

Afternoon Lesson. Mark. 11.

26-05-1974

TEXT MATTHEW 21 V 2

Then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. Matthew 21. 2-3.

We confess there are those significant terms used by the first three evangelists in narrating the blessed event of our precious Redeemer ascending to Jerusalem in kingly majesty, and yet in all holy meekness riding on an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. (Zech. 9.9) These terms are full of sacred impression and particular force in our spirits this day. So I hope as we begin this afternoon we shall be assisted to mention these wonderful facts because I believe they are relevant to some in the congregation.

Before coming to the significance of the ass, what first impressed my mind was, there were two animals; an ass, and the foal of the ass, the colt: not one, but two. We know the significance of an ass, but when we

come to think of a colt it is very young and untamed. Both were fastened. I think that is a stronger term than tethered, They were both tied; that is to say they were fastened, secured, the ass and the colt with her. The Lord gave a word of authority, of kingly power in the Kingdom of Grace that will issue in the Kingdom of glory. There were two to be loosed. Take the term 'tied'- they were loosed. Why? Because, and there is no greater word for a poor sinner to hear: because He gave His disciples an answer to give to those who should question them. "Ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them." The two of them were tied, and both were loosed because the Lord had need of them.

I must not get ahead of myself, but I may betray this before the sermon ends. I know what flows into my spirit, and some of you may know. I tell you there are some of you may still be tied: I would think there are. You are fastened: you are not going on like that. There are some here, and some not here, who are tied. They are here in the sense that they are in your heart and in my heart; not as to their physical presence. They are tied, fastened. The day is fast approaching when the Lord will send a word of kingly authority to loose them. And why loose them? Because the Lord hath need of them. I suppose some of you see much further than you ever express or care to express yet in words. This will touch the deepest springs of your heart: it will touch things that are hidden in the sand. No one knows of them, only God and you, and I hope I do. Presently those at present in this will no longer be tied. This is something the majority of people would not understand or appreciate. You are tied. Presently you will be loosed because the Lord hath need of you. Is not this the most beautiful view of the landscape in the Lord's garden? a vista of revelation, beauty, glory and power, and a prospect that will make your very soul to sing?. -This is rather a sequence from Wednesday at Cranbrook Thursday here, and Friday at Prestwood, and it goes on. It is a golden chain: love is.- I want to observe a few of the significant terms here in the first three evangelists. Why I wanted to read the Text in Matthew was because of the basic fact, the ass and the colt tied. There are two, my friends. Who are they? The Lord knows where they are; not only the ass but the colt with her. Very wonderful this is to me, and to some of you, because it touches you in a vital spot.

If we go to the account in Mark it is this, and only he gives it, namely

"And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met." This is very significant, - a place where two ways met. For a child of God there is always this; coming at times to a place where two ways meet. Is it significant to you? What it means is one of these ways is God's appointed way for you to walk in, but you come to the place where two ways meet. I do not intend to attempt to preach the sermon on this, but it holds me. There must be a decision, and an outstanding example in my mind is of Moses: two ways met. There he was, forty years old, with all his tremendous advantages, and the expectation of princely status, and a part of his princely expectation was undoubtedly that he would have been the Pharaoh; Two ways met. You might say they were his own people, they were slaves, their lives were hard, they were in bondage and sore travail. You might say two ways ^{met} in tremendous meditation. Would he remain in his princely earthly status, or identify himself with his nation?

It goes further. Those who fear God will presently see not only the afflicted Church of Christ, but a suffering Saviour in His life of ignominy. A Man of sorrows; the dear Man Christ Jesus so willing to come as a Servant and be upheld by His divine Father, and be (it is easy to repeat) despised and rejected of men. When you come to think of it, He never showed His dear face but they manifested how they despised and rejected Him. He opened His precious lips and they denied what He said. "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Two ways met. I mentioned this point at Prestwood on Friday. Peter could say by divine revelation and knowledge in answer to the Lord's inquiry, "Whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The Lord attested that. He answered; "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt.16) Peter could come as far as that truly, and yet be more or less totally ignorant of the fact that Christ's work was a work of atonement, to go to Jerusalem and suffer on the cross vicariously. So Peter said; "Be it far from thee, Lord." yet his very salvation depended on it. It shows the process of revelation is an increasing one. It shows the people of God are led from one stage in spiritual experience to another until they are complete. Have you been led on in stages over thirty years? My point

was the Lord said He was going to Jerusalem to be killed and to rise again on the third day. "Be it far from thee, Lord." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross," A place where two ways met. Which way are you going? "Let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

There are two ways He described in His doctrine. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Two ways met. Which way are you going? to save your life, or be made willing to lose your life for His sake and the gospel's? If the Lord has need of you, you will lose your life for His sake and the gospel's. You do not begin to know this to day, but you will find it. I am thinking ^{not only} of gracious men, but of godly women, and I am saying little to you. The point is, the language some of you will appreciate and understand in the path God has called you to serve, fear, and honour Him. Your service is behind the scenes, but you will either lose your life, or seek to save it. You must work it out in your own life before God. Do you say to yourself; "I am going to save my life, and not have a hard one. I shall seek an easy life: it is in my hands to do it." Are you willing to lose your life for His sake and the gospel's? Such save their life and find it. Some of you if you were called on privately, could give a concise clear testimony on these words in your life. You could put your finger on a spot and time when the Lord made you willing to walk in this way; to deny yourself, and take up your cross, and follow Him. You may think this is of little consequence: it is of tremendous consequence. You may say; "Why?" You will never be a close follower of Christ unless you are willing to take up your cross and follow Him. If you take the easy way and there is life in your soul, it will be like following a long way off. This point alone explains why there is so much barrenness, deadness and deathiness. This soul that is willing to take up his cross and follow Christ, lives close to the blessed Redeemer. You will have to work it out as to whether you understand. Some of you do. You will have the witness within from God as to when you took the hard way, and it was sweet to you because you were close to Christ. I think these words have an added impact in these days of mechanics. After all, life is like mechanics. The child of God wants to cast him or herself on God and walk the old weather.

beaten path to heaven.

