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Sermon preached by Mr. J. Delves, Sunday Morning 10th March, 1935.
at "Ebenezer. --Clapham.

Ps. 45. Verses 10 & 11. Hearken O daughter and consider and incline thine ear; Forget also thine own people and thy father's house. So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord and worship thou Him.

The Psalm which appears to be divided perhaps into two parts relating in the first part to Christ Himself and in the second part to the duty of the Church. — It is emphatically a Psalm concerning Christ and His church and the language of it very much resembles that of the Song of Solomons, expressive of the glory, the beauty and intimacy and affection that exists between Christ and His chosen ones., and here evidently David, possibly the Author of this Psalm writing concerning Christ, for it must be concerning Him --for the language here used could not apply to an ordinary person --- is evidently in his heart.....
full, bubbling up, inditing a good matter, speaking of things touching the King, and his tongue is as the pen of a ready writer His heart bubbling up, full of good matter, heavenly matter, things concerning Christ, His glory, His grace, His dominion, His Kingly office, and speaking of Him he said "Thou art fairer than the children of men". Grace is poured into thy lips therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. This is in respect to Christ who is

Mediator and King of His Church and people. This grace in an infinite measure is poured into Him, so to speak, to be poured out. Grace poured into His lips and being as He was in His human nature, under the gracious influence of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ possessing an infinite measure of that grace, and of that spirit, He has this poured into His lips, that He may speak it, -- in the gospel in truth. Grace is poured into thy lips therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever., and afterwards here relating to the Majesty and glory of His Kingly office, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O! most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. But it is of the latter part I would like to speak more particularly. Where there is an injunction, an exhortation, or we might say a command, to the daughters of Zion. Hearken O daughter and consider, and incline thine ear. The word daughter here and in various places in scripture is more universal than we usually use the word. It means a daughter of Zion, a daughter in character, even as an inhabitant or citizen of a country or nation. The daughters of Zion intend and imply the inhabitants of Zion, not used to distinguish any earthly relationship and ties, but used in a general sense as an inhabitant, a member of the living family of God, a citizen of Zion, and to these , this exhortation is addressed. They are to hearken; --they are living people then! We cannot listen and give heed and take

notice or consider unless we have a capacity to do so. Those to whom this exhortation is given are living people, are members of His Church mystical, regenerated persons, in some measure instructed and taught of the Holy Ghost. Taught to know their own need, taught to feel their own sin, to feel the truth set before them, to desire something that nature cannot give;--daughters of Zion. Hearken, O daughter, and consider and incline thine ear. This does not mean just casually to hear something, and take no further notice. We might hearken, or listen, perhaps, and hear something and pay no heed, and take no further notice, but here the injunction is to hearken, to take heed, to consider, to weigh it over, to take it to heart, to seriously consider, and incline the ear, and it is relative, it supposes someone speaking. Who is speaking here? Christ speaking to His church, believers, His daughters, members of His mystical church, upon earth. He is speaking here, and he invites them to hearken and consider. He thus speaks to His people "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life" and it behoves us to take notice, and to believe this, that when the Lord speaks as He does, His people will listen to His doctrine, His teaching. He is the preacher, anointed of the Holy Ghost, the Prophet of His Church. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel unto the poor, to bind up the broken hearted, to set at liberty them that are bound, to preach the

acceptable year of the Lord". His people are to listen, to incline the ear to His voice, His words, His teaching. How does He speak? He speaks in His Gospel. The voice of Christ is heard in His word speaking to His people, giving them direction, exhortation. He speaks to them in His promises, in His reproofs, in His directions in His teachings, in His ordinances, in many ways Christ speaks to His people. A religion is not a real one unless Christ is in it and if He is in it, He is in it to speak, to enlighten, to instruct and guide His people by His spirit into all truth; therefore considering the importance of His words and of His teaching we need to incline our ear, not to turn a deaf ear to His words, but to consider them. If He speaks in the heart, in the conscience, listen to that voice, if He gives you a direction, listen to that direction, if you receive a commandment from Him, listen to that commandment, incline your ear. But you don't like it perhaps. It is a certain way that is repulsive to you; --listen to His voice, you will have God's blessing by obedience to His word. Now whatever matter it may be, listen to it, hearken O daughter and consider. Don't just hear it casually, and then banish it from your mind, and take no further notice of it, but take it to heart. Is it a reproof? Is it an admonishment? Is it something to dissect, to separate, to show you where you are wrong, the place you are in, what you need to give you

