

# The manifestation of God's grace through Christ (Quality: mainly good)

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Date: 19 December 1976

Preacher: Humberstone, George (1896-1977)

- [ 0 : 00 ] If the Lord will enable me, I would draw your attention again to the text that we had this morning.
- You'll find it in the 32nd chapter in Isaiah's prophecy, in the second verse, verse 2.
- And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.
- The second verse in the 32nd of Isaiah. As the Lord enabled us a little this morning, we spoke of who this man is.
- He is the eternal Son of God, the second person in the glorious Trinity, who in the covenant of grace determined to save that number which the Father gave him, before time was, out of the ruins of humanity, and to bless them with eternal salvation.
- [ 1 : 27 ] They were placed safely in Christ. And he, in the fulfillment of his obligation in love to the Father and this people, he took upon him the form of a servant, and came into this world, taking into everlasting union with his divine person, humanity.
- Oh, what a wonderful mystery the incarnation of Christ is. There's much, there will be much ado, perhaps this next week, in the professing world, aye, even in the profane world.
- For it is the time of the year when this glorious person is even the song of the drunkard. Oh, how solemn. Oh, how solemn.
- But oh, what a wonderful mercy it is, if we have ever been brought to bless him, forever humbling himself, and coming into this world, in the mysterious way that he did, in that holy, pure humanity, separate from sinners.
- He did not partake of the fall of Adam, in that nature. No, no. His was a miraculous conception of the Virgin by the overshadowing of God, the Holy Ghost.
- [ 3 : 14 ] A miraculous birth. Oh, how few. How few. How few really believe in it. How few rest their whole salvation, their soul for eternity, upon this wonderful mystery.
- But oh, it is a mercy, if the Holy Ghost has taught us the absolute necessity for the incarnation of Christ, for him coming into this world.
- Oh, how necessary in that humanity. He was, we read in the word, he was made of a woman, made under the law.
- That law that condemns you and I out of hand, for our sins against it, our trespasses. Oh, it is an infinite mercy to be brought to an end of all our own righteousness, and to be brought to an end of all hope, in that terrible law.
- It can only condemn us. He that is guilty in one point is guilty of all. And the very thought of foolishness is sin, sin.

- [ 4 : 37 ]     How solemn is our case. Oh, the mercy of a three-one God that they should ever enter into the covenant of grace, and that Christ should be given, sent into the world by the Father, out of love to this people, and that the Holy Ghost who deals with this people in this world, he alone can.
- He brings about within them a new birth. That mystery that Christ spoke of to Nicodemus when he said to him, except a man be born again, he cannot see, see, let alone enter into the kingdom of heaven.
- Well, it is the work of the Holy Ghost to do this in all the election of grace, and he will do it. not a hoof shall be left behind, not one of his people whose names are in the Lamb's book of life will pass through this life without the Holy Ghost teaching them their sinners, and the need of this blessed man has an hiding place from the terrible wind of the wrath of an offended holy God.
- It is a mercy if he has taught us something of this in our hearts, according to the measure that he has given us faith.
- As we said, some he works very deeply and quickly in, forcibly, some he deals with very gently.
- [ 6 : 30 ]     I know that some like to take the case of Lydia, the purple seller, as a case of, perhaps, gentle beginning.
- I never really could look at it like that. You know, we are told that the Lord opened her heart. If the Lord ever opens your heart and mine, we shall see what's in it.
- And as the Lord opened to her her heart, it's no wonder then that she listened to the preaching of Paul. She would see herself as a filthy, lost, wretched sinner.
- Why, literally, if you open a thing, you'll see what's inside it, don't you? And as her heart was opened, she would see what was in it, that she was a sinner.
- Well now, what a mercy it is if the Lord has mercifully done something like this, in your case and mine. And he has given us to see something of this glorious man, Christ, that he came into this world to seek and to save that which was lost.
- [ 7 : 49 ]     He came not to call righteous people. No, no, his greatest denunciations in all his ministry were against Pharisees, self-righteous Pharisees.
- But all his encouragement, the sweet gospel, he proclaimed to those who were taught their lost condition and who were given to see something of his beauty, his loveliness, his preciousness.
- Well now, what a mercy it is if you and I have seen anything, any beauty that has attracted us to this person. if his name has been made precious to us.
- Have you ever sung that beautiful hymn in our book, how sweet the name of Jesus sounds. In a believer's ear, it soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, drives away his fears.
- Ever sung it from your very heart, feeling the truth of it with him? Ah, to the mercy we have. Well, he is to his people a hiding place from the wrath of God.
- [ 9 : 13 ]     That wrath that at the last day will blow away every refuge of humanity. There is a day coming when that great white throne will be set up.
- All nations shall be brought before that throne. Cremation won't make any difference, you know? No. Even the very sea will give up its dead.
- Death and hell will give up the dead that are in them. And every soul that has had a being will stand before that great white throne.
- And there they will be judged as the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad. Ah, but there will be two multitudes there.

