

Hope for Today

SELECTED RADIO SERMONS

Series D

HERALD OF HOPE

Box 68

Los Angeles 42, California

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Herald of Hope Broadcasts

Monday thru Friday

K G E R—Long Beach, 1390 K.C., K B U C—Corona, 1370 K.C.,
7:00 - 7:15 A.M. 7:45 - 8:00 A.M.

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FOREWORD

We take pleasure in presenting you with this our latest booklet of selected radio sermons.

We pray that "Hope for Today" will bring blessing, comfort and encouragement to many.

The Voice of the Herald of Hope
Brother H. J. Smith

(If there is one saint insufficiently honored, it is the preacher's wife. With deepest love and most grateful appreciation, I dedicate this booklet to Sarah, my faithful companion.)

OUR MORNING PRAYER

Lord we thank Thee that Thou hast invited us to come unto Thee. We do approach Thy throne of grace this morning with grateful hearts knowing that Thou hearest us, and hast greater desire to give to us than we have to receive.

Bless our aged friends this morning. Strengthen them in their hour of weakness. Should there be one this morning suffering in body or mind, lay Thy tender hand upon them just now, Jesus, and heal them. Thank you Lord, for answered prayer.

Bless those who listen to this broadcast as they travel on their way to work. Protect them from the danger of the highway; bring them safely to their destination. Give them a good day in the shop or office. Should any need more wages, better working conditions, or even a new job; we take faith with them right now for definite fulfillment.

Bless our Christian businessmen. Give them wisdom as they labor in managing their business today.

Should there be listening in just now one man or woman bound by the chains of evil habit, help them to see Jesus. If their problem is alcoholism, drug addiction, the tobacco habit or some kind of immorality, break the fetters, loose the bands and let that oppressed one go free.

Lord, bless our young people today. As they go to high school, college, grade school, junior college, or as they go to their place of employment there to work with their hands, keep your hand upon them. Send revival among our youth. Pour out upon them and upon us all the spirit of grace and supplication.

Bless our Christian schoolteachers. Give them wisdom and understanding in these trying days.

God bless this word to the hearts of all who hear, in Jesus' Name.

Amen.

WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES

In St. Luke 5, verse 16, we read these words, "And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed." About whom is this scripture written? None other than Jesus, the Son of God. Was it necessary that He enter into a wilderness experience of prayer? More than once Jesus resorted to such places to wait upon His father. Out of the wilderness of this world has come many cases of definite spiritual leadership. Sometimes the things we think unpleasant and altogether unnecessary, prove to be God's leading in a life of fruitful service.

It was in the wilderness wanderings of Abraham that God gave Him wonderful revelations concerning his posterity. Without urban comforts, (many of us feel we could not do without these); without a permanent dwelling place; with tents of skin and clothing of the most primitive sort; subject to the desert winds, burning sun and the frost of night; Abraham found God in these wilderness places.

It was in that lonely place of near despair, by the brook Jabbok that Jacob wrestled with the angel all night and prevailed. From this wilderness experience he came forth a marked man but a changed man as well. No longer would he be known as Jacob the supplanter, but from now on he was Israel, the prince of God. Though he through life

bore in his body the marks of his dying, yet he was glad for he had gained the prize; the blessing of God now rested upon him.

It was on the backside of the desert that a murderer one day met God face to face. Moses was called aside from his meditation, no doubt, as he considered his lost estate and bitter end; for from the court of Pharoah he came far down to the position of a lonely sheep-herder in the desert wastes to the east of his one-time palace home. Yes, as he beheld that strange sight of a bush that burned and was yet not consumed, he saw there a picture not only of himself but of his own people, the nation Israel. Then called by God by a voice from the midst of the burning bush, he returned to Egypt, led his people forth and through 40 years of wanderings in that same awful wilderness saw them changed from a nation of slaves to a mighty people, a nation of conquerors.

God leads men into the wildernesses of life that there He may talk to them and by there breaking their selfish wills and causing them to bow before their creator, He makes of them vessels of honor.