light and direction? Listen to His voice. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord that walketh in darkness and hath no light, who obeyeth the voice of His servant?" Hearken O daughter and consider and incline thine ear, forget also thine own people and thy fathers house. This is in the form of a direction to these daughters of Zion. We are enjoined to listen to the Saviours voice and to hear His words. They are to forget their own people and their father's house. This means this in the first place, they are to put Christ and all that He is before any and every earthly consideration. He is to be first. "Forget also" not only are they to listen to His voice to hear His words, but they are to forget, to forsake their own people and their father's house. He implies this, that if He call them, they are to come out from the world, to come out from among them and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters" In the first place we might say that this exhortation and direction implies in it a forsaking in a way of forgetting the world, and all that it means to us. Come out from it! You cannot serve God and Mammon. You cannot mix light with darkness, oil with water, we must be one thing or the other. The world and Christ can never agree, you cannot assimilate. We cannot have the world in our hearts. We have our business

vocations, and we have to be in the world, but we may be in the world, and not be of it. We are to come out from it that we may not be of it. We are to forget our own people and our fathers house. There we were in the first place, that is, so to speak, our native place. As we are born in sin and shapen in iniquity in our natural, nature, condition, lost in the world. But here is the injunction given to come out, light is given, a capacity to hear the Saviour's voice, to come out of it, and as the waters were first made to touch the ankles of the prophet in the holy waters, so it would seem the effect of regenerating grace, in the first effect of it, is to gather one out and separate them from the world and its associations, and any unnecessary entanglement among them. Come out from among them, hearken and consider this, but the religion of Jesus Christ will always be dissecting. Not only is this injunction to come out from the world in general under the power of divine grace, and stand, as it were, on the Lord's side, but sometimes it comes closer than this, --it comes into a family, "Forget also this own people" Earthly relationship possibly, and some whom we love in natures ties, naturally, we are come, come out in some instances even from such. David was chosen and called out from the family, and the people of God are sometimes called out, singled out, from a family --"One taken and another left". I will take them, two

of a family and one of a city, and bring them to Zion. So it is in the exercise of God's sovereignty, but we are to forsake, to forget, to come out from them. Forget also thine own people, and thy Fathers house. Natural relationship remains the same, but still there is to be the separation; Sometimes the grace of God will make a separation in a family, if grace comes to one in a particular way, it will, to some point, stir up the hatred and enmity of the human heart in those that are left, against religion and against Christ. So it is, sovereign grace may come to one, perhaps to a husband, leave a wife, even come to the child and leave the parents. God is a sovereign in these matters. Forget thine own people. It does not mean that we are not to live in civil life amicably, honourably and consistently, but it means this, that Christ Himself, will and must be first. He must be put before even the dearest earthly relations, which sometimes may make it very hard living. Forget thine own people and thy fathers house. Look back, especially to the rock whence ye were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye were digged and come out from it. It implies this -- forget thy fathers house-- that we are to take up our cross and follow Christ. Yest' the life of a believer will be a pilgrims life. He must take up the cross. If any man will follow me, let him take up his cross and follow me. We should like to follow him without one!

It keeps us down, seems to hold us back, but there must be a cross in some form, we cannot follow Christ without one. He bore the cross for us, endured the cross for us, for our sake, and we must carry His cross -- take it up. It will be in the form of some trial, something perhaps peculiarly painful, yet here is the word, -- "If any man will follow me, let him take up His cross, cheerfully, willingly, counting it an honour, as some of the old believers did. It really means this, that Christ must have the first place, we must forsake all beside, no other object, no other Saviour, no other ground of hope for heaven, no other sacrifice, but Christ Himself. He is the sacrifice. He is the alter. He is the Priest. Forget also thine own people and thy fathers house -- but it is very hard work. You cannot forsake a companion easily, sometimes it is very bitter business, but here is the injunction. Forget thine own people and thy fathers house. If you have to come out for Christs sake, He will honour you in that separation. You will never have to separate from a friend, the world, or earthly ties without the blessing of God in that separation. There is a promise, a promise of adoption, of care, of protection. "I will be a Father unto you" and I will care for you. You shall be none the loser, for all that you lose for my sake, Christ is to be first, we are to put Him before husband, wife, child, all earthly relationships.

