

Prayer meeting. Monday evening 2nd February, 1970. Pastor Presiding.

Opening Hymn:- No. 362. "Prayer was appointed to convey
The blessings God designs to give"

Reading:- 4th Chapter of Acts verses 13 to 37 inclusive.

Address:- I will make one or two observations upon what I have read but more particularly upon verses 31/2/3.

Last Sabbath we considered some of the striking events on that memorable Pentecostal day. In the chapters that follow we have further records of great things that were accomplished by the apostles, (Not of themselves) but in the Name of Jesus which they emphasised and this had a great effect upon many people who, consequently believed.

There was much persecution, and in this verse 31 is a wonderful prayer - a wonderful prayer! "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken, where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." They were praying under a threat of their lives, for if these chief priests and rulers could have had their way, they would have had them put to death. Whatever they tried to do, they could not stop these men praying for they were resolved to continue to preach the word of God with boldness. It is said in verse 23, and this is rather nice, isn't it "And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them." "And being let go, they went to their own company" They knew what company they loved, they loved their own company especially, as has been the case with most of us in bygone days, when we had busy lives, and many things to attend to, oh how good it was to be "Let go". In my case it was to shut up the shop and hurry off to Galeed Chapel, to our "own company" where a few men prayed - and they did pray. We were glad to go to our "own company" and so it is now.

In verse 24 we read "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea and all that in them is" so they prayed and came to this resolve, let the enemies do what they might, they would not be silent, but would continue to preach the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel. I have been thinking much about this, that more or less, throughout the Scriptures Godly men prayed! We find this with the Patriarchs, David, Daniel, the Prophets, and many others. When did they pray? It was when they were in trouble. This is emphasised in Psalm 107 where we read of those who had been gathered out of the lands, that they cried unto the LORD in their trouble. Some of us know something about this - some of you do. "They cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses."

To return to verse 31 and this remarkable assembly, it is

said "The place was shaken where they were assembled together." This evidenced the presence of the Holy Spirit in a remarkable way. It followed, they spake the word of God with boldness. Come what may, death, life, prison or stocks - they spake the word of God with boldness. They prayed- they prayed. This may be an encouragement to us for things press heavily upon us. Although the Lord may sometimes try faith by a waiting period, He will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise it.

We read "And when they had prayed." There was a gracious unity, they were not all sixes and sevens, they were all "of one heart and of one soul". How sweet this is! One heart in the gospel, one heart in the doctrine. We read "They continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, of one heart and of one soul. This is good, is it not? We can walk together then, when there is a flowing together to the goodness of the Lord, and when a union is felt in these precious things, a union to those who believe these same precious truths, those things that are vital to salvation, although they may not have the same order as we do, yet it is very sweet to feel a union." "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."

Verse 33. "With great power have the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." There was a powerful witness - a powerful witness in their ministry. One of the main points of their ministry was to witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, for of this, they had been eye-witnesses and could testify in a particular way that He was risen from the dead. Great grace was upon them all. When they prayed, it was then the place was shaken. We would like to see Ebenezer Chapel shake in this way. It would not bring down the building, but it would move our hearts. This was an evidence of the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst.

May we be favoured to know more and more of this precious gospel and feel in our souls a witness, not only that the Lord Jesus is risen from the dead, but that He rose from the dead for us, and is now representing us in the realms above.

Prayers:- Mr. F. Burbridge
Mr. S. Collins.
Mr. G. Hunt.