Brethren, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that comes your way as though some strange thing has happened to you, but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering. Out of the furnace of affliction; out of the wilder-

ness wanderings; out of the suffering and loss: He shall bring thee forth in glorious garments, the robes of a conqueror. Thou too shalt wrestle through many a long dark night but thou too shalt prevail. As a prince of God thou shalt come forth in His name, conquering and to conquer.

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty so save." Thou too shalt conquer, thou son of man, even as Jesus thy Lord before thee; for He hath called thee by His name and determines that thou shalt follow in His footsteps. Out of the wilderness He shall lead thee and thou shalt gladly follow Him. He shall lead thee from victory unto victory and from glory unto glory. He shall not leave thee. Until He shall have accomplished with thee and within thee His great plan, He will deal with thee still. Out of the wilderness of testing thou shalt come forth into His glorious light. Let not thy heart be fearful. Only believe. His hand doth rest upon thee.

THE COMPASSIONATE TOUCH

If there is any one thing I desire and feel I need today it is "the compassionate touch." I am sure it comes to us as a result of love: God's love dwelling within our hearts by faith, and we being made perfect in that love. Compassion is a tender emotion found too little today even among Christians. Again and again I have become aware of my coldness and seemingly almost disinterested appraisal of human suffering. I am sure such callousness is not my highest desire, therefore I must seek a change that will come from God alone.

An individual who finds his duty bringing him into the courts of human misery, grief and suffering may find within him a tendency to become indifferent and unmoved by the sufferings of others. This may be normal for the worldly man but certainly not the Christian. A man who is a real Christian gives testimony by his very name and association that his life has been changed by his contact with the Master. If God has come to him of a truth, the stony heart is gone and in its place is a heart of flesh.

I remember so well my own dear dad, gone on to his reward a number of years ago. One thing I will never forget about Dad was his tenderness of heart. I believe it was Godly compassion in

his life. He was a funeral director and as such beheld much human suffering through bereavement. Yet in all the years he served in this capacity, I never saw him unconcerned or callous about death. He wept with those who wept. I can remember him weeping at funerals of those he scarcely knew, just because he felt compassion for those bereaved. At times I have felt conscience stricken for my lack of human compassion. At such times I can only pray for the tenderness of Jesus to come into my life afresh.

Sorrow is a very deep emotion to those who are exercised thereby, and as Christians we should find ourselves stirred as we behold another passing through such dark vales. To be a compassionate soul; to be moved with compassion as we share another's loss, is to have a deep feeling of divine fulfillment. Have we not been instructed to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ? Have we received the Biblical admonition to tenderness of spirit? To be possessed of such tenderness is to be blest with a sense of human and divine values all too few have in these days.

God loved man, His highest creation; loved him to such a degree that He gave up His best for him. The proof of His love was His willingness to give His son a human sacrifice. Jesus who came in the image and likeness of His father, was possessed with the same divine characteristics. He willingly

chose the cross of Calvary to fulfill redemption's plan and thus through suffering and death bring many sons and daughters into God. Could it be possible that as we choose to walk with men along the dark road of suffering and bereavement, we will be able, by association and experience, to lift them up with us into the heights of God? "The compassionate touch" make Jesus a perfect saviour. Perhaps in a sense compassion will work through us similar miracles of grace. As we sorrow with others, we become associated with them in their grief and are able to also share with them our heavenly consolation.

I have prayed for an understanding heart. I am sure that the answer to such a petition would be a heart touched with the feeling of others' infirmities and would undoubtedly result in our willingness to bear one another's burdens.

My friend, does the love of God dwell in your heart? Is Christ in reality enthroned within? Are we moved by a genuine compassion for the lost, the suffering, the bereaved, the dying. Have we understood the real meaning of "bowels of compassion?"

GOD WITH US

I was reading this morning in Rev. 21 and a portion of the 3rd verse became a blessing to me. Perhaps it will be as much to you. It is just these words, "... and God ... shall be with them." Of course this particular verse is speaking of the presence of God in that eternal city, our future abode; but then into my mind came other promises of "God with us," in these very days in which we live. Let me share with you a few of these wonderful thoughts.

