



the
Golden
Candlestick

**THE MOUNTAINS AROUND
JERUSALEM**

Part 2

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Volume 150

THE MOUNTAIN OF HEAVENLY RESOURCE

Reading: Matthew 15:29-39.

Here is a scene of great need; the extent and the range of the need is quite definitely and deliberately stressed repeatedly. It is “the multitudes”, “great multitudes” which are in view. The need is brought out in great fulness, and over against it there is this disclosure of Christ’s concern and desire that that need should be fully, wholly met, and strangely, this occasion is in the mountain. There was another occasion when He fed the multitude, as we saw already in the earlier chapter. Here it is said to be in relation to the mountain, indicative again of this principle that it is heavenly fulness which is in view. This, figuratively, is the mountain of heavenly or spiritual fulness, out of which the need, however great, vast, or deep, can be fully met. Let me reverse that and put it in this way, that heavenly fulness demands a heavenly position. “In this mountain will the Lord of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined” (Isa. 25:6). “*In this mountain ...*”. When you look to identify that mountain, you find it refers to Zion, and then you find that it indicates the heavenly Zion of Hebrews 12. “Ye are come unto mount Zion” (v. 22). It is a heavenly, not an earthly Zion, which is really in view prophetically there, and it again embodies this law that a heavenly position is essential to heavenly fulness. This operates in two connections.

Resource for need

First of all, as to the disciples. If we are those who are, in heart at least, and some in very practical ways, taking responsibility in the things of the Lord, called unto that service, that ministry, of meeting spiritual need, it will depend entirely upon our spiritual position as to how much resource we have with which to meet the need.

If we are working with the mentality of an earthly kingdom for God, if our conceptions of the work of God are all just down here in relation to this earth, and we are pursuing the work of God along the line that this world employs for pursuing its interests and ends, having just a temporal conception of the things of God, we shall be left to find the resources. That is the history of Christian work, that if you have a merely temporal, earthly conception of the work of God down *here*, establishing something *here*, getting a name for the work of God here, God just leaves you to find your own resources to carry it on, so you will have to be travelling about all over the place trying to get people to support it. The Lord is not taking responsibility for it; He is leaving it to you. But when we get into His own heavenly conception of things we see that in this dispensation God is not seeking to build something on this earth of a permanent character, but is taking something out of the nations to be linked with His Son in heaven, a people out of the nations for His Name, something that is taken out and linked with Him in heaven in a spiritual way. While here in body, its life is drawn from above, all its relationships are heavenly, and you come into the realm of spiritual fulness, and God looks after that; there is plenty. That is a very practical thing indeed, and it represents the great, vast difference, between your wearing yourself out in trying to find the means to carry on the work of God, and the Lord carrying you on on an altogether supernatural basis of resource. Some of us know that difference in our own history between the time, the years, when we were having to find the straw for the bricks, the resources for building what we were trying to build, and it was exhausting work. It meant reading all the latest books and keeping in touch with all the latest ideas and working hard to find sermons and addresses and the wherewithal to meet the demand. How often we were just at the end of all resources, but then the revelation of God's heavenly intention came and a transition took place, from which time forward there has been no lack. It is just the river flowing in fulness all the time; a very practical difference.

You must really know what it means to have your life hid with Christ in God, where Christ is, in order to have all the heavenly resources at your command for a heavenly realm of life and ministry. As you know, in the Gospels things are only hinted at, suggested and illustrated. When you come over to the latter part of the New Testament, you see it just working out all the time. There is abundance, plenty of food available. The need is vast, there is no doubt about it. People are saying everywhere that they are in a state of spiritual starvation — quite unnecessarily. The supplies are

adequate and even more to meet the level of the demand, as indicated here. In chapter 14 there were twelve baskets left over; here it is seven baskets. You will notice in your margin that different words are used for 'baskets'. The words indicate that the seven baskets were larger than the twelve baskets. But there are seven baskets here, and that is the number of spiritual fulness, and there is always a margin in heaven. You never exhaust heaven, and you never can keep even with heaven. Heaven will always be ahead of you. If you have a life in union with the Lord above, He is always well ahead of the greatest need. You never can catch up with heaven's resources. This is one more emphasis upon the heavenly position necessary to know heavenly resources.