There will be a multitude on the right-hand side, clothed in the righteousness of this blessed man who came into this world to magnify and make honorable the law for his people in his work of salvation.

[ 10 : 24 ] salvation. And they will be clothed in his righteousness without spot, without blemish. Oh, what a favor to have a hope that we shall be among that multitude.

He will say to them, come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world.

But look on the other side. Oh, what a multitude will be there. That multitude will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them, to hide them from he that sits upon that throne as his eyes view them through and through and every secret of their life is brought to light.

Oh, how solemn. what a mercy it is if the Holy Ghost has taught us, convinced us of our state and brought us to this glorious man.

It is his blessed work. Christ draws his people, God the Father draws them. Christ said, no man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him.

[ 11 : 51 ] the whole blessed trinity draw the people of God to Christ. It is, I believe, the delight of the Holy Ghost to exalt this blessed man.

He will fill all heaven at last to all eternity with praise and blessing for his finished work which as they were brought to believe in it and hang upon it all their hopes.

They will sing his praise throughout all eternity. Oh, what a mercy to have a hope that this man has been made our hiding place.

But we must move on in the text. Undercovered from the tempest. If you look at this word, really, I did look sometime, go in a dictionary to see what it meant and there I was told it meant no such thing as a very, very permanent dwelling, but a covering, say that you might put up in a field for animals to shelter into, to run into in a storm, covered from the tempest.

Ah, you know there are all kinds of natures among God's people. We read of them, don't we, in that sheet that was let down to Peter, the acts of the apostles, in that sheet were all manner of animals, even to creeping things of the earth.

[ 13 : 55 ] And we read too in this same prophecy of different dispositions in men. We read of the lion eating straw with the ox.

We read of these various different dispositions of men being brought down and humbled, and a little child shall lead them.

And you know in the church of God, oh, what different dispositions there are. What different dispositions. things are important.

And if the Lord shows you and me what we are by nature, you will say, like Asaph says, in Psalm 73, I was as a brute before thee.

No better. No, no. Or, you will sometimes feel yourself with a poor creeping worm, creeping in and out of the earth, that cannot bear the light of the sun.

[ 15 : 07 ] You will feel in your heart what a poor, sinful, weak thing you are. Well, now, these descriptions in the word of God, and this wonderful description here, are covered from the tempest.

Covering it really is, in the tempest. And if you, if you know anything of divine teaching, if the Lord has mercifully perhaps blessed you in times past, given you a hope in his mercy, favored you with the revelation of Christ, and given you some assurance of an interest in his precious blood and righteousness, in a word, given you a hope that heaven will be yours at last, that your sins are put away by the sacrifice of himself, you'll come into a world of tribulation sooner or later.

Oh, yes. We find in the Song of Solomon what blessed discoveries and what blessed communion there was there between the bride and the bridegroom.

But, oh, we also find, too, toward, and I've noticed, it's toward the end of the song, who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?

Oh, it seems as though now, toward the end, she's a poor, decrepit creature, robbed of all her strength, and she leans heavily upon the arm of the bridegroom.

[ 17 : 04 ] arm, that arm will never give way, no, no. Well, now, she has passed through the wilderness. What is the wilderness?

