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Substance of two Sermons preached by our Pastor

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Morning Lesson. Revelation 18.

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. Isaiah 26. 20.

All gracious and spiritual people will at once recognise how congruous with the present state of affairs in the world and in the nation this sacred Text is. It is a message for the times. If I give a preface, the whole of the chapter may be summarised in this way: it is the praise and testimony of restored and converted Israel. You will notice there are two outstanding things in the chapter. One is the promise and expectation of the Lord increasing the nation and blessing His people. The other is a time of trouble, and it is specified under the term 'judgments'.

The Text has to do with a time of sore judgments and anticipated judgments. It is a call to the Lord's people to enter into their chambers and to hide themselves until the indignation be overpast. So judgments are poured out measurably on people, individuals, nations, and they are a manifestation of indignation against sin, and you will see through the chapter the word is prominent: "for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

I will give a brief word on judgments. What are the judgments of God? How may they be defined? God is our Creator, Law-giver, King. Where there is gross wickedness on the earth, then behold how the patience of God is lengthened out: and behold how He gives a little space to repent of our fornication and cast off our sins by righteousness. God does not act immediately, usually. There is an extension of His patience. This is incredible to us when we ponder it: there is a little space. Then if there is persistent violation of His laws, - the royal statutes, - and none are really ignorant of them. It is a sad commentary if it is true, that millions of people never read the Bible. But the fact is there is a commentary on the statutes of God in the conscience. There is that realisation of evil till, as I judge by the language of Scripture, the

conscience becomes seared as with a hot iron and there is only scarred tissue, so it is non-operative. Generally speaking there is a conscience, and people quickly hide or wish to get away, until they become brazen and show no shame. There comes a time when the Lord sends His angels, - sometimes a destroying angel with a drawn sword, or with a vial to pour out on the earth. The sword is drawn from its sheath and exercised.

Judgments vary in degree, intensity, and coverage. There are general judgments (as we had on Thursday) when the earth was drowned. That was the first destruction of the earth by water, and it will come by the element of fire. So there are these judgments that covered the whole area of the planet. There are limited judgments. You remember the judgment the Lord sent on Israel. They had prophets who warned them. Many times did He warn and reprove them to bring them from the brink, but He said; "Ye would not." That is the recklessness of sin; it is the state of human nature. They persisted, and the Chaldeans and others mastered them, conquered them. They were victorious over them, and the Chaldeans were the hand of God. They had so many years in bondage; slaves in deep distress.

I will refer to the judgments of God. A judgment is a manifestation of the frown of God on the inhabitants of the earth. There are limited judgments on individuals, families, communities; on the king who gave not God the glory and was smitten by Him. "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms." It is undoubtedly true, we are living witnesses that the judgments of God are here now, and may yet be anticipated: it is impossible to escape. It is quite impossible for the earth and the inhabitants to be immune from the judgments of God. We cannot contravene the royal statutes and escape. There are judgments of sinners seduced by Satan and who yield to temptation. You think how many people in the world are smitten with disease as a direct result of their immoral lives. The Lord preserve our young people, and keep them pure and holy. You cannot go over the boundary and escape. There is a series of visitations and there are visitations that go on to the end of life: they are permanent.

There are two categories of judgments: those on the head of the wicked,

and those on God's people. In the category of the Lord's people, with those judgments there is always mercy mixed with judgment. We sing of 'mercy and judgment'. Take King David. He knew the judgments of God, and the Lord said a form of judgment would continue to the end of his days. He said also; "Thy sin is forgiven." So there was mercy. For God's people there are judgments they are brought to accept and submit to, and they recognise how righteous the Lord is to send them. There is this sweet mercy with His judgments.

With the ungodly, poor creatures, there is no mercy. Poor creatures'. Why do I say 'poor creatures'? Because I deserve it myself, and who knows? I said, with the ungodly. I must subdivide. There are those the Lord will call, and there are those who are left. Some receive their first call of alarm and first awakening under judgments. "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea." Judgments. If I took you up as a congregation, - it is impossible verbally or to write: if I could there are some who could write sentences on judgments, and they have an object lesson ever before them. It reminds them that God dealt with them in mercy and judgment. He is vindicated.

If any should say; "Why should there be judgments?" they are a vindication of the character of God; an assurance of His Being, His sovereignty and supremacy. If He never dealt with sin against Him, He would cease to be God. That is impossible. So join with me in prayer that the Lord will use His judgments so that multitudes in all countries may be awakened. What I find disturbing is, it seems to me that many professing the Name of God are insular. They only think of themselves and the little community they live in. They have no regard for millions round the world, and to me this is very sad. You want to try and think of the vast population of this country and the world, and pray to God that there may be a glorious Reformation sweep through the continent and round the world. I want to declare immediately that when a person or a city or a nation acknowledges their sin and seek reformation, the Lord is ready to forgive and to remove His judgments. How ready the Lord is to forgive if there is true confession! If only this could be impressed

on the minds of multitudes that He is so ready to forgive! Repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit, but how willing and ready the Lord is to forgive! and He delights in ^{mercy}. To me this is rather a blessed preface because we certainly see what we saw on Thursday night. We have ^{seen} vengeance retiring, and we have seen mercy coming out. You will remember the sweet notes; the bow in the cloud, and God's oath that He would never again drown the world. Mercy still comes out.

