

Notes of Sermons Preached by Pastor Henry Haddow at Brockham Green
on Lord's day February 5th 1911

Morning Sermon

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. (Psalm 43:5)

You have been singing a very blessed hymn. Some of you can say by blessed experience:

*O bless'd devotion! thus to meet,
And spread our woes at His dear feet;
Call Him our own, in ties of blood,
And hold sweet fellowship with God. (John Kent)*

O the condescension of God in favouring worms of earth to have fellowship with Him! My dear hearers, have you ever had one moment's fellowship with God? Can you indeed come in and say:

*His former visits we recount,
On Mizar's hill and Hermon's mount?*

What a mercy it is to know anything of what it is to view His lovely face, and to see the King in His beauty, and to have a blessed hope that you will –

*– live to reach the place
Where He unveils His lovely face,
Where all His beauties you behold,
And sing His name to harps of gold! (Isaac Watts)*

I was thinking this morning we do not know the extent of bliss the soul is capable of enjoying, neither do we know the depth of misery the soul is capable of descending to. Some of us have felt a little misery of soul, and we have also known something of the joy of God's salvation. The psalmist was indeed a blessed man of God. It is true he knew something of misery and condemnation, and he knew something of calling out of deep waters, and of the horrible pit and the miry clay. And he knew something of mercy, peace, and salvation, and like Naphtali of old he was sometimes full of the blessing of the Lord. And you will find that the psalmist breaks forth again and again: *Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! (Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31)* God's exceeding great and precious promises were fulfilled in his soul's experience. So David was satisfied with the goodness of the Lord. He could speak of it, blessed man, after God's own heart. He could say: *O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth. (Psalm 71:17)* And God showed him that He had made with him an everlasting covenant. This was enough for David, though his house was not as he wished it to be.

David knew what it was to be joyful in the house of prayer. You know where God blesses the soul – that is the house of God. Has He blessed you in the barn, in the chamber, in the stable, in the office, in the kitchen? I have thought of Jacob when he fled from the face of his brother, and of his taking stones for his pillow and lying down to sleep with guilt upon his conscience. You know of his dreams, and when he came to himself, so to speak, he said: *This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. (Genesis 28:17)* Have you had such spots and seasons to look back to? The Lord says: *I will bring all things to remembrance. (see John 14:26)*

Well then, David had his times of blessing. It is a mercy to have the blessing of God in the sanctuary. This is what makes the soul love the house of God. Have you seen God's power here? Some of you

have. I have. I have had some of my happiest moments in this pulpit. I do not say but what I have had dark moments here, and preached to you in bonds. But this house has been the house of God to me, and here I feel –

*Here my best friends and kindred dwell,
Here God my Saviour reigns. (Isaac Watts)*

When David penned this psalm, what a distance he was from it! His enemies sought his life, and he is far from the tabernacle. But he is not far from God, though in soul feeling God is at a distance. David began the 42nd Psalm with: *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.* What a mercy for David to be able to use such language as this when he was away from the tabernacle, though his soul was cast down within him. *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.* He knew something of soul thirst.

Now I have known what it has been to be the very reverse. Have you? Last Lord's Day I was in bed all day. My daughter read the 14th & 17th chapters of John, but I could no more say: *My soul thirsteth for the living God,* than I could create a world. If God has taken us in hand, we shall have to know by painful experience that all our springs are in Him. Well, there will come this – we may not have such a painful trial as I have referred to, but there will come this soul panting, this thirst, as the hart panteth after the water brooks to quench its thirst, or to escape the animal that is pursuing it. You will get to heaven if your soul thirsts for God, and pants for God. If you have had such an experience as this, you will get right away to the Lord. I once saw a wounded deer. The keeper who shot it was in a tree. You know, which ever way the herd go, this wounded one will run in the opposite direction. And so it is when the soul is wounded, the soul will want to go right away from all creatures.

*Could the creatures help or ease us,
Seldom should we think of prayer;
Few, if any, come to Jesus,
Till reduced to self-despair. (John Newton)*

Blessed man, if you find that there is this thirsting after God, and that none but God can satisfy your soul. I know what I am speaking about. There is nothing beneath the sun that can satisfy my soul except God. I have sometimes said, "Let everything go. I am ready to part with all to possess God, and to know the power of Christ's resurrection. One says – and we have said it, though we have been put to the test after saying it – and I say it again:

*I could from all things parted be,
But never, never, Lord, from Thee. (Samuel Medley)*

You may be surrounded with earthly prosperity, and then your soul thirsts after God. Do you know anything of this? The psalmist knew what it was to live in the favour of the Lord, but yet we now find him crying in the language of my text: *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise Him.* He was thirsting for God, and his meat was tears day and night, and his enemies said unto him: *Where is thy God? (42:3)* Sometimes you would be ready to answer such a question, but when God seems to have forsaken you, how about it then? The psalmist said: *When I remember these things (the things he had known of God by experience) I pour out my soul in me. (v.4)* Then he puts the question to his soul: *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* Three times you find this verse in these two psalms. You will not find such a long verse as this repeated thus in any of the psalms with the exception of the 107th Psalm: *Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!*

