

Evening Lesson. Psalm 37.

4-07-1982

And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28. 20.

Let us endeavour to show the blessed sequence of the paragraph, that the almighty power which resides in the Lord Jesus is exercised. It is divinely used, and power is exercised for the salvation of His beloved people, and as it is thus exercised for them by the eternal God there is a blessed sequence even in this. That power exercised for them is then exercised through them — in, and through them. It is a remarkable mercy that when divine power is exercised in us, then we have a new creature, a child of God, one who is formed in the likeness of Christ; one who is transformed to His image, loses the image of Satan and has the image of Christ impressed on him. So the image of the Lord is restored to him. It is the exercise of divine, almighty, sovereign, efficacious, gracious power in the soul. This power the Lord ~~then~~ exercises in us. He then begins to exercise it through us for the sake of others and in serving Him. You will notice the word occurs, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." So beloved friends, if you will now contemplate and meditate on three blessed things in holy order and divine sequence, you will see the wonder and miracle of it. We may use a synonymous term; "What hath God wrought" for us, in Jehovah Jesus, in the Covenant of Grace in the heavens, and in the blessed atonement of His dear Son? What hath God wrought for us before we had a being, before we saw the light of the world, before a dear mother held us in a loving embrace? What hath God wrought for you long before the foundations of the earth were laid, in the amazing Councils of Peace and the Covenant of Grace? What had God wrought for you? There is a blessed sequence: what hath God wrought in you? Because if we take the pursuance of the whole economy of grace in salvation you will see the Trinity in unity, the unity of essence and the distinctiveness of the Persons in the Godhead. What hath God wrought in His dear Son so He should be a Saviour and in all His wondrous priestly work of redemption? What has been wrought by the Holy Ghost in you? There is perfect correspondence between all these. We might pause for our examination of the fundamental, glorious truths. What hath God wrought

in us? Do we resemble Christ? Have we His Spirit so we are no longer as a wild beast, but conformed to the blessed image of a dear Saviour, the loving Man who rules the courts of bliss? Are we now His servants, humble, loving, forgiving, full of fidelity? What hath God wrought in us? Are we so Christlike, with the grace of humility, compassion, love, faith, obedience?

Then we can carry this further. What hath God wrought through us? Your mind will go to the ministry of the Spirit. It is not confined to the public ministry. The Lord largely uses the holy ordinance for the ingathering of His elect out of the race of mankind, but there is a ministry of the Spirit through all believers. Think how many godly matrons have been of untold value and blessedness in their families. The Lord has used a dear mother in a double sense, naturally and spiritually. They are mothers in Israel. (This is not empty language.) ~~So~~ what hath the Lord wrought through us? I want you to solemnly, blessedly ponder. Has the Lord wrought through you? There is the outworking of this power. Power is not stagnant: it is used and it flows out. O the power! Because it is supreme and invincible no power equals it. It is the supreme, invincible outworking of power that accomplishes all the purposes of Jehovah. A man or a woman may be determined to continue a course in the world. One of my predecessors said to his dear mother, a member of Hanover Chapel, Tunbridge Wells, "Neither God nor man will change me." He preached here for several years. You see it is divine, almighty power. I say to you dear people, the power of God in every phase of spiritual experience you are involved in, whether you know it or not. Has God a command to fulfil, something to accomplish? His power will do it. It is not a matter of a long discussion in the mind, weighing things up and protesting. God's power will accomplish it. If you do not remember more than this this evening, try to remember the amazing volume of sovereign, almighty, invincible power in God is always active and operative in the objects of His choice, and to restrain the powers of darkness. You know the effect of it. You may sit in your pews or in an easy chair and feel as dead as dead can be; no motion, prayerless, and you know in a moment when the Lord sends divine power you have a broken spirit, love flows, you realise the holy activity of your ransomed soul God-ward and Heaven-

ward.

If we briefly go aside, you know with all the gross wickedness on the face of this planet because of fallen, polluted creatures and murderous spirits, it would not be safe to live without the exercise of God's power restraining the powers of evil. We do not realise it. It is the output of power that holds down the powers of darkness and enemies of our souls. I hope you are able to absorb some of this, because it is for intelligent minds to see the working out of God's power. It is taken up in the Scriptures where the Lord said, "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" There is another ^{instance} where the output of power does not rest with numbers or armies. It does not rest with great numerical superiority. It is this power, as with Gideon's three hundred. Think how power affects people. They may close a door in your face in business, and the Lord makes them open the door and you walk in. Man is so determined: there is an output of power and things are reversed. Power is exercised to make people willing. I do not feel one could say categorically that generally speaking the way of God is the way you would choose naturally. It is often the way you would not choose: there are objections, protests. The exercise of power makes you willing. And there is another aspect of the output of power, that is the whole economy of grace in salvation. Everything to do with God, the Trinity, faith, true religion, prayer, all the exercises of the Spirit our flesh is wickedly averse to. The people of God still have this aversion to the things of God in their nature after fifty years. It is the output of power subdues fallen nature and makes you willing and gives you to delight in God. We are naturally irreligious people: we do not want religion. There are a few caught by Satan who have a false, pious temperament: they love religion, superficial and nominal. It is attractive to them, as the theatre is attractive to some. People are thoroughly irreligious: they do not want religion. Even God's ministers have this nature. Only the grace of God enables us to preach and hold on our way. What a subject! Almighty power, the output of power is not tangible: its effects are. You do not know its dimensions. There is the output of power from Heaven on earth among His people, and also to restrain the wicked.

