

But come not near any man upon whom is the mark; (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[0 : 00] I ask the Lord to be pleased to help me. I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the book of Ezekiel, chapter 9, and the center sentence in the sixth verse.

But come not near any man upon whom is the mark. The center sentence in the sixth verse, chapter 9, the book of Ezekiel.

This is a subject which if grace is given to enter into it and consider it a right, should lead to much searching of heart among us, because it is to do with the judgments of God being poured out upon a guilty nation.

And yet God has made a blessed provision that all who have upon their foreheads that mark which the Spirit of God alone can set upon a man or woman, youth or maid, O they shall realize, they that in the Lord confide and shelter in his wounded side, shall see all dangers overpassed, stand every storm and live at last.

The picture is brought before us, and it was made known by the Spirit of God to Ezekiel in his own days, when the judgment of God was about to go forth upon Israel as a nation, and they were to be carried captive out of the land of promise, and there being Babylon for seventy years long.

[2 : 25] And while much of the language is figurative, at the same time it was brought to pass actually in how matters fell out in the dealings of God with Israel.

And it might be well in approaching the subject to look at it in the setting of it. And you might sometimes think, especially you dear younger people, as you read the Word of God, what are these things which happened so long ago in Old Testament times to do with us nowadays?

Do they fit in with the pattern of life as it is now to be lived in the world at the present time? And now, the Word of God says, whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort in the Scriptures might have hope.

And whatever you read in the Word of God, whether it be hundreds of years ago, there is always the same pattern in the dealings of God.

And that is, say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings, but say ye to the wicked that it shall be ill with him.

[4 : 13] The wicked shall be turned into hell and all nations that forget God. And, as I have said, whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, it is to show us that the dealings of God are always to his own pattern and his pattern does not vary down through the ages, whatever chaos and confusion there is abroad in the world, whatever wickedness, as the wicked do wickedly, yet God has guaranteed in every age that his people shall be sheltered and be in safeguard from all the assaults of the world at large or whatever hell itself let loose may attempt to do.

God has guaranteed that it shall be well with them in every state secure, kept as Jehovah's eye, it is well with them while life endure and well when called to die.

And now, when the judgments of God were to be poured out, God made it plain that although Israel as a nation, Israel at large, were to suffer the extreme of his judgments and go into that long Babylonian captivity, yet there were amongst them Israelites indeed and they were to be marked, set apart, that although they would likewise be in that Babylonian captivity, yet God's eye was upon them to do them good and to bring them back again when that captivity should end into the land of promise and dwell therein again.

And now, in the setting of the subject, it is very striking, Ezekiel says, He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that I have charged over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.

And behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand.

[7 : 13] And one man among them was clothed with linen with a writer's ink horn by his side. And they went in and stood beside the brazen altar, and the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, that is, the mercy seat, whereupon he was to the threshold of the house.

And now, that is to show to us that the glory of God had much departed from Israel as regards their worship of Israel's God, and that Ichabod was written upon it, the glory is departed.

And Ezekiel says, And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's ink horn by his side. And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

And then to those who had a slaughter weapon, each man in his hand, he said, Go ye after him through the city and smite.

Let not your eyes spare, neither have ye pity. You will not like the sound of this, but this is the judgment of God as it is to be known. Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children and women.

[8 : 51] But come not near any man upon whom is the mark. And this is very solemn to contemplate. And begin at my sanctuary.

Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. And now, if you would see how this is fulfilled, I will read it to you where it tells us just before Jerusalem was destroyed and the judgments of God poured out, how Israel as a nation were behaving.

And it says, moreover, all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed at Jerusalem.

Listen, and the Lord God of their father sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place.

But they mocked the messengers of God and despised his words and misused his prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people till there was no remedy.

[10 : 21] What a very sad picture that is. And now see how the judgments of God were fulfilled. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion upon young men or maiden, old man or him that stood for age.

He gave them all into his hand. And now that was just a question that according to the seed that Israel had sown as a nation so they reaped the harvest of it.