Resource for service

Again, as in each previous instance, there is a foreshadowing of things. On both occasions the disciples were proved to be altogether inadequate to the situation. It is remarkable that two occasions like this should occur, and that on the second they should not have learned the lesson of the first. They had seen the five thousand fed, and then when it comes to four thousand — beside women and children, they raise the old question, 'How can it be done?' They project their doubts into it; they are altogether unequal to this situation, they do not see from whence the need could be supplied. The Lord does marvellous things, and a little time elapses and another big situation arises, and we are just as much in doubt as we were. It was overwhelming then, but somehow or other it has lost its power with us now, and we are just questioning again as to what is going to happen, what is going to be the issue; that is the old earthly life. And so these men were proved repeatedly to be unequal to the situation, not seeing or knowing how the thing could be dealt with and the need be met.

Get them on the other side of the cross; the other side of Pentecost, and are they questioning this matter? No, they are equal to the situation now. What they find now is, not that the need is too great, but the capacity of the people too small to receive what they have to give. 'We have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them.' So far as the disciples are concerned, they have come to know by the Holy Spirit, heavenly union with the Lord and that meant that they can be equal to the situation, however great. Let us take that to ourselves. That is true as to the multitude, as to the need. Well, here again, the same thing applies: the servants for their service, the crowds for their need. It is all in heaven, it is

all available; there is sufficient resource, and more than sufficient, for the greatest need that could be brought to the Lord, provided you get away from earthly limitations; provided the cross cuts clean in between your earthly relationships to bring you into union with your Lord in heaven.

THE MOUNTAIN OF HEAVENLY VISION

Reading: Matthew 16:13-Matthew 17.

In chapter 16, we have the Lord questioning the disciples, “Who do men say that the Son of man is?” (v.13). We have their various replies, and then Peter’s declaration, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Then we read what the Lord said in reply as to the source of that revelation. And after that the great word about the church which brings the church fully forward for the first time in the New Testament: “I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” The two are brought together, the church and the kingdom; the church being the embodiment of the kingdom in its laws, principles and nature. Here is heaven governing where the church is concerned; it is heavenly government in and through the church.

“Then charged He the disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ. From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed.” Then came the reaction to that from the disciples, and what the Lord saw of Satan behind their reaction. “Get thee behind me, Satan.”

Now verse 28: “Verily I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” “And after six days Jesus takes with Him Peter, and James, and John his brother, and brings them up into a high mountain apart: and He was transfigured before them” (Matt. 17:1-2). There ought not to be a break between Matthew 16 and 17. It is one of the very unfortunate things that have happened by dividing up in this way, because in this arrangement Matthew 17:1 is the continuation and the complement of Matthew 16:28. “There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no

wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom”, and after six days, with the Mount of Transfiguration it is revealed what that coming kingdom would be like.

We are on the mountain again with the Lord; we have seen that Jerusalem is now, in the earthly sense, being set aside. Another Jerusalem, a heavenly one, has appeared, the church, taking up all these spiritual features symbolised in the earthly, embodying the meaning of the kingdom of the heavens.

The vision of the glorified Son of Man

What does all that mean? What is this for the future? I think we can call it ‘the heavenly vision’. If you look at Matthew 17:9, you have this: “Jesus commanded them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead.” What then does that heavenly vision include? Well, first of all, that very title which He uses of Himself is indicative. “Who do men say that the Son of man is?” “Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead.” That title gives us the significance of the range of Christ. You need to turn to the letter to the Hebrews again to understand that. In Hebrews 2:6-18 the Lord Jesus is brought right before us, and then appeal is made to the eighth Psalm, “What is man, that art mindful of him? And the son of man, that the visitest him? For thou hast made him but little lower than the angels, and crownest him with glory and honour. Thou makest him to have dominion over the work of thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet” (Psa. 8:4-6). “But now we see not yet all things subjected to him. But we behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus ... crowned with glory and honour” (Heb. 2:8,9); Jesus, the Son of man, crowned with glory and honour. And Peter, many years afterwards, thinking back to the Mount of Transfiguration, says, “He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there was borne such a voice to Him by the Majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount” (2 Pet. 1:17-18). Peter is referring back to Matthew, to the Son of man in the Mount crowned with glory and honour. It brings to us this, that God’s thought for man is here seen in its full realisation in Him who has become the inclusive representative of man, the inclusive Son of man representing man as God intended, and still intends him to be, as God intends that one, new,

corporate, comprehensive man to be, “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

On the Mount of Transfiguration we see, so to speak, the Son of man reaching right back towards the Fall and taking up the divine thought for man, bridging that long gap from the divine conception to the divine realisation, bridging all that came in with the failure of man, taking up the divine thought and realising it in Himself, and then throwing on to the future that representation of God’s thought in perfection and saying in effect that this is how it will be when God reaches His end; He will have a race like this. Do you see Him on the Mount of Transfiguration? That is how it is going to be corporately, collectively, when God realises His first intention concerning man. It is going to be like this — a glorified humanity.

