

Sermon preached by Mr. H. Dawson at Ebenezer Chapel, Hastings, on Wednesday evening, 25th July, 1951.

"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty"—Isa. 33. 17.

THIS is a great word, and to a sinner born again it is an alluring word. It may be that some of you who have the mercy to be born again ponder it, as being the text the preacher has announced,—“O, if I could only realise the truth of it! If God, in His infinite condescension, would grant me that wondrous mercy, to see Jesus, and see in Him “all my salvation and all my desire!” If that concern does beat in your breast, then this word looks kindly at you: “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty,” sooner or later. The Lord bless you!

I would like to look at this word, as the Lord shall help me, from two or three view points, and the setting of the subject is very suggestive. I like to look at the setting of the subject, because it is like looking at a picture when it is framed.

When this word was penned, as Isaiah, inspired of God, put it down, “Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty,” it was primarily addressed to Judah’s kingdom. It was when the Assyrian host had overrun the land, and Jerusalem was besieged; and Hezekiah, Judah’s king, was sitting in sackcloth and ashes, mourning before God, and the outlook was very grievous. The future of Judah as a kingdom was very dark, for the Assyrians were overrunning and overriding all other kingdoms, and to those who dwelt in Judah’s little kingdom it looked as though Judah itself must also go down. ‘No!’ says Isaiah, inspired of God, ‘No! you see Hezekiah, Judah’s king, at the present time, (as he ought to be,) sitting in sackcloth and ashes, mourning before God. The Lord will appear, and deal with the Assyrian host, and Judah as a kingdom shall be delivered, and you shall see Hezekiah in his royal robes later on and rejoice in what God has done for you, and give unto Him the glory that is due unto His Name.’ And it came to pass in every jot and tittle of it. That is the setting of the subject.

Now to get back to the starting point,—how many of you are sitting, as it were, from a spiritual viewpoint, in sackcloth and ashes? How many of you are mourning before God, not because of an Assyrian host that has overrun you, but because of the things within and things without that have brought you “low in a low place,” so that you hardly know what you are or where you are; and maybe the thought of a subject like this announced as a text, “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty,” makes you feel, “It is so high, I cannot attain unto it.” Listen! It is attainable! *Thine* eyes, which now view mourning, sackcloth and ashes, gloominess without, misery within, “*thine* eyes shall see the King;” not Hezekiah, Judah’s king, but Him Who reigns on the throne of grace, the King of Whom the Father said, “Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion.”

(Ps. II. 6.) “Thine eyes shall see the King.” A greater than Hezekiah is here. Let us forget about Hezekiah; let us only think of Hezekiah’s God—He Who is verily God and verily Man, Jesus Christ. “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.”

First of all, it is very striking what this dear godly Isaiah says in his prophecy about eyes, and it is instructive and helpful to poor sinners who hope in God: “Bring forth the blind people that have eyes;” (Is. xliii. 8) and this word, “The eyes of the blind shall be opened.” (Is. xxxv. 5). Now do you feel before God that He has been pleased to do that for you? Think you, if you told the truth, and “out of the abundance of the heart” the mouth is speaking, you could venture to say,

“Lord, help me to declare today,  
Though many things I cannot say,  
One thing I know, all thanks to Thee,  
Though blind I was, yet now I see?”

You remember that man in the gospel, “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see;” and neither earth nor hell could beat that knowledge out of him. “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” Listen! If by the grace of God you can say that first, “I know,” there are two more ‘I know’s’ in the Word of God that you will say sooner or later: “I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day;” (I Tim. i. 18) and the other, —(wonderful ‘I know!’)—“I know that my Redeemer liveth.” (Job xix. 25.)

“Thine eyes.” In this prophecy of Isaiah’s there is a word like this, “And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim.” (Is. xxxii, v. 3.) A rather strange sounding statement, somewhat paradoxical, but it is wonderfully encouraging to many poor sinners born again; many poor sinners born again can see a little, hear a little, say a little, but as yet they cannot “see the King in His beauty.” But this word holds out hope, blessed encouragement, “The eyes of them that see shall not be dim” always to a full assurance of their interest in the things of God.