He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. And these six men of whom I read to you and behold six men came from the way of the higher gate which lieth toward the north and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand.

There is a reference to it in the book of Jeremiah which will show you what was the fulfilling of it and it is very solemn reading.

in the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah in the tenth month came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem and besieged it.

[12 : 04] And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in and sat in the middle gate even Nergal Shariza Shamgar Nebo Sarsikim Rabsaris Nergal Shariza Rabmag with all the residue of the princes of Babylon.

There you see six men are named and they were the six men who were leaders each with a slaughter weapon in his hand. And now I want to show you as the Lord you help me what all this means for you and me because the principles on which God deals with the nations of the world are irrevocable and they cannot be altered never toned down although he shows much long suffering and much mercy to mankind yet sooner or later the judgment of God will go forth upon the wicked and every man every woman every youth every maid upon whom is found the mark of belonging to God will outright whatever storms may rage and live but come not near any man upon whom is the mark much of this although

I not take up the time to show it to you as I want to get down to that which is experimental truth as the Lord should help me but I say much of this could be made applicable to England as a nation the principle remains just the same throughout the ages righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people and now let us look at this man clothed with linen with a righteous ink on by his side who is he there is no doubt whatever that it is a representation of Jesus Christ as the high priest he who was clothed with linen garments on the day of atonement when he went in to the holiest of all as

Aaron the high priest did on that day to offer sacrifice and plead for Israel as a nation all together and he still goes about making his blessed mark upon all that vast host God has ordained to life eternal in every age and the great thing that I would be concerned about is to whether you and I can thank God and take courage that we belong to these people whom he has marked with whom it will indeed be well while life endure and well when called to die going back a moment to Ezekiel's day there were quite a few in that day who were marked with that blessed mark the sign of being taught of

God numbered with his dear people Ezekiel himself was a marked man so was godly Daniel and likewise Nehemiah and Ezra and the three Hebrews that went into the fiery furnace and many more could be searched out and you must never forget there might be yet many more still to whom no reference is made at all in the sacred pages because there is always a tendency in us if we are indeed ourselves taught of God as we look round the world at large and survey the church of Christ to underestimate the number belonging to it if a great man like Elijah and he was indeed a great man a great prophet he had known what it was to live near to

[17 : 08] God he had done wonderful work for God and yet when he looked round Israel in the land of promise he came to the conclusion I only am left amongst the men who have a mark on their forehead and there is that tendency in us and you must watch and pray against it and ask for large heartedness because when all is said and done there are many more in the church of Christ at the present time than you and I can realize I have thought for a long while of a word the psalmist uses when he speaks like this thy hidden ones and to earth remotest bounds there are the hidden ones their names never appear in the headlines they may not even belong to any specific church at all but they are marked with a mark and they are not all grown up people that are marked and those old and grey headed but there are those in life's mourning youths and maids and children two scattered abroad in the world who possess this mark and what you and

I should be doing preacher and people alike in looking round the church of Christ surveying how matters seem to be going how they seem to be falling out in the days in which you and I are living I say what you and I should be doing is just this great God thy kingdom come with reverence we would pray may the eternal three in one his sovereign scepter sway yes and now let us look at this subject as I said more from the experimental viewpoint of it having looked at the setting of it but come not near any man upon whom is the mark and now the apostle Peter tells us and it is a word that is applicable to the days in which we live the time has come that judgment must begin at the house of

God and go back a moment to what I read to you as the background of this subject what did it say in that which I read to you more over all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much chief of the priests things were wrong in that which was the church in Israel's day and there is much amiss in the church of Christ professing nowadays and there are many things yet to be put right in the church of Christ possessing many things of which it can be said and James would say it yea he has already said it my brethren these things ought not so to be and therefore it becomes every one of us to heed that word let us search and try our ways and turn again unto the

Lord and now it is said go through the midst of the city through the midst of Jerusalem and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof and now if you and I are helped to do that right I will tell you what will be the outcome each of us will have to begin a tome which shall know every man the plague of his own heart I do deprecate any tendency whereby people who are taught of God and have names on church rolls and those who were taught of God with names not thereon when they speak about England's guiltiness as a nation if they speak of it from a kind of detached viewpoint you must remember you and