When Jacob fled from Caanan and from the face of his brother Esau and went toward Haran, one night he dreamed of a ladder reaching toward heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending. But the most wonderful part of this revelation was the voice that spoke to him. "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest . . . I will not leave thee." Someone may say, "My, I would love to have such a revelation of God and receive such a promise." Is God a respecter of persons? Never! Did not Jesus promise that He would never leave us nor forsake us? Is Jacob more privileged than we? No! God is with us today. Blessed is the man that believes His promises. But let us look further into the Word.

One time Moses shuddered at the thought of

leading so great a people across so great a wilderness and God spoke these words to him. They are found in Ex. 33:14; "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Was this presence only for Moses? Was this promised rest only for that great man? No!, for God spoke later, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. He that hath entered into this rest hath ceased from his own works." Here, my friend, is a rest of faith promised to the people of God. Thank God, we are the people of God; born of His spirit; washed in His blood; heirs of the covenant of promise. This rest of faith is our's today. God is with us.

Many times the flesh gets weary with the battles of life and we greatly need encouragement. Perhaps this word will be a comfort to your heart. It is found in Deut. 20:1. "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies and seest . . . a people more than thou, be not afraid . . . ; . . . the Lord thy God is with thee." We all have battles to face, and as we get closer to the end of the race, it seems the struggle becomes more fierce. What a comfort to know that God will be with us in all our battles.

Are you at the present passing through great trial? Does it seem that you will be swallowed up by adversity? Listen to the promise given to Isaiah in chapter 43, verse 2. "When thou passest

through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Weary one, rest upon the promise of His word. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." God does not leave us comfortless but sends us His word in time of need. Accept its truth; clasp it to thy breast. Let it breathe into thee hope and confidence. God is with us.

Many times it seems like we are in the minority and that the hosts of evil encompass us round about. Hear the words of Jesus found in Matt. 18:20. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Alone? We may be a minority, but with God, we are a majority. Greater is He that is with us than all that can be against us.

My friend, God shall be with us even unto the end. Hear these wonderful words of Jesus recorded in Matt. 28, verse 20. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end." Therefore we can say with saints of old, "The Lord is my helper and I shall not fear what man shall do unto me." We are blest, my friend, with the eternal promise of God's divine presence. Let us never doubt it. Let us believe it right now. Mystery of mysteries, "Christ (is) within, . . . the hope of glory." God is with us.

I CAN TARRY BUT A NIGHT

There is an old song ringing through my mind just now, "I am a pilgrim and a stranger; I can tarry, I can tarry but a night." I wonder how many of us realize that we are but strangers here within a foreign land? Our home is far away upon a golden strand. Ambassadors are we from realms beyond the sea. We're here on business for our King.

Oh how short is life's day. As a vapor in the air it is seen today and then it is gone forever. As grass in the field, so green, so beautiful, it is soon cut down and the place it has known shall see it no more. Compared with Heaven's long day, our earthly stay is but a short night. A night in which we enter into our rest in God and looking forward to a glorious heavenly awakening, clear up our little business here, set our house in order and wish for that better day that shall be our's at the rising of the sun.

Many there are who would seek to detain us and to distort the real meaning of our stay here. Surely, God's purposes hereafter, although unknown to us down here, cannot be compared to anything of earth. Hath He not said that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of men, the things that God hath prepared for those who love Him." Occasional glimpses into that

eternal world through His spirit, encourages us to press on toward the mark, the prize, the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus. Looking not on the things which are seen but realizing that the unseen things are those of eternal value. So here we labour, not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which shall endure for all eternity.

Many are the voices rising about us in these days that would seek to interest us in this world's goods, or popularity or acclaim. Let us hear all these as the babel they truly are. Our receiver is tuned to but one wave-length. The voice from heaven is our chief interest. All else is of lesser importance. Where *He* calls me I will go. What *He* tells me I will do. I shall strive, God helping me, to make His slightest wish the law of my life. Waste not thy efforts to interest me in these things of wood and hay and stubble. In the storehouse of eternity my inheritance awaits. There the gold, the silver, the precious stones shall all be mine. Though I see them but through a glass darkly, I rest upon a promise sure, divine. In the morning I shall walk 'midst heaven's splendor. All this and more, all this and more shall soon be mine.

