

Looking unto Jesus (Quality: Very Good)

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[0 : 0 0] To help us further this afternoon, we would direct your prayerful attention to the Hebrews, Epistle to the Hebrews chapter 12 and verses 2 and 3.

Hebrews chapter 12, verses 2 and 3. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your mind.

As we were looking at these words this morning, we were linking it with the previous chapter, and indeed with the previous verse. In the first verse of this chapter, the apostle is speaking of the race that is set before each one of us.

We're all running the race here below. And if we are the Lord's people, we're running that race toward heaven. And it is with patience that we have to run in that race set before us.

[1 : 2 3] But as in the case of a natural race, there is something to look forward to, a prize or the mark, as we saw in Philippians this morning.

So here he says, looking unto Jesus. This is the person to look to at all times. And as we have been reminded this afternoon in the opening hymn, how these things were set before the Israelites in the wilderness.

We were looking at Moses this morning, as he is spoken of in the 11th chapter, and how he looked forward to the day of Christ when he kept the Passover.

And that lamb was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now as we've been reminded this afternoon, when those Israelites were in the wilderness, and they had come to a certain place, and the Lord sent fiery serpents among them, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died.

And they were brought to this. They said, we have sinned, or we have spoken against the Lord. And they said to Moses, pray unto the Lord that he may take away the serpents from us.

[2 : 4 8] And Moses prayed for the people. But what did the Lord Jesus, what did the Lord instruct Moses to do? He says, make a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole.

He was to make a serpent, just like those serpents that had bitten the people, and to set it up on a pole. And he says, it shall come to pass, and every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

And as those that had been bitten looked to this serpent of brass, they lived. And that serpent of brass was a type of Christ. Jesus himself reminds us of it when he is speaking to Nicodemus, recorded in the third of John.

He says, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that each who ever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Oh, what a mercy if we've been brought like these Israelites to look unto Jesus, just as they looked to the brazen serpent and lived.

[3 : 56] So we, as we look to Jesus by living faith, we shall live eternally. We shall know ever life. Looking unto Jesus. How those Israelites then, in the wilderness, those that were given faith, they looked unto Jesus.

But then, as we were noticing this morning, in the eleventh chapter, we have those various ones mentioned by name. And one of those names I want to just dwell upon a little while this afternoon, he mentioned David.

David also. Now David certainly looked unto Jesus. In the things that he wrote. In the Psalms particularly, we find David looking unto Jesus.

For instance, if we go back to Psalm 22, we find David quoting the very words that the Lord Jesus Christ himself said on the cross at Calvary.

in the 22nd Psalm, verse 1, David wrote, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

[5 : 20] And if you read through the Psalm, you'll find many expressions which show us what the Lord Jesus suffered on the cross.

Indeed, they show us what is found in our text this afternoon in the next verse. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself.

And you find those people that were round the cross when the Lord Jesus suffered. They were saying similar things to what David has here.

All they that see me laugh me to scorn. They shoot out the lip. They shake the head saying he trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him.

Let him deliver him seeing he delighted in him. These were the very things that they uttered when they were looking upon him. He suffered the contradiction of sinners against himself.

[6 : 22] And so David in these Psalms was looking unto Jesus. You find various verses in those Psalms which were fulfilled when Jesus was crucified.

For instance, the 18th verse of Psalm 22. They part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture. This is the very thing they did.

Those soldiers when they had crucified him they parted his garments among them and cast lots upon his vesture. And we could go through many of the Psalms where the Psalmist David speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the 69th Psalm again we find words that were fulfilled when Jesus Christ suffered. Verse 21 of Psalm 69 they gave me also gore for my meat and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

This was fulfilled exactly in the day when the Lord Jesus Christ suffered on Calvary's cross. And so we find David looking unto Jesus in the Psalms.

[7 : 43] He saw Christ. He saw him in his sufferings. He saw him in his death and he saw him in his resurrection too because we have those Psalms which speak of his resurrection as well as his sufferings.