If we do not put Him first, we are not worthy of Him, but it is sometimes very bitter work, it is separation,-we do not like it; yet here it is, we are to forsake our own people and our father's house, but it is the promise here, that I did intend more particularly to enter into. So, upon that forsaking, if you can but take up that cross, if you put Christ before all beside, His honour, His glory, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty. If he is thy Lord, you are not your own; you have a King, a Ruler a Governor. He is thy Lord, worship thou him. Are you willing to lay all down for Christ? The Apostle himself was brought into that place, in a remarkable way, so much glory did he see in the cross of Christ that he said "Yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung that I may win Christ and be found in Him. Well! I venture to make this observation, that a view by faith of the glory of Christ alone, will really make one take up their cross and follow him. Glory! we cannot glory in anything as a believer but in the cross of Christ and a view of His cross, of the glorious salvation in it, of the way open to heaven, being a defiled earth, will make all earthly things recede and fade away from the affections and Christ will become Alpha and Omega, all and in all, the one thing desired. Perhaps we may once or twice

in our lives, really come to this, to say sincerely before God, whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. You will be willing to leave them; that friend, that companion that you love so much for you love Christ more. We shall have to leave all earthly companions one day and Christ, His glory, His cross is more attractive. He will make himself first, Alpha, Omega, therefore, forget thine own people and thine own father's house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty. I must confess this is a little difficult to explain explicitly. It is easier I ~~might~~ say for me to speak of the beauties of Christ, but here we have to turn the scale and speak of the beauties of Church, Beauty in Her! why, surely there can be none. If we look at ourselves, and have a sense of our vileness, wickedness, guilt, sin and death, there can be no beauty. I am black, but comely. We look at ourselves and see nothing but blackness, yet there is a beauty. Can it be true that there is a beauty? There must be, yea a beauty desired, yea even greatly desired, So shall the King, King Jesus, thy Lord, greatly desire thy beauty, naturally beauty that are pleasant and attractive to the eye, beautiful to look upon, attractive and pleasant. So I may say, it is in grace. There is a beauty in the Church that is attractive in the eyes of Christ, her Lord her King, Her Shepherd,

her husband, and He desired their beauty, desires to see it, but wherein may this beauty consist? It consists, I believe, in the first place in her union. There is a beauty in the indissoluble union that exists between Christ and His Church. She is loved of Him, and He is loved of her. There is a marriage relationship, a tie which is sacredly intimate. Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth for thy love is better than wine. There is a union that is sacred which can never be broken, sweet union, one that has a glory in it; and this is the standing of the Church in Christ, and this is spoken of by the Apostle in the Ephesians where in speaking of the marriage relationship, he says for this cause shall a (young) man leave father and mother and they two shall be one flesh, but he says, I speak concerning Christ and the Church. There is a union more intimate, more beautiful than any earthly relationship, can be, although earthly relationship does typify and set forth that divine union, and there is a beauty in this in the eyes of Christ. They are given to Him. He bought her with his blood, She is espoused to Him, He is her husband, there is a beauty in her relationship to Him, but there is a beauty too in her subjection to Him. When a believer is enabled to subject himself to submit to the laws of Christ and there is a beauty in that subjection in the

conformity of a believer to Jesus Christ. There is a beauty something attractive in the eyes of Christ, there is a beauty in her confession. When a poor sinner is enabled to confess sin, to open the heart in confession, plead the blood of Jesus Christ, to lay hold of Him by faith, there is something attractive, a beauty in it in the eyes of the Lord Jesus. It may seem difficult to understand, but in the exercise of faith, there is a divine attraction. Draw me, we will run after Thee. The King hath brought me into His Chambers, We will rejoice and be glad in Thee. Thou art all fair my love there is no spot in thee. In all/purchase of Christ in the exercise of prayer in subjection in true conformity in suffering for His sake, in subjection, there is a beauty. You will not suffer anything for Christ's sake, but what He will observe that suffering, and in as much as you take up that cross for Him, and His honour, there is that in it, which is attractive to Him; there is a beauty in it in His eyes. There is a beauty too in her obedience in the obedience of the Church, to His word, His law, His ordinances, in every act of divine worship wherein He has enjoined His people to observe His word and laws and walk in His ways. There is a beauty that is desired and attractive in His eyes. Yes! When one's spirit is made willing for the glory of Christ to submit to His