Christ expressed in the church

And now this comes in concerning the church, or the church comes in concerning this. It is all of a piece. It is this heavenly church. Oh, not the church that you and I are all too sadly familiar with, not what is called ‘the church’ down here. No, but that church which God has ever had in mind, which He can see. What is it? Well, it is Christ expressing Himself through countless members of one Body. It is Christ corporate, that is all, but eventually Christ corporate, glorified, transfigured. That is God’s intention, God’s thought. And here, in this figurative, heavenly place on the Mount, the high mountain, there is a revelation given which is the heavenly vision.

You know exactly how that worked out later. It was when they saw Christ risen, ascended, glorified, saw Him by the Spirit; when they saw that great, eternal, vast thought of God concerning His Son, it was then that things became marvellous, effective, down here in the gathering of the living stones, the material for building that church. It was then lifted right away from all poor, earthly conceptions of the church as an organization and an institution, something down here. In the case of the apostle Paul when he saw the Lord Jesus in glory on that memorable day in his life, it was then that he was overwhelmed, not just with the single idea of Jesus as a unit, Jesus of Nazareth of whom he had heard down here, but now as a glorified Person. That was big enough to smash him to pieces and all his earthly system as well. What he came into at that time, as he makes perfectly clear, was that this Christ is comprehensive. He is not just a single man; all those whom Paul was persecuting were, in effect, Christ.

“Why persecutest thou Me?” (Acts 9:4). They are Christ. All that comes through that apostle later on that line had its beginning there; the seed of the vast meaning and significance of Christ was dropped into his heart on the Damascus road, and he went away to the desert to get hold of that, to grasp it, to wrestle with this overwhelming thing. And it was that heavenly vision that broke all his national barriers, all earthly departmentalism of race and everything else, and made Him the great comprehensive Man, Christ inclusive. Paul saw the heavenly vision, which meant not only Jesus as an individual glorified, but he saw in that Individual the elect church comprehended and what its heavenly calling, heavenly vocation and heavenly destiny is. “A glorious church” (Eph. 5:27); that is how he puts it at the end of the Ephesian letter, the document which most fully brings the church into view. “Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the church to Himself a glorious church”, a church of glory. That is the Mount of Transfiguration. Has he not already said to the Corinthians, “We all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed.” It is the same word, transfigured “into the same image” (2 Cor. 3:18). Eventually the transfiguration will be complete, and the church will be a glorious church. That is all here in the heavenly vision.

For a time that vision became eclipsed because the men were not on heavenly ground. However, after the cross, by which the earthly ground was cut away, they came onto heavenly ground, and it was that vision which governed them. It was that conception of Christ comprehensive which lay behind all their living and serving. It was indeed a glorified Christ crowned with glory and honour. The word of Psalm 8 was undoubtedly meant to refer to the first Adam; he missed it and now it is taken up by the last Adam, crowned with glory. He is the first of this heavenly race, this heavenly kingdom.

“Crowned with glory and honour”

What is glory? It is simply the outshining of the essential nature of this new Christ. It is not just an endowment from without. It is the manifestation of what is within. In Christ’s case that is undoubtedly true. The true, divine nature burst forth. The glory is seen to be inherent in the very nature.

