joying in God?

J.B.S. It is joy because of reconciliation in Romans 5. Reconciliation is that everything has been removed. The newly-born soul's joy is that he is out of the ruin: the prodigal's joy is in the father's house. 'The great supper' is the celebration of grace, which no one enjoys until he knows deliverance or liberty.

REM. What is the path to liberty?

J.B.S. The only way to liberty is to leave Adam for Christ—to change your man; then it is "not *I*, but *Christ* liveth in me." There are two sides; one, that you are cleared in the eye of God in the cross; the other that you know you are in Christ. Then you are free, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The flesh is set aside as you walk in the Spirit. You must accept the fact that you have died with Christ. To this you are committed in baptism. The mark of a man walking in the Spirit is that his body is a living sacrifice.



## LIBERTY

2 Corinthians 3: 7-18; Galatians 4: 28-31; 5: 1

OUR subject this evening is how we are established in liberty. Those to whom both these epistles are written—the Corinthians and Galatians—had fallen from liberty, and now we see how the apostle establishes it. The defection is different in the Corinthians and in the Galatians. The natural mind led away the Corinthians, religiousness the Galatians. These two come out in a different way in the Colossians. Christendom is characterized by ritualism and rationalism. In Corinth we see in a church really enlightened, but led away by the natural mind, how the apostle seeks to establish them in liberty. There can be no progress till you are established in liberty. You may admire truth, but you cannot progress. The Spirit always leads you on in His own line. He never drops a stitch, as it were; He never deviates from His own order. The divine work is in the one line. The apostle had not been in Corinth between writing the two epistles. In the first epistle he tells them that he was determined to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

REM. What is the gospel of the glory?

J.B.S. The gospel of the glory is that your Saviour is in glory. You are drawn away by it to Christ where He is, out of the ruin here. The gospel in Christendom does not go beyond the Passover. Many are not beyond pardon. Resurrection is another step. When I see Christ risen I am justified, I have peace with God. You cannot have peace till you know Christ risen. Paul calls the gospel of the glory "My gospel." The gospel of the glory brings you to the Person. In Romans you are learning the gospel. If you study Romans, you will see that the apostle is bringing you to the Person, and that is deliverance. The first thing I know is, that Christ did

a work for me; the effect of that is that I *give* to Him, as Jonathan gave to David. Secondly, I know that He is my life. The effect of that is that I *suffer* with Him. If you know Him in the assembly, His interests occupy you. The gospel of the glory is that there is a *ministration* of righteousness from the glory. There was a *demand* for righteousness from Mount Sinai, now there is a ministration of righteousness from the glory. The glory of God is the expression of all His attributes. This could not be shewn to Moses, but all shines out in Christ.

REM. What is the effect of beholding the Lord's glory?

J.B.S. Transformation. In Psalm 73 the godly man finds he is unfit for God's presence; he says, "I was as a beast before thee"; but now, seeing Christ in glory, I am brought into moral correspondence with Him. You cannot enjoy the gospel of the glory unless you are in liberty. The Corinthians were led away by their natural minds, they gloried in their own wisdom.

The nearer you are to Christ in glory the better off you are. Isaiah felt unfit for the glory. He says, "Woe is me! for I am a man of unclean lips." He was not in liberty. There is no live coal in the glory now. Why? Because there is a Man there, who has accomplished all for the glory of God. The live coal sets forth that God does not abate His holiness, but He always has grace. I have not found an illustration of the difference between law and grace. I have heard of a landlord forgiving his tenants, but becoming a giver to them instead of demanding from them I never heard of. Dr. Doddridge's dream sets it forth in measure. He dreamed that he came to the gate of a palace, and that he was so well received that he went in; then he went on from room to room, and was better received as he went on, till he came to the presence of the Sovereign, where he was received with acclamation. He should have learnt from scripture the truth that his dream sets forth, but God brings the light to a soul in different ways. The way in which the Corinthians are established is beautiful; it is like the Queen of Sheba when she came to Solomon and saw his glory, she was so entranced that there was

no spirit left in her. So it is in beholding the Lord's glory, self is displaced. A man who is led by his own wisdom has never yet been in company with Christ in glory. If he were he would be transformed into the same image. This word, transformed, is only used four times in the New Testament.

REM. Is there any difference between the liberty in Galatians and in Corinthians?

J.B.S. In Corinthians is set forth that man's mind has to be surpassed by that which is infinitely beyond, and the effect is "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus." The liberty of Galatians is Christ formed in you; the true Isaac in His place, Ishmael cast out.

REM. Do you see distinction between the natural mind and religiousness?

J.B.S. In the latter you observe days and months and years. You are under the law. The Galatians had begun in the Spirit, and were seeking to be made perfect in the flesh. That is religiousness. The Corinthians were full of their own wisdom; that is the natural mind.

REM. Explain the effect of beholding the Lord's glory?

J.B.S. You are in His company, and are made like Him—transformed. Merely reading the Bible will not make you like Him. The two disciples going to Emmaus had a wonderful exposition of scripture; it did not alter their course one bit. But when the Lord made Himself known to them all is changed. They leave their own course and take His. I may behold Him in my own room, and if I do, I drop my own things by being brought into company with Him. But when I behold Him in the assembly, *His* things absorb me. Even with those two disciples we see how when they behold Him their own things are secondary; they go back to the hive, and with good honey too. I am lost in delight of heart in beholding Him. And besides this, I have guidance—I get scripture to corroborate it—fresh light.

REM. Does a person ever lose liberty?

J.B.S. You do not really lose it, but it may be clouded, you may lose the enjoyment of it. If a father in Christ falls, he is restored to the height from which

he fell. The Corinthians were greatly endowed, but they were full of their own wisdom, they were not ready for the 'hidden wisdom.' Your own wisdom is superseded by being with the greater than Solomon in the sphere of His glory, and you are brought into moral correspondence with Him. Stephen is an illustration. When he beheld Jesus in the glory of God he was in moral correspondence with Him here.

The Galatians were trying to be perfect in the flesh; they were not in liberty. How is it established in them? The apostle tells them that Abraham when Isaac was weaned made a feast, all in the house doing honour to Isaac; all except *one*, a youth of fourteen, and he mocked. That was Ishmael. Sarah says he must be cast out. The first great thing in getting rid of the religious man is, that Christ must have an acknowledged right to everything that I have, from the nursery to the office. No man has liberty till he has parted with one man—Adam, and is in another—Christ. Till he comes to "not I, but Christ liveth in me." Then he is able to say, "I am crucified with Christ." If I were absolutely under the control of Christ, I should do everything in a beautiful way, because a divine way. He does not help us with what is not of the Father. Nothing is more difficult than to say experimentally, I have done with the old man—he is eclipsed. Man tries to improve himself, he does not like to be eclipsed. The doctrine in Christendom is—get Isaac to improve Ishmael; but no! you must turn Ishmael out. I studied the beautiful traits in man till I found that not a single trait in him would acknowledge Christ. Ishmael, Abraham's son, brought up in Abraham's house, was found after fourteen years persecuting the heir of promise. It is a more painful experience than that of Romans 7, to find that the best quality in my nature does not like Christ. It is a terrible discovery. Amiability—honey will not do; no! you *cannot* improve the flesh, it will be flesh still. As J.G.B. said, 'You may sublimate the flesh as much as you like, it will never yield spirit.'

There are two things: the first is, that you acknowledge Christ—the true Isaac—in His place. The second

is, that you do not tolerate Ishmael. It is a wonderfully blessed moment when a soul can say, 'I *do* acknowledge Him.' Now comes—no toleration for Ishmael. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free." You may say, If I put Ishmael out of the door he will come in at the window. No; the Spirit resists the flesh, and He is within you, that you may not do the things that you would. I have no power in me that would not let the flesh in, that will keep the door, like a policeman. I have said that flesh is stronger than grace. I would not say so now. Many are like teetotallers practising self-control; but that will not do—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." There is not a word about sins in that passage, it is pure liberty—a new creation.

Now you can say, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And now comes the practical course—"the life which I now live in flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." It is transcendent!

REM. What marks a person in liberty?

J.B.S. He rejoices in Christ Jesus and has no confidence in the flesh; he shrinks from the flesh. Everything must come divinely. The more effective a man is, the more correctly will he quote scripture.

REM. Will you explain again the difference between objective and subjective truth?

J.B.S. Objective is—everything is done *for* me, all is pure grace. Subjective is—the Spirit's work *in* me; you must not separate them. The Spirit effects *in* me what Christ has done *for* me. The Spirit makes it all good to me. He sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts. No one will be happy till he is as clear of the old man in his own eye as he is clear of him in God's eye. In the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, I am free from the law of sin and death. If you have gone the road you will know what it is.

REM. Do you think that Romans, Corinthians and Galatians are different aspects of liberty?

J.B.S. Liberty is taught in Romans, but the Corinthians and Galatians had departed from it. Romans

is simple truth. Romans and Ephesians are generic (parent) epistles. One gives the gospel, the other the church.

REM. In Luke 15 we have the germ of both. "For this my son was *dead*,"— Ephesians; "was *lost*,"—Romans.

## THE ASSEMBLY

Matthew 14: 10-31 ; 1 Peter 2: 2-10

J.B.S. Our subject this evening is the assembly. The first point is, what is its object and purpose? The second, how you are in it. Thirdly, the privileges and responsibilities of it. Fourthly, the moral effect of being in the assembly. The first thing to see is Christ's rejection. In Matthew 14 John the Baptist has been beheaded, and the Lord is going to prepare the disciples for His own rejection, and to give them instruction as to the new ground. It was a moment of profound interest, what is called in political language a crisis. From chapter 14 to chapter 16 He is educating His disciples for the new structure.

REM. Why do you connect it with the beheading of John?

J.B.S. John was the forerunner of Christ. It is like a courier going before a king. If they kill the courier, it shews they are ready to kill the king. The Lord plainly accepts it as indicative of His own rejection; and what does He do? He goes into the wilderness. Do you understand that? Do you accept His rejection? That is the first step towards the assembly. There are many pious men in system who cannot find the assembly. Why? Because they do not start aright. They do not start with His rejection. The object and purpose of the assembly is to supply a place for Christ on earth where He has been rejected. How little is known of it!

The Lord goes away to the desert where the poor of the flock can find Him, and feeds them there. Then He sends His disciples on the sea, that they may realise the state of things on earth. He Himself goes to the mountain. They are in the midst of the sea; the winds and the waves—the power of Satan and the world against

them. And He goes to them. BUT HE TAKES NOW A NEW POSITION. He is not now, as in chapter 8, quelling the storm; but He is above it in a new position—*supreme* now, not only superior; He was always superior; now He is supreme, outside of it all. I ask each one of you, Do you believe that the Lord is in a new position?

REM. I think I can say I do.

J.B.S. You admit He has changed His position; He is walking on the water, supreme above all here—outside of it—He is declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead. If you could meet the Lord now, I ask, could you find Him on earth?

REM. The only way we could know Him now is as the glorified One.

J.B.S. The Lord is rejected, disallowed of men. He is declared to be the Son of God with power. He is outside the whole thing. Has He any place on earth? Yes; He has His assembly; He comes into the assembly; He has no other spot here. He is there as Son of God. You come to meet Him there, not as your Saviour, but as the Son of God. He is Son over God's house. If we meet Him in the assembly it is as Son of God. In these chapters, 14-16, He is preparing His disciples for the new structure, which they would belong to in the place where He was refused. In the gospel narrative all is pattern. In the Old Testament you get types, not patterns.

Our second point is, How do you get in? The assembly is formed of living stones. How do I get to be a living stone? Matthew 14 describes the step—coming to the Living Stone. We come to Him first. Peter illustrates the step. He leaves the ship, and gets to Him across the water. If you go to Him now you must cross the water. How do you do that?

REM. Water represents death, does it not?

J.B.S. Yes; the water represents death. If you appropriate His death you are in His life. That is the step. I believe a great many brethren have never taken that step: they have not got to the Lord personally as the *Living Stone*—the new material. John 6 and Matthew 14



happened at the same time. One is His side, the other our side.

REM. Peter had been dealt with by the Lord previously.

J.B.S. Yes; there must be conversion. The current idea is that when you are converted you come to the Living Stone. Nothing of the kind. You come to Him in His new position, and then you are come to the new structure, to form a constituent part of the assembly where He dwells. I do not think a person can come to Him as the Living Stone if he has not deliverance. It is a great thing to get deliverance.

Now it is the Person we have before us—He is our life, and we are in the place where He is.

It was affection in Peter that made him leave the ship to join the Lord. If a young believer has affection he will never be satisfied until he gets to Him.

REM. It is the heart that is drawn.

J.B.S. Quite so. I often give an illustration of it in the way young birds are taught by the parent birds to leave the nest and fly. They flutter over the nest, and the young ones in their desire to join them, discover that they have wings—the *power* for it. The power for us is the Spirit of God. We have the power; what we want is the affection to join the Lord. When you *do* join Him, you find He is your life—He is everything.

REM. Is the step easier now than in Peter's time?