Pity me not if I have little here. The morning shall reveal God's true reward for all the faithful. For those who walk by faith and not by sight, awaking shall rejoice in that glad morning when day dispels the shadows of earth's night. We labor

not for earthly meat that perisheth but that which shall endure eternally. What shall it profit if we have all earthly treasure and miss the joy and light of Heaven's day?

My friend, there is a better day, a better place, a nobler life than this. This earth is but a little step toward Heaven's joy and bliss. Press on thou weary one, press on. Shake off the bands that tie thee here. Perfect in Him this perfect gift, the love that casts out fear.

Just one short hour and I may pass through yonder gate so fair. What matters if the gate's the grave or a pathway through the air? Heaven's morning bright and fair shall break and earth's vain shadows flee, and I shall find my place at last and dwell eternally.

Yes, I am but a pilgrim and a stranger here. I can tarry but a night. Friend, can not I interest you in this vision. It is indeed a glorious hope. Will you not with me set your heart and affections upon things above where Christ sitteth upon the right hand of God the Father?

HOLY DETERMINATION

In these days we need holy determination. The time is too short; the hour is much too late for less. If there was ever a time we needed to buckle on the whole armour of God it is now.

When the apostle Paul made the statement, "None of these things shall move me," he was doing more than stating a fact. He was emphasizing his position in the matter of determination.

Not long ago I heard a dear old colored sister state that she had a 'made-up' mind to go through with God. I trust today you can say the same. Only such "holy determination" will cause us to survive the pressures of end-time days.

Are we presumptuous in taking such a determined position to go through with God? No, I believe God will back us up in such a "holy determination." Did not the Lord encourage us to do so when He said "My grace is sufficient for thee," and "stand therefore with your loins girt about with truth."? Did He not tell us to "fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life."? Are we not admonished after having done all to still stand? All these speak of "holy determination."

I suppose you have heard this statement "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church." Long

ago the church undoubtedly would have passed into oblivion had it not been composed of men of "holy determination." "The Lord knoweth them that are His." God knows those who are capable of possessing a "holy determination" to continue in a just cause, and calls them into His great work.

The work of God in these days can only be carried on by men of great determination. A compromising position will never do. Compromise has been one of the devil's chief tools to destroy the work of the church and weaken her purpose. We must constantly resist Satan in the faith. We are promised that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. To *know* the will of God is wonderful but to *do* the will of God is much more important.

Our professed love for Christ and His word and work can only be attested to by a holy determination to keep the faith and walk in obedience. This may not be easy at times for we wrestle not against flesh and blood. We must constantly be on our guard, "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints."

Deception is one of Satan's chief tools but always remember that we need not be ignorant concerning his devices. We are not children of the night but of the day and we are told to walk in the light as *He* (Jesus) is the light. In *Him* dwelleth

no darkness at all. At any time, whether speaking, living, or doing, we can depend upon guidance from on high. The Lord will lead in all truth those who put their trust in Him. Satan would deceive the very elect if possible, but always remember that Jesus is the all-conquering Christ. *All* power is given to Him in Heaven and in Earth and nothing is too hard for *Him*. If we lack we are encouraged to "ask of God who giveth to all men liberally."

Have you wondered at the Bible statement, "Many are called but few are chosen"? What could be the reason for such a failure? Not all men are willing to act in "holy determination" and *go through* with God. The parable of the sower in Matt. 13 throws great light on this. Let us read this together beginning with verse 3. "A sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." Verses 19 to 23: "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh

the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it; which, also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

May God fill us all with a holy determination that His word shall not fail to find a lodging-place in our lives and bring forth real fruit.

JUST JESUS

There are so many things one could speak about this morning but one Name seems to stand out above them all. Jesus is that name. "Just Jesus." Why could a name mean so much to this man. We could preach about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; of Adam, Noah and Daniel; of Isaiah, Jeremiah or

Ezekiel. All of these names suggest historical truth. Much could be gained by considering their lives, but today I see Jesus alone; "Just Jesus."