Another facet of the continual ^{output} of power is the maintenance of the

whole universe. Everything stays in order and functions wonderfully and perfectly. Power is why the sun stays in its place and we go round it in a year. Power is why the moon is where it is, and all the planets and the seasons. Power is why there is the whole body of instinct in all God's creatures. It is why swallows fly seven thousand miles, and have wonderful intuition to know where to go and to come back to the same place. It is the output of divine power. Does it involve you? Do you realise it? You hope you are a praying man or woman: if you are all prayer is the output of divine power. It is in you. Is there divine inspiration? It is the power of God. Do you need divine support? There is power. What has sustained you to this day, held up your feeble frame that is dust? It is the output and intake of divine power. I find myself so much on this one part of the subject — power to save, power to make willing, power to deliver. Think of God's power in delivering His people. Things looked impossible when Daniel was in the lions' den, but, "Is thy God able?" There was the exercise of divine power over the king of beasts; they were friendly, they had no feeling or wish to devour Daniel. And the three Hebrews in the burning, fiery furnace: if you could think of the terrible nature of a furnace so the men who attended it and made it hotter were consumed by it. The three Hebrews the fire had no power over, because God exercised this power. There was not even the smell of fire on them. Christ was walking with them in the fire. You see it on all hands. Think of the power of God that is always active, performing God's purposes, will and pleasure. All power. I wonder if you are able to discern areas where power involves or affects you. It would be a wonderful spiritual exercise for you to try to work it out by the help of God. So power, and power wrought in and through us.

The second part of the substance here is the working out of power through us. God has given you power and a heavenly commission; now go. "Go ye therefore. I have given you this power. You are in union with Me. I am sending you. Go. This power will flow through you." It is of course, a gracious proof of the ministry of the Spirit that many people are affected by divine power through the preaching. They are cut down, blessed with a revelation of Jesus. All are nourished, taught, comforted, led, cheered, brought to the Kingdom to be brought to the Happy Shore. All who are intelligent will follow this. They would not want any thing

wasted. If God has given me this power He has said, "Go." They cannot stay at home; they cannot be static. "All power is given unto me. Now go, so power is used and flows through you. That is My purpose."

Let us come through to what we have read. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It all means energy, strength. Power is needed; it is a varied life. One uses strength in the service of God and He extends it. You are used up in His service. "Baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It shows that the Word of God is blessed and there is a tremendous degree of travail. You need power to travail. You will never know it without power divine in you and through you. So, "teaching them -- what a full life! -- to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Then, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." If you are involved, as you must be, you will need this promise, because you will come back to self and realise what a poor sinner, broken vessel, blade of grass you are, so inadequate, unequal, and you need this promise. He kindly gives to us this beautiful promise that is plenary, comprehensive: there are no gaps, no periods when you are left destitute. You will need it much, child of God, in your path. You will never be able to walk the path without it.

He says, "And, lo." Lo is an archaic word for Behold. "And, behold," Who? "I, the Great God, the blessed Messiah, the glorious Head of the Church. And, Behold, look. Lo, I." If you have got God it is well. Think what it means if you have! And behold it by faith. Keep your eyes fixed on Me, with no diversion. You will need it. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. "And, lo, I am with you." How essentially personal it is. "And, lo, I am with you." Is He? What is the answer to it? Have you had proof to day that He is with you? Humbly do we submit that we have, more than some would realise. What do you say when you have been in hospital, or lost a dear one and been supported and comforted? You say, "The Lord said, And, lo, I am with you alway, and He is faithful." He is with you alway. What do you say when you have had a long, deep trial and felt you would have to give up, and the Lord amazingly, divinely strengthened you? Yes, He said, "And, lo, I am with you alway," and He is. What do the dear sisters say in widowhood? "And, lo, I am with you alway." What will always be

the secret of your life, child of God? "And, lo, I am with you alway." I will give you a personal, graphic demomstration of/the word. My mind was depleted tonight. I thought, there is a divine service: what shall I do? The Lord said, "And, lo, I am with you alway. I cannot say more." However difficult, trying your path, "And, lo, I am with you alway." In emergencies, sorrows, dilemmas, responsibilities and all concerning you, "And, lo, I am with you alway." Presently the human frame begins to deteriorate, and it is not only visible to you but to others, and you compare with fifty years ago and realise. The Lord says, "And, lo, I am with you alway. I will never leave you, even unto the end of the world," that is the end of time with you. "And, lo, I am with you alway" to guide, support, provide for you, to uphold, sustain, deliver, to give wisdom, peace, comfort, joy, and land you safely on the Happy Shore. Blessed be
God.