

Our response to difficulties in our lives

Part 1

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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] Just read a few verses. I'd like to read a couple of verses in Hosea.

Hosea chapter 2, verse 14.

Therefore, behold, I will allude her and bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her, or I will speak to her heart.

And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and a valley of acorn, for a door of hope. And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the days when she came up out of Egypt.

[00:01:04] To verse in 1st Samuel. 1st Samuel chapter 7, verse 2.

And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirgath-Jerim, that the time was long, for it was twenty years.

And all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

Song of Solomon.

Song of Solomon, chapter 5.

[00:02:07] We'll pick up at verse 6.

I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone. My soul failed when he spake.

I sought him, but I could not find him. I called him, but he gave me no answer. The watchmen that went about the city found me, they spoke me, they wounded me. The keeper of the wall took away my veil from me. I charge thee, O glosses of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love. What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us? My beloved is white and ruddy, the cheapest among ten thousand.

His head is added with a most fine gold. [00:03:01] His locks are bushy, as black as the raven. His eyes

are as the eyes of doves by the river of waters, washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers, whose lips like lily drop in sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are of gold rings set with the beryl.

His belly is as a bright ivory, overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold.

His countenance is as leavened and excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet.

Yea, he is altogether lovely.

This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

And just a few verses in the 24th chapter of Luke.

[00:04:01] One of the verses here in Luke 24.

Verse 13, And two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem of a priest called Philons. And they talked together of all things which had happened. And it came to pass that while they communed together in reason, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.

And their eyes were holden that they should not know him. He said unto them, What manner of communications are these, that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad?

One of them, whose name was clear for us answering, said unto him, What, though only a stranger in Jerusalem, hast not known the things which have come to pass there these days? And he said unto them, What things?

And they said, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and man. And how the chief priests and the rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, [00:05:04] and have crucified him, but we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. And besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done. And he said unto them, O fools, and sway of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? And begin at Moses.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked to us by the way, while he opened to us the scriptures? And they arose the same hour and returned to Jerusalem. Finally they were gathered together, and then that were with them. [00:06:01] What my simple thoughts that I've gathered over the last few days is to basically say, as we've looked at Israel going through the tribulation, that time when we've read about this, the time of Jacob's trouble. And we see all the difficulties that the nation will go through.

And yet at the end of that day of tribulation, we see that the nation comes out. And there is a nation born in a day. And that nation according to Zechariah will look upon him who they have pierced. And they shall mourn.

And we see that there is a right spiritual condition in the hearts of the remnant that are seen in the

book of Zechariah. That every family will mourn.

And as a nation, they will acknowledge their sins. And they will acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is the one that is absolutely supreme. [00:07:02] When we look at Israel and there's a wonderful picture, then I would just like to apply it to our own lives. And as we go through difficulties, as there are different periods in our lives when we face up to great problems, is it not very often sometimes that the Lord is passing us through these difficulties? That at the end, there may be fresh impressions of Christ brought before us. What we find that word in Hebrew is when we were reading, I think it was in the 12th chapter of Revelation, where it speaks, he will be taken into the wilderness. And I think this is a little picture here, that that remnant will be taken into the wilderness. And during those three and a half years, that time of Jacob's trouble, it says here, quoted the new translation, and speak to their heart.

It is there in that difficulties, that they will be brought face to face with the realities of what it is [00:08:03] to have crucified the Lord Jesus.

It's there, they will be brought to realize who the Lord Jesus was. And we had that little verse, which I thought we were going to touch on the past evening.

In relation, we spoke about the ark being taken. What a sad day it was when the ark of God left Shiloh.

We read about it in one of these previous chapters.

It's in the end of chapter 4.

You will remember the occasion that they come and they take the ark of God. And eventually it's heard that the ark of God has been taken by the Philistines. And Eli, he hears his two sons have been slain. And it says when he heard the ark was taken, he fell off a chair and his neck broke. But you know, as we read further down, we read there of a sister, [00:09:02] the wife of Ichabod, the wife of Phileas who gave birth to the child called Ichabod. And as she was dying, she said, the glory has departed.

