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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor
on Sunday, March 2. 1980.

Evening Lesson. Romans 4.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.
John 8.56.

Here we have the infallible testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself concerning His beloved son and servant Abraham, and the vital secret of his life, of his holy religion and of his faith and obedience and his position in the economy of God which is especially, father of the faithful. I put a word to you: how amazing and wondrous it will be and is, if this is the infallible testimony of the Lord concerning us: if He should say of us, "Your father Abraham (your name) rejoiced to see my day." For nothing can erase this or make it negative or void. It is a wellspring of life, holiness, glory, peace, salvation in our souls. All is pendant, relating to divine blessing and the principle derived from the blessing in our souls. So as I begin the discourse, beloved friends, let us ask ourselves the all-important question; are we gracious participants and in the glory of the Text? Have we seen the day of Christ and rejoiced to see it, and been made glad?

I will refer again to remind the friends, of the nature of the grace of faith. Although almost two thousand years separated Abraham in time from the incarnation, he saw with great beauty, glory, clarity the wonderful day of Christ, for distant things were made nigh to him. There are several important things in the word. You will notice what would appear to be almost repetition of the same fact. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day," and he goes on, "and he saw it, and was glad." So what is the spiritual significance? There is never tautology in the Word of God. Where the same word is reiterated there is a divine purpose in it, so I want to know what it is. I have sought the Lord that He would show me. It is according to the whole life and testimony in relation to Abraham abundantly clear. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day," Rejoice there means to leap for joy. Undoubtedly there is special reference to the incarnation of the Son of God and to His immaculate conception and virgin birth; to the coming of the Saviour,

the glorious Redeemer. How significant the language is; "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day," The day dawned, the shadows fled away when the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem. To this sin-ruined, blighted world,- dark, tormented, suffering, how wondrous was the dawn of day! Following the fall and banishment from Eden the curse affected the whole Creation; what a night! When man fell to the image of the devil, the image of God was defaced. "Ye are of your father the devil." It was a night of darkness, misery, curse, wretchedness, sin, depravity, and the 'woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." What a night! a night of hatred, malice, murder, revenge, immorality, unfaithfulness, godlessness. What a night. I will pause to say, during the time of the dark night as with Abraham every child of God saw the light: every prophet had the testimony of Jesus. Take Malachi, who prophesied four centuries before the birth of Christ. What a word he had for the distressed people! Here is something for the wicked and for you. "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble." What a contrast between these and the third part that will be brought through the fire! In the first case they are consumed: with the Lord's people, "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire." It is the Refiner's fire; a dear loving God dealing with His children, manifesting Fatherly love and giving them to know sonship. He says, and this is for you in the dark night, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise,- the day will dawn, the shadows flee,- unto you that fear my name,- a loving, reverential fear, as most loving children feel to their revered parents in infinitely greater measure. It is a wonderful thing. "But unto you that fear my name," there is a blessing coming. Abraham saw, all the saints saw the bright and morning Star, and Moses prophesied of Him, and in the Psalms and all the prophets. So "shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

The first part of the Text, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my

day," relates to the incarnation, to the coming of the Saviour. He saw this day and rejoiced to see it. There was a leaping of his soul in him for holy joy. All of you in the Sanctuary who love and fear God will know in your ~~heart~~ life when you first saw His day and rejoiced to see it. It is a permanent, eternal blessing: that is how we are to view it. I remember when I rejoiced to see His day. Prior to that I felt to be sinking into the pit, and I knew God would be just. Eventually I was with no hope. You have heard me say before, it was not with ^{me} a question of fearing I should be lost; I was lost. Against that sombre background, O to see His day! for day to dawn in the soul! "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day," Immediately in the degree or manner the Lord sees fit to bestow it by wonderful method divine,- and there is no substitute for the method of heavenly revelation or unveiling,- immediately the sweet Person of Christ, His lovely countenance, sweet voice, His glory shines into the soul, the day dawns. I would like to put it to you in this way. Some of the people of God have an open vision of the glorious Person of Christ. They can say,

"I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His cross I stood."