Long ago a savior was promised to the world. Not only to Israel was the promise given but it was said that in His name would the Gentiles trust. Many even today make much of a nation or a people but Jesus came to this world to become more than redeemer to one nation; He was the perfect manifestation of God's great love to all mankind. The love of God is of such quality and so all-inclusive that it knows no racial bounds. Pity those who today feel that they or us or any group or nation have exclusive rights to the promises or blessings of God. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. The message given was "Whosoever will, let Him come." For me to feel that I or my people, my church, or my nation have exclusive rights to so great a God and so wonderful a plan as this salvation, would be to attempt to rob God of His greatness and to make Him as I am, a respecter of persons. Has not the Word declared that "In every nation He that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him."? God is greater than my faulty vision; yes, greater than all human perception.

God knew that man was prone to follow the sight of His eye and the hearing of his ear, therefore He gave us One to see and hear. His name

was Jesus; "Just Jesus." So few on earth have seen Him except with the eye of faith; but He is so glorious, so wonderful that He cannot be hid. Even weak faith reveals Him as the Son of God.

The world still seeks a savior, a deliverer. They seem to feel their need of some great one to bring them out of chaos into order and out of tumult into peace. The governments of earth are constantly choosing leaders, and oh so soon they tire of them for they are but men. The world undoubtedly needs help today; yet vain is the help of man. If they could but see that they need Jesus; "Just Jesus." In Him was embodied all that man would ever need. He was perfect in life and perfect in death. He was powerful in life and powerful after death. The bounds of life that limit earthly men in no wise hindered God's man. He was the master of them all. No idle boast was this, "All power in Heaven and in earth is given unto Me." The Father had committed all judgment to the Son; for in Him did all the fulness of the God-head dwell.

Jesus is my Savior, and more. He is my healer through the stripes laid upon His back. He promised and He gave the Holy Ghost to be our teacher, comforter and giver of power for a fruitful life. Today I can hope for more and more through Jesus; "Just Jesus."

Weary one; troubled in heart and mind; sick one, suffering so long with pain; lonely one, with eyes filled with tears; disappointed one with a heavy heart; bereaved one, walking alone; empty one, needing to be filled; discouraged one, waiting for comfort; you need Jesus, "Just Jesus." Can you not see in Him God's ample provision for every need of every man, anywhere? You were not forgotten in God's great plan. You too have a part, a place, a promise. Will you not call on Him now, breathing that Name, the only Name, the greatest Name under Heaven, The Name of Jesus, "Just Jesus." The mention of that Name in Heaven causes angels to bow low. The speaking of that name in faith causes consternation in the regions far below. The calling on that Holy Name in prayer brings blessings to all men, everywhere.

Don't you see it this morning, friend? We need Him, sorely need Him. We need Jesus. No other can or must take His place. He must reign supreme within our lives. We must walk in His light, live by His faith and pray in His Name. What is that name? Jesus, "Just Jesus."

A LIVING SACRIFICE

In the Old Testament we read much about sacrifice. It seemed that Deity demanded the shedding of blood. During Israel's history countless num-

bers of bulls, goats, heifers, lambs, doves, were slain and offered upon God's altars. We know now that the blood of these could never take away sin. God accepted these sacrifices in lieu of a better day when one spotless Lamb from among men would be sacrificed to make possible eternal redemption for all. The day finally came when God reached down from heaven and tore aside the thick veil that separated man from God and with one master stroke ushered in a new and a better day. The promised Messiah had indeed come but was rejected by His people. Yet through that rejection, salvation, remission of sin, spiritual enlightenment and fulfillment was offered to all men everywhere. The blessing was to be without money and without price for a price had already been paid; It was the blood of God's dear son.