He has given us His own divine life, and while we in ourselves are not

as He, not being the original vessels of the divine nature, He has given divine life to be within us. Eventually that divine life, if it has its way and is not frustrated by disobedience, will show itself in the same way and break out in glory. The word of the apostle regarding that is very simple: "... when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed" (2 Thess. 1:10). It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). At some time Christ is going to blaze out and betray the hidden secret of our spiritual life in glory. People will look on and say, I never thought they were that kind of people, that that was possible where they were concerned. Now, you and I are anything but glorified people, but there is resident within us that power which one day will manifest itself in glory. We have little intimations of that sometimes. We say we have had a touch of heaven on earth, times of blessed fellowship with the Lord and with one another, and we say, This is a bit of glory and something breaks up inside! It is a spiritual sense of glory. But think of that in overwhelming fulness. That is the destiny of the church — "the fulness of Him that fills all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

"Crowned with glory and honour". Those two things are the reverse of corruption. Glory over against corruption, honour over against shame.

Let me close here for the moment with this. The church is not a theme, it is not a doctrine, a teaching, it is not a subject in the Bible. You can have all the teaching and all the doctrine and know all that the Bible says about it, be conversant with all the theories of the church, and there be no glory or life about it. The church is not a subject to be studied, a doctrine to be taught. The church is a Person to be manifested; it is Christ. And no one really knows anything about the church until they have seen Christ by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Do not ask to see the church and do not ask others if they have seen the church. There is a lot of that sort of language going on — have you seen the church, the truth of the Body? Oh, the Lord deliver us from that sort of thing! Have you seen *Christ*? If you have seen Christ, you have seen something more than just a Person. Great, vast and wonderful as the Person is, that Person signifies something more than Himself as an isolated unit. He represents and signifies a vast, elect company to come to His likeness, to be conformed to His Image. It is only as we really see Christ in a spiritual heavenly way that we know anything about the church in truth. So do not begin to study the doctrine of the church, and be very careful how you take hold of any teaching about the church. Always remember that you can never have that in a living way unless you are seeing Christ, and for the expression of the

church we have to keep on seeing Christ. It is to be the manifestation of Christ. You may have none of the doctrine, teaching, theory, and yet be in the good of the reality of seeing the Lord. Far better to have it that way than to have all the technique and not to have seen the Lord. It is on heavenly ground that He is seen, and that Mount is a marvellously comprehensive Mount. It goes right back to those eternal counsels of the Godhead before man was created, in their deliberations, counsels and conceptions as to the meaning of the creation which they were about to bring into being, and man was its centre; and right on to the eternity yet to be the realization of that, and it is fixed upon that Mount. It is a tremendous Mount, and it is tremendous to come up into a heavenly place and see the Lord, and, while that may sound external and somewhat remote and far away, it simply is what happens when the Holy Spirit gets a full way in us. It is what happened on the day of Pentecost, it is what happens whenever Christ becomes absolutely Lord and Master in a life. The sovereign Lordship of Christ as Head is the secret of everything else.

THE MOUNTAIN OF HEAVENLY DISPENSATION

In order that the essential nature of the Lord's work and the Lord's purpose in this age should be known livingly and worked out livingly, a higher spiritual position is necessary. We understand so well the nature of the work of the great adversary in this connection. We see the success of that work even before we get out of the New Testament. From the high altitude of the first years as set before us in the book of the Acts, the church began to decline. When we get out of the apostolic age we find that decline steadily going on, until the church publicly, generally, becomes a thing of this world, even becoming politically attached to the earth. The battle all through the ages has been in this very connection, as to whether the church would maintain or retrieve the loss of its heavenly high position, or for any reason at all, by prosperity or adversity, accept something lower. What is and has been true throughout all its history is true today and is true with us. It is true in the case of every individual believer, as it is of the whole — the tendency to come down; and everything from the side of the enemy is directed towards creating a lower level of things than God intended, and therefore a lower level than that to which the Lord can wholly commit Himself. It is only as the Lord's position for His people is held that the Lord can commit Himself.

It is at this point that we need to recognise something that may solve some problems or just give the final answer to a lot of our difficulties. That to which the Lord really does commit Himself wholly is the spiritual side of things, not the temporal side of things, even in relation to His work. He may facilitate; He may help; He may send resources; He may rule and overrule in temporal matters; but we would agree that it would be very dangerous for the Lord to make that His realm of complete operations. That is, whenever a difficulty arises in the temporal realm, if the Lord immediately came right in and swept that out of the way and gave an easy, clear path to His work and His servants, it would really militate against

true spirituality, and it would bring the whole thing down to a temporal level, and you can see what would happen. Multitudes would come in because of the advantages. 'It is a good thing to be a Christian; God does everything for you if only you will be a Christian', and so you become 'rice Christians', as they are known in certain parts of the world. So the Lord neither can nor will nor does commit Himself fully to the temporal aspects of His own work.