David then one of these mentioned in the 11th chapter looked unto Jesus looking unto Jesus. Jesus what a wonderful thing it is friends to be able this afternoon by faith to look to this glorious person who is the very author and finisher of our faith who began that work in us who gave us the faith in the first place and will be the finisher of it and he will perfect that which concerns us looking unto Jesus when we were speaking with our aged friend in the interval he quoted that beautiful hymn I believe it was made a blessing here one Sunday to him one of the verses in that hymn how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear it soothes his sorrows heals his wounds and drives away his fear he knows what it is

I believe to look unto Jesus and what a mercy if we have been favoured with the same faith looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith and let us come this afternoon to these other words more that follow who for the joy that was set before him as we intimated this morning briefly there was a joy set before the Lord Jesus he saw the reward he saw the travel of his soul as that word we find recorded in Isaiah's prophecy which speaks of the travel of his soul after speaking of his sufferings in that 53rd chapter and showing what the Lord Jesus Christ had to go through as he suffered for his people we find it recorded in the 11th verse of that chapter he shall see of the travel of his soul and shall be satisfied there will be a satisfaction to the Lord

Jesus Christ as he sees all his people presently save home in glory he shall see them he shall see of the travel they caused him travel of soul but he will see them all saved all safe home in glory he shall see of the travel of his soul and shall be satisfied and I've often said this friends not only will he be satisfied but every believer will be satisfied when they get home to glory there's no satisfaction here below because we're still in this veil of tears but presently when we see him face to face there will be a complete satisfaction David could say I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness and it will be satisfaction to awake in his likeness so the Lord Jesus Christ did have this joy set before him who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross and one of our hymn writers says this what he endured no tongue can tell to save our souls from death and hell he endured but I believe the apostle does give us a little of it in the second chapter to the

Philippians as he writes of this which the Lord Jesus endured he speaks to us and we need to be reminded of this word in the second of Philippians verse 5 let this mind be in you he says he intends that these Philippians should have the same mind that Christ had the mind of humility the mind of lowliness meekness let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus who being in the form of God he shows us that he was equal with the Father and equal with the Holy Spirit and thought it not robbery to be equal with God but he made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant that was when he came to this earth of course and was born in Bethlehem he took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross this is what we have here in the text the death of the cross he endured the cross and it meant him laying down his life it meant not only pain and agony and sweat and blood but it meant him giving his life his whole life for sinners who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross oh what the Lord

[13 : 42] Jesus had to endure as he was nailed to that cross and as that cross was placed into the socket how he endured great pain great agony and not only was the agony of body but agony of mind as he was bearing upon himself the weight of the sins of the whole church of God from Adam's day to the end of time all those that were brought to believe in Christ he bore their sins in his own body on the cross who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross and you know we sometimes have a cross to bear each of us have a different cross some are afflicted in their mind some in their bodies some have one thing and some another but it's a cross and we have to bear it

Jesus had to endure the cross we have to endure our cross whatever it may be who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame that was a shameful thing to be crucified to be led out to Calvary all the shame that attended it but the Lord Jesus despised it he didn't reckon it he just despised it it was nothing to him he was doing his father's will he was performing that which was appointed for him and so he despised that shame and what a mercy for friends now he is set down at the right hand of the throne of God he has ascended up on high he is at his father's right hand this is spoken of in the beginning of the epistle to the

Hebrews this wonderful day when the Lord Jesus sat down when he had by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high and how wonderfully it is set before us in another chapter where Jesus is contrasted with those high priests of old and how that they continually stood but when it comes to speak of Jesus this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of God having completed the work it showed that the work was done it is finished he said on the cross and his work was accomplished nothing could be added to it nothing taken from it he is set down at the right hand of the throne of God having done that which his father required of him he has returned to his father and he sits at the right hand of the throne of God and now we want to consider this third verse and it brings us into a consideration of Jesus this morning it was looking unto

Jesus by faith now we come to him oh to consider him more this consideration of him you know is a wonderful meditation and in the first place we want to consider him as he is set before us in this epistle to the Hebrews if we go back to chapter 1 we consider him in his Godhead but he was God the eternal son of God higher than the angels what wonderful expressions we have concerning him in the first chapter and verse 3 who being the brightness of his glory that is the brightness of his father's glory and the express image of his person didn't he say when he was here on earth

I am my father of one he was the express image of his father's person and he upheld everything by the word of his power he was the omnipotent God as well as man and as he is set before us in this first chapter it is as God as one who is much higher than the angels for we find it recorded unto which of the angels said he at any time thou art my son this day have I begotten thee and I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son this is only spoken of the Lord Jesus Christ the eternal son and there is a quotation from one of David's psalms in verse one in the eighth verse of chapter one where it says but unto the son he saith thy throne O God is forever and ever this is spoken of the Lord