What a taint, as it were, on that nation of Israel, that the only person that really seemed to be concerned when the ark of God left Shiloh was this sister. And yet we know that ark was outside of Shiloh. It never went back to Shiloh. But when we pick up this story in the 7th chapter of Samuel, we find that the time was long.

You know, that speaks to me that if we're in a situation where we're out of communion with the Lord, if the ark of God is not the center thing in our lives, well then the time would be long.

What a sad time it was for Israel. [00:10:02] They were brought to lament over the fact that the ark of God wasn't present with them.

And as I say again, if we do not have the Lord Jesus as that center person in our lives, and I'm sure each one of us here know what it is to be out of fellowship with the Lord Jesus, there's been something coming to our lives. Here it was the fact that they would use the ark of God as some form of icon, that they could just use it to go into battle and they'd lost the ark of God. How often in our

lives do we do things which are completely contrary to what the word of God would have us to do. And we're out of communion with the Lord and the time is long.

Sad to say for some people, they can be out of communion for a tremendous amount of time because of our own pride in our hearts. And none of us like to admit that we've gone wrong. And none of us like to admit that we've done things [00:11:02] in the past that we shouldn't have done. And yet, you know, the Bible tells us, John's epistle says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to be restored into that wonderful place of communion and fellowship.

We read Solomon on the past day again and these verses came before me very much.

Here we find that the bride is looking for the bridegroom and she says in verse 6, I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and had gone. It's like this little picture of the nation of Israel in that coming day when they will be on their own and it is there that they will realize what they have done to the Lord Jesus. It's there that they will look at what happened to Calvary. It's there when the truth of some of the Psalms [00:12:02] will come before them very forcibly. It is there, no doubt, where Isaiah 53 will be seen clearly before them. It says, who has believed our report? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? And there will be this Jewish remnant that will take up that Psalm, take up that verse, Isaiah.

It will be shown true to them. They will be able to say he was despised and rejected of men.

We have seen him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, but he was wounded for our transgressions. You know, that is what the nation of Israel in a future day is going to say. And here, the bride says in verse 8, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find him, tell him where he is, that I am sick of love.

And the daughters of Jerusalem ask the question, what is thy beloved more than another beloved?

[00:13:04] You know, when this question was raised 2,000 years ago, they said crucify him, crucify him, we will not have this man to reign over us. And how is that nation that crucified the Lord Jesus going to be turned around? It's because they're going to go through that time of Jacob's trouble. And here, the answer is given.

She says, my beloved is white and bloody, he's the cheapest among 10,000.

When we speak of something being white, we think of something being absolutely pure. And you know, Israel will one day acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is absolutely sinless.

Israel will one day acknowledge that in him was no sin.

He did no sin, in him was no sin, and in him sin is not.

He is white. But also they will acknowledge that he is the one [00:14:01] that is ruddy.

We know that David is said to be ruddy, but I only realize that the word is only used four times in the scriptures according to my reckoning. Twice in relation to David, once here, once in Lamentations.

In relation to David, it's when Saul went to anoint him as king and Saul looked upon David and he said he was ruddy. He was one who was fit to be the king. He was one who was going to be supreme. And Saul could say David was ruddy. And the nation of Israel will look upon this man and will say he is ruddy. He has the qualifications for being the king. And the next reference to ruddy is when Goliath saw him coming to him and Goliath said he is ruddy. Not only was he the one that was fit to be the king, he was the one who could defeat Satan. And that nation of Israel will acknowledge not only that the Lord Jesus is king, [00:15:01] but that he is the one who has completely defeated Satan. He is white. He is ruddy. He is cheapest among 10,000.

He is the one to which the rallying point of everybody should be.

I believe a different translation renders it he is lifted up as a banner. He is the one that everyone should rally to. And this is what the remnant says. He is the rallying point.

And we know that he will be the gathering point in that future day.

And they go on to say his head is as most fine gold, his locks as bushy and black as a raven's. We've perhaps all had these words ministered to us by better men and more capable men than me. But just simply what they speak to me, his head is as most fine gold.