To go to the subject matter of the verse, I should say there are times coming when there will be greater judgments, yet there seems to be a promise of a wonderful revival in Zion. Without doubt there are greater judgments because there must be a fulfilling of the Word of God concerning Jerusalem. There is another thing that perplexes me. I must be discreet, but all tell us we are in a dreadful state in the country and the world. They tell us the economy of every nation is in a tottering state, yet they never spell it out. I should like to know. They never seem to know what should be done. My Text is specific and positive. It tells us what to do if we are the Lord's people. Don't you see the point? It is of no value to be desultory. You want to know what to do. We are in a state, I do not know what. Let them tell us what to do. All Britons would be only too willing to do something. One is certain, we know what to do from the Bible, if the good Lord gives grace to return to Him, to cast off our wickedness. The Text tells us what to do. I will just give an illustration that will demonstrate the wonder of knowing what to do and the efficacy of it. Lord Montgomery, when he was Field Marshal took a different course from the others. He gathered his officers and men ~~round~~ round him and told them the dangers and what he planned to do, and he enjoyed the confidence of his men. My Text tells us what to do.

So the Text is a message for the times, and it is a blessed message indeed. It is solemn because it is indicative of indignation that will be manifested, and while it is there will be no safety only for "My people" who have entered their chambers and shut their doors and are hidden. The Text seems to be couched in terms of rebuke. "Come, my people," as though they had been wandering about. "Where have you been?" I am sure there is a measure of rebuke in it. "Come, my people. Come in" Often because of carnality and a preoccupation with life and the world

we forget our sweet resting place.

"Come, my people." This is a positive word for you in the circumstances that obtain. You know your course, and it is a great mercy. You know the will of God and what He has provided, - a chamber, and He has invited you to come in and shut the door until the indignation pass over. It is a solemn term, Indignation. It makes one wonder how far reaching it will be. You know, I must say there is no safety for any unless they are hidden in the chamber. This is a time fraught with anxiety in business and in industry. Mountains are carried into the midst of the sea; the waters roar and are troubled; the earth is removed. There is only one course. You cannot say; "Here we are; we have done well." There is no certainty. There are two certainties: they fall on deaf ears until the time comes. One is the day of adversity which is set over against the day of prosperity, to the end that man should find nothing after God. The other is death and the last Judgment, and heaven and hell. Whoever you are, in a profession, in business, with a little family, here is the course for all of us who hope we fear God; "Come, my people."

I suppose I must hasten because there is much to deal with if the Lord grants His sweet word. "Come, my people. Come." Back in the summer we were speaking on the word "Come." "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden." It means an orientation of the soul towards Christ. Wonderful it is to know Christ by divine revelation so He is the centre of your love, life, heart, all; so you are looking toward Him. The whole of the Text is the activity of faith as it relates to the people of God. If you have faith it is as a grain of mustard seed, which is very potent. Faith is potent by the Spirit; it is active. "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself" It is the activity of faith and the other graces; the activity of love. You are looking to Him. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

The next thing is to move as fast as you can. You may walk, run with alacrity, - fly. It means to move. Are you moving to Christ? running? flying as the dove to her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth? It is moving, approaching, drawing near, getting close, and it means arriving. You have arrived, entered. That is coming. Sweet meditation this could be for you in the interval, to think of coming to Jesus, to the chamber.

looking to Jesus, moving as fast as you can, and faster till you are flying, and drawing near, knowing you are getting closer, and arriving. That is coming. O the beauty and blessedness of it!

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad."

Wonderful it is to come to Jesus! It all involves the irresistible power of the Spirit and the wonderful irradiation of the Sun of righteousness, the power of it in the ~~xxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ soul to draw you to the vast source, the Person of Christ Himself. "Come, my people." Does it include you?

"My people." There are three things in this. The first is His claim on you. You are His. "My people." He claims you. It is wonderful for the Lord to claim you. "My people." If He should say to you; "My child, I love thee well." Does He claim you? You claim your own children;- my son, my daughter. You have a claim and it is valid. So first, "My people." He claims ~~xxx~~ them because He has adopted them; because He abundantly loves them; because the Father gave them to Him; because He redeemed them, purchased them. They are bought with a price. He claims them because He has conquered them. O this claim! "My people."

Another side is, if the Lord claims you He will favour you to claim Him. If He says to you; "My child" you are able to say; "Thou art my God, and I will praise thee." "Come, my people." He claims them. Next, it expresses His boundless love to them. "Come, my people." You cannot tell how this endearing word is completely filled with divine love. "Come, my people." I do feel we are still very favoured. I have felt much at various times in the year with the blessed presence of the Lord the sweetest liberty. It is so wonderful to feel the Lord's presence. It takes you almost to heaven, and you believe you will be there. So the word is full of love divine. "Come, my people."

The third is, it manifests how concerned your Heavenly Father is for your welfare. You are in a day of trouble; the indignation is coming, and He is so concerned for your safety and welfare. (You are safe.) "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers." Amen.