There is a clear open vision of the precious body of Christ. As you may see me in the pulpit and I you in the pew, so with divine clarity and glory some see by open vision the Person of Christ. It was so with me: so clear was it, I saw His eyes. You know what eyes convey: they are the windows of the soul, and they reflect or show the feelings of the heart. A kind, loving look is wonderful. Anger, malice, enmity may be seen in the eyes. It is almost impossible to conceal the feeling of the heart. O those eyes! the 'dear windows of His soul!' and in that open vision He looked with love, pity, compassion, clemency on me. I rejoiced to see His day: day dawned. You never go back to that night: you will never go back under the curse of the broken law feelingly. You will have darkness but there is no curse. You will have times of temptation and great trial but you will never go back, for the day has dawned and you rejoice to see it. Emotions are the deepest feelings of the personality and they are heightened by what is preparatory. Take the emotion of joy: it is tremendously increased because of the experience of sorrow that is

preparatory to it. You are going through a dark, black season in life and the Lord wonderfully appears for you. O the joy you feel! Your spirit and person has been capacitated by your sorrow to appreciate and enjoy bliss: it makes it so much greater, so it is necessary. The artist fills his brush with dark colours in the background to highlight the beauties, and it is so in the path of life, and your soul continues in this day. You will have nights from one aspect of it, - nights of trial, temptation, pain, grief: you will never go back to the night of self-despair, under the law, in bondage and darkness. The Lord has brought you to the day, and it has been produced by the dear Sun of Righteousness. It is a day of deliverance, joy, peace, exhilaration: your spirit is thrilled with the expectation of what is laid up in store for you. You know Him, and presently He tells you He is yours. There is sweet converse, blessed communion, the time of love, flourishing His beauty. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day." Day may be spoken of as the dawn of everlasting Day; foretastes of Heaven.

Another word on the revelation of His Person. Not all His people are able to claim an open vision of His divine Person. I will dwell here for a few moments. It may be the light of His glory shines: you do not see His Person but the light that shines. It is the Light of the World; it is Christ. He is with you and the whole Sanctuary is filled with His glory. You do not see His Person; it is a revelation of Christ, the glory of God. I have referred to this before: when the Lord delivered me in August 1930 it was confirmed in this Sanctuary; the place was full of glory. It was confirmed at Galeed, and at Gower Street Memorial Chapel: there was this glory: it is Christ. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day." It is daylight sprung up, it is a day of liberty, a day of living hope, sweet immortal hope in your spirit, realising you know Him whom to know is life eternal, and there is life immortal in your soul. It is animation, inspiration, blessing, sunshine. Some see this glory. Those who see His wondrous Person see the glory, but I wanted to reach those who never see the open vision of His Person. This may have been the method divine in the dawn of day with you. You saw His glory in His peerless, precious Name, the Name of Jesus. The Holy Ghost has spoken to your soul, Jesus, and it may be the whole of the passage; "His name shall be called JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins"

He has been revealed to you in His Name. "Sweet Name, when once it's virtue's known." You would not be able to claim you had received an open vision but you have received His Name; or may be He has spoken a Scripture to your soul that relates to His sweet Person. "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." The Lord gives you a word and glory shines and the day dawns. O the wonder of the sweet gospel day when you began to walk at large! You are brought out of your prison cell and you are walking, leaping and praising God. It is day: you have Christ, your precious Saviour. All who know Him go to Heaven. So what a day it is! sweet, blissful, blessed, happy day! "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." "Your father Abraham saw my day." He was in the experience of it, he entered into it. 'Day' relates to the time of love that will come: it is sweet day. You 'go forth in the dances of them that make merry'. "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent." "Your father Abraham saw my day" this Saviour, Friend, Redeemer, who should save His people from their sins. O this precious King, dear Prophet, wondrous Exemplar, glorious Person!