“The time of love will come,  
When we shall clearly see,  
Not only that He shed His blood,  
But each shall say, For me!”

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“Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.” Another word of Isaiah’s, and that is to do with eyes, “The eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.” (Is. xxix. 18.) Some of you may be here whose experience as you judge it, and as it really is, is darkness, obscurity. You cannot define the dealings of God as you look back over the way you have gone, and you cannot see what you *have* seen in bygone experience. Your Ebenezers, your Hill Mizars, are out of sight, and that brings you into line with yet

another word in Isaiah's prophecy about eyes, "We grope for the wall as the blind, and walk at noonday as in the night, and are as if we had no eyes." (Is. lix. 10.) But they do possess eyes, eyes that God has opened, too.

"Some small glimmering light I have,  
Yet too dark to see my way;  
Jesus' presence still I crave;  
When, O when will it be day?"

"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." Do let your conscience tell you the truth about it before God: have you got eyes that God has opened, as you humbly hope? No longer in the world and of it, nor blind to the great truth that you are a sinner journeying through it with a never-dying soul; no longer blind to that great, pre-dominating fact that,

"Jesus is the one thing needful;  
I without Him perish must."

O, if you and I have had our eyes opened in things divine, and God has given us spiritual eyesight, our life ought to be a living doxology; "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" If God has singled out you and me, and made us to see in Him beauty and that which is to be continually desired above all things, and to feel:

"To me Christ is more precious far  
Than life and all its comforts are."

O, how much we have to be thankful for! Ere I open up this subject from another viewpoint, I would like to emphasize how this truth—"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty"—is to be known.

Ere you and I, if it is our mercy to be taught of God, can "see the King in His beauty," there are other things we must see; there are preparatory sights. There is what you might call the ABC stage in the life divine. Yes! "When He the Spirit of truth is come . . . He shall reprove the world of sin;" and it means, "Thine eyes shall see," first of all, (solemn sight! terrible sight!) what you are by nature, where you are in the Adam fall, how undone, how lost, how helpless in things divine. Yet it is a great mercy to see it. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

"Sinner, if thou art taught to see  
How great thy guilt and misery,  
In every thought and act impure,  
The blood of Christ thy soul can cure."

"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty."

Your eyes will also see, not only what you are as a sinner, but the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and that deep down in your heart is the seed of all evil that is rife in the world, so that you and I, left to what we are by nature, could be a potential Hitler or Stalin, and be in their shoes as godless dictators, doing as Hitler did and as Stalin still does. Remember that! You have only to look in the glass of the

word of God, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." A solemn, painful business, when you get this made known: "which shall know every man the plague of his own heart."

Thine eyes shall also see this, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified," (Rom. iii. 20.) Saith the law to the sinner born under it, "Pay me that thou owest." But your eyes will be brought at length to see,

"Not the labour of my hands  
Can fulfil Thy law's demands,"

And there you will be,—(go back a moment to Hezekiah,)—there you will be in sackcloth and ashes, and mourning before God: "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

I add this, "Thine eyes" will also see the world and be given a proper estimate of it, what the world really is, that it is a wilderness and can afford you not one tittle of help in living the life divine. No earthly source can supply what you feel to need, ease for a guilty conscience, relief for a troubled mind, a blessing indeed for your never-dying soul.

"I cannot here contented live  
With all the dainties earth can give."

The psalmist long ago was given eyes to see this, and what did he say? "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." And Moses long before:—"Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

That brings us to this culminating point, as it were,—"Thine eyes" shall see how it is possible for a sinner to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; and that though he feels he has nothing of his own, yet possessing all things in what Jesus Christ is. And why? "Thine eyes" shall see that "salvation is of the Lord." Yes, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."

Now that is just a feeble outline, as it were, of some preparatory sights that lead up to this sight, most of all to be desired, of Jesus Christ as the King in His beauty, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty."

As grace is given, I would like to say a little about Jesus Christ as King. What can any of us who try to preach, (though we hope God has given us His Own authority to do it,) say about Jesus Christ as the King? One of my favourite words in this Holy Bible, Book divine, is the last word that the Holy Spirit inspired to be written in it. According to the time, the Gospel of John is the last book in the Bible that was written, and the last word in it is this, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be

written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written;—ought to be written! “O worship the King, all glorious above!”