[19 : 22] Jesus Christ his throne is forever and ever his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom what a wonderful thing to see him in this first chapter as the eternal God as the one who existed from all eternity just as Solomon speaks of him in the eighth of Proverbs when he was with his father before time began and his delights were with the sons of men so in the first chapter consider him as God the eternal God then as you come into the second chapter of this epistle you consider him as man as being born into this world thou madest him a little lower than the angels thou crownest him with glory and honor the Lord Jesus Christ was made a little lower than the angels for he says we see

Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death in order that he might suffer that death on the cross in order that he might bear that sin of his people upon himself this is why he became man as God he could not suffer in that way but as man he did suffer and so in the second chapter we find him spoken of as he took on him the seed of Abraham he took not on him the seed of angels but he took on him the seed of Abraham he was made like unto his brethren he became man and as you come into the third chapter you have this very word itself in verse one of chapter three wherefore holy brethren partakers of the heavenly calling consider consider the apostle and high priest of our profession

Christ Jesus what a consideration friends as we consider him as God consider him as man God and man in one blessed person and then consider him as the great high priest who came to suffer in the sinner's place and much is spoken of in this epistle of the high priest and of his office and what he had to do how the high priest of old went into the holy place once every year and it typified how the Lord Jesus Christ has gone into heaven itself into the holy place having accomplished that salvation for his people what a wonderful thing friends to see Jesus as the great high priest consider him consider him as our high priest what a wonderful word we have in a previous chapter where we find it recorded we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities but he was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin he can sympathize with us in all our bereavements in all our losses in all our crosses because he has been here himself he has been through these things he is a sympathetic high priest so he was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin consider him consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself during the interval

I was looking into two or three chapters in the gospel according to Matthew on this point this consideration of his enduring such contradiction of sinners against himself and let us look at one or two things there what he endured as he suffered the contradiction of sinners against himself first as we go to chapter 26 in the gospel according to Matthew and we find the Lord Jesus Christ as he was betrayed by Judas they came to the garden of Gethsemane and there was one who was a sinner and he suffered from that one man

Judas one who professed to love him one who professed to follow him and yet now he is left to betray him what endured from that man as we read that he had given the high priest a sign saying whomsoever I shall kiss the same as he hold him fast and forthwith he came to Jesus and said hail master and kissed him what he endured as he saw Judas come forth and kiss him and yet how tender he was in the midst of it all he says to Judas friend wherefore art thou come then came they and laid hands on Jesus and took him oh he's beginning to suffer this contradiction of sinners against himself consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself and so he's led away and we read that in verse 57 of that chapter they led him to

[26 : 03] Caiaphas the high priest where the scribes and elders were assembled and we find that they begin to bring in false witnesses at the last we read came two false witnesses and said this fellow said I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days we know that he didn't say that no he was referring to his body when he mentioned that concern in the temple but he didn't say it in exactly those words he knew that they would do the destroying destroy this temple he says and I will build it in three days and of course he was speaking of his own body and how that he would be raised again but the high priest speaks to him answer is they nothing what is it that these witness against thee they were against him you see these witnesses he endured such contradiction of sin as against himself but still

Jesus held his peace all the wonder of this in the midst of all this accusation we see that word fulfilled surely in the 53rd of Isaiah he is led as a sheep to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is done so he opened not his mouth he held his peace he held his peace all the wonder of this that the Lord Jesus could be so silent in the midst of all his accusations and so a little later on we find that they said in verse 66 he is guilty of death then did they spit in his face oh friends what would be our thought what would be our reaction if someone did this to us they did spit in his face and buffeted him and others smote him with the palms of their hands oh what the

Lord Jesus had to endure there as they spit upon him and buffeted him contradiction of sinners against himself and this was continuous because he not only endured this contradiction you see from those enemies but think of this when we read of Peter's denial think of how Peter was questioned those three times concerning his knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and Peter denied thrice I know not the man don't you think this must have been something which weighed heavily upon the Lord Jesus as he knew that Peter were denying him then we read of how he looked upon Peter and Peter went out and wept bitterly Peter knew what it was to repent and confess his sin but this was all among this contradiction of sinners against himself even the denial of

Peter and the betrayal of Judas and all these enemies against him and then we find in chapter 27 further things that he had to endure we find in verse 26 then released he Barabbas unto them and when he had scourged Jesus he had to be scourged he had to be delivered to be crucified and we read the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall think what he endured here friends think what contradiction of sinners as he was taken into the common hall and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers and they stripped him and put on him a scarlet robe and they mocked him and then they plaited this crown of thorn have you ever seen those thorns friends that they used tremendous great thorns when they plaited that crown of thorns they must have been hurt themselves as they were doing it but they plaited it and put it upon his head contradiction of sinners against himself that cruel thorn of crowns and it wasn't gently put upon his head no doubt it was roughly put there they put it upon his head and a reed in his right hand and they bowed the knee before him and mocked him saying