J.B.S. Not a bit. Coming to the Living Stone is the act of the Spirit of God, and then it is you are built in. In John 9: 35 the man who had been blind has come to the Son of God. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? . . . Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? . . . Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that talketh with thee." He has come 'to the Living Stone; he is in the solitude of light, outside of man.

REM. Do you mean that joining Christ means giving up?

J.B.S. No; I am not thinking of giving up. I am thinking of *one* thing—the Lord Himself. I want to join Him, and to do so I must step outside of myself and of man. It is only in His life that you can cross the water.

Peter began to sink. There is where priesthood comes in. The Lord stretched out His hand to him. He did not smooth the water, as in chapter 8; but He draws Him to His own side. Relief is what most Christians are looking for.

REM. To join the Lord is really to know Him in His new position.

J.B.S. Exactly. It is the same order that comes out in Hebrews, "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one."

REM. I do not see the difference between a person being converted and being a stone.

J.B.S. Every converted person is a stone, but he is not confirmed yet—not in his place. In the First Book of Kings we see that the stones for the temple were in the quarry, but they had to be brought from the quarry to Jerusalem, to be a component part of the building where God would dwell, and covered with cedar and gold for God's presence. All saints are stones out of the quarry, but all are not built in. You are a stone but you are not a living stone till you come to the Living Stone. It is actual contact with Christ Himself.

REM. You would say that a person might be converted many years before he got to that?

J.B.S. I say it is so with thousands in Christendom; and I come closer; I think that many among brethren have not taken that step though they have peace. It must be by the Spirit of God that you take the step. The Lord is on the other side of death and you cannot be on the ground that He is on except through death. If you are in liberty you practically realise John 6.

Now we come to the third point: The privileges and responsibilities of the assembly. The first thing that characterizes us is—We remember the Lord's death. It is a weak meeting when the breaking of bread is postponed. There is the altar and the door of the tabernacle; I have death and glory before me; I with the consecrated company join Him; I am in the holiest of all. There is no type of it in scripture because it is so transcendently great. The High Priest went in alone in the Old Testament. He has companions now.

REM. What do you go for?

J.B.S. I go to *remember* Him, and to *listen* to Him. Wherever Christ is, is the holiest of all. He is the greater than Moses and the greater than Aaron. Moses received communications. We listen to *Him*. He would give the suited word, and even if no word is spoken, a wonderful effect is produced. "Beholding the glory of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3: 18) is the Holiest of all for the Gentile. When He comes to me in my room, it is to *my* circumstances; when I join Him in the assembly, I go to *His*. Verbal ministry, if in the Spirit, always indicates freshness from the Lord. The Father is made known. There are two things in John 14—"I will not leave you comfortless," and I will let you know who I am—"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father."

REM. You expect communications in the assembly as nowhere else?

J.B.S. I do. Psalm 84 is a time of ruin, a valley of Baca. I get into God's house; I come forth, as a royal priest, to shew forth the praises of Him, &c. This is our fourth point, the moral effect of being there; the royal priesthood explains it—what you are outside.

REM. You couple responsibility and privilege in the assembly?

J.B.S. Yes. A man who says not a word may be a hindrance if he is in a bad state. How often the giving out of a hymn may lead the meeting astray! It is a great responsibility to take part, but blessed. A true minister of the word never speaks beyond what he knows. There is no ring in it unless he is in it himself. If you have to do with the Head you will get light on the spot, and though you may give it out feebly, it will be telling. If you are with the Lord you are thinking of Him, and of His people, and you get direction from the Head, and the light He gives you being from Him, brings a blessing with it. All do not know the Head, but if they seek the welfare of His people, He gives a word to help them. You may get an impression from the Lord that brings the word in a fresh way to you.

REM. Explain the difference between 'Believers' meetings' and the assembly.

J.B.S. In 'Believers' meetings' believers come together to rejoice in the Saviour and salvation, but in the assembly you go to meet Him as Son over God's house. In the former you go for yourself. In the latter you go for Him. You form part of a building where He dwells. It is entirely new ground. You find yourself in a new position.

REM. In speaking of our being brought into the assembly, would you say it is individual?

J.B.S. We learn it individually; we learn everything individually. If you talk of sins in His presence *He* is not supreme to you.

REM. When we speak of sins in the assembly we speak of ourselves.

J.B.S. Quite so. You have gone to your own house instead of to His. If you were to go to court you would not tell the Queen that you had a dirty face yesterday, you would go to her suited to her presence. All the sons of Aaron had the right to go in, but if they had a blemish they could not go in, though they could eat the bread. You must be in the perfection of Christ. There are no sins connected with the Christian; there is no more *conscience* of sins. There may be consciousness of it. If I sin, I cut a rod to beat myself. I do not deny that we sin; we do; but the brethren of Christ as such do not sin.

REM. If we apprehended the new order, we should not be occupied with the old.

J.B.S. Surely we should not. The consecrated company enjoy Himself. It is not that you go in in the acceptability of His work only, but in the acceptability of Himself. I do not think we realise, on the Lord's day morning, when we come together, what it is to be a building for Himself. The longer I live the more I see how little I have apprehended the nature of the new structure. How different our coming together would be if we apprehended it more! It was very soon spoiled, bad material brought in and ruin. But the Lord is not lost; the Living Stone is not lost; and we come to Him. We never understand *the Lord* until we *come to Him*. We may understand Him as Saviour, but we do not understand what

the Living Stone is until we *come to Him*. The mass of Christians do not get beyond conversion; and among ourselves how many are not beyond having peace with God. If you have not that, you have nothing. But is there nothing beyond? Faith tells me what God has effected for me, but it is only by the Spirit I enjoy it, and if not walking in the Spirit I do not enjoy it.

## THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

Hebrews 4: 11-16; 6: 19, 20; 10: 19; Leviticus 8: 22-33

J.B.S. Our subject to-night is the priesthood of Christ. The first thing is, He is distinct from Aaron; that we have in Hebrews 6—"the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Little is known about priesthood practically, because people are so little established in the work of the Saviour, and unless you have, in that sense, done with the Saviour you cannot touch the priest. I know many take exception to this statement, but I say, If you have sin before you, you have not the Lord as priest before you. As priest He has nothing to do with sin. When you come to the priesthood you come to an entirely new footing. The idea of priesthood in Christendom is what you get in Leviticus, but that is not the idea of it in Hebrews. The idea in Hebrews is that Christ is rejected here and exalted to God's right hand, a priest after the order of Melchisedec. If you accept the one—His rejection, you get the other—His exaltation and priesthood. Christendom ignores the first, and never knows the second. They have no idea of the priest of God, and therefore they put the priest between the congregation and God. You get the true thought in the hymn:

In Him we stand a heavenly band,  
Where He Himself has gone.

Is that clear to you? It is a great thing to get the right idea to start with. The priest's service on our side has to do with infirmities, not with sin. When you talk of sin you are not with the priest. In Hebrews 1 we get, "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down."

REM. Christ is not a priest on earth.

J.B.S. He could not be a priest on earth, He is a priest on high. So the idea of a clergyman being priest is all a mistake.

REM. You think priesthood has to do with infirmity?

J.B.S. There are two parts in priesthood. One is to carry us through difficulties to Himself; the other—to bring us according to Himself into the presence of God. The first part terminates at the end of chapter 7: He is able to bear you above every pressure; the second is, that He maintains you in His own blessedness in the presence of God. Many Christians know the first part, but few know the second. Chapter 4 is my side, chapter 10 His side. I used to wonder why chapter 4 comes before chapter 10. I found the reason is that I want my side met before I can get to God's side.

REM. What is your side?

J.B.S. Infirmities. I want His sympathy. The first part of His priestly ministry is to relieve your spirit of every pressure, even as He is now out from every pressure under which He went in grace for us; the second part is to maintain you before God. Sins are all purged before you touch the priesthood, "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one"—of one nature with Christ. It is no question of sin on either side; on my side it is infirmity, not sin; on His, He leads me into the Holiest, and there can be no sin there. If a man speaks of sin He is not in the Holiest. If you brought sin there, it would not be the Holiest.

REM. You would not deny that we recollect what He has done for us?

J.B.S. Not before you come, but when you are in the Holiest you are beholding the glory of the Lord. If you do not see this, you lose the idea of worship. "We both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

REM. But there is something of sins in Hebrews?

J.B.S. Yes, but it is over. We read, "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down." Again, "No more offering for sins." You may say you do sin, but there is no more offering for sin. The moral idea of the Holiest is the blessedness of Christ in the presence of God, not your own salvation. The more I

ponder it, the more incomprehensibly great I see it to be. We all have a meagre idea of worship.

REM. Is it in being drawn to Christ in the way you speak of, that we learn what His priesthood is?

J.B.S. Yes, you are drawn to Him in your infirmity. There are three classes of infirmities. 1. The pressure of circumstances. 2. Bad health. 3. Bereavement. Job went through all three. He lost his possessions, his health, and his family; but though he had sustainment he had not sympathy. The mass of Christians are there; they bear up in a way under their trials but they have not learnt the Lord's sympathy.

REM. How is it learnt?

J.B.S. Like Peter in Matthew 14. When he is set on reaching the Lord he finds out his infirmity. He cries, "Lord, save me." He had wanted to get to the Lord, but now he wants to get out of trouble. Affection was leading him to the Lord, but his own infirmity stopped him. The Lord, instead of quelling the storm, stretched out His hand and drew him to Himself.

REM. Was it failure when Peter began to sink?

J.B.S. Failure of faith—weakness. Happy the man who does not give way under pressure. You cannot get sympathy till you get to Him.

REM. What is sympathy?

J.B.S. You see it in John 11. Martha got His instruction and correction, He *talked* to her; but Mary got His sympathy, He *walked* with her. When I get His sympathy I am drawn away to Himself where there is no trouble. I am solaced with Himself, I am in His company, I am perfectly relieved. The common idea of sympathy is comfort; but relief, even sustainment, is not sympathy. Nothing so affects my heart as that the One who loved me and gave Himself for me is indispensable to me in every sorrow and pressure here.

The effect of what is brought out in Hebrews is that the Lord is so indispensable to me, that my heart is weaned from this place. I then run on to a Person who has endeared Himself to my heart; that is the race of chapter 12. I never knew a man leave the world in heart till he got to know the Person who gave him relief



in sorrow. Affliction does not wean one from the earth. We all have sorrow, but what we have to learn in the sorrow is His sympathy; Mary learned it in walking with the Lord; and she so learnt it, that to lose Him in death would be a greater loss to her than that of Lazarus, and she says, I will put the costliest thing I have in His death. The Lord says, as it were, I not only love a sinner, but I will make a sinner love me. Mary buried her greatness with the Lord, and this was called waste! I have seen very few do that. When you are drawn to His side, it is not merely that He solaces you, but He so bears you up that you are like Paul and Silas, in prison, but above the pressure.

We get in chapter 4: 11, "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest." That is, running on to heaven. Now we have two things to help us on the road—the word and the priesthood. The word is to shew us the way we should go. Do you understand that?

REM. I think so.

J.B.S. You might mistake your way, for there are many wrong roads, and only one right one—the road to heaven. You find the Lord has gone that road, and you are sure to get His hand on that road—His sympathy. If you are not on the right road, you will not get His sympathy. Martha is not on the right road, and though He loved her and corrected her, she does not get His sympathy. Correction is to shew you that you are not on the heavenly road. When you are on the heavenly road you get His sympathy. Paul and Silas got sympathy, and they sang praises to God in the prison; they were above their circumstances. You go to a meeting pressed down with your trouble, but if you get into His company you are borne above it, so that instead of being a hindrance to the assembly, as you would be if overwhelmed with your sorrow, you are above it, and He leads you into the Holiest—His own presence.

Lying here in the night, there is nothing around me to comfort; I look up, there is no improvement in my circumstances, but I get sympathy from a Person who is not here, and I am drawn out of the pressure to Him.

REM. What about the trouble, does it go?

J.B.S. The trouble does not go, but in the presence of the One who is not here I am drawn out of it—solaced; not helped or cured, but solaced in His company. If you lose the company, you lose the solace. Paul and Silas' backs were sore after the stripes, but they had the sympathy of the Lord and were above it.

REM. How does mercy come in at the end of chapter 4?

J.B.S. Mercy takes you out of your difficulty. "Ye have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." Many a one is looking for mercy in his trial who is not looking to be borne above it. Paul and Silas got solace when their feet were fast in the stocks, but afterwards mercy came in, they were delivered.

REM. We shall ever want mercy.

J.B.S. Quite so, because we are in a place of need. He is the Father of mercies.

REM. I believe we might so enjoy the Lord in the trouble or difficulty that we might thank Him for it.

J.B.S. I believe so. I said to one who had lost his wife—If you look to this place your sorrow is here, but if you are drawn to Him the solace is where He is, and you will get so solaced in His presence that you will be above your sorrow, in perfect tranquillity. People talk of sympathy, but they do not know much about it.

But that is not all. That is *your* side of the story. Chapter 10 gives you *His* side. He is on the other side of the water, as we had last night. There I learn what it is to be brought into the blessedness of what He is in the presence of God. Do you think you understand the priesthood on your side and on His side?

REM. His side is Himself, I suppose.