My point at the moment is that the Lord does commit Himself to the spiritual side. You may be having a bad time in temporal things; there seems to be hold up, delays, contradictions and you wonder that the Lord does not do this and that in the realm of material things which you think are necessary to the Lord's work. But when you begin to look at the spiritual side of things, you have to say that the Lord is there, there is something happening there, the Lord is going on there. There seems to be a contradiction, but really it is only a proof that the higher the level above the earthly and above the natural, the fuller is the measure of the divine commitment. That is what we are after. Perhaps in the churning sea of illustrations and symbol and type, you have just lost sight of the real landscape, but that is what it is. A certain level is necessary for the full accomplishment of the divine purpose in this dispensation, and the measure of the Lord's commitment is the measure of our 'altitude'. Heaven always symbolizes universality. There is a sense in which you cannot get beyond there. Spiritually the position in union with a heavenly Lord means fulness, and the measure of fulness depends entirely upon that heavenly life and the heavenly nature of everything.

Perhaps that helps us to come to these closing chapters of the Gospel by Matthew. We come to our next altitude in chapter 24.

The shaking of the earthly

"And Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on His way; and His disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple." How does that strike you? The disciples wanting to take the Lord Jesus on a sightseeing trip, and show Him the buildings of the temple! That is where their eyes are, that is what they are thinking to be important, that is their idea of impressiveness, importance, greatness and grandeur. You have not gone very far towards this mountain before you note this setting. "But He answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be

thrown down. And as he sat on the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the consummation of the age?" (A.R.V. Marg.). You know what follows through Matthew 24. It is the old ground of the prophetic school, and we are not having anything to do with that now, because that would bring us down out of our mountain at once; but what does clearly arise here in connection with this Mount is that it is the Mount of the heavenly dispensation. We see that material and temporal things according to this world's ideas and standards of greatness and even of the religious world's standards, are the things which govern the mentality of these disciples after all this time. There is something there so deep-rooted, so inveterate, so persistent. We do not judge them, we are just like them. However spiritual we may think we are, the fact remains that we are tremendously influenced by temporal standards. It is a continuous battleground as to how things stand in this world before men, and even as to what the great religious leaders, and even evangelical leaders of our time regard as the important thing. It has a good deal of influence with us. The Lord makes His pronouncement about that. The whole thing is going to be completely disintegrated. And it is on a mountain that He takes up this whole question, and you cannot get away from the fact — however it may be chopped up by those who are interested in these things — that at least the first part of this chapter relates to Jerusalem, and what comes out is that it is going to be broken up, shaken to its foundations and will totter to the ground. All that which they thought so great and so permanent is going. All that which they thought so established here will not have one stone left upon another.

On the Mount He begins to show the disintegration of the one in order to make room for the other. On the Mount heaven touches earth and from there the heavenly dispensation is clearly in view. Notice some of the small details, for example, "The disciples came unto Him privately." Of course, they are scared for their very lives that such statements as He has just made should be known by the people concerned, so it is in secret that they come to Him; they are afraid of this whole thing. How different they are not so long afterwards! You see them in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost! But here they are afraid for themselves and they are afraid for Him, and they are afraid for everybody. What a real difficulty it is!