I all king of the Jews oh this crown of thorns how painful it must have been and they spit upon him and took the reed and smote him on the head this is the contradiction of sinners against himself yes and after this we read that they let him out to Calvary and they crucified him they nailed him to the tree they put those nails through his hands and feet he had to endure that the nailing of him to the tree all included in this word consider him oh we don't consider him as we should in this that he had to endure that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself and so as they nailed him to the tree what pain what agony he had to suffer there and then we read they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall and when he had tasted thereof he would not drink and again we notice in the next verse that they crucified him and parted his garments cast in lots that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets they parted my garments among them and upon my vesture did they cast lots those scriptures those psalms that we referred to they were fulfilled when

[33 : 09] Jesus was crucified but then even when he was hanging upon that cross bearing the sins of his people we read this in the thirty ninth verse of the twenty seventh of Matthew that they that passed by reviled him as they passed by the cross he had to suffer this contradiction of sinners against himself they reviled him wagging their heads and saying though that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days save thyself if they be the son of God come down from the cross likewise also the chief priest mocking him with the scribes and the elders and they said he saved others himself he cannot save if he be the king of Israel let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him but you see friends he was true he was saving others he was saving you and me therefore he couldn't save himself in that way he couldn't come down from the cross because he was in the sins of his people with all this contradiction of sinners against himself he trusted in

God they said let him deliver him now if he will have him for he said I am the son of God and even those thieves they were crucified with him we read the thieves also which were crucified with him cast the same in his teeth contradiction of sinners against himself all those thieves were cast in the same in his teeth but what a mercy with one of those thieves he was brought to consider his way and brought to say to the Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom our friend in the interval quoted that concerning the dying thief and I believe as he quoted what he did it came into my mind the dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day and there would I though virilously wash all my sins away oh consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself yes even when he was hanging upon the accursed tree the

Lord Jesus endured this contradiction of sinners against himself but the time came when he had to endure that darkness and he had to also endure that which we've already referred to mentioned in the 22nd Psalm when he endured his father's absence my God my God why has they forsaken me that was one of the bitterest ingredients in his cup of suffering as his father hid his face from him consider Jesus then oh to consider him in all this that he endured such contradiction of sinners against himself why why should we consider these things lest we be wearied then we often feel friends this weariness and as we get older and older we find it increases the weariness we have to say with the hymn writer sometimes weary of earth myself and sin dear

Jesus set me free open thine arms and take me in for there I long to be but as we consider him and the more we consider him I believe the more we shall see how much greater his sufferings were than ours and it will cause us to see things in their right perspective you know there's a word in the second of Corinthians which I often think of where we find the apostle saying our light affliction which is but for a moment we think it is a great affliction a heavy affliction and we think it's going on a long time year after year but when we consider it in the light of eternity and consider it in the light of what Jesus suffered it's only for a moment and it's a light affliction that's why the hymn writer wrote those words how light while supported by grace are all the afflictions I see to those the dear Lord of my peace my Jesus has suffered for me as we consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself we should see things in their right perspective we should see our own afflictions in their right light lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds yes we often feel this weariness and this faintness but as we are enabled by faith to look unto Jesus as it is in the previous verse and consider him we should see how light our afflictions are how little we have to suffer in comparison to what he suffered and we should know the meaning of another verse of another hymn where the hymn writer says his way was much rougher and darker than mine did Christ my Lord suffer and shall

I repine oh to consider him more and more what he endured to take away our sins the Lord Jesus suffered greatly may we then leave this word with you to further consider and ponder over the words we have brought before you today looking unto Jesus this is the essential looking to him for salvation looking to him alone because there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved looking to him like the Israelites did as they looked at the brazen serpent looking unto Jesus who is the author and the finisher of our faith to that one who for the joy that was set before him who had that joy in prospect when he would see all his people gathered home in glory who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross and the one who despised the shame and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God and the

[40 : 29] Lord help us all in our future days to consider him more we don't consider him as we should consider Jesus this one who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest you be wearied and faint in your mind may the Lord add his blessing to his word amen amen Thank you.