I have made a contribution to England's guiltiness as a nation and that is what is the underlying truth here the men that sigh and cry for what is done in the midst of the land begin at home as they seek to wait on God and wait for God concerning their own guiltiness wherein they know you and I know if we are taught of God that we have not always been all that we ought to be in our profession of the name of Jesus we have been sometimes cold and formal and we have been too much like the hymn writer says Hosanna's languish on our tongues and our devotion dies and now what is needed is that you and

[23 : 19] I should find our spirit stirred up within us that whilst we beg a blessing for England as a nation we especially desire matters to be made right between our own souls and God and that will be a contribution to a gracious revival coming in the church of Christ and in the church that you and I belong to many of us everything stems from you and I having to do with God regarding our own case that matters may be made right between our souls and God may I remind you if you need to be reminded of how Jerusalem Jerusalem's wall was rebuilt in the days of Nehemiah every man repaired over against his own house and

I am persuaded that every man had enough to do to repair over against his own house and they did not go gallivanting about round the wall to see what other folks were doing and maybe criticise and suggest they should be doing this or that but every man was doing that which he was called upon to do over against his own house and that is how matters fall out for you and for me if there is to be in the church of Christ a gracious revival there must be a sign and crying for the iniquities done not only in the land but that you and I will have to come like David did when he said oh lord pardon mine iniquity for it is great yes that will be one mark that will be upon the foreheads of all who were taught of

God that they will stand before God alongside the public and God be merciful to me a sinner yes and they will confess here on my heart the burden lies and past offenses pain my eyes as I have said and do you think of that as the first mark it is essential which shall know every man the plague of his own heart when he the spirit of truth is come he shall convince the world of sin and I am sure for the church of Christ nowadays that is the greatest need that God should pour out upon us his spirit granting a real conviction of sin and if that could be given it would soon make matters to be sorted out and be put right before

God and man convince us of our sin then lead to Jesus blood and to our wandering view reveal the secret love of God come not near any man upon whom is the mark it is set forth in Old Testament times under the plague of leprosy whereby the poor leper had to journey about and keep separate in his life and to a great degree dwell alone and cry wherever he went unclean unclean and that is how you feel when you appear before God if you were helped to tell him all the truth like the woman in the gospel falling down at Jesus feet she told him all the truth and you find in the word of

God those who were most notable for godliness appeared before God in that condition the apostle Paul says oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death and Job said behold I am vile yes much might be said along that line of thought but I want to look at some of these marks as they are made manifest come not near any man upon whom is the mark and how very solemn it is for those of us who are old and grey headed and any of us in offices to fill as it goes on and begin at my sanctuary it is a very searching consideration it means that every man who goes forth to preach the gospel must go back and consider what authority he had to begin to preach did he get it from

[28 : 57] God if he did get his authority from God then it will stand fast and he will be a marked man and God will own and bless his labors but it is well to go back to one's commission to preach and search again for the divine authority whereby one went forth to stand upon Zion's walls so it is in every office in the church of Christ as you fill it is it to the glory of God that you aim to do so or is it that you shall be advanced and uplifted before men begin at my sanctuary then they began at the ancient men which were before the house men old and grey headed who had long been linked up with the house of

God but they had not got the mark and they went down under the judgment of God and now here is a mark and I hope many of you possess it every sinner born again is the subject of a sole concern about eternal realities when you are in a right mind a right frame you are concerned that God shall do something for your soul and you know it is something which he alone can do say unto my soul I am thy salvation and now some of you can remember when this concern took hold of you you had not felt it before you had been found in the house of prayer from baby days on it may be but there came a day when you felt as you had never felt before and you realized there was not only time in which you were living out your life but there was that which follows time eternity and you would be entering into it and in entering into it you would either enter into heaven or hell and now once that concern is lodged in a sinner's breast it influences his life from that time on so that whatever ambitions he has had regarding this life he has to reconsider them and to make them according to what the word of God declares seek ye first the kingdom of