J.B.S. Yes—Himself in His own place and surroundings. Take an illustration. Supposing I am in great trouble and I have a friend; I know he will help me, and I go to his house. He meets me at the hall door, and says, 'I know all about it, but come in here to my company and let us have a happy time.' The Lord meets you in your trouble, but where does He draw you to? To the holiest of all—to Himself. The Holiest of all is

morally heaven, where He is. He fulfils it all. The moment He died the veil was rent. We have boldness for entrance into the Holiest, but it must be through death: He is the true sanctuary. In Hebrews 9 He enters heaven *for* us, but when He comes into our midst He brings heaven *to* us. No one could be in Christ's company but in the Holiest of all; He is crowned with glory and honour, the Son of God.

REM. Is it only when we are gathered together that we know that?

J.B.S. You may have it in a sense at any time if you look to Him; but it is different to know Him thus in your own house and in His house. In your house *your* affairs are before you, in the assembly *His* affairs are before you. Which would you rather have?

REM. His affairs are superior to ours.

J.B.S. You might say—I should like both, and that is a good answer. But there is a difference. It is a great thing to be able to say, “the Lord stood by me and strengthened me”; but when I go to Him in the assembly it is like the queen of Sheba in Solomon's house. Many who go to the assembly know nothing of the Lord's presence. It is because we are so far behind the reality of these things that we so little understand them. We have a great high Priest, first to relieve us from pressure, that is *our* side, *then* to lead us into the happy circle inside. What is that? The Holiest of all, where there is not a stain or soil—nothing to say to sin. We have boldness to enter through the blood of Jesus. You see Aaron's sons were consecrated with Aaron. In the type they go with him into the tabernacle; we have a great Priest over the house of God, and we go in with Him. Do you understand?

REM. Yes, we go in to the presence of God.

J.B.S. In the tabernacle there was first the altar, then the door. In Christendom they never get beyond the altar; that is the death of Christ. He finished the work; all was accomplished there in perfection. But it is not only in the perfection of the *work* that I go in, but in the fragrance of Christ Himself. I am there in all the fragrance of Christ.

Turn to Leviticus 8; you get the sin-offering and the burnt-offering, that is, the death of Christ for sin, and as a sweet savour to God for acceptance; and then the ram of consecration. Christendom, as I have said, only gets as far as the death, and leaves out the consecration ram. Consecration is more than your acceptance; it is now that you actually enter into the tabernacle in all the fragrance of Christ. God has consecrated you; you come in; what are you feeding on? On the perfection of the Person who has made you accepted. He is the Minister of the sanctuary. In Him you come into the Holiest of all. Nothing can be more inconceivably great. Why if Christians really knew where they are there would be no understanding them by man, they would be so independent of everything here. He has gone in and we have gone in with Him.

In Him we stand a heavenly band.

REM. What is the difference between sanctification and consecration?

J.B.S. In sanctification you are drawn from the bad to the good. In consecration you are filled with the good. In Leviticus 8: 27 their hands are filled with the consecrations—really Christ.

REM. Will you tell us something about the laver?

J.B.S. It is connected with the priesthood. We get the feet-washing in John 13. To understand that you must know intimacy. If there be not intimacy there can be no sense of reserve. Hundreds have good consciences and no sense of tangible sin, who know nothing of the intimacy which would be conscious of a shade of reserve. It has been said of Peter, that in John 20 he had a good *conscience*, but not till chapter 21 was his *heart* right. You must have known intimacy in order to know the least shade of distance. Many think John 13 is advocacy, but it is more. Advocacy is for known sin. The feet-washing is to remove all that hinders us from enjoying the Lord. The cause of distance may be negligence. The bride in Canticles 5 felt there was distance, though there was no known sin. The Lord says—I am going to a

place where you cannot be with me with the slightest soil; I must wash your feet; there must not be a spot on you, if you would join me. *He* does it. He washes our feet because He does not want there to be a shade of distance.

In Hebrews 10: 19 you get another step, you are not only of the consecrated company, but you pass into the Holiest. The moment Christ died the veil was rent, I have boldness to enter. The blessedness of Christ occupies me. No passage of Scripture explains being in the Holiest so well as 1 John 4: 17, "As he is, so are we." We are brought on a moral level with Him; we share with Him. He says, as it were—You believe on Me in the scene of My rejection; you share with Me, not by-and-by only, but *this* minute in My exaltation.

REM. What is the thought in "through the veil"?

J.B.S. He opened the door through death; you can go in no other way than through the appropriation of His death. It is a new and living way that He has consecrated. You must go to the other side of the water. He died that you might be brought in. If nothing but His death could open the door, it is not possible that I can go in in any other way; I cannot go in in the flesh; I must go in the Spirit.

On the day of atonement (Lev. 16) two goats and a bullock were offered. The goats were for the people, prefiguring the earthly company, and the bullock for Aaron and his house, "whose house are we." The gospel of the two goats is the limit of the gospel that is preached in Christendom; the gospel of the bullock is the gospel of the glory. That takes you inside. In the gospel of the two goats, all your sins are gone here, in the place where they were committed; it ends with forgiveness of sins. The gospel of the bullock brings you to the Person, where the Person is. We get the benefit of both, for both were accomplished in one stroke in the death of Christ. The Holiest of all to the Gentile is 2 Corinthians 3: 18, "We all, with open face beholding . . . the glory of the Lord." All the high priest was to the Jew is infinitely surpassed now in Him—"Whose house are we."

REM. What is the effect of knowing Christ in the Holiest of all?

J.B.S. I have found a home outside this world, and nothing makes the world so bare to me.

REM. In Hebrews 8 the Lord is High Priest and Minister of the sanctuary?

J.B.S. That is His place and when you know Him He is that to you. The moment the Lord comes into the meeting the atmosphere of heaven is there.

REM. Will you say something on the verse, "Let us go forth to him without the camp"?

J.B.S. You must be inside before you can go outside. I know Him in the brightest place, but I ask what sort of a path had He here? If you are drawn to Him there, you would not seek a place here; it would not be consistent. The last chapter of Hebrews tells what people should know of you. You could not be outside the camp unless you were inside the veil.

REM. What is "We have an altar"?

J.B.S. That is inside—the Holiest. That is the practical result of having come to chapter 10.

REM. I suppose the blood gave them a title to the altar?

J.B.S. The moment He died He opened the door. It was His death, not even His resurrection that opened the door. We could not go in but through death. What a wonderful moment for a person when he sees that he is brought into a scene where everything is perfectly holy, and that he is there, not only in the perfection of the work, but in all the blessedness of Him who did the work. What different meetings we should have if we entered into that! People talk of going to worship. You cannot worship till you get to Him. We must get to Him first.

REM. He has set us for it.

J.B.S. No question but that He desires it. The real way of blessing for souls is to try these things for themselves, to get to know them experimentally. It is the time that you spend with the Lord that is *everything* to you.

## THE WILDERNESS

Exodus 15: 22-27

J.B.S. Our subject is the wilderness. Israel were redeemed out of Egypt, and you see from Exodus 15: 13-17 that the purpose of God was to bring them into Canaan. But the wilderness lay between. There was no way of getting into Canaan except through the wilderness, and typically this is true for us. There is no other way of touching heaven but by accepting death here, and that is accepting the wilderness. The interval between Egypt and Canaan is the test for every one of us. Happy the man who is in that interval according to God. I know nothing that is so little known as the true character of the wilderness, and its consequent experience. The one who truly understands the wilderness as God's appointment is a happy man. He looks for nothing but death here. That is really accepting the wilderness. You get out of Egypt by the death of Christ, and you have to learn that there is nothing for you in this scene but the death of Christ. The test to us is to accept the wilderness as a scene of death with no resource for us but God.

Israel took thirty-nine years to learn it, and we may take as many, though you might be only an hour in it. The thief and Stephen were a very short time in it. I thank God for what He has shewn me as to the real character of the wilderness. I have often shrunk from singing:

This world is a wilderness wide,  
We have nothing to seek nor to choose,  
We've no thought in the waste to abide,  
We've nought to regret nor to lose.

But the more I see what God expects me to be in the space between Egypt and Canaan, the more solemn it

is—blessed indeed, but solemn. All the troubles of my life, all the shakings and tumults, have occurred in that interval. Why? That I might learn complete dependence upon God.

REM. Israel was in the three places—Egypt, the wilderness and Canaan.

J.B.S. Yes; J.N.D. has said that the wilderness was not part of God's purpose but it was part of His ways. The wilderness is, as it were, a bridge between two ports. If the people of God would accept it instead of Egypt, and in the light of Canaan, it would be a blessed place, or rather experience—for it is an experience rather than a place—for them. You have life in Christ outside this world, and there is nothing here to minister to that life. Exodus 15, 16, 17 is the wilderness proper—what it is to God. The manna, the smitten rock, the intercession, the victory over Amalek, set forth in fullness God's grace for you in the wilderness. But the first thing you find on entering the wilderness is Marah; that is death: you have to drink death. The waters of Marah were of the waters of the Red Sea. The death of Christ, which has delivered me from Egypt, is to be practically maintained if I am to be truly in the wilderness. If you have not learnt what it is to be clear of Egypt you cannot possibly have wilderness experience; you must start clear. Romans 6 and 7 give in a short compass what makes the wilderness for us. If I accept death I save myself many a sorrow, and I am sustained here by God. There is nothing here for me, but what comes from God.

REM. We get mercies here.

J.B.S. But natural mercies do not belong to the wilderness, though we do get them here. In the wilderness I only get what God is the source of. We have to learn ourselves. Israel spent forty years in learning themselves, and they did not get free—did not really accept the wilderness till Numbers 21.

REM. What do you mean?

J.B.S. They were either going back in heart to Egypt or murmuring. The wilderness yields nothing to the flesh, and if you go back in heart you go back to Egypt. They had to learn themselves; hence the wilderness was



to humble them and to prove them, to know what was in their heart, and to make them know “that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.” When the Lord was led into the wilderness, this is the first scripture He quotes in answer to the devil. He was the dependent Man. Though He had power and means to relieve Himself He would have nothing but God, and was in the wilderness perfectly dependent on Him. If you study His life you will find that He never did anything for Himself, He never altered a single circumstance in His own favour. “Foxes have holes . . . but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” But He had joys which nothing could touch, and He could say, “That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” All His springs were in God. That was the way the Lord lived here as a Man, and that is manna.

How distressed Israel were when they got to Marah, and that is like ourselves. We are little prepared to find no green spot here; we are glad to be out of the place of judgment through the death and resurrection of Christ. That is the Red Sea. But we are little prepared to keep in touch with His death all the way through, and it is only in His death that we can be practically free from the *man* under judgment. To accept this is to accept the wilderness. The young man in 1 John 2 has overcome the wicked one—Pharaoh; but still it is said to him: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” You know you are clear of the judgment of death because you have appropriated Christ’s death for your salvation. Do you *continue* to appropriate it? or are you gratifying yourself in the place where He died? In 1 Peter 4 we read, “Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” That does not go as far as “dead to sin” in Romans 6. In 2 Corinthians 4 we have “Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.” If you are truly in the wilderness you do not allow a word or a thing of that for which Christ suffered.

That was Paul's experience. Tell me, if you are living the life of a Man who is not here, what is the first impression you get?

REM. That Christ is not here.

J.B.S. Exactly. You have the impression on your soul that He is not here, and that is the wilderness; for if *He* is not here there is nothing for *you* here, nothing here for the life you enjoy. If you are in your room enjoying the Lord outside of everything here, and come down to the most beautiful family circle, it will not help you.

REM. That is where the disappointment comes.

J.B.S. You have to bring grace into the circumstance. It does not bring grace to you. Do you follow me?

REM. I think I follow you so far as that there is no resource for us here.

J.B.S. The most favourable natural circumstances do not minister to you. It is a dry and barren land. I believe you get the truest picture of wilderness experience in Psalm 23. Where do you come from? From where there is nothing to minister to you; but you are with Him, and where does He lead you? He leads you in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. You have the sense of His resources, and not only that, but of His favour in the presence of your enemies.

REM. Do you say that there is nothing here to minister to the new man?

J.B.S. If you know anything tell me what it is. Shew me *anything* here that *could* minister to the new man.

REM. I was thinking that all ministry to the new man must come from the new place.

J.B.S. Quite so, but that place is not here.

REM. The Holy Spirit must minister it.

J.B.S. Yes, but where from? He brings it *down* to you.

REM. The Lord in glory is the true spring.

J.B.S. Quite so. Well, the first sense you have after having got deliverance is that Christ is not here, and that there is nothing for the new man here. You have a life beyond this place in a scene of unclouded joy; but there is nothing for you here. That is the wilderness. It

is a terrible snare for Christians to be looking for good things here since Christ is not here. Nothing is more hindering than to have expectations in this scene. If I am really living in the life of Christ, enjoying His tastes and interests, I have a joy outside this scene, and I find that nothing here helps me, and I do not desire anything here; I want to be supported as He was supported here, and that is manna. You will never get manna until you are living in His life. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." That is your true life in which you live *to God*. Then "the life which I now live *in flesh* I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." That is the new path for the wilderness. I do everything in dependence on Him, not in any ability of my own, but in complete dependence on God, and the greater the obstacles which I have to encounter, the greater the opportunity for me to prove the power of the Spirit of God in enabling me to overcome.