The test of the heavenly dispensation

He leads them to the Mount of Olives. Just glance back at chapter 21, and you will see that it was from the Mount of Olives that He sent those to find the ass on which He would ride into Jerusalem, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah: “Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; ... lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass” (Zech. 9:9). From the Mount of Olives He went, and in that meek and lowly way presented Himself as King. The fickle multitude, of course, jumped at earthly possibilities, and again the disciples are all in it. But when you get to Matthew 21:15, you get to the true situation in Israel among the Jews, and it will be found that even the fickle multitude will come to that presently when they discover that He did not mean a temporal, political kingdom at all. And when all that prospect seems to be more than doubtful, the crowd will join the ruler’s cry, “Away with Him!” The real thing deep down behind is in verse 15: the positive antagonism towards Him; no desire to have Him, of course stimulated by envy and jealousy. The place where it was really drawn out as to what people wanted was the Mount of Olives. From there it was first of all drawn out as to what people were after; apparently on the one side wanting a king, (but see what sort of king and kingdom they wanted!), and behind that was, “We cannot have that and we do not want the other.” There is a deep-down antagonism to the kind of kingdom that He is really bringing in, although it may seem otherwise in the case of the multitudes who went before and followed after shouting “Hosanna”. Really their thoughts and His are very far apart, and that becomes very clear in the end. The Mount of Olives first of all gets down into the truth as to what people are after. You never know the truth about a situation. It may look alright, it may seem to be quite favorable, but in fact it may be all wrong, false, untrue. You never know until you obtain the heavenly position of higher ground, and then from that higher ground you can see the truth about things. That works in principle; that works in history. If you present the high ground of God’s full thought for His people and the hearts of the people are really set upon having a work for God down here that is flourishing and prosperous and well-spoken of, you find that people are really, after all, only going with Him so long as He comes into line with their ideas and ambitions. But immediately that runs counter to thoughts more earthly, thoughts even in relation to Him, something deeper rises up. They are not going to have that. You have seen that many times; you must not touch their things. They say it is for the Lord, but you must not touch

it; it is their own. If you are not coming to help their thing or things with your ministry or presentation, of course they won't have it, and it resolves itself into this: they won't have Him; that is not the kind of Lord they want. They want a Lord who is going to make *their* thing for Him successful down here. You can only know and discriminate between the true and the false when you yourself are on the higher ground. Perhaps you know something about that. The Lord may have led you on spiritually, He has led you into new realms, and you look back and see what your devotion to the Lord really amounted to before — very largely something in this life.

The heavenly dispensation the doom of the earthly

Then the Mount of Olives was also the place from which Jerusalem's rejection and doom was settled. Matthew 21:19-20 embodies this: "And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only; and He said unto it, Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever. And immediately the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How did the fig tree immediately wither away?"

From this Mount, He wept over Jerusalem. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:37-38). From the Mount of Olives this whole thing — which is not the true, not the heavenly, although professedly, ostensibly, for God — is rejected and its doom is fixed.

A kingdom which cannot be shaken

It was over against the Mount of Olives, just by the Mount of Olives, that the Lord went up in ascension, and the whole dispensation from that point, everything in relation to Him, became heavenly. You see how this Mount governs this whole matter of a temporal, earthly dispensation, and a spiritual and heavenly one. The Mount of Olives is the dividing point in this matter. We said that the first part of Matthew 24 relates to Jerusalem, and it is clear that it connects with the letter to the Hebrews. "Ye are come unto ... the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22). And then what follows? "But now He has promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven. And this word,

Yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain. Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken ...” (Heb. 12:26-28). You see how this fits in there. The letter to the Hebrews is the transition from the earthly, (the whole system of types in the old dispensation), to the heavenly, and then it comes to its climax with this: all the earthly will be shaken to its very foundations and will totter to the ground, but “receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken ...”. That is all fixed, so to speak, in the Mount of Olives. From that vantage point you can see the difference between that which is down there and that which is up above. Hebrews, of course, is the heavenly kingdom.

Here on this mountain we have the foreshadowing of the new dispensation which can only really be seen from above. People looking up from below will never see it. You have to get up above and see it from the heavenly standpoint to see what God’s real character in this dispensation is, the character of His work and His purpose. You must have the eyes of your heart enlightened.

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE ECLIPSE OF THE EARTHLY

“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Then said Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended in me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee” (Matt. 26:30-32).

Midnight

Here the Mount is the place of the eclipse of all the earthly. It is rather remarkable and impressive how one thing moves into another like this. It is as though you are in one continuous, unbroken movement; the Mount of Olives bringing out in clear revelation this thing which has to go, and the Mount of Olives again showing how it is going, and bringing them right into the eclipse of all that. They were still clinging, still holding on for something here. Now it is shown that that is going into midnight, going to be blotted out, and so far as they are tied up with it, they are going to be blotted out, they will go with it if they are bound up with it, and their only hope is that they come out on to other ground altogether. What a terrific thing is the breaking of the earthly and the natural things. Just look at these men when this word was fulfilled — all made to stumble, offended because of Him, scattered abroad, disintegrated in every way; personally in themselves, broken to pieces, shattered; among themselves, scattered, no one trusting the other's report. Nobody is being trusted. Yes, a real scattering in every way. What a shattering thing it is to be delivered from the old, earthly attachment, even in the things of God. Your world goes to pieces. When God brings you into view of His real spiritual order of things, the real nature of His work in this dispensation, your world eclipses, disintegrates, and you go into the dark, you do not know where you are. You have lost one world and so far you are not right through into