A new day indeed had dawned for men. No longer would there be the necessity of elaborate rituals, of bloody sacrifices, or beautifully garbed priests to mediate for man. Now salvation indeed had become an individual matter and man himself could dare approach a holy God and find grace and mercy to help in time of need. God's emphasis ceased to be placed upon the leadership of a great man or a chosen nation but now in every nation those who feared God and worked righteousness were accepted with Him. The common man with no background or priestly tribe could now in his

own right become a priest unto God. No longer did he need a bleeding dying sacrifice to plead for him. God had given once and for all a sufficient sacrifice. A Lamb had been slain from the foundation of the world and His death had brought life to as many as would believe.

Heaven was no longer far away but the kingdom of heaven began to be seen upon earth. Furthermore the kingdom was set up in hearts and lives of individuals. God in reality came to dwell among men. Not to be seated upon a gold and ivory throne; not to be seen in some great temple, but now into the hearts of faithful men He came with power to bless.

'And what of sacrifice? No longer need blood be shed. "It is enough," God said. A living sacrifice is what the Lord now seeks; a living sacrifice. To present our bodies now a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, this is the service He now seeks.

The poorest man may be a priest to God. An altar could well be a grassy knoll upon a hill, a shady spot in yonder forest deep, a chair before a fireside. When God looks down from heaven and sees a bowing form in any place, He stretches forth His hand of love and hears that broken prayer. With such a living Sacrifice He is well pleased and promptly orders angel hosts to minister with mercy and in grace.

Canst thou not hear Him cry to thee. "My son, give Me thy heart."? I'll give thee joy thou knowest not, and strength and grace impart. A way now hath been made for thee into the heart of God. Be bold to come before the throne by faith in Jesus' blood. The golden sceptre now is seen within a hand of love, and see it reaches now to thee. Draw nigh, for God is love. Around thee,—everlasting arms, above thee wings of care, within thee reigns a peace serene. 'A joy beyond compare.

SHUT IN WITH GOD

Have you ever been shut in with God? This is a blessed experience but perhaps hard on the flesh, for circumstances that may bring about such a condition may not be to our liking.

We are such busy people. Running here and there and doing this and that. Scarcely any time to read the precious word of God and practically no time to pray. Like Martha of old, "careful and troubled about many things." We may even consider ourselves practical Christians as we "face up" to the daily responsibilities that are ours. But all in all we will have to admit in the rush of living and the fulfilling of life's many obligations, we are indeed neglecting something very vital. I have seen ministers who recognized that they were too busy to be spiritual. Such will eventually face a

physical collapse, or perhaps worse than that, a moral and spiritual collapse.

Many of us desire greater spirituality but feel that we must be faithful to the present demands of our church or work. Some of us think ourselves to be indispensable. I have noted how wonderfully things can get along without me. Perhaps they can do as well without you. Of course as long as you bear the whole burden and take the whole responsibility, others will let you do it. However, you may find eventually that the path of wisdom would have been to spend more time with God. We need physical and mental relaxation and more time for meditation and prayer. Now I am not speaking of laziness. Some may be prone to be thus, refusing to accept any responsibility, giving as an excuse that they must wait on God. Some who do such only want more time to spend with their own thoughts which at times are not too wholesome.

There are times when God in His mercy and wisdom deems it best to call a halt to our fleshly and perhaps even mental or spiritual activity, and causes us to be shut in with Him. We are usually so busily engaged in human fulfilment that we cannot get the mind of God in such things so God must permit our adversary to touch us physically or otherwise. Of course Satan is always willing

to oblige. Consider his designs and plans concerning Job.

Not long ago I heard a dear man of God tell how the Lord permitted physical affliction to come upon him and completely halt all physical activity and then while in this place, seemingly completely incapacitated, God began to talk to him, showing him other plans for his life about which he knew nothing. "Shut in with God." Perhaps not so pleasant an experience to the flesh but nevertheless a needful one.

There would be no way of measuring the true value of the experience of Moses on the back side of the desert where he was shut in with God. Miraculously preserved in his babyhood, raised in the palace of the Egyptian king and then be driven to the wilderness as a common murderer. What a strange turn of events. Yet this was in reality his experience of being shut in with God. Here Moses was given his final training for a great ministry to come.