REM. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Is that manna?

J.B.S. No; it is a contrast to it. It is for living, not for the wilderness. I do not know anything so little known as manna.

REM. What do you say manna is?

J.B.S. Manna is the way Christ lived on earth, a life of entire dependence, sustained by God. The world was a wilderness to Him, and He went through everything in divine beauty. The actual grace in which Christ walked here is the manna for us, and according as you are truly in the wilderness you get it.

REM. Would you say it is the life of Jesus on earth?

J.B.S. It is His manner of life here, but you must be in His life outside of all here to get it. You must be with Him where He is, in order to be like Him where He was. Israel would not accept manna. They loathed it. (If you learn yourself truly, you will find out everybody else, and so can help them.) In the thirty-ninth year of their wilderness history they spake against God and against Moses, and their soul loathed the light food. The fiery

serpents were sent. The real cause of the trouble—the devil, who can touch unjudged flesh for its destruction—comes out, and a brazen serpent, which had never bitten anyone, is lifted up. This answers to John 3. The Son of man must be lifted up. He who knew no sin was made sin. Sin is condemned in the flesh, removed from God's eye; and outside all the evil the relief comes. I am alive in Him; I am severed from the man under judgment in His death; I have tasted death in Another. The brazen serpent proved that there was no cure for the flesh but death. When I see Christ made sin, and that I am crucified with Christ, the day of everlasting blessing has dawned for me, I see that I am out of it all in Christ our Lord—out of death into life.

In verse 17 you get "Spring up, O well." You have the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of life; you have come experimentally into His life in the power of the Spirit, as in Romans 8: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The end of Romans 5 and chapter 8 go together; chapters 6, 7 come between as parenthetical. Now you are properly set up in the wilderness. The brazen serpent and the springing well are really what we get in John 3 and 4. Israel makes a new start there. They are not in Canaan yet, not over Jordan, and they have battle till they get over. There is conflict on the other side, but of another character. For us it is that we are in the race of Hebrews 12. It is a battle all the way, your life is in your hand, and your only food manna.

Then there is a new force against you, and that is Balaam. Balaam represents the tactics of the enemy to get the people into social intercourse, and he did them more mischief than any other form of Satanic opposition. So it is in this day. The Balaam snare is the masterpiece of Satanic wickedness for the people of God. Every one of us has been more or less affected by the snare of Balaam. Nothing has corrupted us so much as company. It is the society that Christians keep that does the mischief, and mark my words! *everyone is coloured by the lowest company he keeps.*

REM. Do you mean in business?

J.B.S. When a man is in business he is not thinking of company, but if he relaxes and ungirds and gets into social intimacy that is not of Christ, he is corrupted. Our company is the christian company. See how Balaam corrupted the Corinthians by inviting them out. The more attractive a man's company is, the greater the danger. The snare may be in *reading*. Ink will soil you as well as mud: you generally find a man's reading to be according to the company he keeps.

The Thessalonians had to encounter Amalek. That was open opposition, but the Balaam snare is subtle; he invites you, is gracious to you.

REM. What do you do when they invite?

J.B.S. Refuse, unless I can go in the grace of Christ as a servant and not to enjoy myself. We get a lesson in a horse in a mill. He goes through the work of the mill all day, but is glad to get to the stable. You have to work, but the home of your heart is outside it all. You will never know this world to be a wilderness unless you have a home outside of it.

REM. What is the difference between Marah and the brazen serpent?

J.B.S. Marah is suffering in the flesh because I will not gratify the flesh. And why not? Because Christ died for it. That sweetens it. "Arm yourselves with the same mind." You refuse the flesh as it arises. In the brazen serpent I see Christ made sin for me, the old man gone, all gone in the cross; we do not come to this in a day.

REM. How do you get out of the wilderness?

J.B.S. Through Jordan, and that is privilege. It is our privilege to be dead with Christ outside this scene. Jordan is realising in myself what the Red Sea makes me before God. I have through the death of Christ found a way, not only out of Egypt, but into Canaan. Romans is dead to the man—to sin. Colossians is dead to the world. There is often a long step between the two. I am not dead in myself, but I am dead *with* Christ. I am severed from my link with Adam and with the world by His death; but if I am dead with Christ I am alive in Him.

REM. Israel was seen to go into the Red Sea, and was not seen to come out. They are not seen to go into Jordan, but are seen to come out.

J.B.S. Old commentators say that they went through the Red Sea in single file, but through Jordan abreast. When they come to Jordan there is no water in it. In the Red Sea the waters were a wall to them on the right hand and on the left. Stephen found that there was no water in Jordan. This is a poor place to one who has the joys of heaven in his heart, but I have died with Christ from the rudiments of the world.

You will never know Christ as Head until you are over Jordan.

REM. You say the wilderness is the place of testing?

J.B.S. Yes, it is the test to us all, because it is where we practically learn death. I am through divine grace out of judgment; but more than that, I have a new place outside of all here. I have to go from one place to another. What sort of person am I in the interval between Egypt and Canaan? What a lamentable history Israel's was, and at the same time what a wonderful record of the grace of God. "Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." That was the principle of the Lord's life as Man here. He learned *obedience*—not to *obey*, but *obediencé*—by the things that He suffered. Philippians is the experience of a heavenly man. You must go to the top to be in that. You cannot have wilderness experience if you do not know your place and home in heaven. In Ephesians the believer is viewed as already in heavenly places united to Christ, and he comes back to all here in a new way.

REM. What is the hidden manna?

J.B.S. What God saw in Christ here. In Revelation 2 we find, when the church had suffered from the snare of Balaam—evil association—that the overcomer gets the hidden manna—the way that blessed One walked here to the delight of God. The church is the complement of all that Christ was here. It has taken nineteen hundred years to bring out the complement, you a bit, and I a bit; millions of bits. People do not see that the

assembly is the complement of the Man in whom God was manifested—that it all comes from Him.

I hope all your hearts are set on understanding the wilderness, and being truly in it for God. If they are, you will never forget this evening. We ought to know what the Lord is teaching us; He satisfieth the desire of every living thing. What a happy time we should have if we accepted the wilderness at the beginning—looking for nothing here but death, and in complete dependence on God. But we have to learn it; we all shrink from accepting the wilderness. We never enjoy Christ in heaven unless we accept death here. Paul and John found things getting rougher as they went on. Instead of the end of their days being spent in a quiet, shady retreat, one was an exile, and the other a prisoner. But they were very happy.

REM. Did they eat manna in the land?

J.B.S. They ate it till they ate the old corn after the passover. See Joshua 5: 11. The interval between Egypt and Canaan tests us *all*.

## CHRIST THE HEAD OF HIS BODY

Colossians 2 ; 3: 17

J.B.S. Our subject this evening is Christ the Head of His body the church. We find from this epistle that a company may be very nice up to a point without knowing Him as such, but until one knows it, one cannot be in the secret of Christ. The Colossians were an interesting company, much like the Ephesians. The apostle says of them, "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints"; and to the Ephesians, chapter 1: 15, "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints." The Colossians had learned what it was to be in the assembly, but they did not know 'the Head.' Hundreds accept the doctrine of the Head who have never entered into it.

REM. What is the mark of one holding the Head?

J.B.S. A man who holds the Head would come out here in all the sensibilities of Christ. Suppose there were a company who had all lost their heads and got a new head—one head for all—what would be the effect? You cannot understand union unless you know the Head. The body derives from the Head, and the Head gives direction. Many own that Christ is the Head of the church, and has a right to rule, but it is another thing to be really under His dictation.

REM. Is not the Lord presented as Head in more ways than one?

J.B.S. He is Head of every man, 1 Corinthians 11: 3, and Head of all principality and power, but here He is spiritual Head. The Colossians were not in the power of it, they did not know the mystery.

Let us trace the way of learning it, and then its application. It is only as getting to His side that we know Him as Head.



In chapter 1 the apostle is putting the Colossians on the true ground. They must not be moved away from the hope of the gospel, which is heaven. Then comes out, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." The part of the mystery brought out here is the Head, and especially in connection with Gentiles; *they* derived from Christ—Christ was in them as life.

We do not get beyond life in Colossians. In Romans 6 I touch life as relief out of death; I get it as relief. In Colossians I have it for enjoyment. I learn what life with Him is; I have life with Christ in the sphere of life, and if I do not know this I shall never understand the Head. In Romans it comes out in connection with deliverance. If you have not deliverance you cannot advance though you may know all the Bible.

REM. When did the truth of the mystery come out?

J.B.S. Through Paul; Ephesians 3 shews the revelation of the mystery made known to him, and the administration of it committed to him. See also Colossians 1: 25.

REM. What is the mystery?

J.B.S. That the church is Christ's body. The aspect of the mystery that we get in Colossians is "the Head".

In chapter 2 we come to the *gain*, what we gain by it. "For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God." If there was great conflict there must have been great opposition. The opposition was to hinder them from getting this great gain. The gain was that they derived from the Head. The apostle's anxiety was that they should fully know the mystery of God, in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The wonderful thing is that we should share all these things, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If we were holding the Head we should answer to what would be right for Christ's circle of interest. Wisdom is wise in all things, not only in great things. The vulture's eye hath not seen wisdom's path. It is a great thing to get hold of the immensity of

the grace; even if we are not up to it, it is a great thing to see what we are called to. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *there*; nothing outside. The impending danger for the Colossians was that the two evils that had affected the Corinthians and Galatians—man's wisdom and law—man's mind and religiousness, should be used as a combination to add to Christ. These things had to be counteracted in another form to that in which they had been counteracted with regard to the Corinthians and Galatians. Here what delivers is "the Head." I do not want learning or religiousness if I have all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in the Head. The fishermen were not very learned people. These snares are patent in Christendom all around us, and among ourselves too. Sanctimoniousness is part of it. Reverence is right, but not sanctimoniousness. What delivers is to see the Head, and how completely everything begins anew, from the top, so that nothing human can help. Paul, the most accomplished man, is more effective when he has stammering lips. We have not to work on the feelings, but to get direction from the Head.

Turn to verse 10 to continue the history. "Ye are complete *in him*." Therefore we cannot add to or improve it. It is a great thing to get hold of the fact that I do not need to go outside of Him. We are *filled up* in Him, the same word as fullness in verse 9. Then verse 11, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." There is no more sweeping passage than this. It is not the '*sins* of the flesh,' but 'the body of the flesh.'

REM. What is putting off the body of the flesh?

J.B.S. To be completely outside the first man. The whole thing is swept away. It is circumcision, not crucifixion. Circumcision is stronger than crucifixion. It is Gilgal; every trace of the old thing gone. If we understood Jordan better we should understand Gilgal better. It is a positive relief that I am clear from all here through the death of Christ. Chapter 3: 3 hooks on to chapter 2. You could not be dead with Him and not be risen with Him; what is true of us in Christ has to be

experimentally true of us; all is effected in Christ, but if you are sincere you want it carried out practically in yourself. Seeing it is important, but it has to be adopted, not only admired. We have one point in verse 10—complete in Christ, and the other in verse 11—the old thing done away. If you have not come to verse 10 you will not take in verse 11. All that is necessary for God I have in Christ. By degrees we are waking up to the wondrous things we have in Christ. I see the immensity of what I am called to, and how little I am practically in it.

Verse 19 is the great practical line: “And not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.” Then comes verse 20: “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world.” Now we are taking the place of being over Jordan. Colossians is over Jordan but not in heaven. It is dead to *things* here—the rudiments of the world, more than to *man*; the wilderness is accepted, and Jordan is accepted. In the death of Christ I am outside the world—outside everything. No one will taste heaven as a reality unless he accepts death—accepts the wilderness. You will never understand the Head until you are over Jordan, until you are morally outside this world. You do not get into the sphere of life till then. It is not only the wilderness, but being morally apart from everything here in the sphere of Christ’s life, though not gone to heaven. Colossians holds an intermediate place; Romans is dead to sin, Ephesians seated in heavenly places; Colossians is dead to the rudiments of the world, and in the sphere of Christ’s life. In the sphere of His life we “seek the things which are above” (chap 3: 1), we are not in heaven yet, otherwise we should not be told to look *up*; but having died to the world we have got into a new sphere of things, and it is here that we *practically* learn circumcision. Therefore we get “mortify therefore.” You have to carry out circumcision practically. It is not to mortify now and again as an evil arises, but once for all—the whole thing has to go in one lump, will and all. You are already circumcised with the circumcision of Christ, and by the Spirit

it is to be made good *in* you. It is not practice. Many read this chapter for practice, but it is not practice though it is practical. All has to go like Elisha's garment. When he got the power to take up another he rent his own garment, rendered it useless, and took up Elijah's. It is not merely to put off habits but what is indigenous in the nature. *By the Spirit* it is done *in* you. It is your appropriation of what has been effected *for* you. First we get—mortify all works of will; then—put off and put on. There is nothing so unknown as the new man.

REM. What is it?