Now, there may be in this congregation this morning – and I believe it so – some whose souls are cast down. Last evening I had another portion of the Word of God on my mind, but these words I have read by way of a text arrested my attention. May the Holy Ghost help you to ask your soul: *Why art*

thou cast down, disquieted within me? There must be a cause for it. It is well, sometimes, to speak as David did to his soul. Would to God that many more professors were cast down. It is impossible, if you go forth with the lamp of profession, and are not cast down, to get to heaven. It is contrary to the Word of God. *In the world ye shall have tribulation...in Me ye shall have peace. (John 16:33)* You will know something of this experience if you are in the school of Christ. Perhaps you say, "My soul is cast down," but you dare not say, "O my God." But you long to say it. The Lord lifts up those who are cast down.

After having known something of the Lord, our soul is cast down, and we ask the question: *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* O it is sin, it is sin! David knew something of this. See how that man after God's own heart was left to sin. We may not be left to fall into outward acts of sin – God forbid we should – but it is that which works within that causes our soul to be cast down. God makes His people know that sin is exceeding sinful. The thought of foolishness is sin. How do you find it when you come to the Word of God, and go on your knees before Him? I am speaking now to those who know the grace of God. I have known my wounds to stink because of my sin. I have been truly thankful that my soul has been cast down by reason of sin. Do not misunderstand me. I mean that I am glad that God has not left me to sin, and let me go unpunished. The mere professor may go on in sin, and know nothing of his soul being cast down.

Sometimes sins of childhood have caused me to be cast down. Is it not a sin? I speak it, friends, with reverence: there is no real reason why the soul should be unduly cast down by reason of sin. What I mean is this: Christ has put away sin. Christ has borne the sins of the elect on the accursed tree. Sin shall not have dominion over you. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, and keeps the soul in life, and by His blood brings rebel sinners home to God. There is efficacy in the blood of Christ. Some say they have no sin, but *if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8)* I do feel this, and I know some of you do too:

*That, had I not Thy blood to plead,
Each sight would sink me to despair. (Joseph Hart)*

I do not think the sight will ever sink you to despair. Sin hangs heavy in my soul, but faith looks to Jesus' blood, and faith believes. O that is it, friends:

*Faith in the bleeding Lamb,
O what a gift is this!
Hope of salvation in His name,
How comfortable 'tis! (Joseph Hart)*

We leave the subject this morning. May the Lord add His blessing.

Afternoon Sermon.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted with in me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God. (Psalm 43:5)

The souls of the redeemed, as you have just been singing, *Why so cast down, dejected soul? (Gadsby 714)*, are precious to the Lord Jesus Christ. *Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee. (Isaiah 43:4)* The soul that Christ has redeemed is secure, and is bound in that bundle of life with Him to all eternity. But they will find the path to be a way of trials and tribulations.

*Trials may press of every sort;
They may be sore, they must be short. (Joseph Hart)*

I hope I have felt this. There is a needs-be. *Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: the trial of your faith is much more precious than of gold that perisheth. (1 Peter 1:7)*

We were speaking this morning of sins being the cause oftentimes of the soul being cast down. I am not going to set up a standard. I do not believe there is a gracious soul in this house of prayer but who knows something of this in some measure. I know my soul has from time to time been cast down by reason of my sin. O friends, if you have never sinned with your eyes open, I have. I know it has been wrong to do it, but I have done it, and as soon as I have, I have had some experience of the words of my text. It is a mercy that God will not allow us to sin cheaply. It is no mark against us that God deals with us, but it would be if He did not. God said of one: *Let him alone: he is joined to idols. (Hosea 4:17)* He visits our transgressions with the rod, and our iniquity with stripes. And whilst you are thus cast down, and your soul is disquieted within you, you say:

*Come, my soul, and let us try, for a little season,
Every burden to lay by; Come, and let us reason.
What is this that casts thee down?*

And the soul will answer:

O I sink beneath the load of my nature's evil!

Ah, my friends, this is the path, strange though it may appear to some of you. You read *Hart's hymn (780)* at your leisure, and you will find it comes down to this:

Pore not on thyself too long, lest it sink thee lower.