Literally, it's a place where there's nothing, nothing to sustain human nature, no food, a dry desert, no water perhaps in it, briars, thorns in it, hurtful things, noxious weeds.

Isn't it a description of this world sometimes to the believer, especially if he's favoured in his soul with the love of Christ abroad in his heart?

What is the world to him? It is a doomed world, it will go up in a blaze one day under the wrath of God. There's no continuing city in it for the real child of God who is exercised, no, and there's no rest in it really, and although I know in this day in which our lot is cast, in this welfare state that we're in, we're not tried in providence like our forefathers were, I can just remember a little of it, but it doesn't alter the word of God, it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom.

If you and I haven't that tribulation in providence, if the Lord mercifully supplies all your needs in providence, be thankful for it.

[ 18 : 54 ] but you will still have tribulation, much tribulation, and it will be in here, in your own heart. Satan is ever on the watch to trip up your unwary feet and mine.

Oh, and we have a little memory in our mouth that no man can tame, and it will often bring you into a state of guilt, sin, and many, many things in your pathway will rouse up passions within you, many lusts, and many evil things, iniquities you'll discover in your heart.

What did he bring Israel of old into the wilderness for, and lead them there forty years? it was to humble them, to prove them, to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments or no.

And not only that, but it was to bring them to this, that man does not live on bread only, material things, but on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, shall men live.

This blessed word, especially as he makes it powerful in your soul, or if he speaks to you in your tribulation, and you know, as he brings you into trying things, perhaps affliction or afflictive dispensations, many, many things that your flesh doesn't like, it is to humble you, but oh, instead of you might say, instead of humbling me, it rouses up my rebellion, and it brings all manner of evil up in my heart, so it does, it'll make you to know what is in your heart, life, if you didn't go in the wilderness, if you didn't have these trials, all the nice, easy, fast-wise, without a trial in it, you wouldn't know what's in your heart, if I didn't at one time, and you didn't, know, that it is these troubles, these trials, all this warfare within, will bring up unbelief in your heart, you will learn that you've got infidelity in your heart, you'll learn that you've got passions within you that rouse and light up, oh, you never thought you were half as bad as you are, it is the wilderness that teaches, and the trials and troubles, the tribulations in the wilderness that will try you, and you think in your heart, and the devil will tell you too, that all this is against you, you can't be a child of God, he'll say, and all these things working in your heart, how can you?

[ 22 : 19 ] But, the mere professor, the world link, know nothing of this experience, it is to humble you before him, and he'll not leave you in these things, no, no, no, no, always the many promises, even in this blessed prophet Isaiah, the many sweet promises he has made to his people, he'll bring them through the fires, through the floods and flames, through them, not leave them in them, no, no, no, and he will often be to them covered in these tempests that will come upon them.

Storms that sometimes burst upon them that they never expected perhaps in their circumstances, in their pathway but more especially perhaps within.

And these tempests, they'll need a covering. And they'll be glad like a poor beast in a field to creep into this covert, a covert from the tempest.

Know anything about these tempests? Do you know anything about them? Have you got such a smooth, nice pathway that you haven't got a thing in it that causes you any trouble?

Nothing like a tempest. When I tell you, examine your religion if that is it. I wouldn't give you much for it.

[ 24 : 05 ] No, no. The word tells us it is through much tribulation. We have all these instances in the Old Testament of how the Lord has dealt with his people and you'll find it is through much tribulation.

Oh, how Jacob was tried when they went to him, his hard sons. When they went with him with that blood-stained coat of many colors of Joseph and said, Know now, if this be thy son's coat, oh, the hardness of their hearts.

And he said to them, didn't he, It is my son's coat. Surely some beast hath devoured him. And this was in spite of old Joseph's dreams that he had pondered over before.

Ah, he said, All these things are against me. You'll bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. But they never did. No, no.

It all taught Jacob. And the Lord mercifully taught him in many ways. But he also taught him his preserving care over him when his brother with murder in his heart determined to slay him.

[ 25 : 39 ] How the Lord mercifully, when he had sent the present over the brook and all that he had, then he went back over the brook alone, but not alone.