"Your father Abraham saw my day," and we have following that, "and was glad." My spirit has been seeking the Lord since the word came to me, that I might speak according to His holy wisdom and will, and at all times. I know how it is revealed to me and as to why this follows. "Your father Abraham saw my day; and he saw it, and was glad." I will tell you the word which has been a key to me to unlock the door: it was in the Lesson this morning. In the wonderful account in Hebrews 11 of the Old Testament worthies, there is a section that deals with Abraham: you will remember when I quote. It was when he was called to offer up Isaac,- "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." I will just read and you will understand. "from whence also he received him in a figure." The word is figure. It is the key that opens the word, especially the second part of it. Isaac was a figure, a type of Christ. "he received him in a figure," and in this all he passed through was a type of the Lord Jesus. ^{His} soul leapt in him at the incarnation: he walked the same path in relation to the promised son, his seed, Isaac.

In the birth of his son he saw there^{was} something far more important attaching to it. He saw the line of genealogy and the birth of a Saviour. "he received him in a figure", a type of Christ. His soul leapt in him at the incarnation, and he was made glad when he saw by faith the finished work of the atonement of his beloved Redeemer, and His sacrificial death, burial and victory. He saw it all through;- when Christ said, "It is finished." His death, burial, the flowing of the fountain. On the third day He rose, and after forty days ascended, and

"Each bright order of the sky
Hails Him as He passes by."

O the wonder of His ascension and exaltation and enthronement in Glory! "and he saw it, and was glad." Abraham saw His birth and His accomplished priestly work of atonement, His session at the right hand of God on high, His glorious victory, the expiation of sin, a holy righteousness wrought, the Church sanctified by His pure body. He saw it and was glad. This all enforces and is the foundation for what we have proclaimed; the progressive revelation of the Spirit concerning the Person of Christ. You go from one step to another: from the manger to Jordan, where He was baptised, to the Mount of Transfiguration, to the garden, the Judgment Hall, the cross, the tomb, the resurrection, the skies. It is progressive revelation: that is the meaning of the whole passage. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see" the birth of the Saviour; the whole of His blessed work. He saw it and was glad, - heavenly joy for ever, and gladness. There will be ethereal joy in your spirit; joy that is transporting, inexpressible. "and he saw it, and was glad."

I remind the friends of the nature of seeing the day of the Lord Jesus by Abraham. How profound his knowledge was. When the Lord had given the little lad, at a certain time the Lord tried him, and commanded him to offer up his only son. It is all through a figure and type of Christ. You see in his birth the raising up of his son out of what was tantamount to a grave, for both their bodies were dead in relation to procreation. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest...and offer him"-in a figure. It was all a type to him. God the Father would offer up His only begotten Son. He spared not His own Son. If you can think of this with Abraham, it was all in a figure, a type of the blessed One. I have never seen the full importance of

'figure' before. He leaves Haran to go to Canaan,- in a figure. They became heirs of the promise, going to the promised land with the promise of Christ in their hearts. Concerning the lad, God said, "offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Some have said it was all an allegory: I believe it was factual. It is sweet to me, the profound knowledge Abraham had of the Lord Jesus; he rejoiced to see His day. He saw the mountain afar off and he and the lad went to the place. The lad said to his father, "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" How full of pathos it is! "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering,"-in a figure: he saw Christ. O the beauty of the view he had of the Lord Jesus, the one sacrifice for sin for ever. Presently there would be no more sacrifice for sins: it has been offered, and atonement made for the sins of the people of God,

A final word. There are two things I hope I may be helped to speak to. The whole subject exemplifies the wonder of the grace of faith, and it pleased the Lord that His people should know this truth: "The just shall live by faith." It means you must not expect to see your way with clarity. "That traveller treads the surest here That seldom sees his way." He walks by faith, and this is God's appointed method. Often things look opposite to you and, it may be, unpromising; you feel discouraged. Things try you, and the devil/takes advantage of it. "The just shall live by faith." What honours the Lord is trusting in Him at every step. He will never leave you nor forsake you. It is leaning, depending, trusting. As "your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day," so, dear heart, child of God, tried, and walking in sorrow or difficulty, there will always be a dawn of day with you. Whatever night you go into or whatever matters concern you, there will always be a day dawn, resurrection power, resurrection life, resurrection glory. There will always be a day. "Watchman, what of the night?...The morning cometh, and also the night." The second night is different from the first: it is a night of rest; holy rest and peace. "Watchman, what of the night?" I am saying it to the beloved flock. "The morning cometh, because He is risen." Blessed be God.