“Thine eyes shall see the King.” Jesus Christ was born a King. “Where is He that is born, King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.” Yes, and when at length He was hung on Calvary’s cross at the end of His wondrous, holy and meritorious life, dying in the stead of poor sinners,—(O was it for you and for me that He hung and suffered there?)—“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.”

“Thine eyes shall see the King.” Jesus Christ as King exercises authority and He possesses power. It is the function of a king to govern, and that is what Jesus Christ does, “And the government shall be upon His shoulder.”

“In heaven and earth and air and seas,  
He executes His firm decrees;

And though His methods are unknown,  
Judgment and truth support His throne.”

Power! “The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.” “Where the word of a king is there is power;” and when Jesus spoke as the King to the swelling waves, “Peace, be still,” immediately there was a great calm. Does Jesus Christ as King stand before the grave of Lazarus? “Lazarus, come forth!”—and he came forth, bound hand and foot in his grave clothes. Yes! “Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: “The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up,” and there are many like things which Jesus Christ does in His sole prerogative as the King. He delights in mercy. It is the prerogative of England’s king to pardon. He must sign the paper containing such good tidings of great joy to a poor prisoner, especially one condemned to die; and then you see a report of it,—‘His Majesty has exercised clemency.’ But that may be done sometimes when it is not wise to do it; earthly kings exercise their judgment and do that which is politic to do. Not so Jesus Christ the King. He is a God ready to pardon. “Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?” He makes no mistake. “Behold, God is almighty, and despiseth not any.” Job xxxvi. 5.) “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.” (Psalm cii. 17.) Jesus Christ, as King, does what not England’s king nor any other king can do. England’s king may set a man free when he is guilty, but he cannot justify that man and honour the law in the majesty of it; but he takes into consideration what are termed ‘extenuating circumstances.’ Look you,—“Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty,” in doing this:

“Behold a scene of matchless grace,  
’Tis Jesus in the sinner’s place.”

Yes!

“He took the dying traitor’s place,  
And suffered in his stead.”

Beautiful gospel truth it is,—and it tells of Jesus Christ as the King. He had ability to suffer, an ability which He acquired by living under the law on the sinner’s behalf and standing, as it were, in the sinner’s stead when at length He died for a number which no man can number; “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

Do you *not* see that the King, Jesus Christ, of a truth has authority? “Thou hast given Him power over all flesh,” Jesus Christ said to His Father in the Holy of holies, when He prayed as verily Man. Yes! He has power. Remember that! “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God;” and although you see this poor, troubled world like it is, do not forget that Jesus Christ still exercises His government over it, and in His time, His way, He will make it manifest that the government is upon His shoulder. Do you believe it? If you do, may I say this,—(I am not preaching legal things.)—live as though you do! Remember, though the future is very dark, and evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, yet this truth remains. “And the government shall be upon His shoulder.” “For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under Him;” but the day is to dawn when “Thine eyes shall see the King” in the beauty of this truth.

Have you ever noticed a word that you listen to at times in the burial service, speaking of Jesus Christ at His Father’s right hand, “from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool”? Remember that!

Jesus Christ the King. As a King He has a throne, a throne of grace. On that throne He reigns, even at this evening hour, to do poor sinners good.

“No sinner shall ever be empty sent back,  
Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus’s sake.”

O what a glorious King of grace Jesus Christ is! On that throne He stretches out, as it were, His royal sceptre, His “exceeding great and precious promises,” inviting, encouraging, emboldening poor sinners to come just as they are. “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.”

As a King, He must needs have a kingdom, and His kingdom beneath the sun is a kingdom of grace. Do you and I belong to it? Possess you any well-grounded evidence that you are a loyal, humble subject of Jesus Christ the King? “What think ye of Christ?” As you live your life, what is your aim? Is it to “win Christ and be

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found in Him?" Do people see, as you live your life, that you have been with Jesus? Does your conduct, your conversation, betoken it? I say, Jesus Christ as the King has on this earth a kingdom; and in that kingdom, down through the ages, He has got millions of loyal subjects who love Him and His truth, and who say, in a right mind, a right spirit,

"This prayer and this ambition mine,  
Living and dying to be Thine,"

I ask again, "What think ye of Christ?"

