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Sermon preached by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer" Clapham on Wednesday evening 28th. March, 1973

Hymns 90, 13, 1010

Reading: John 14 (1-27)

Text : John 14.1

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me".

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I realise that the sacred hymn we have been singing (13) has its reference to Psalm 136 which I read on Monday evening, and for some time I felt perhaps I might continue with that subject of the Lord's mercies which endure for ever. It will be remembered by some that there are people who think it an unnecessary repetition that it should come at the end of every verse, but if we should be favoured to feel something of that mercy in our souls, and especially in relation to the hymn we have been singing, we should say it is no vain repetition because, "His mercy endureth for ever".

This word has come rather much to my mind and so I have ventured to read it. As you know in these chapters we have the very gracious words of the Lord Jesus not long before He suffered. They are very gracious words that may tend to quiet the mind, console the spirit, strengthen the faith of the Lord's people. It was a remarkable thing to say when the Lord Jesus was about to enter upon those sufferings, He must have had trouble enough in His own spirit, and especially as reference is made particularly to Peter, that he would deny Him, and yet, notwithstanding all the circumstances, He could say to those disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me".

In this chapter we find the Lord saying several times, "These things have I spoken unto you", and that for various reasons. In a later chapter He says, "These things have I spoken unto you that ye should not be offended". We understand that those people who love the Gospel have great peace and nothing shall offend them, but when the Lord was upon earth there were certain people who followed Him who were offended; but they were not the Lord's dear people or they would not have been offended. There is nothing in the blessed

Gospel that will offend a poor sinner who can feel in his heart that he is saved by grace.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace". That is another reason why He has spoken them. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full". So He had specific reasons for speaking these things and for giving utterance to these most precious truths that we have in these chapters.

This may be a timely word to some; I do not know why I have read it, but these are the Lord's words, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me". There were things that evidently troubled these poor disciples, and one of them was that the Lord had told them that He must soon be parted from them. This troubled their minds. They were happy in His presence, in the enjoyment of His company; but He spoke of being parted from them, and that in a short time they would not see Him for a time. All this they could not understand and it troubled their minds; and that may be the case with many of the Lord's people. A hymnwriter says:

"In thy presence I am happy;
In thy presence I'm secure;
In thy presence all afflictions
I can easily endure."

When His presence is felt and enjoyed nothing really troubles us, for we have peace in Him, and our mind is at rest. "Let not your heart be troubled". There appear to have been other things that troubled their minds. The Lord told them that persecutions were awaiting them and even martyrdom; and this may have troubled their minds. In fact their minds were troubled largely because they could not understand what He was saying. They could not seem to grasp His meaning when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know". Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?". It troubles our minds; you speak of going away from us and as though we know all about it; but we don't know; how can we know the way? It troubled their hearts and there were other things that the Lord gave expression to that were evidently beyond their grasp. He said, and this is mentioned three times in this chapter, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?". "Believe me that I am

in the Father, and the Father in me". It was more than they could understand. Moreover the Lord said, "Ye shall abide in Me and I in you". This seemed to trouble their hearts because they could not understand it: so it may be with many of the Lord's poor troubled ones. What the Lord was saying to them was more conducive to quiet their minds - "Let not your heart be troubled". I wonder how some of you have come here this evening, whether you have anything pressing upon you, whether you have come in heaviness of spirit. The wise man said that heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop. Many of the Lord's people are in heaviness especially in these times in which we are living. Many a heart is troubled; many things come that give occasion to this. Our soul's case may be a trouble to us, where we stand, whether we have any part or lot in the matter, whether we shall endure to the end, hold fast and be right at last. Sometimes His providences trouble us, His ways of dealing with His people trouble them; but often it is because they cannot clearly discern the Lord's design and purpose in His dealings. If you could, that would tend to quiet your spirit, bring a measure of peace into your heart; but we are like those of whom it is said, "We grope for the wall like the blind".

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Blind unbelief is busy. We get into dark places, under mysterious providences, or are passing through difficult painful things. Our hearts are burdened and troubled; we know that we are poor mortal creatures, that life is uncertain; we know not what a day or an hour may bring forth; and this may burden the hearts of some of the Lord's people. The power of His good Spirit is not with us as in former days; we do not see those open manifestations of the divine power of the Gospel in these days in which we live that marked past occasions when multitudes crowded to hear it and many were in great trouble about their sins. "Let not your heart be troubled". This was said to His disciples for various reasons. Is your heart troubled? Have you come here tonight with a troubled heart? What is troubling you? Perhaps it is something you could not tell your

best friend. It may be a burden you have to carry between your soul and your God. Here is a tender word, it is like a still small voice, that whisper of heaven that a troubled heart may hear from the Saviour, "Let not your heart be troubled".

