

Prayer meeting address by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer", Clapham
on Saturday evening 12.1.74

Hymns: 966, 1098

Reading Isaiah 64

This remarkable chapter is very largely a prayer of the church, and it opens with an earnest entreaty, "Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence". It is an appeal by the church to God, and referring to mountains, "that the mountains might flow down at thy presence". This may come into our experience, and the path in which we may be walking, or the difficulties that may confront us. There can be mountains of sin, for sin is our greatest enemy because it has separated us from God. There are mountains of difficulty, trying, painful, afflictive providences that come upon the Lord's people; and sometimes mountains of temptation from the enemy attempting to overthrow their faith and standing. What can you and I do with these high mountains? We can but take them to the Lord with this appeal, "Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down" that these mountains which separate, might flow down at thy presence; and so it appears that they did, for it is said in verse 3 "When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence". This was the case with the Lord's ancient people on more occasions than one, and to a point nothing else can really level, spiritually speaking, like the Lord's gracious presence. If the Lord is with us feelingly in a gracious way, the very face of His presence may level a mountain of affliction, of trouble, of many things, a mountain of an absent, silent God, and so on.

There is just this also, a timely confession by the church here, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf". That is a confession by the church and leaves nothing in ourselves to be proud of, for everything is cut up, torn to pieces, and that which

we may have placed much upon is like to a bundle of filthy rags. Even so there is a very gracious falling into the Lord's hands, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand". If we can really come there feelingly and commit ourselves unreservedly in a spirit of gracious submission to the Lord to do with us what He will, we shall see the mountains flow down, we shall feel the power of that presence even though it be at times by terrible things, as it was with the Lord's intervention when the children of Israel came to the Red Sea.

Further reading - Psalm 51.1-12.