J.B.S. If you knew Christ better you would know the new man. There is nothing of the old in it. Here you are over Jordan in position, you have died and risen and are looking to appear with Him in glory, and you have put off the old man. You come into a new circle of things where there is no human voice, where there is "neither Greek nor Jew . . . but Christ is everything and in all"—no kind of man at all, learned or religious, Christ is everything. You are outside the influence of everything here. You have come to a spot outside everything of man, where there is no man but One, and that One the Lord Jesus Christ; like the disciples on the mount of transfiguration, when they "saw no man save Jesus only." What deep enjoyment we should have if we knew more of that!

REM. Would you say that the Head supplies all that should take place in the assembly?

J.B.S. I should—hymns and everything; we should have wonderful times if everything were supplied by the Head. I get instruction from Him how to act in *His* circle, not in my own circle. The Head supplies what suits Himself to His own company. I try now to come to the assembly like a blank sheet of paper. I used to come otherwise. What He gives is always effectual. It makes one very small, and one may give it out stammeringly, but it makes one very glad, and it comes with His authority. He would give it to you in the meeting or confirm it to you there. If you followed it out you would be timid on the one hand and not abashed on the other, for He would be before you.

REM. If I gave out a hymn that I had on my heart, would that do?

J.B.S. That is not the way to do it. It would be bad if it were not on your heart, but that is not a reason for giving it out. It should be dictation from the Head. Nothing damages the assembly so much as our coming to it thinking of ourselves instead of Him.

REM. What is the difference between the leading of the Spirit and being under the direction of the Head?

J.B.S. In the former case you are not led beyond your knowledge, but in the direction of the Head you get knowledge instantaneously. The Head is dictation; He gives you a new thought which you never have had before, and it is helpful to the saints. The control of the Head is in relation to the body. It is not individual. He directs only in His own circle—the christian circle. He directs life.

In verses 12–17 you get what we *derive* from the Head. His affection, His sensibilities, His word, and then His peace. A rough, uncouth man comes out in a new way, with 'bowels of mercies,' &c., and with a suited word too, and that because he has got another Head. I see the wisdom and goodness of God that when He revived the truth to us it was that of the Head. The first thought of it was given to a clergyman, that there is one Head, and that if there is one Head there must be one body.

The magnitude of it is set before us in this epistle. I am afraid to say what I see. You must be morally outside this scene, liberated, in a new sphere, to know Him as Head. No one will understand me unless he has gone a bit of the road.

"Meditate upon these things." I do not believe a man gets anything without exercise. The chief interest with God is that which is known least about.

## UNION WITH CHRIST

Ephesians 1: 14-23

J.B.S. Our subject this evening is conscious union with Christ. In the counsel of God we are united to Christ, but the apostle prays that they may know it. The word 'know' is conscious knowledge. The counsels of God are all secured to you, but the point is that you may have present knowledge of union, and that which results from it. If you are not in the state for it you cannot enter into it. There is the state belonging to the condition; you must be in the practical state for union with Christ, or you can never enter into the reality of it. It is by the Spirit of God that I know that I am united to Christ. Everything is accomplished in Christ, but it is only known to me as the Spirit makes it known. If you do not know Romans you will never know Ephesians, though you may read it morning, noon, and night. We ought to be exercised as to what He is teaching us.

Genesis 24 gives us the illustration of union. Abraham's steward was sworn to bring one of the stock of Abraham for a bride for Isaac. The great point was, she was to be one of the same kindred. That is the first thing. If anyone asked me what is the great delay in souls knowing union, I should say, they do not enter into the fact that they are of the same stock as Christ. We get it in Hebrews 2: 11, "all of one." If you put a noun to that you spoil it; you lose the idea. We do not get Union in Hebrews, we get companionship and "all of one." Saints do not realise they are of the same stock as Christ. He did not come to improve our stock but to bring us into His, so that He is not ashamed to call us brethren. This is a most important point of view of union, for nothing that is not of Christ could be united to Him. It used to be said that He is our elder

brother; that is not said now, but through the cross we are His brethren, and therefore there can be union without disparity. You cannot improve kindred, you can improve acquaintance by consort, but you cannot have consort without suitability. The idea of union has been lost sight of and degraded. It has been used, as in one of our hymns, as a confirmation of salvation. It has nothing to do with it. There can be no knowledge of union unless I am at home with Him. The Holy Spirit conducts you to the spot where He is, but I must first know that I am *of* Him, "all of one." "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." After He rose from the dead, He said "Go to my *brethren*." He could never have said that before.

REM. What about "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother"? Matthew 12: 50.

J.B.S. That indicates the character, but no one could be of the same order until He rose again from the dead. Nothing goes into heaven but what came out of heaven. If you are not of Christ you will not go to heaven. He was the Man "out of heaven"—a man of an entirely new order. The church is of His order and is united to Him. We know so little of it. I often wish I knew more of the tastes and interests of the new man. It is only as we know Christ that we find them out. The first thing in learning is to discover one's ignorance, then to look for light.

Well, the first thing in Genesis 24 is that the steward is sworn to bring one of the same kindred; then he asks the Lord that the damsel who would shew him grace should be the person. Rebekah comes. He puts the question to her; she has grace; she draws water for him and for the camels also. He found her out by her grace. The person ready to be conducted into union is the person who has grace, condition.

REM. What is condition?

J.B.S. I am of His stock—the old man put off—the new man put on. The most beautiful natural sentiment cannot be united to Christ. There was nothing in Eve

that did not come from Adam. Adam said "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." The apostle says, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." When I think of the greatness of it, I wonder I am not more set upon it; more captivated by it. God's destination for us is the highest in His kingdom as to position. As to relationship with Him we are sons. I do not know many who have conscious knowledge of union. Many accept it as a doctrine, but that is not being in it.

REM. What is the mark of a person who knows it?

J.B.S. We get it in the second prayer in Ephesians. What you have there is the consequence of union. If you find a person truly united to another, what is the chief thing in his heart? The person to whom he is united. That is Christ. He is dwelling in my heart and I am in His heart. This prayer is not the state of an individual, it is the state of the Bride. It is divine state answering to divine standing. Romans is individual state, but here, Ephesians 3, it is the state consequent on union with Christ. The Christ dwells in your heart. As with a good wife—all the interests of her husband absorb her. The first point in the prayer is, He fills my heart; the second, I am in the whole range of His glory; the third, I know His love. No one really knows His love as stated here unless he knows union. The effect of union is—you get the heart of the bride. If you ask what is the enjoyment, I answer, first get it and then you will understand it. Christ dwelling in your heart absorbs all your affections. It is very emphatic, *The Christ*, all that concerns Him, I have all His interests at heart. The wise woman (Prov. 31) is thinking of all that concerns her lord. Christ is not a visitor in your heart, He is *living* there. You are in spirit in heaven, and you are occupied with His interests here—His personal concerns. It is not a question of what you are doing, but what is occupying your heart. You will not answer to the prayer of chapter 3 unless you know the prayer of chapter 1.

REM. What is the point of the prayer in chapter 1?

J.B.S. You are not only enlightened but you "have the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of



him." Until you are in the knowledge of God you will never understand the mystery; you can have no conception of it. These Ephesians were ready for it. When we begin to know a little of it we long for everyone to know it. I often wish at prayer meetings that there was more exercise of heart as to how little we know union. It would transfer us from the individual circle to His circle. A wife must leave her own interests for her husband's.

There is first the call, then the history. Our calling is to be united to Christ. Historically we have to go to where He is. Rebekah had the call first, the history follows; she is conducted from the far country to Isaac's country. We must leave this place for His place before we can know union. The Spirit conducts us there. When Rebekah is to go to Isaac the first thing she has to do is to break with her family. If you cannot break with your family you will not learn union with Christ. Her family wanted to detain her in Mesopotamia. She had to refuse, and to leave them there. They say to her, "Abide with us at least ten days." But she says, "I will go." That is decision. I am set for it. The true heart starts. Happy for her that she did not delay. If she had stayed ten days, she would have stayed many a day longer. I have seen people fall back by what is commendable in nature. Natural ties are commendable and therefore the more hindering. First love sacrifices everything for company. We read of the disciples in Luke 5, "when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him." They had just received a great mercy in the multitude of fishes, but they say, as it were—We think more of this poor man than of all else, we will forsake all and follow Him. I have never seen anyone do that without getting manifold more.

The more you are separated from the world the more you get of divine things; you get more acquaintance with God's things. The company of Christ is better than anything that anyone could give up. He likes our company. Nothing will ever draw the heart to Him till we know his love. A person to be loved by, and to love, is beyond anything. That leads on to union. If I know

His love and love Him, I want to be with Him where He is.

REM. You do not want to teach us that natural claims are to be disregarded?

J.B.S. No; in Luke 14 one of those who refused the great supper says, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come"; he should have said, I will come and I will bring her too! A natural claim is like the bed of a river; that is where it ought to run.

The first mark of a man in the Spirit is that his body is a living sacrifice.

REM. Is 1 Corinthians 6: 17, "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," union?

J.B.S. That is connected with responsibility. Union is not responsibility, it is privilege—His grace.

The first part of the prayer is the calling—that you may know it. You cannot know union till you are brought to His place. It is there that the Spirit is ready to conduct you. If you have not come there, you have not answered to the affection of Christ, or to the Father's purpose. The prodigal had not answered to the father's heart until he was at the feast enjoying the fatted calf.

REM. What is the hope of His calling?

J.B.S. The wonderful position to which we are brought, shewing the manner of the grace.

REM. What is "the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints"?

J.B.S. He inherited Canaan through Israel. It is not the saints that are the inheritance; many think it is the saints themselves, but it is *through* them.

What I press is—union now with the Person in heaven. If you are in the present consciousness of union you will come out in heavenly power; you will be known by what your heart is bound up with.

Read the closing verses of Genesis 24: 52 to end. There are a great many steps. Rebekah had first to break with her family, and then to go through the wilderness. I see some who have broken with their family, but who cannot take the journey. Rebekah had not only decision but she had continuance. I never saw a man delay to do anything, that he did not miss it. Then when she got

sight of Isaac she took a veil and covered herself; she got sight of her head and she veiled her own head. Then she goes with him, and he brought her into his mother's tent, and he loved her, and Isaac was comforted. If we really knew union with Christ we should be a comfort to Him on earth where He has lost Israel, of which the death of Sarah is the type. That shews that the type belongs to the present moment. The celebration of the marriage is the public avowal of what is true now by the Spirit.

REM. What are the seven types of the church?

J.B.S. 1st, Eve. 2nd, Rebekah—you have left everything for Him. 3rd, Leah. 4th, Asenath, Joseph's wife; he gets her to comfort him in exile. 5th, Zipporah. 6th, Ruth. 7th, what you and I ought to be now—Abigail; we repudiate all the acts of the old husband and minister to the wants of the rejected King. Moses got Zipporah in exile, he could not save his nation then, but he saved the women from the shepherds. If your heart is set on saving, you will save someone.

REM. Why do you leave Rachel out?

J.B.S. Rachel is Israel, surpassed by Leah. Rachel brought in the idols.

In Ephesians 3: 17-20 you get a wonderful thing—your endowment. Four things: 1, Himself, He dwells in your heart, verse 17; 2, His property, you have a new world and new interests, verse 18; 3, His love, which passeth knowledge, verse 19; 4, His power, verse 20. Himself, His interests, His property, His love and His power. "According to the power that worketh *in us*." In His power you come out for Him on the earth. You come out in two great circles, His circle—the church, and your own circle. You love your wife as Christ loved the church. Wives are subject as the church is to Christ; and in chapter 6 you are superior to all the forces of the enemy.—Fulfilment of John 12: 31. If we knew more of it, what a condition of unspeakable joy and prosperity would be ours! with only one divine object before us—to be here for Himself. Oh! if we felt it more—how little we answer to His purpose! God's purpose for every one of us, His great destination for us which is beyond con-

ception, is that we should know that we are united to Christ in heaven. May each one of us know what it is to have this divine joy in the midst of the darkest circumstances.

REM. Will you enumerate the subjects of these readings?

J.B.S. 1. Acceptance and Deliverance. 2. Liberty. 3. The assembly. 4. The priesthood. 5. The wilderness. 6. Christ the Head. 7. Union with Christ.

*End of Series*

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# LIGHT

## READING ON JOHN IX\*

J.B.S. The subject in chapters 8 and 9 is light. Light comes to the greatest sinner. In chapter 8 the Pharisees went out one by one; the condemned woman stayed. The law finds you out, and it condemns you. Light exposes you down to the roots, but makes known to you forgiveness. The Lord exposed to the woman of Samaria what she was. The Lord does not take you up without knowing all about you. The law condemns. Light exposes, but brings salvation.

Light, as we see here (chapter 9), puts you outside everything that is reputable and respectable among men. You are prepared for a wonderful but solitary path. In the solitude of darkness the blind man saw nobody; in the solitude of light nobody would have him. Christians are not prepared for the peculiar solitude from all that is of man, in which one is placed on this earth in order to understand God.