God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you he begins to realize and maybe he makes it a prayer Jesus engrave it on my heart that thou the one thing needful art I would from all things parted be but never never Lord from thee oh it is good to see this concern lodged in poor sinners hearts especially in those who are in life's mourning it is good to see it in those who are farther on in life's journey but those in life's mourning have still got their lives to live if all is well in the fullness of it and therefore they can be witnesses for God as long as they live from the time they are the subjects of this concern to have matters right between their soul and God come not near any man upon whom is the mark and now there is this mark and you really must go back over life's journey and search out if you can when it was stamped on you not that you saw it but it was stamped upon you as it were and that is when it could be said of you behold ye prayeth behold she prayeth oh it is these people who are taught to pray who will stand every storm and live at last and now go back to when you began to do it and now

I shall stress that as long as I live in my ministry that you ought to be able to do it you must know when you first of all knocked at mercy's door and desired mercy from the God of heaven when you said and you had never said it before in the same way when out of the abundance of the heart the mouth was speaking God be merciful to me a sinner remember me oh Lord with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people oh visit me with thy salvation the word of God says there is a beginning to it and there must be then began men to call on the name of the Lord when did you begin to do it if you can go back and remember when you began to do it and you know that you have been seeking to do it ever since you have got a very blessed mark the word of

God says blessed are all they that wait for him and they that wait for him wait upon him as grace is given yes does thy heart for Jesus pine and make it secret moan he understands the side divine he marks the hidden groan yes oh it is a wonderful mark to be taught to pray and that means as you are taught to pray out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speak it you may not always be able to tell out in words just what your feelings are but you can appeal like Jeremiah does it has helped me sometimes oh Lord thou knowest I the Lord search the heart and he knows that which is bottled up within you which you would if you could make known in words but you and

[36 : 06] I have to be thankful to learn the soul that with sincere desires seeks after Jesus love that soul the Holy Ghost inspires with breathings from above yes come not near any man upon whom is the mark the devil himself may attempt to come near such a man but he will not be allowed to triumph over that man Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees and then the next mark will be this as you were led into the truth here a little there a little you will be brought to have no confidence in the flesh regarding your soul's salvation the apostle Paul emphasizes that we are the true circumcision which worship God in the spirit and have no confidence in the flesh if any man could have had confidence in the flesh it would have been

Saul of Tarsus but when God opened his eyes and when it was said of him behold he prayeth he scrapped all his so called righteousness and counted it dung and dross that he might have the mark of the spirit of God upon his forehead and be one who was taught of God to have no confidence in the flesh not the labor of my hands can fulfill the law's demands then you see these people on whom this mark is found they are separated from the world in the spirit of it and in practice I know it is very difficult to live such a life but the hymn writer says I thought about it many times be to this world as dead alive to that which is to come you have to live your lives in the world as it is and you have your duties to do your sphere to fill and you give your attention to it but you give your prayerful attention to it and there the mark is seen and you do desire in your life as grace is given to be like

Moses choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season and oh dear friends there must be this separation from the world for it is an essential mark marvel not if the world hate you said Jesus to his disciples but know this it hated me before it hated you yes if ye were of the world the world would love his own come not near any man upon whom is the mark and now the next mark is a very sure one all these other marks are sure but this one he that loveth is born of God is what we might call an indelible mark because sometimes when you are not sure when you have many ifs and buts and hows as to whether you do belong to the brethren you do love those whom you believe are brethren and you want to be found amongst them living and dying and we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren and what is it you love in the brethren it is that which you believe they are by the grace of

God which makes them to be what they are and lovable love is the golden chain that binds the favored souls above and he's a hair of heaven who finds his bosom glow with love and then this love is not only to the brethren it will be to love the truth the truth that you listen to the truth that you read in the sacred pages of the word of God Paul said to the Thessalonians ye did receive the love of the truth you can listen to it and you might even sometimes admire the proclamation of it but the great thing is to love it and that means you will still love it when instead of you being comforted by it you are convinced of your guiltiness before God and you are searched and tried in listening to it and you have to feel before