But as the Lord shall help me, I come to the third viewpoint of the subject, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty"; but do not forget what I have emphasized:

"Th' Holy Ghost will make the soul  
Feel its sad condition;  
For the sick, and not the whole,  
Need the good Physician."

As you look within,—and it is healthy to do it, but

"Pore not on thyself too long,  
Lest it sink thee lower;—  
Look to Jesus, kind as strong,  
Mercy joined with power."

Your happiness, your hope, your help is in looking to Jesus. Nevertheless I tell you the truth, you will see as you grow older, more and more, what you are by nature, your emptiness, your poverty, your insufficiency, your undeserving, your hell-deserving, yes, and your deep need of what Jesus Christ is as all your salvation and all your desire. "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty."

This word can be viewed from a thousand viewpoints, and yet another thousand. Think of the beauty of eternal purposes, to begin. Go back, as the Lord shall help you, to before time was born and the world was built. O that faith may be given to you and to me to ponder this great truth, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It was in those eternal purposes, when the covenant was ordered in all things and sure, that Jesus Christ was made manifest as the King in His beauty; He Who in the fulness of time would come down into this sin-cursed earth, on behalf of poor sinners like you and me. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." O, the beauty of it! Does it ever delight your soul to contemplate it? Does not the truth make your heart beat a little in desires when you think on it? Surely it brings sometimes a little softness, a tear to your eyes; or are you as dead as the tarmac road you walk along? "What think ye of Christ?" Did you ever feel,—  
O that you may have the feeling often!—

"Compared with Christ, in all beside  
No comeliness I see;  
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,  
Is to be one with Thee"?

"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." Think of the beauty of how He came into this world. It would do you good. You are too ready to grumble, (I am not fitting caps on!) because there is this and that in your life that you would like re-arranged; yet you have your easy chairs, your feather beds, your comfortable homes. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." Go to Bethlehem, I say; see what came to pass there, see the King in His beauty, see a Babe, a holy Babe, and the only holy Babe that ever was, "Born a Babe by birth mysterious," yet

"His shoulders held up heaven and earth,  
When Mary held up Him."

O, there is indescribable beauty if you get grace to go to Bethlehem and see that great thing that came to pass there. It will allay your grumbling, your murmuring, your fretfulness, and make you feel as you want to feel, and say, however hard to be understood the dealings of God with you may be, "It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good." "Thine eyes shall see the King" in the beauty of His birth, and it is a wonderful mercy if we can feel He was born for us, "a Brother born for adversity."

Think, too, of the beauty of His life. He is said to be, (and that is what He is) the holy, harmless, undefiled Son of God. O, this King dwelt on earth and lived His life.

"In Him the Father never saw  
The least transgression of His law."

O, that law under which you and I were born,—He was "made of a woman, made under the law," as to His wondrous humanity, and as God in our nature He kept that law in every jot and tittle, so that you and I have the beauty of His righteousness to make us beautiful too, beautiful in the eyes of God, so that He says to poor sinners, base, black, bad as they are, "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee;" because it is the communicable beauty of Jesus Christ as the King, "The Lord our Righteousness" made over to us; "our sins by imputation His," but His righteousness is ours. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

O, the life that Jesus lived, the beauty of it! He was hounded about in this world. Hell fought against Him at every turn. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." He was tempted, He was afflicted, He was mocked, He was set at nought, He was scourged; that terrible word you read, "The ploughers ploughed upon My back, and made deep their furrows."

So He lived His life, verily Man, Jesus Christ the King, and then at length, the beauty of His death! When His beautiful life reached its close, His life on earth as verily Man, then He stedfastly set His mind to go up to Jerusalem, knowing Calvary's cross was to

be set up there; and on that cross Jesus Christ the King is seen in His beauty. Yes! "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I can only give you hints to think about when you go on your way, for the subject is so vast; but "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty."