His eyes are opened! What really brings him into light is washing in the pool of Siloam, which means 'Sent.' This man's history is really the history of a soul. The first thing a soul gets positively is light, and that comes through receiving Christ as the Sent One of the Father. Everyone believes that Christ was a man on earth, but they do not believe in Him as the *Sent* One. The disciples ask, "Did this man sin, or his parents, that he was born blind?" In Exodus 15: 26, every bodily affliction is looked at as the consequence of sin. Therefore their question. The Lord replies that it was not on that account he was blind, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

REM. What does His spitting on the ground signify?

\* Sunday Afternoon, Edinburgh.

J.B.S. The clay set forth Christ in humanity. God manifest in the flesh was here. This Christians do not really see. Faith was in the washing. I connect it with "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." God sent Him. He was the Sent One. It is not merely accepting the truth of incarnation, but seeing Him as the *Sent from God*.

The man's troubles began with his neighbours—where he was best known. I do not believe any young convert knows what is before him in the path for God. You get no sympathy from the world, no one feels for you. The Lord said, "If any man hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple." He wanted to give them a sense of the reality of the path. He is a happy man who accepts the path, however great the conflict in it.

The neighbours pass him over to the religious people—to the Pharisees, who at once condemn Christ. They say, "This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath," as if anything could more honour the day than to give a great blessing. Religious people do not help you, they tell you to *do*. What you have to do is to *receive*. All is done for you, and you have now to get the good of it by the Spirit. He is now handed over to his parents. They make a spectacle of him; they will not confess that Jesus is the Christ, so much are they afraid of the religious element. He is now outside the three great circles of society. No Christian can understand the new ground unless he travels this road. The devil tries to get you on to a by-road, and to make you think it is the right one. You get opposition on all sides till you are outside everything of man. The man who is standing in the favour of man is not advancing toward God. It is God we have to do with, not man.

Now the Jewish nation is against him. As he goes on, he is getting deeper and deeper in the assurance that he has to do with God. He says, "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." Then the nation cast him out; he is nationally outlawed. I do not believe anyone will find Christ's place unless he goes this road. There is only *one* road to the assembly. In casting him out they fulfil the passage in chapter 10: 4, "He putteth forth his

own sheep.” Happy the Christian who is completely free of the leaven of the fold. Here it is the Jewish position, but the effort of Christendom now is to *make* a fold. Chapter 10 sets forth where this man is brought to. But in chapter 9: 35 he is outside of everything with the Son of God. He is in a spot, free from everything of man—in the solitude of light. Look at the grace of the Lord! What does He say? Dost thou believe on the Son of God? It loses all the force if you say Son of *man*. I compare it with Peter saying, “Thou art the Son of the living God.”

REM. He does not know Him?

J.B.S. He knew the work that had been wrought on him; he was bold in the faith, he knew *Jesus*. He had not seen Him at the first. Now the Lord says to him, “Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.” Intimacy has begun. Now are fulfilled verses 14, 15, of chapter 10: “I am the good shepherd; and I know those that are mine, and am known of those that are mine, as the Father knows me and I know the Father.” The two in this part of John’s gospel, whom the Lord revealed Himself to, were the woman of Samaria and this man. Both were outcasts. “He worshipped him”! he could not help it. The word worship is taken from a dog fawning on his master; he is so charmed with his presence.

In chapter 10 He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. The “porter openeth” is God’s order, and the Lord entered the fold according to it. You will never understand chapter 10 unless you understand chapter 9. No one was *saved* in the fold; they were *safe* in a way; a fold was enclosed with walls like a country pound. The best oriental idea of it is, merely security from wolves.

REM. What takes the place of the fold now?

J.B.S. His hand. “I give unto them eternal life . . . neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” No one can scatter them from Me.

REM. What was his warrant for being outside?

J.B.S. They would not have him. Christ is outside and when he is cast out Christ finds him. I am not speaking

of conversion. You are not in a position to know Him outside of everything unless you are on true christian ground. I have to come to *Himself*. He gives His life for the sheep, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Life outside of all the ruin. Then there is most peculiar intimacy between Him and the sheep.

REM. What is meant by "shall go in and out"?

J.B.S. Liberty; no walls, nothing to prevent liberty and pasture. People do not understand what a terrible thing it is to break with the world. The woman who risked her life to save David, is the woman who 'despised him in her heart' when he danced before the Lord.

REM. What is the lesson in that?

J.B.S. Where there is most natural affection there may be most aversion to you as a Christian. Galatians 4 has been a deeper trial to me than Romans 7. The most cultivated idea that I have does not like Christ; that is Ishmael. I do not know anything at all that has so brought me down. It was dreadful when I discovered that. The moment you bring in the human element, Christ is virtually displaced. In praying or preaching, if you bring man in you lose ground. I *know* it, because I have gone through the sorrowful experience of it.

In the solitude of light he was thrown out of a *place* to worship in, and he found a *Person* to worship. There is a universality about a Person, that no combination of circumstances can equal. No circumstances could make up for a Person. Do you understand that? It is lovely. The Lord meets Mary Magdalene in the garden. He does not tell her He will restore the old garden, but that she should have *Himself* in a new way. The more a man advances in grace, the less he will look for things here.

It has been said, 'The expulsive power of a new *affection*.' I say, 'The expulsive power of a new *Person*.' If a man could say he was the chosen friend of the sovereign, he would not want the company of others.

It was in a lonely place years ago that I read the last two verses of John 17, and I said, "To *think* that I am the object of that love!"



Chapters 11 and 12 have to do with Israel. Chapter 13 is entirely new ground—His side. Our side is, He had to die; His side, glory. In chapters 13 and 14 they were shut in with Him. It is the way John puts the assembly; it is not individual. Only three verses in chapter 14 refer to the individual as such. Chapters 15 and 16 are outside. In chapter 17, He first sets us as Himself in the presence of the Father, and then sets us as Himself in the presence of the world. The new Jerusalem will answer to it by-and-by, but it is *present*—now. My heart is not satisfied to postpone it till by-and-by. I want something *now*. When the bride in Canticles felt her loss (chapter 5) what comforted her was recounting the features of the one she did not see.

READINGS AT CARLISLE  
OCTOBER 1895

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PEACE AND DELIVERANCE

John 3: 14, 15; 4: 14

J.B.S. The first point to see, and what is so striking and a puzzle to many is, that John begins the announcement of the gospel with Numbers 21. Why did he not begin with Exodus 12 or 14, with the work that brought them out of Egypt as a redeemed people? Why does John begin here?

He begins here because it meets the state of souls. Many have known something of the grace of God; they have faith in what has been done for them, they believe in the work that has been wrought, but they have not the enjoyment of it; I do not say they have no joy, but they do not walk in the abiding enjoyment of it; they do not know what we get in chapter 4, "A well of water springing up into everlasting life"; 'never thirst, never thirst,' they have not come to that in the experience of their souls. What John brings in is our side. It is not so much God's side. Do you see what I mean?

REM. Yes, you mean that John brings in our enjoyment?

J.B.S. Yes; it is like the prodigal son, he was all right with his father, when his father was on his neck; there was peace, but there was not happiness yet, for he did not feel fit for his father. He said, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." Have you not found persons who have peace with God, who yet have not happiness because they get very distressed about their own sinfulness?

REM. Would not peace and happiness go together?

J.B.S. They ought, but they often do not. I think hundreds of persons have peace, who have not happiness; they know it is all right between themselves and God, but they are not at the supper yet. Why? Because they have not on the best robe. The best robe is Christ. It was the father's answer to the prodigal's utterance of unworthiness.

I propose in these readings to take up the history of the work of the Spirit of God in the soul. The first thing is peace, there is nothing between God and the soul; that is peace. I see that everything that stood between me and God has been removed by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; the One who was there bore the judgment due to me and glorified God. That is figured in Exodus 14, the Red Sea. We appropriate the death of Christ, enter into the truth of His death and resurrection, that is a great point. But look at Israel. They were thirty-nine years in the wilderness, and they were never rightly set for Canaan until after they looked at the brazen serpent, Numbers 21. Now John begins in chapter 3 with the brazen serpent, because he begins with *our* side, how we get into the enjoyment of the work. It is important to see the difference between peace and enjoyment. It is a great thing to get peace by the work of Christ, but it is a great thing to get the enjoyment of it. That is what the prodigal son wanted; he knew there was nothing between his father and himself when his father kissed him; but what troubled him was, he was not fit for his father's house.

Now we come to our subject for to-night. What is deliverance? Perhaps no point in a Christian's history is of deeper importance than deliverance, for nine-tenths of believers, as far as my judgment goes, are occupied with truths which are beyond deliverance, and who yet do not know deliverance. But they cannot progress one inch until they have deliverance. You must travel the road marked out in scripture to get it. Do you understand what deliverance is?

REM. I think so. Is it justification?

J.B.S. No, that is peace. Many a one knows peace, who does not know deliverance; that is exactly the blunder; I know it myself, I have gone that road. When I

saw Christ had borne my judgment, and all was gone from the holy eye of God for ever, I said it was beautiful, it was profound blessing; but when I looked at myself I was not a bit happy. The fact is, at that time I was trying to improve the flesh. For deliverance you must have more than justification, you must see that the old man is gone from *your* eye, as clearly as you see that it is gone from *God's* eye. It must be by the Spirit that you learn that; it is only by the Spirit that you can see it gone. Peace is, I see myself gone from the eye of God through Christ's work. What comes next? Romans 7 and Numbers 21; you find you are unmendably bad; you become sick of yourself; then you cry, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then it is gone, not from God's eye only, but from your own eye; and that through the Spirit of God in you.

Romans 8 is the prodigal clothed, he has the best robe on. There is no condemnation, you are in Christ. It is by the Spirit you know it, you could not know it by the flesh.

REM. The practical enjoyment of it will follow.

J.B.S. Read Romans 8: 2. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Now you have deliverance. Do you understand it now? Come now, explain it.

REM. It is the knowledge of the full and finished work of Christ.

J.B.S. No; that is peace, that is not deliverance.

REM. All is gone from God's eye through Christ?

J.B.S. Yes, that is peace.

REM. For it to be gone from my eye, I must be with Christ where He is.

J.B.S. It is not a question of yourself. You are sick of it, you want to be delivered from it. In Christ you *are* delivered. You have changed your man. Do you understand? Would you like to change your man?

REM. I would.

J.B.S. There is no use in talking of deliverance till you have changed the old man for Christ. I have done with Adam, and I have Christ. No one has deliverance, let him say what he please, until he has changed his man. It

is easy to see that many people know peace with God who have not deliverance. The reason why there is so little progress in souls is, they have not deliverance. They go to meetings, but they are not really in the truth of the assembly. But that is further on; I am trying to get the first step to-night.

REM. Could a person be in the enjoyment of being in Christ, and not have deliverance?

J.B.S. He could not know he was in Christ but by the Spirit. You see when the prodigal had his new robe on—that was Christ—he could sit down at the feast; then they began to be merry. If ever you were there you would remember it.

REM. I do not quite see what you mean; I might be in Christ *before God*.

J.B.S. Ah! that is peace again. You are back to peace. For deliverance you must change your man. I know that the old man is gone from the eye of God, and that His eye rests on Christ. I am received, I am accepted in the Beloved. Then I come to another point, that there is no other man in *my eye* but Christ. How is that? the flesh could not see this, it must be by the Spirit. If you believed that God raised Christ from the dead, you have received the Holy Spirit. In Romans 5 the first impression the Spirit of God makes on the soul is, that God, who was against your sins, is now for you; it is like the prodigal brought to his father. You see that God is for you. Quite right, but you have not got deliverance yet. What is the next point? The same Holy Spirit assures me I have Christ for my life. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." I am on new ground. Not only can *God* take new ground with me, but *I* am on new ground.

REM. Everything is gone from the eye of God on the cross.

J.B.S. Yes; that is peace.

REM. And for deliverance from that which is gone from the eye of God, it must be gone from my eye.

J.B.S. Exactly; and it is only by the Spirit it is gone from your eye. What makes the delay is, it is not until you are sick of yourself that you seek it.

Well, then the first thing presented in John 3 comes to your side. You see the One who was made sin lifted up; He is treated as if He did all the mischief. The brazen serpent never bit anyone. Christ was made sin, as we read in Romans 8—"God sending His own Son, in likeness of flesh of sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

REM. I suppose then we should know God was for us.

J.B.S. Yes, but that is peace, not deliverance. What has done much mischief among brethren is this, that because by faith you are clear of everything before God through the cross, therefore by faith you are clear of everything in yourself. What scripture do you get for it? "Reckon yourselves therefore to be dead unto sin." But you cannot carry it out but by the Spirit; the flesh could not put the flesh to death; there is not a bit of deliverance but by the Spirit. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free"—Can you say that?

REM. I can through God's grace see what He has effected for me.

J.B.S. You have got back to peace again. Deliverance is, that I do not *touch* the old thing. I am on new ground, I have changed my man. You will find it out practically when you come to deal with souls. I have gone through it myself. I want to live in practical deliverance.

REM. It is possible to have the truth doctrinally without having it experimentally.

J.B.S. That is where in one sense the mischief has come in. By faith I get what God has done for me, that is right and simple; but I do not enjoy what God has done for me but by the Spirit. By the Spirit you know you are in Christ, accepted in the Beloved. That is God's side of the story—and He never reverses it. But you and the Spirit must run together. You must walk in the Spirit, but you will find it no small thing.