Now, now there wrestled a man with him till the break of day. Ah, that man, I've no doubt, was this man in the text.

And, oh, Jacob was given strength. He said, Let me go. Oh, Jacob said, No, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

And though he halted upon his thigh after, yet, I and many of God's people have been made to halt on their thighs by the dealings of God with them, humble.

They haven't been able to run so fast as they could at one time, and they couldn't fly up so high. Their wings have been clipped. Well, it is through this tribulation and the dealings of God with them that humbles them, brings them down before him to need his help from time to time.

[ 27 : 01 ] Oh, does not the bride and groom say to the spouse, Let me see thy countenance. Let me hear thy voice. Sweet is thy countenance.

And sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. What? What even in these pleadings with him for mercy, in tribulation and trial and affliction?

Yes. It is music in his blessed ears. It is his own work within, teaching you what a poor, helpless, hell-deserving creature you are.

I can't preach a pleasant, easy pathway. It's not in the scriptures. And I've not had one. Never expect one. My nature would like one.

But no, God has not promised it. You'll need this hiding place. You'll need this covert from the tempest.

[ 28 : 05 ] But now we come to another side in this blessed promise, as rivers of water in a dry place. Notice, the word is in the plural. Rivers of water. Not just a little stream. Not just one river. No, no. But all this inexperience sets forth the mercy, the love of Christ, the love of God. John tells us in the revelation, I saw a river, a river, proceeding, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb.

And do we not read in one of the Psalms, there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.

[ 29 : 14 ] This is the love of God to man, flowing down from the throne of God. But, it is in a dry place, rivers of water, in a dry place.

I tell you this, God never wastes his grace, nor his blessings. No, you'll be brought into dry places.

You'll realize what a dry place the wilderness is, I mean spiritually. spiritually, and you'll be made to realize what a dreadful, barren heath, spiritually, your heart is by nature.

And it will bring you into these dry places. And sometimes in your trials, you may come to the house of God, and there may be good sound preaching there, but you cannot feel anything.

Oh, I do believe the Lord sometimes withholds these blessings from his people, to bring them to cry more mightily to him for them.

[ 30 : 32 ] Even in nature, in business, when things are in short supply, as we term it, they become precious. The price goes up.

And the shorter the supply, well, the more precious it becomes. I believe the Lord works in that way too, with his exercised people.

He will not let his blessings be cheap. No, no, no. If you are blessed with a stream from these rivers flowing into your soul, it will be because you need it.

It will either be a foretaste to strengthen you beforehand, of some trial or tribulation that awaits you in your pathway, or it will be after or during a trial.

He will bless you. He will bless you. Rivers of water. We haven't time to go into these rivers of water.

[ 31 : 41 ] Oh, it means all the blessed work of Christ, for every office he sustains. It means his high priesthood in heaven too, as in that blessed humanity, at his final ascension into heaven.

He went up, he took that humanity with him into heaven. He is there at the right hand of the Father, in that humanity.

His way was a way of tribulation. His way was much darker and rougher than mine. But why? And he was tempted with and with the wild beasts in the wilderness.

Why? So that in heaven, in that sacred holy humanity, he can feel for his people in a human way.

You can't go to him with your trials, your tribulations. You can't go to him with anything that is strange and unknown to him.

[ 32 : 59 ] No. Oh, in that holy priesthood, he knows all about your path. He knows all your troubles, all your trials, all your temptations.

He has passed through them in humanity. What encouragement there is here. And this is, this is one of the rivers, rivers of water that flow into the dry place sometimes.

Oh, when, when the Holy Ghost brings a little faith into exercise in your heart, when you feel everything's dried up, you feel parched, spiritually, I mean, you wonder where the thing will end, wonder if the Lord will ever deal with you in a way of love and mercy again.

you feel yourself such a wretched sinner. And, unbelief is there, the devil helps it on. But, oh, how sweet, when the Holy Ghost mercifully comes, unexpected perhaps, turns your eyes, the eye of your faith with him, to look at this blessed, glorious man as your great high priest in heaven before the throne of God.