This does not mean, let things slide, be careless about things, - nothing of the kind. This "Let not your heart be troubled" has something very sweet about it to those whose hearts are troubled. It has something very sweet about it indeed. It is as though the Lord would say, is your heart troubled? Bring that trouble to Me then, bring it to Me. Perhaps you could not tell other people much about it, if anything, but you may tell Him all about it. There is something in what a dear friend said once, when she joined the church at Galeed; she said it was very hard work to attempt to speak before others, but it is so much easier to speak to the Lord Himself. "Let not your heart be troubled", cast your care upon Him. You may be walking through deep waters, the Lord in His Word said, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee". Is it not true that some of us have had to learn that the further we get away from the Lord the more troubled we become? Why is that? We have almost forgotten the Lord in our troubles; but this is a sweet word, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" - Rest - not, I will trouble you a bit more, "I will give you rest". When is it a poor troubled one finds this rest? When he is enabled to cast his care upon the Lord, to come to Him with these burdens, these temptations, many things that may press one down. The Psalmist felt like this when he said, "My soul is cast down within me". He had many things to cast him down; but there is a point with the Lord's dear people, however intricate or complicated or difficult the matter may be, it may be something that no-one else can understand, but you can take it to the Lord feeling sure that He can understand. You cannot take a matter to Him that is beyond His comprehension. He has never had to say, Yours is a difficult case I cannot understand it, "Let not your heart be troubled".

Philip seemed to be a bit troubled, he said "Lord shew us the

Father, and it sufficeth us". Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?". He said something very sweet to Philip, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father". What a blessed word is this, I know it is, because I felt it once in my own soul at the time when the Lord favoured me, I was absorbed in some view of Him and then it came to me, what about the Father - and this came, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father". So it is said in this chapter by the Lord, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me". How beautifully profound this is. "I and my Father are one" He says. Here is a very blessed demonstration of His glorious deity. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father", in the union subsisting, "I and My Father are one". "My Father is greater than I" - that is true in regard to His humanity, but not His glorious deity. "I and my Father are one" - this relates to His divine Person in a particular aspect, for "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one". "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". If you get a flash of it in your soul you would not doubt the glorious eternal sonship of our blessed Redeemer. No - Father, Son, the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit from everlasting to everlasting, Father, Son and Holy Ghost - One God. "There are three that bear record in heaven, and these three are One".

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me". There were a lot of professing Jews who professed to believe in the Old Testament; they believed in God but they rejected His beloved Son, although He came unto His own, as we read in John 1, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not", but when He comes into the heart of a poor sinner that poor sinner receives Him. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God". "Ye believe in God", not as questioning this but to prove a point with them and to prove to these poor troubled disciples that to believe in God is to believe in His blessed eternal Son. Ye believe in God", that is in the Father. It is so noticeable how many times the Lord refers to the Father in these chapters. "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me". Several very

confirming things there are. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him". "Ye believe in God". The point that rather fixed me, as I was pondering over this, was this - James says that devils believe and tremble. They may believe that there is a God, they do, but not to the salvation of their souls. They tremble because God is their enemy and will be their destruction. But, beloved friends, it is profoundly sweet and it is in a particular sense that we believe in God in feeling some hope that this God is our Father. O how sacred this is, when we can feel that it is our Father that gave His Son that bitter cup to drink. He may give you a bitter cup to drink. As one says, "A Father's hand prepares the cup". This is the hand of God, it is true, but it is God our heavenly Father.

"In my Father's house are many mansions". I have been thinking about Mary Magdalene, perhaps you have felt a bit like her. After the resurrection, after the Lord rose from the dead, the disciples had gone away, Mary Magdalene stayed there and the Lord came to her and made Himself known to her and she would have embraced Him, but He said "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God." Your Father, Mary. If He is your God He is your Father. This is a point I had a little thought upon. The Apostle wrote to the Ephesians, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ". Oh, dear friends, if God is our Father, if He really is our Father, then Christ is our Redeemer. Christ is our Redeemer! This is sweet, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father". Oh what would some of you say if that would come right into your heart - "Your Father", so that you could say my Father. It is my Father that is in heaven, my Father to supply your need. "Take no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself". It is true that there is sometimes to be a thought for the morrow, but the Lord's point was to show that "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things". Do

not be unduly disturbed or burdened or overcome by things, surfeited with the cares of this life or providences that may be hard and heavy. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things". "My Father and your Father".

There is something else here. The Lord said "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there **ye** may be also". I do not know if you notice something striking about this; the Lord did not say that where I shall be shortly, there ye may be also, but "where I am - now - there ye may be also". But He was with them. That is perfectly true, but this is a blessed proof of His glorious divine Person, His deity in the blessed Trinity. He assumed human nature and appeared upon this earth to redeem His poor people, but it was not His divine nature that was offered upon the cross, although His divine nature was not separated from His human nature in that sense; but it was His human nature that He took upon Him to offer up for His people. That did not split up the Trinity; the Son in His eternal personality as the eternal Son of God was still in heaven. "Where I am there ye may be also".

I shall have to leave it, but there are other points in this, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. "Believe in the efficacy of my precious blood, believe in my Word, believe in My promise, believe in My work. I came to accomplish all this. This appears to be a word to confirm them, to quieten their minds. It is a beautiful word for a troubled one. It is a beautiful word, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Amen.

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