Consider Saul of Tarsus. Busy doing what he felt was right; stamping out heretical beliefs in Israel and then suddenly cut down and blinded. Consider this man being led by the hand of other men. "Shut in with God" by blindness. Here he made supplication to God until revelation came and a new ministry was begun.

I have noted that many of those being greatly used by God today, went through such an experience of being shut in with their Lord. Physical affliction, bereavement, financial losses, spiritual failure, perhaps none of these could be desired, yet as the scripture has stated, "These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work in us a far more enduring weight of glory."

Are you shut in with God, my friend? Here is your opportunity for spiritual advancement. You may now be in a position to find a more fruitful ministry and have a more blessed spiritual experience. Is your cross heavy? Embrace it my friend, and through prayer endeavor to learn the divine purpose in it all. God definitely has plans for your life. No doubt for this reason you are shut in with Him.

A MOUTH OF WISDOM

Would you read with me St. Luke 21:15? "... I will give you a mouth of wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

Many men desire gold or popularity or power, but could there be a greater asset to any life than wisdom such as this? Could there ever be a gift or grace that carried with it such power potentials as this great gift of God?

In this world all men, especially good men, have many adversaries. To be so impowered and blest by God with an enduement of wisdom until our adversaries could not speak nor act against us, is almost unbelievable. This does not mean that men shall not try to oppose or set at nought, but they shall be helpless before such wisdom.

Moses had a mouth of wisdom and as he walked and communed with God no man was able to stand before him all the days of his life. Miriam spoke against him and became leprous. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led a rebellion against him and the earth opened its mouth and they went suddenly down into the pit. No man was able to gainsay nor resist the wisdom of this man Moses.

In the 6th chapter of acts we read of another such man. His name was Stephen. He had great faith and power but most of all he had "a mouth of wisdom," for in verse 10 we read that "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."

Stephen laid down his life as the first martyr in the Christian era but the mouth of wisdom was never silenced. Wisdom speaks on. Its voice is heard from the heavens. It speaks forth from the empty tomb. It cries out in the streets.

Though men were hired to speak against Stephen, though they stirred up the people until a riotous

mob clamored for his life, though he was taken by them and accused of blasphemy, none of these charges could be substantiated for all the adversaries could not gainsay nor resist the wisdom by which Stephen spake.

Solomon saw the value of wisdom. He called it the principal thing. He admonished men to seek it, to claim it, to possess it, to treasure it. Wisdom has kinship to the love of God. Both spring from the bosom of eternity. Both are products of the Father God. Though silver or gold may seem to be more tangible rewards for service, wisdom is an eternal reward.

Wisdom brings the human into close relationship with the Divine. Moses talked with God face to face. The glory of the eternal was upon him until his face shone with a supernatural light. The people looked and were convinced that Moses had been with God and learned of Him.

As Stephen stood before the high priest, the elders and the mob clamoring for his life, his very countenance was changed until it was written that "all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Then as Stephen stood before the angry mob and the stones crushed out his life he looked up to heaven and saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God the Father. After thus testifying for the last time and breathing out a prayer of for-

givenness for his murderers, he fell asleep and took his journey to that fair land where wisdom rules eternally. Wisdom is the enlightenment of heaven. So powerful a force is this that its radiance is transmitted to the human and the mortal enjoys a taste of immortality while yet standing in the flesh.

It is said by the word that "love never faileth." But the same word declares, "Wisdom is the principle thing, therefore get wisdom and with all thy getting get understanding." This wisdom of which we speak is not a product of the human intellect. It is a gift of God. It comes as the fruit of a godly life. It is not acquired in colleges and universities but is manifest in the most humble places among the most humble men. It cannot be purchased of men. It must be obtained from God alone.

Let us seek this great gift from above. It is not to be compared with anything of this earth. That which is of the earth is sensual, devilish. The wisdom from above is pure. Let us earnestly desire the best, seek the face of God until there shall come into our lives this pure gift of eternity.

CLOSING PRAYER

God bless Thy people with peace. Help them to see Jesus today. In His name we pray. Amen.