God guilty guilty yet you will still love the truth that makes that manifest in your soul's experience the Savior said he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God it is a great thing to come up to worship God in his earthly courts and to hear what God the Lord will say to you as the word of God is set before you and the gospel of his grace is proclaimed blessed are your ears for they hear and there is that word that needs to be contemplated more than it is I fear either atheneia let him hear what the spirit set unto the churches come not near any man upon whom is the mark and now all these people young and old whatever age are marked with godly fear each one possesses it and it helps them it is an unctuous light to what is right a bar to what is wrong and it helps them

[42 : 48] I say to so live that it can be said of each one and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord godly fear brings this great truth home to you thou God seest me to feel that is I is upon you searching you examining you and yet deep down in your heart you do want to do that which is right in his sight another mark is this and it is a very vital one the apostle Peter said unto you therefore which believe he is precious and now answer the question what think ye of Christ and now in the answer that you give if you can give one that

I hope you can it will make sure that you have got yet another mark you have known what it is to feel to me Christ is more precious far than life and all its comforts are you have an aching void which this world cannot fill and how you find an amen in your heart to that petition Lord Jesus make thyself to me a living bright reality how you treasure up in your soul's experience the preciousness that you have known and felt when you have been favored with a glimpse of Jesus Christ and could discern and feel as you want to feel that he is all your salvation and all you desire much might be said along that line of thought but come not near any man upon whom is the mark and now go back a moment to

Israel when they were at length in Babylonian captivity and all the judgments of God on the land of promise had been poured out and now you read in one beautiful little psalm they that sow in tears shall reap in joy and now there is another mark that when you feel matters are not with you as you would like them to be when you are painfully aware that in your soul's experience you're in a kind of captivity and you can only sigh and cry bring my soul out of prison but there is a sowing in tears and what does that really mean blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted dear lord may I a mourner be over my sins and after thee and when my mourning days are o'er enjoy thy comforts evermore

I believe there is quite a deal of that being done nowadays in the church of Christ by many who have got that mark upon their forehead oh they do sigh and cry regarding their own soul's experience and they do want matters to be made right between their soul and God and they sow in tears sometimes regarding it but come not near any man upon whom is the mark there is just this mark I would touch on as I come toward the amen other people will see this mark if you possess it you will see their mark if they possess it because it is said and they took knowledge of them that they had been with

Jesus and it will be seen in your lips and life if you have got this blessed mark set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry and if you possess it it will be seen whose you are and whom you serve and other people will be glad to discern it it is a sweet experience when you feel like Barnabas who when he came to Antioch and saw the grace of God he was glad oh how glad you feel to see any evidence whatever in people that they are being marked with this mark and that they possess the grace of God although as yet it may be in the beginning of it yet you know he which hath begun the good work will not fail to carry it on and complete it yes it will be seen in your conduct your conversation and the company you keep come not near any man upon whom is the mark and now there is just one other viewpoint of this subject

[48 : 34] I touch on which will show you you dear young people especially that the subject I have taken has still got a meaning for the days in which you and I are living and now in the book of Revelation you read of something which has not yet come to pass but which will come to pass and after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth that the wind should not blow on the earth nor on the sea nor on any tree and I saw another angel ascending from the east having the seal of the living God and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea saying hurt not the earth neither the sea nor the trees till we have sealed the servants of our

God in their foreheads and now there is the present day fulfillment of what was done so long ago in Old Testament times when the Savior the blessed man clothed with linen with a righteous ink corn by his side when he went when he went up and down and marked everyone ordained to life eternal and he is still doing it as I have sometimes told you and the Lord added unto the church daily such as should be saved every day the Spirit of God is at work doing it marking those ordained to be born again with this blessed mark and that ensures their eternal happiness and that it is indeed with them well while life endure and well when called to die and as regards our present attitude and behavior do remember what

I read to you for I read it with that purpose and take heed to yourselves let at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life and so that day come upon you unawares for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth and now this should be our attitude before God and man watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the son of man amen and for to y