We think of the fact of he is God.

And they will admit that the one who they crucified [00:16:02] was indeed God.

His head.

He had all the intelligence of the divine person as he moved through this sea. His locks are bushy, black as the raven.

In Revelation when we read about the judge we find that he has white hair. No doubt would signify maturity.

But here he is seen with locks as black as the raven with no decay whatsoever. In that same mature position that he was when they crucified him. And there they view him as the one with his hair bushy, black as the raven. Then it speaks of his eyes. With the eyes of doves.

You know perhaps we can apply this to Peter.

That day when he denied the Lord Jesus on those three occasions. I think that we see the Lord's eyes as doves when he looked upon Peter. And Peter went out and he went busily.

[00:17:03] Is it not true as we think of the Lord Jesus those wonderful eyes.

Those eyes that brought kindness and peace. And those penetrating eyes. It goes on to say about those eyes.

Fitly said.

No doubt they were eyes that not only could bring kindness and could speak to Peter.

But they were eyes that on other occasions could pick out evil.

When he spoke to the Pharisees and he says he looked upon them being grieved in his heart.

But then the remnant speaks about his cheeks. Cheeks you know. They were the very cheeks that Isaiah says they plucked the hairs from his cheeks. Will that remnant of Israel when they speak about the Lord Jesus remember that he was the one that went into death for them. He was the one that they plucked the hair from his very cheek.

But here his cheeks are as a bed of spices.

[00:18:04] There was a fragrance that came from him. His lips are like lily and we read in the Psalms out of his lips grace is poured into his lips.

What a tremendous thing that the remnant will in the future day own the Lord Jesus as the only one that is able to give those grace out of his lips.

His hands are as gold rings.

Does it not that again speak to us. When we speak of rings as the authority that he has and in his hands is all the authority to fulfill all the work that God has for him to do.

We could read his legs are as pillars of marble. And no doubt each one of these things has some particular significance for us to look upon.

Pillars of marble is absolutely stability.

That which is committed to the hand [00:19:02] of the Lord Jesus was absolutely secure and there was no question of either that it would not be fulfilled. Goes on his countenances as Lebanon. But she finally says yea he is altogether lovely.

What a position to be brought into to acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is altogether lovely.

If we get that into our souls there is something about the Lord Jesus he is altogether lovely. Nothing else would be a challenge in our hearts. He alone would be supreme.

The day is coming when the nation of Israel will own him as the supreme one as we have said as the king of kings and lord of lords.

You know as we move through this scene as we are waiting for the Lord Jesus to come.

We all pass through very many difficulties. Many sorrows as we go through the way.

[00:20:01] Some of them are caused because of our own sinfulness, because of our own weakness. Some of them are caused not because of what we have done but because of the fact that we live in a world which is a world of sin and of sorrow and we all have sorrows and we all have difficulties and

we all have problems. But perhaps as we look at these problems we should see that the Lord Jesus has taken us through these problems so that out the other side we may have a deeper appreciation of him.

Just as the nation of Israel will go through that tribulation and will come out with a deep appreciation of the Lord Jesus.

So I think we see in these two here on the way to Elias as they go on that journey we know that they are sad. Their hopes as far as this world have come to an end.

They said we thought it would have been he who would have redeemed Israel.

[00:21:01] Their thoughts and their hearts were connected with this life, with this scene.

They wanted the Lord Jesus to take over the reins of power to dispel the Romans.

It would have been a tremendous thing had he did so for the disciples that they would have no doubt have been with him. Here were two that probably had that in view that the Lord Jesus would reign and they would be there with him. But their hopes have been dashed. You know very often what we think is not what God says.

And they said we thought he would have redeemed, we trusted even him who would have redeemed Israel. The Bible says our thoughts are not God's thoughts.

In our own personal Christian lives there are many things that we might think. There are many things that we think are quite okay.

Are they in keeping with the word of God?

[00:22:02] And here these two we say they were a couple perhaps they were as they were journeying on their way home.