REM. It is easy enough done if the eye is fixed on Christ.

J.B.S. It is easy enough, if you keep to it. The sailor says, I do not mind the weather if I can see the sun. You

may get your eye on Christ, and yet get away in a minute. I sometimes say to people, Are you ever disappointed with yourself? Are you?

REM. Sick of myself.

J.B.S. I am glad when people come to that point; God is never disappointed with you.

REM. I believe that too.

J.B.S. There is another side of the flesh, but I have hardly time to touch on that to-night. The danger is in having to do with natural things; unless walking in the Spirit you are caught by them. I am going to ask you a simple question. What is the first trait of a man walking in the Spirit? Come now!

REM. There is no room for the flesh to act.

J.B.S. But what would *mark* it?

REM. Christ would be formed in him.

J.B.S. That is true, but it is the other side of the story I am asking for—the first trait of a man walking in the Spirit? You get it in Romans 12, his body is a living sacrifice, it is the Lord's; he has got a new master for the body. I am to do what He wishes. I may like to go out to-morrow if it is fine, but that is not the question. Does the Lord like me to go out? It is not what *I* should like to do. You have no right to do anything, but what the Lord would have you do. I do not go into that now, it is too large a subject. I hope you are all clear of the difference between peace and deliverance.

The man who has got the Spirit of God has in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Now there is not a need, he never thirsts, it is in him, you need not go outside for anything, you need not go to the Queen, nor to anyone. You have in you more than you can measure. Look at it—'never thirst'! never have a sense of need! never have the sense of an unsatisfied desire! You are brought into a region of satisfaction.

REM. John 4 and Romans 8 in that way go together.

J.B.S. It is John's way of putting it. I will give you a question now. What is the first sense in a soul who has deliverance? John 3 comes in there, "shall not perish, but have everlasting life." You have the sense of eternal life. You get it by the Spirit. The law of the Spirit of

life in Christ Jesus makes me free, and I am brought on to entirely new ground. You may say, I am not up to it, but I say you must go the road; if you do not go this road you cannot get it. Well, *I* cannot convey it to you, but the Lord can. It has greatly impressed me, and more since I came here, how many brethren have peace who have not deliverance.

REM. Would that be because we do not give a place to the Spirit that He may occupy us with Christ?

J.B.S. You must experimentally have superseded Adam, and brought Christ in. When I used the expression in E——, ‘changed your man,’ they said it was a new statement. I said I knew no better word to express it. When you have reached Christ you are very glad to get rid of the old man. The apostle says in Galatians, “I am crucified with Christ,” the old thing is gone—“nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” What is the first sense a man has who is living this life, who thus knows Christ is in him? What is the first sense he has as to this world? Suppose you go into the world, what feeling have you?

REM. That I do not belong to it.

J.B.S. In one sense you are right, you have a life that does not belong to this place—that makes it a wilderness. The first sense a person gets is this, and it is an important thing to get hold of, that Christ is not here; you are living a life that is not here.

You will never get into the truth of the assembly until you come to that conclusion. I have the life of One who is not here; He is not on the earth. The whole deception—I cannot use a milder term—the deception of Christendom is, that Christ is here. Churches and chapels are erected in His honour; but He is *not* here. The man who has deliverance knows that. I have the life of One who is not here, and therefore the next question is—where can He be found? Now you are on the road to the assembly. He cannot be found on the earth, He is found in the assembly. That brings us to a new subject, but before we come to that we have to learn that Christ is not here, and that I have the life of One who is not here, and therefore the world becomes a wilderness. That is



what Israel would not accept; they murmured because they had nothing but manna. There is nothing to minister to me here. If I had thousands a year and was living the life of Christ, instead of settling down seeking to make myself comfortable here, I should find there is nothing for me here.

The life I have is the most perfectly beautiful thing. Does everyone understand this? I should like to be able to convey it to you. It would make an immense change in you; I know it has made a great change in me. I would not cultivate a flower now, I do not belong to the place, it is a wilderness. Israel took thirty-eight years to learn the wilderness. Why is it a wilderness? J.N.D.'s hymn reads:

This world is a wilderness wide,  
I have nothing to seek or to choose,  
I've no thought in the waste to abide,  
I have nought to regret or to lose.

Are you up to that?

REM. I should like to be.

J.B.S. You must look up, you must begin at the bright side. It is not being a monk or a nun. I do not think affliction ever drew a man out of the world. But if he is attracted outside of it, he takes a new place in it. Perhaps I have said enough for to-night. Does everyone understand it? We are all ignorant. God does not send angels to teach us, He sometimes sends a blunderer like oneself.

REM. I suppose if we knew all the blessings we have received, and if we understood them in some sense, it would bring us into the company of, and occupy us with, the Blesser.

J.B.S. You cannot be occupied with the Blesser until you are in His life; the life of the flesh could not enjoy Christ. If I have His life I enjoy Him, but then I find that I can only enjoy Him by the Spirit.

# THE CONSECRATED COMPANY

## Leviticus 8

J.B.S. In Hebrews we see that the church is Christ's house; we read, Aaron offered for himself and his house. Aaron and his sons represent the church. Christ is a priest, but after a new order. He is a priest after the order of Melchisedec. In Leviticus 16 two goats were offered for the congregation, and a bullock for Aaron's house. Now which would you like to have? Do you understand my question?

REM. Yes, I should say the bullock.

J.B.S. Yes, the bullock. If you go to the parish church you see an outward representation of Leviticus 16. The congregation, so to speak, have the two goats, and inside the communion rails are the so-called priestly company; they profess to have the bullock. Now which company do you belong to—outside the rails or inside?

REM. Inside the rails.

J.B.S. The inside part is fulfilled; the outside is not fulfilled yet. It is a poor imitation of the true thing that is thus represented in the Church of England. The congregation is the earthly company; that is Israel, and their time has not come yet. Christendom does not get beyond that; they do not get beyond the forgiveness of sins. You get that set forth in the two goats. The bullock was for the priest and his house and we go inside with Him.

We have in this chapter the consecrated company; that is the great thing. Aaron and his sons are a type of the church.

REM. Do we not come in at all in the scape goat?

J.B.S. Yes, it is all one work; we get the good of it all; but we get more than the scape goat, more than forgiveness of sins. A man who is talking of his sins is on earth,

he is not in heaven. In Revelation the heavenly company are where sins are gone.

REM. In Revelation 5 sin is referred to.

J.B.S. There the heavenly company speak of those on the earth. There is a great difference between the two; we have both; but all I want is, that you should get hold of the difference. I find people measure scripture by their experience; you must first get scripture and then your experience.

REM. Then you would say the scape goat does not go beyond the forgiveness of sins?

J.B.S. It tells you that all your sins are gone into a land not inhabited, but it does not bring you into a new place. The Church of England imitates it as if all contained in Leviticus 16 was complete. Outside is the congregation, inside the rails are the surpliced priests. Would you rather be with the congregation or inside the rails?

REM. I should rather be inside the rails.

J.B.S. That is where we belong. What Christendom has done is to put us outside, as if we were the earthly company.

REM. As believers we get both.

J.B.S. Surely, for it is one work.

REM. "Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more," do we get the good of that?

J.B.S. We get the good of that in Hebrews 10, "There remaineth no more offering for sin." We cannot offer for sin now. You may say you *do* sin; yes, but you cannot offer for it now, can you?

REM. No.

J.B.S. What do you do with sin now?

REM. We have to confess it now.

J.B.S. Exactly, you have to confess it, and if you do not confess it, you suffer.

Now we come to the consecration. You see there are the bullock and the rams. There are two aspects of the offering, one at the altar, the other at the door. First (verse 14, etc.) there was the bullock for the sin offering upon the altar, and the carcase burnt without the camp; and secondly there was the ram for a burnt offering, which was wholly burnt on the altar. It all went up to

God; of those two offerings no one partook. Then there was the second ram, the ram of consecration (verses 22, 23), of which Aaron and his sons partook. I wonder if you take that in. There is a verse in Corinthians that throws light on it; better turn to it, 1 Corinthians 10: 18, "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" In the sacrifices you eat of, you are partakers of the altar, but you are not a partaker of the sin offering nor of the burnt offering. That was a work entirely for God; you could not have fellowship in that. That is the idea in Christendom about the Lord's supper; the very way they express it shews their idea of it. 'Take and eat this bread in remembrance that Christ died for thee.' There is no such idea in scripture in connection with the supper; the supper is remembrance of *Him* in death; they make it a sacrifice on the altar.

Aaron and his sons partook of the second ram that was offered. Where did they eat it? At the door of the tabernacle. Do you understand that?

REM. I think so.

J.B.S. If you are only at the altar you are dwelling only on the work done for you. That is where they are in Christendom; they never get beyond the work done for them; that is the altar. We have the altar but we do not finish with the altar, we go in with the consecrated company. What is that? Not only is there a work done for us, but we enter the door, we enter the Holiest. In the figure you see the difference between the altar and the door. What is the difference, can you tell me? Have you ever come to the door?

REM. Is the door approach?

J.B.S. Of course it is. Christ is the minister of the true sanctuary. If you look at the figure it is very simple. In the altar we remember where He was and the work He has done; that is the burnt offering and the sin offering; that is salvation; nothing but His death could give this. But the door is not merely the work He has done. I come in in the common fragrance with Himself. Aaron and his sons' hands were filled; the youngest son as much as the eldest, and in that common fragrance, a

sweet-smelling savour to God, they went to the door. How do you go to the door? Well, I put it to you, Do you go to the door in all the enjoyment of the assurance of the perfection of the work done for you? or do you go in the perfection of Him who did the work? Do you see the question?

REM. Yes. We come in the perfection of Him who did the work.

REM. Were all the offerings offered before the consecration?

J.B.S. Yes, all before the consecration. It is in consecration you go to the door and there you feed. What do you feed on? Do you feed on your own goodness? Do you feed on your salvation? Come now, that is a very simple question.

REM. We should feed on Christ.

J.B.S. You cannot feed on anything else.

REM. He is the Bread of life.

J.B.S. Yes, quite so, but He is the ram of consecration. People think they can consecrate themselves. What consecrates me is having my hands filled, not with my fragrance but with the fragrance of *Christ*; that is what I understand by going to the door. I remember Him at the altar in His death, but it is not only that He has borne my judgment but I come in in all the fragrance of Himself into His presence. I think therefore the breaking of bread ought to be early in the meeting.

REM. We come together to break bread.

J.B.S. I believe hundreds go to break bread, who are not in the Holiest.

I think we now understand consecration, at least I hope we do. It is not simply the benefit to yourself.

REM. Do we pass from the altar to the door when we go into the Lord's presence?

J.B.S. Yes. If you get to the door you walk in.

If you partake of the altar, what do you partake of?

REM. I partake of the second ram?

J.B.S. Very good; then I say, you are identified with Him, you are identified with His death. That took place on earth. I believe the great effect on a person who is truly at the Lord's supper, is this—I cannot look for

anything where my Lord has died. He died here. But, thank God, I know Him in another place. I know Him in glory. He is the minister of the true sanctuary now.

REM. Do you make any difference between the door and the Holiest?

J.B.S. I know nothing in the Old Testament that really sets forth our place in the Holiest. Aaron's sons had no title to be in the Holiest of all. Christ was not a priest after the order of Aaron. He is after the order of Melchisedec. He was rejected here, now He is exalted a great priest at the right hand of God. What is that to me? Well, he says—All I have you share in, you are co-heirs with me. It is the most marvellous thing possible. It is not only that He has done a work for me but I share with Him. I could not be in the presence of God but in all the blessedness and beauty of Christ.

REM. Why is it a ram?

J.B.S. I think it is in connection with the burnt offering; that went up to God in all its perfection before Him. In that perfection you go in.

REM. I notice here that Moses had his part. What do you think of that?

J.B.S. I think Moses represents the divine side; we do not share in that. The way I look upon that is, the heart of Christ before God for us; that is the breast. I do not think that it is making intercession for us when we do not go straight, as people say. It is that we may have grace supplied to us to share in the wonderful nature of the blessing we have got.

REM. You said last night that in Leviticus the priest finished up the sacrifices.

J.B.S. If you turn to Leviticus 1 you will see that if a man brought a bird for his offering the priest had more to do for him than if his offering were a bullock or a sheep or a goat.

Now we go into the Holiest of all. We share in the unspeakable blessedness of it; the more you ponder it the more wonderful it is to your heart; we share in the blessedness of what Christ is to God. I am here in the place of His rejection, but I share with Him there in the greatness of His exaltation.

REM. He is called a 'Great Priest' in the New Translation.

J.B.S. That is looking at Him on high; on earth there were other priests; there is only one priest now.

REM. That is the Son of God.

J.B.S. I remember a man who denied the priesthood putting a string of questions to me. One question was, What did the priest do when he came out? He wanted me to say, He blessed the people, for he did not understand the priesthood in the least, that is why my reply vexed him so. I said, 'I know what He does when He comes out, what I want to know is what He does when He goes in.' He has gone in. Do you see?

REM. He will come out for His people.