Ah, this is a river. This is a river that will assuage your thirst in a dry land. Ah, and, you will feel by faith that he understands you better than you do yourself.

[ 34 : 41 ] that he has passed through temptations. He has been forsaken. You may feel forsaken, but you know nothing in comparison with the forsaking of his father when he was upon Calvary's tree, when he cried out, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

He was forsaken that you may never be forsaken. No. You may feel sometimes that you can, left to yourself, and, Satan, the unwearied adversary, tormenting and trying you, but, you will never be forsaken.

No, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. And, sure enough, a trickle, at least, from these rivers and streams in your dry place will revive your drooping soul.

Look what a wonderful figure this is. You can imagine the traveler passing along through a dry place, a wilderness, a parched desert.

He has no water left in his bottle, and he feels like thirsting. But what does the Lord say? When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them.

[ 36 : 23 ] I, the God of Jacob, will not forsake them. No, no. Rivers in a dry place. But to know these rivers and experience them, we must know something of the dry place, you know.

As I said, the Lord does not pour down these things cheaply. No, no. It is his will that his people shall know something of these dry places, so that they shall value, long for, a drop of living water.

And is not Christ that living water? Is he not these rivers of water? This glorious man in the text, he, he shall be not only a hiding place, not only a cover, but as rivers of water, flowing in this dry place.

Have you ever experienced it? Have you ever come to chapel feeling dried up, wondering whether you would get anything at all, and knowing you don't deserve anything, that yet perhaps you are surprised as the gospel being made a sweet blessing to you, as the person of Christ being made sweet, his name, his, his very person, precious to you, the cheapest among ten thousand, the scene altogether being changed.

It's rivers, rivers in a dry place, with all the graces of the Spirit, and all flowing through the wounds and blood of a dying Redeemer.

[ 38 : 15 ] Oh, what a mercy it is to feel these things in your heart, but, I repeat it, you will be brought into those places where you'll need it.

And then, we must pass on, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, we don't understand these, as I pointed out at the outset this morning, these, the Bible is an Eastern book, and literally, we can't understand in this land of ours, the full meaning of these figurative terms, as they would in the East.

The Bible is an Eastern book, but, oh, it sets forth the traveler in the East, weary, absolutely weary, he looks around, and all he can see is nothing but wilderness, sandy desert, and the sun at midday is shining down upon him with burning heat.

desert. This is the literal figure, and he hurries as fast as his poor strength will enable him to creep down and get in the shade of this rock.

Have you ever felt your own wretched self to be nothing but a weary land within? And have you ever been brought under the shadow of this great rock?

In the margin it says, heavy rock. Aye, heavy with eternal glory. This sets forth Christ, this rock, this rock of eternal ages, this rock, shall we say, upon which he builds his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The poor sinner was being brought to seek for refuge to this blessed, glorious man, feeling something of this figure of speech, that he is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

You can just imagine, literally, for a moment, visualize the poor traveler, glad, you know, even in this past summer, this year, the heat was so great sometimes, we were glad to creep into the shade, but what must it be in these eastern countries, and these vast tracts of desert, wilderness, no shade in them, no shelter, but all to come across this great rock, protruding, as it were, up out of the sandy desert.

Have you ever felt the burning rays of persecution? I have. Have you ever felt the burning rays of Satan's attacks upon you?

and have you ever felt the need of the shade of this blessed rock? Ever felt all that I could creep to his blessed feet and feel his preciousness, be clothed in his righteousness, washed in his precious atoning blood?

would be heaven, rest, peace, refuge, to my weary soul. Oh, there's not many people weary, is there?

No. We're so worldly in this day, and we're so taken up with the things of time and sense, that I do believe the Lord has a few, that he exercises really with these things, he deals with them, and he brings them into all the places mentioned here, they need this glorious man as a hiding place, from the wind, a cover from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, they know something of these experiences, their real experiences, you'll never get to heaven without experience, my friends, never, may not be very deep, it will be according to the sovereignty of the Holy Ghost, but, you've passed through this life, and you'll never enter into these things in your measure, it will be sad for you at the end, dreadful.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.  
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Amen.