They were sad and their hearts were connected with this scene. And the greatest problem with their life was that they had no acknowledgement of the fact that the Lord Jesus was risen. And you know this is one of the greatest facts of Christianity is that we follow a risen saviour. He is risen not only risen from the dead but exalted at God's right hand at this moment. And if we really took a grip to that statement that the son of God having been crucified here is in glory at this moment. I believe that would make a fundamental difference as we move through this scene that the things of this life would be put to one side and we would seek just to follow the Lord Jesus. What a wonderful saviour we have as he draws beside these two. You know the Lord didn't come beside them [00:23:01] and harass them. He didn't come beside them and tell them to get back to Jerusalem. He came along beside them and he spoke to them things concerning himself.

If there are problems and there are no doubt many problems in our assemblies no doubt there are many problems in our individual lives but the antidote to all of them can be summed up in this little expression things concerning himself. And he explained to them that Christ ought to suffer. It's not just a question of of all this is he must suffer these things and enter into his glory and he gathered Moses and all the prophets. What a wonderful exposition this must have been for these two as they

were getting towards their home.

The Lord Jesus speaking to them in relation to the Moses and the prophets.

And yet you know the Lord Jesus he would have gone [00:24:01] further. I think in that statement that we find here we find a very similar statement in relation to the Lord Jesus when he was on the disciples were crossing the lake and the Lord Jesus came to him. And I think it's Mark's Gospel that said he would have gone on further. And here we see that the Lord Jesus is speaking to their hearts. Here we see that the Lord Jesus is trying to bring out their affections to him. The Lord Jesus is saying to him do you really love me? Do you really want me in your company? Do you really want me in your presence? And very constrained him to come in and he emboldened them.

We know that he was made known unto them as he broke the bread no doubt for their evening meal. And they could say did not our hearts burn within us?

You know beloved brethren if you want to suffer heartburn the only way you'll get it is by being occupied with the Lord Jesus.

Being occupied with him in his wonderful [00:25:01] life down here.

Being occupied with him as recorded in the books of Moses yes.

Being occupied with him as recorded in the prophets. Not forgetting what was mentioned last night primarily. If we're going to be occupied with the Lord Jesus the information that we have primarily has to come from the four Gospels.

Those four rings on the ark has to be clearly there. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. To see him then the Lord Jesus. But you know just in passing I noticed that when the Lord Jesus is in Jerusalem and there he's speaking to the company. He speaks to them in verse 44 of the Lord Moses and of the prophets and of the Psalms.

Perhaps in the assembly connection we can appreciate something of what the Lord Jesus endured. Something of his sufferings as we gather together. Particularly on the Lord's Day morning. [00:26:01] We can enter into something of the feelings of the Lord Jesus as revealed in the Psalms. Well this couple that left Jerusalem on a sad journey. The journey that was around about seven or eight miles and they were perhaps taking them two hours as they walked back to Emmaus. Very sad. The Lord Jesus came to them and their heart was burning. And you know they returned to Jerusalem. And what joyful returning journey that was dear friends.

And so just these simple little thoughts. If we see Israel that will go through this time of tribulation.

And they will come out of that time of tribulation and they shall be born in a day. They will look upon him and they will appear and they will mourn. And they will acknowledge that he is the right saviour. They will acknowledge that he is the one that is to be adored and to be wondered. Is it not true in our own lives as we move through this sea. [00:27:01] As we go through difficulties. As we go through many problems. And there are many problems that we have. Which are not of our own makings. There are problems in our families. There are problems in our health perhaps. There are problems elsewhere. As we go through these problems. Is it not the Lord's objective not to destroy us.

Not to cast us. I don't know how often the devil says to us. The Lord is bringing this in order to destroy you. The Lord brings these problems and difficulties to us in order that he might bring us closer to himself. And as these two here in Luke 24 as they went away from that company. I'm sure that journey had one object before them. It was to bring them closer to the Lord. You know that is what happened. They could say did not our heart burn within us. So perhaps when we have difficulties when we have problems we can think of these verses here and we can think of this and realise that it is only to bring us closer [00:28:01] to the Lord.