J.B.S. Oh, He will come out for the congregation; but He is gone in for those inside the rails. We get, as I have said before, a picture in the Church of England of what is true morally in Christendom; for many Christians know that they have the benefit of the two goats, who do not know the blessings set forth in the bullock. If you have the bullock you have both, for the greater includes the less; it is all one work. There is a vast difference between the congregation and the priestly company.

If you ask me, what do I go to the meeting for? I reply, I go to the meeting first and foremost because I form part of the building—God's house, and I go there to remember the Lord. First, I remember Him; next, I listen to His voice. Many go and get only as far as the altar. They do not go on to the door. If you remember Him rightly you must be the consecrated company and go in.

REM. The worship should begin after the breaking of bread.

J.B.S. I do not object to beginning with worship, for we come into His presence with a song. The sight of Him makes me worship. The moment I get to the door my heart is bowed. I am in His company seeing Him and listening to His voice.

In the figure it was from the mercy-seat God spoke. From the Holiest God propounded His mind. You get it in type. Israel knew what the Holiest was; the Gentile

had nothing that represented it. But look at 2 Corinthians 3, "Beholding the glory of the Lord, you are transformed into the same image." There you get what the Holiest is for the Gentile. If you read the Bible from cover to cover you will not get anything greater than that. Some have said that reading the Bible is beholding the Lord's glory; they do not understand anything about it. Beholding the Lord's glory, you are transformed; our translators did not understand it, and they put, 'Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed.' How do you behold Him? In the Holiest. At the altar you remember Him, at the door you behold Him. Do you understand?

REM. Yes. Is the result seen when you come out?

J.B.S. The result is seen by others. One result is that your judgment about things is changed, you could not tell how. True, you understand the Bible better, but that is not it. Look at the two disciples going to Emmaus; they had the most wonderful exposition of scripture that ever was heard, but it did not move them one hair's breadth. People say, What a wonderful lecture! what a beautiful exposition of scripture! But it does not alter them one bit. What *does* alter them? THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD.

What was the effect on the two disciples of being in the presence of the Lord? They saw Him, they knew Him, and now they go the very road He is gone Himself. They go to Jerusalem; they are occupied with His interests; they follow Him; they are transformed.

I consider *that* the most wonderful verse in scripture: "But we all, looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord, the Spirit." People ask for guidance for one thing or another. I say, if they would spend ten minutes in the Lord's presence beholding His glory, they would be so outside themselves that they would be transformed; they would get His mind. Of course, His mind would be according to scripture; but it is not by reading scripture, but by being in *His presence* that you get it.



## THE COMPANY INSIDE

### John 14

J.B.S. The first thing to bear in mind is that John 14 is collective. It was spoken at the supper table. I have been in the habit, and I believe many others have too, of looking at this chapter as individual, but you see it is connected with the company. Only three verses in the chapter are individual, verses 21, 22, 23. All the rest is collective.

It is an immense comfort when you see what the Lord is in the assembly. Even if I cannot go to the meeting, I can learn what He is there. We have here the company which afterwards became the assembly, and we see the position He has there, and what provision He has made for us in this world where He is not. You understand that, do you not?

REM. Yes, I understand that.

J.B.S. It is a great thing to see what the Lord says—"Let not your heart be troubled." That is not in reference to some misfortune that has befallen yourself. He does not allude to some private trial.

REM. One has been apt to look at it in connection with one's individual circumstances.

J.B.S. Exactly, so used I. But you see He says it in connection with what comes out in chapter 13. Supper being ended, or rather supper going on, He rises from supper. It is all inside. I think a great many people have been instructed in chapter 15, which is outside, who have never been inside. Do not you want to be inside?

You have the inside in chapters 13 and 14. This is the beginning of the company; it is very small, but that is the way it began. The Lord is shewing to the little company, now reduced to eleven, what He would be to

them, before a word is said about going outside. Do you see what I mean?

REM. I think I do. Do you mean by being inside being in the Lord's company?

J.B.S. I mean the Lord's company in the assembly; that is the place where He is found on earth. In John 15 you are out in the field. Tell me now, when a soldier is enlisted what do they do with him first? Do they send him to the battle-field?

REM. Not at first; I suppose they put him through training.

J.B.S. They bring him to the barracks. If a man seeks to be in chapter 15 and has never been in chapter 14 I say he is a raw recruit.

I get immense comfort even though I cannot now go to the assembly, in knowing that the Lord is in the assembly. I may not know what is going on there, but I know what *He is*. It is an immense comfort to know there is a resource for His own in the time of His rejection, even though everyone does not appropriate it.

Here He rises from supper; which was a figure of His death, and He brings the truth of it to bear upon them in a new way. He girds Himself with a towel, pours water into a basin, and washes their feet. He is rejected, and now if we are to be with Him we must go to Him where He is. There is a new principle. Now He is the Living Stone and you must leave everything here to join Him. You must go into the Holiest. You cannot join Him anywhere else. But if you are to join Him in that scene of unclouded light then you must have what we get here—the feet-washing—you must be fitted for it.

REM. This chapter is not individual?

J.B.S. No, it is not. Now if you want to know Him, to know His provision, if you want to know what a resource He is for His own, where do you go? Do you go to church? Do you go to Rome?

REM. You go to scripture.

J.B.S. No, you go to the assembly. Do you see? He is in the assembly. It is a great thing to get hold of, that He is in the assembly and nowhere else on earth; that is His place now that He is rejected here. I do not mean

that He will not manifest Himself to you individually. That is what we find in verse 21, "I will love him and will manifest myself to him." That is individual.

Now what is feet-washing?

REM. The Lord's care for His own, that they may enjoy His company.

J.B.S. Yes, quite right, that they may enjoy His company. I believe a great many who have a good conscience have never had their feet washed.

REM. Is it the word applied?

J.B.S. It is, but still the first great point of the feet-washing is this—you must be fit to be with Him. In John 10 the Lord says, "I know my sheep and am known of mine, as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father." Peter had a good conscience in John 20, but he had not his feet washed until John 21; that is, his heart was not right. Many a man goes on with a good conscience, knowing Christ as his Saviour, but has never come to Him as the Son of God, he has never made acquaintance with Him. I could not tell you what it is, but what He desires is that you should have this acquaintance. He washes their feet, He wants to remove every stain, or what would come in to hinder this intimacy.

REM. If I do not know this intimacy I do not know the washing of the feet?

J.B.S. I believe you are right. The Lord was going to take a new place you see. I believe that is connected with the Holiest of all. It is the same idea. He was going to take a new position, and if His disciples are to join Him there, He must fit them for it. He is in the light, you could not come into the light without this. It is not the advocacy, that has to do with sin. It is not sin here, it is more like what we get with the Bride in Canticles 5. He is gone away. She was not a transgressor, what she did was only to fall asleep, but there is a shade of distance, there is reserve.

REM. The more you know His company, the more sensitive you are of any distance.

J.B.S. Exactly. Well that is the first thing. You must study the chapter; we cannot in one reading get through

it all. I should like you to get the line of it. First He washes their feet. Then He announces that in that little company of twelve there was one who would betray Him. He presents to them the difficulties of the situation. In that small number, only twelve, you get a sample of the difficulties that belong to this day. First, there was the treachery of Judas; secondly, there was the denial of Peter. The most prominent man among them would deny Him with cursing and swearing. And Judas, I do not think he wished to do the Lord harm, but he wanted to make money by his knowledge of Him. Many are ready to do that, barter their knowledge for money. There was the love of money in Judas; he is exposed, and he goes out; as someone has said: 'the door that closed on him gone out, shut in the One who is the source of all.' Man in Judas had gone to the lowest point of evil. Man in the Person of Jesus was raised to the highest point of exaltation. "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him." This is all inside, it has nothing to do with the world. Judas, the man whom you might have expected most from, is gone out to barter Him for money. Peter is ready to deny Him. In this state of things it is that chapter 14 opens. "Let not your heart be troubled." Now what is their resource?

REM. Is He not everything to them in this place?

J.B.S. I want verse 1, you have gone to verse 6. What have we first? I want the order.

REM. He says, "Believe in me."

J.B.S. That's the secret. If you do not have the first you will not get the second, but you find many believe in God who do not believe in Christ. I do not say they do not believe in His work. Do you understand that?

REM. I can understand it if you mean that they have not the Person before them.

J.B.S. No, it is not that; but they do not see that the One who was rejected and cast out is the One they must count upon; that all power is given to Him in heaven and on earth. He who has the key of David. Do you count on Him?

You see there are two lines, two chains, as it were, running down the chapter; one is faith, the other is love.

Faith goes down to verse 14. Faith is, that I live here in the light of what He is. Love is, that what love would like love gets, and that is company. Do you see the two lines?

REM. Yes, I think I do.

J.B.S. You get the first in Ephesians, "Since I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus." Having faith in Him you walk about in the consciousness of the resource you have in Him. He is able to bear you up all through the difficulties here. He is not here, but you have faith in *Him*. "Ye believe in God, believe also in *me*." That is the first thing; if you have not got that, you have not got your right place in the assembly. The second thing is, "I go to prepare a place for you." And what is the third? "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." If you come by Me, you get the new way—it is still all faith. "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."

Then in verse 12 we get another thing: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Those who believe on Him shall do greater works. Stephen is an example. In a certain sense the greatest work the Lord did on earth was to raise a dead man to life. In Stephen you have a man raised above himself, and above all the power of the enemy, and going to glory. How could he be that but by the power of Christ? That shews the resource. Do you see now what we get in this chapter?

REM. Yes, I think so. Is it not that He was going away, but they were left with resource?

J.B.S. Yes, exactly, that is it—If you want to find a resource—*come to Me*. If you are short of supply, turn in here; here is your bank. It is what He is to the company, and it is an immense comfort to know when I go into the assembly that I shall find Him, and I have learnt what He is in the assembly. He winds up with: "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it."

REM. Is that collective?

J.B.S. It is all collective.

REM. We have often taken that verse for the individual.

J.B.S. Yes, we have; but it is all collective.

REM. Does it not apply to me in my individual path.

J.B.S. No; it applies to the assembly, it applies to the Lord's interests. It applies to such an one as Stephen, if you like, he was for the Lord on earth, and for His interests.

REM. In speaking of the resource in Him, is it simply for the assembly or for the whole path?

J.B.S. Oh, whenever the occasion arises. "Whatever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do."

REM. Chapter 15: 7 says, "If ye abide in me . . . ye shall ask what ye will." That is individual, is it not?

J.B.S. But that is the field. If you have not been inside, you cannot go outside. In the Church of England the clergyman goes to college to study divinity, and then he is ordained. The order in scripture is, you must be ordained first. You must have chapter 14 before you have chapter 15. Think of a man working away before he is ordained. It is thus with many. They do not know Him as their resource. You may speak of a man you do not know; but how can you find resource in him if you do not know him?

Now we come to love. Love gets what it likes. What would you like? He is gone away. Tell me any one thing you would like to pray to the Lord for?

REM. Love values His company.

J.B.S. Yes; and love gets what it values. That is always the case. It is an invariable principle of scripture. Love gets what it likes. If you value a thing you get it.

You want His company, but if He is gone away how will you get it? What will you do?

REM. There is another Comforter.

J.B.S. What is that for?

REM. He says in verse 15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

J.B.S. But what is He going to give you?

REM. In verse 16 He says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter."

J.B.S. Why did they want a Comforter?

REM. Because He would be absent.

J.B.S. That is it. They wanted someone because He was going away; they wanted comfort in His absence. Elijah said to Elisha when he was going to leave him, What shall I do for you? Elisha asked that he might have a double portion of his spirit. The Lord does not ask what He should do for them, He says, If you love me, I know what you would like. What would *you* like?

REM. That I should be kept in the company of the One I belong to. We want the Person.

J.B.S. Tell me from *scripture* what you want.

REM. Verse 18 says, "I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you."

J.B.S. That is right. He will come to you. In verse 16 He says they should have "another Comforter, whom the world cannot receive." Why can it not receive Him?

REM. "Because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

J.B.S. Go on to the next verse.

REM. "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you."

J.B.S. That is it. *I will come to you Myself*. That is in the assembly. I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you; that is inside.

Then verse 20: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." At that day ye shall know the greatness of it; the greatness comes out in the church. Next you come to verse 21; verses 21-23 are individual. Then, verse 26, you have the Holy Spirit: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." That is on earth.

Finally, He closes up with "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." *He is the resource*. Read it for yourselves. If you would sit down with it before you for half an hour, taking every verse, I am sure you would see the resource for us in the dark day.

It is not that the day is bright, but we have a bright resource for the dark day.

Do you understand the line of it? I do not expect you to take it all in, but you see the line, do you not?

REM. Yes, I think I see it. We have a resource in the day of His absence.

J.B.S. You have it to-day in Carlisle. It was very small at first. It began with eleven. One had gone out to betray Him. One was ready to deny Him. It was not what *they* were, but what *He* is. Do you say—I get no help from brethren? That is not where you are to look for it. Your resource is not in brethren—HE IS YOUR RESOURCE—He is everything to the new company. If you are really counting on Him you will know what it is not to let your heart be troubled.