I feel I could pause on this point. You see life now, and what the scientists say, and people of eminence in all branches of the professions. They say; "You are a foolish man or woman. It is in your own hands. There is no need to have a life of tribulation now: you have got it in your own power." They would say to you; "You are archaic, outmoded, a thing of the past." Work it out before your Maker, and see where the two ways meet, and meet in your conscience before God. The Lord knows. But you look on Him: He went to the cross, and He said; "Look, if you are following Me, deny yourself, and take up your cross, and follow Me." The other way is a path of ease.

There is another word. I do not want to reiterate with too personal an application. As you well know, this is my word from Westminster. "Have faith in God." I felt as the Lord gave it me He might give it to you. You will find along the line you come to places and circumstances where this is a wonderful word to you; "Have faith in God." When you come to think of the depths you come into and you have felt to be in, a word like this is a marvellous word when the Lord drops it into your soul. You will get to a place where you can see no deliverance; you are at your wits' end, and He says; "Have faith in God." This revives and delivers you. What a word for those in heavy trial, when the devil besets you, and you can no deliverance see, and the devil hounds you day and night, and the dear Lord whispers; "Have faith in God." Do you see?

"But let not all this terrify;
Pursue the narrow path;
Look to the Lord with steadfast eye,
And fight with hell by faith." (305)

"Have faith in God." When you come into some of the depths you will bless God for this word.

I want to refer to the same narrative in St Luke. It is this. When Christ had taken His place on the colt, - "they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all

the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. This is it; "And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples." St Luke gives the word by the Spirit and this was the answer of Jesus; "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." There will come a time when you will not be able to hold your peace. I never thought the exercise of baptism would descend on me with such force and power in one week: it had been in my heart. For one week it descended like the last stages of labour. There was no peace or rest for me day or night, no peace anywhere. The issue was at the end of the week I felt I could not go on another minute. So I ventured, and opened my mouth to one of the deacons. From that moment peace flowed into my soul. The time comes,- O that the dear Lord would grant it be so with some of you! "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." It is spontaneous and irresistible. It is a thing you have no control over at all. It comes with such power that you cannot suppress it or hold it in your breast. "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." This must suffice,

I will revert to the three main points in the Text.-I could say to you, it is the same in the ministry. It was the same with me. I have often said to young ministers; You will prove the first year or so the Lord will carry you in His arms. Mr Frank Gosden said; (we both went out in the same year) "It is so blessedly easy. It just flows." After the first year or so it is different. It is like a babe. The first year it is sweet enough to hold the babe up. Presently; "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." (2 Tim.2.3) So you see the point. This is how it is when you desire to honour the Lord. You say to yourself; "This is not me. No; it is the Spirit of your Father that speaks in and through you. It is incredible. I suppose for years you have looked at yourself and your limitations, and thought, it is impossible. It is not you, it is the Spirit.

Now, the ass and the colt; there were two. Man as he is born is like a wild ass's colt, so it seems significant that Christ chooses sinners, and rides on an ass and a colt. The significance of an ass is, dull, obstinate stupid, and that sums up a sinner. Take the three terms, and know your

own heart and state in unregeneracy and your corrupt nature: the three words are applicable. So there is the ass for you, and the young one needs a lot of taming. It takes a good many years to tame a sinner. You will realise the force of this. My nature, your nature is like the ass; dull, obstinate, stupid. This is not exaggerated: I make no apology. I say it with decorum; not in a coarse manner. It is true that man's nature is obstinate, stupid, dull, yet the Lord had the two who were tied, and they are going to be loosed. (I must try to hasten.) A sinner is tied in unregeneracy; held fast by Satan, as we had on Thursday concerning the heart, and the strong man armed keeping his palace. "But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth the spoils." (Luke 11) And the poor ass and the colt are tied by Satan, sin and death in unregeneracy, and the Lord is pleased to loose them by quickening, regenerating power. I often think of a young man at Westoning who came to hear me years ago, in 1937. Friends said; "There is a young man preaching, You come." The arrow entered his soul, and he told me afterwards; "I could have pulled you out of the pulpit. I am not putting up with this." There was a round of agitation in his mind. He often went to the public house, and he was determined to go that evening. He put his hand on the door handle, but he could not go in. It was done. He thought; "I shall soon drown all this." but there it was.

"Why loose ye the colt?" The Lord God apprehends sinners who are bound by the law, guilty, under condemnation, till they know "The waters wear the stones: thou wastest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man." (Job 14.19) which He does. There is One stands in court who has procured for you release and pardon, and there is a smile on His face. He has procured your release by His blood. - Christ is revealed. "Loose him." There is measurable freedom: it is not complete until the soul receives forgiveness of sins and justification, and the ass and the colt are loosed. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8,32) Christ's service is perfect liberty. This is it. "Loose him, and let him go."

"Say to that ugly gaoler, Sin,

'Loose him, and let him go.'" (151)

You have lost your load, your burden, sorrow, misery; you are pardoned. What happened? They put their clothes on the ass and the colt, and set Christ on them. He rode on both of them: they were interchanged. I think this is a fair inference from the divine record. He is enthroned in your soul, and His blessed Spirit fills your soul, and He sits on and rides on you as your King. What does this mean? "The Lord hath need of him." I saw in that some in unregeneracy, my friends. The Lord hath need of them. I saw the ass,- God-anointed ministers. God riding on them into the Churches. I saw the colt,- a deacon, and the Lord riding on him in his office. Amen.