See Him on that glorious Easter morning, as He rises from the dead triumphant over sin and death and hell. See Him as, later on, He ascends into heaven, where He is now on our behalf, "now to appear in the presence of God for us." See His beauty as our Advocate on high, so that when a poor sinner tries to draw near to God and feels, "I would, but cannot, pray," there is this sweet truth sometimes to gladden your heart,

"Since my Saviour stands between,  
In garments dyed in blood,  
'Tis He instead of me is seen,  
When I approach to God."

"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." "For there is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." (I Tim. ii. 5.)

I might add a word or two,— "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty" in that gospel of which He is the sum and substance. Watch this when you hear the gospel. I wish you well. I would say something, as God shall help me, to be a help to you. I say, watch this when you hear the gospel. It is not a question of hearing sermons, No;—whoever the preacher is! What I want to emphasize is this, "In the volume of the book it is written of Me;" and when you hear the gospel it will bring you to this, that it is not a well-arranged, well-thought-out sermon that pleases you, but this, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." "Thy words were found, and I did eat them;" (Mark how Jeremiah worded that!) "and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." (Jer. xv. 16.) I look at that word from this viewpoint: "Thy words," (plural,)—the written word, or it may be the gospel as you listen to it, "were found, and I did eat them;"—"and Thy Word,"—the incarnate Word, He Whose word it is,— "was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." You see, Jesus Christ, on that Emmaus road with those two dear disciples, opened up in the scriptures the things concerning *Himself*.

It is not only in the gospel being preached with sound doctrine, and in your being nurtured in that, although essential, but it must be this, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty;" and to feel as you go on your way,

"Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me  
A living, bright reality."

What a beautiful gospel it is, when men sometimes get a little help to preach it with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven! and how you respond to it, how your heart is warmed and your mind is

enlightened, and you feel,

"'Tis the gospel  
Points to heaven, and shows the road."

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance." (Psalm lxxxix. 15.)

Not only so,— "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty" in the sacred pages, and one hymnwriter prays,

"Divine Instructor, gracious Lord,  
O be for ever near!  
Help me to read Thy sacred Word,  
And find my Saviour there."

As I come toward the "Amen" I will say this, there is a beauty in the worship of God in every aspect of it. What a wonderful sight it is to see people turn aside from the busy scenes of everyday life, and gather together at Jesus' feet, as you are if you have come aright. "Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." When the presence of God is known and felt, then you realize, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." (I Cor. vi. v. 17.) And you see "the King in His beauty" when you sing praises with understanding; but I was going to say this, the King is to be seen in His beauty when poor sinners who love Him and are loyal to Him and His truth are obedient to His commands and go down into the baptismal waters for His sake, and make it plain to the world, professing and profane, Whose they are and Whom they serve.

"Let all obedient souls  
Their grateful tribute bring;  
Submit to Jesus' righteous rules,  
And bow before the King."

Do you mean to tell me you have never looked on, some of you, and felt a sweet, blessed pleasure as you have seen a believer taught of God following Jesus Christ in His Own ordinance? And says He,—and it is Jesus Christ the King speaking,— "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Yes! See those people so baptized later on gathered round the Lord's Table in a church state, to eat the bread and drink the wine, and remember, as they gather there, a little family, one with each other, one with the Lord, if it were not for what the grace of God has made them to be they would pass each other in the street, because they would be strangers and have no oneness. But what "the King in His beauty" is makes them one in Him. "Thine eyes shall see the King in His Beauty."

And now, if you are taught of God it will be here a little, there a little as you journey through life, you will get a glimpse of "the King in His beauty," and you will say,

" More frequent let Thy visits be,  
Or let them longer last."

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But this word has yet a fulfilling. When our eyes shall close in death, then, then in a way that no creature can describe, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." And I might add this, in that great day "every eye shall see Him," the great day of judgment that is to come. Then Jesus Christ, Who is now despised and rejected of men, will be seen by all men who have ever been; all mankind; "every eye shall see *Him*." Then there will be millions of hearts that will beat in terror indescribable, but if you and I are taught of God our hearts will overflow with "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

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" See the Judge our nature wearing,  
Clothed in majesty divine;  
You who long for His appearing,  
Then shall say, 'This God is *mine* !'  
Gracious Saviour,  
Own me in that day for Thine."

The Lord help you to lay these things to heart!

Amen.

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