*Then why so sad, my soul? though bad,
Thou hast a Friend that's good. (Joseph Hart)*

The Lord, He is the Lord that helpeth thee. He lives to wash thy sins away.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Temptations will cause the soul of the child of God to be cast down. Who would have thought that the Lord Jesus Christ after His baptism would have been tempted by the devil? It is our mercy that He was tempted as we are. He knows the temptations you are the subject of. Perhaps there is some temptation that troubles you, and it seems at times as though you will have to give way. How you do sometimes groan to God that He will keep you in the hour of temptation. Your groaning is not hid from Him. By reason of these powerful temptations your soul is cast down, and you are ready to say with the psalmist: *My soul melteth for heaviness. (Psalm 119:28)* *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation. (James 1:12)*

It has been sweet to me sometimes to know that God's angels are hovering round. You may have God's voice commanding you to go here, go there. I am the God of Bethel; I will go with thee. Like Jacob, you have not gone far before the angel of God has met you. God is about to prepare him for what is before him. He wrestled with the angel till break of day. And when he saw that he could not prevail, he could not because He would not. I have an old Bible at home that says: *He could not because He would not.* In a moment He could consume him, but He permits Jacob in his strength to wrestle with Him. Jacob wanted a real blessing; he wrestles until he gets the blessing. So it will be with you.

Why so cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Jesus lives to succour you. God's waterspouts cause my soul to be cast down. That is affliction which God sends. The hand of the Lord is in it. Job says: *Have pity upon me...for the hand of God hath touched me. (ch.19:21)* The Psalmist says: *Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts: all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me. (Psalm 42:7)* It is trouble upon trouble, and you say you do not know how you will be brought honourably through. Do you know this path? Mark this, beloved, if it is there is a

needs-be for it. I trust I have sometimes, in the midst of the deepest affliction, fallen flat at His blessed feet, and justified Him in it all. He is – *Too wise to err, too good to be unkind.*

We are troubled and afflicted, but why so unduly cast down? Job might well say, when his children and property were all gone, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* Then why so cast down? God is faithful that hath promised. *Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.* (Deuteronomy 33:25) One may sometimes reason after this manner: Has He ever left me to sink? And you remember what He has done for you in years that are past. It is passing through this that one is enabled to say: *Hope in God.* Faith comes in, so to speak. Hope in God for pardon, for peace, for grace, for wisdom. Hope in Him. O what could we do without hope? The God of hope gives hope. The soul is enabled to hope in Him in the midst of all, painful as the path may be. *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.* (Hebrews 6:19) We are saved by hope. It is a mercy when you are brought to this hope. You look to God; you hope in God; and you say, Thou art my hope.

You will not hope in vain, my friends. God will help you, and you will go a little further, shall I say. *Hope in God: for I shall yet praise Him.* The time will come when I shall praise Him. Perhaps there are some of you this afternoon who cannot praise Him. You are brought so low, and whilst you are thus exercised, faith may be given you, and you may be enabled to say: *For I shall yet praise Him.* Your harp is upon the willows; you cannot sing the Lord's song. It is midnight, so to speak, with you. The psalmist says: *O send out Thy light and Thy truth* – send it into my soul.

Sometimes we have thought in days gone by that one should never praise God again, and we have written bitter things against ourselves. We have remembered Zion, and we have wept. But the time of love has come again. Day-break has come. We have then said:

*My Saviour is near,
And for my relief will surely appear. (John Newton)*

Have you sometimes felt that – *With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm?* The psalmist said: *I had fainted, unless I had believed.* (Psalm 27:13) So you see the soul believes, therefore he says: *I shall yet praise Him.*

He tarried until the hour set to favour Zion. Have not you sometimes felt that the days of darkness have been many? I baptised last Wednesday a very gracious soul. The Lord blessed her twenty five years ago. About four months ago she was in great darkness, and she feared the Lord would never appear again. But the Lord appeared, and she praised Him. I hope I felt the Lord's presence this morning, especially at the Lord's Table. I felt I must give out one verse, but I did not do so. It was: *Praise God from whom all blessings flow.* Faith springs up and speaks after this manner: *For I shall yet praise Him.* I shall praise Him with all that blood-bought host.

He is the health of my countenance. It is said that the countenance is an index of one's health. You cannot always depend upon that naturally. I have looked at persons, and said, "What a healthy man!" But where are they today? In the silent tomb. You do not know at what moment anyone may be taken. The psalmist says the Lord is *the health of my countenance* – spiritually. When the Lord's presence is felt in the soul, you do not make a mistake. You have seen persons walk with a heavy step, and the Lord has come and turned their captivity, and what a change is to be seen! The father may have gone up into his chamber to pray with a heavy heart, but he has come down with his countenance beaming with delight, and you have said, What a change! My children have said, What a change!

He is the health of my countenance. In His favour is life. *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* (Psalm 30:5) You may go into the dying chamber, and see the suffering one drawing near to the end, and as you gaze upon that one you say, "There is a change. Look at that smile! It is the health of God's countenance." O what a soul enjoys sometimes in the hour and article of death!

He is the health of my countenance, and my God. Now, look at these words: **My G-O-D.** Take this away with you if you forget all I have said beside, and ask the question: What is contained in this one word? And ask yourself: Can I say God is mine, and I am His? I shall have to leave the subject.