the other. It is midnight. There can be midnight in spiritual history; when the Lord is putting us through a transition from one level to another, applying the cross to things which were less than the Lord's intention, we cry out to the Lord to lead us into His heavenly fulness. We pray and beg of Him to do it, but let us remember that that is not done mechanically or automatically. You go through some tremendous disintegrating process, the scattering and breaking up of your old world. At times it may be like this. You are between two worlds. Here the Mount of Olives for this occasion was between two worlds, heaven and earth. It was something suspended, so to speak, between the two. It was the end of one; the other was in process. They will be there presently, but they are not there yet. There was an earthquake when Christ died, and there very often is an earthquake in another way when we come really into the meaning of that death so far as things spiritual and things temporal are concerned. Our very earth shakes under us, and things come tottering, tumbling and crashing down all about us, and so often it takes an earthquake to do that. Ruins, just ruins! Well, that is a dark side because we are talking about the mountain of the eclipse of the earthly. "Scattered abroad".

The dawn

Thank God, from this mountain the streaks of dawn had begun to rush across the sky. Presently we shall see them in that dawn which is not yet daylight, see them between the cross and the day of Pentecost. It was just like that — flickers, streaks of light rushing across the sky. Two men on the way to Emmaus — it is a streak of the new dawn. And other things are happening, all very uncertain yet, all seemingly unreal, and yet very real, something in between day and night. But the day will break! They will come right into the daylight. I say that here, because, remember, God's nights are always intended to lead to new days, and if you are in the in-between stage now, you may just be getting streaks, swift shafts of light flashing across your horizon, that is the promise of a new day. "All ye shall be made to stumble, shall be offended ...". That may be necessary in the ways of God with us. If offendedness has to come to us in our ways with God, in our very going on with the Lord; if He has to bring about the offendedness and allow us to stumble, let us remember He never does it with a view to final devastation, it is not to ultimate loss, it is simply the exchange of the lesser for the greater. We are going to come out into something better through this eclipse. "I will smite the shepherd, and the

sheep of the flock shall be scattered.” Yes, scattered on the earthly ground, but gathered on the heavenly.

The day

The fact is this is not just an outside event and happening. The fact is that that earthly ground itself as the very nature of disintegration, is only accelerating the process which will take place sooner or later. That earthly life, that earthly association, has in it all the seeds of corruption, therefore of disintegration, because there is death in it. You know quite well that any Christianity that is earthbound has death in it, and sooner or later it will disintegrate; it will not stand the shaking. It is only on resurrection ground where another incorruptible life is present that you have the very nature which cannot be disintegrated. It is in the resurrection that we are begotten again — not to the prospect of another eclipse or shattering, but unto a living hope. In resurrection there is an indissoluble life, and therefore that which is on that ground is something that will stand and withstand the shaking.

THE MOUNTAIN OF COMMISSION

Reading: Matthew 28:16-20.

One thing that must be noted in this connection is the ‘inclusiveness’ of this mountain. It is the mountain which includes all the other mountains that we have seen in these meditations.

A mountain which includes all others

Here in this mountain there is, at least potentially, the first mountain, the new nature of the people concerned, the new heavenly nature of the people concerned. You do not need me to work that out. You know the Lord is not going to commission anybody out of the old Adam who is not reconstituted, who has not the heavenly nature. The tragedy is that so much of the work of the Lord in the nations is nullified because the old man does come up so much in those who are seeking to do that work. So this mountain must include that.

Then the second mountain, or the mountain of His heavenly presence in the midst of the storm; from the mountain down to the lake; the heavenly presence for the sake of His own in the conflict. “Lo, I am with you always.”

The heavenly resource is in the third mountain. They came by His feeding of the multitude, to discover heavenly resources for situations for which they were naturally not equipped. There was heavenly supply. And here, what is the heavenly supply? “I am with you.” That is how it worked out afterwards, and we know that if we know the Lord is with us, we are equal to any situation.

The heavenly vision — transfiguration; surely that is included in this final Mount! “All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.” The heavenly vision, the Lord glorified in His sovereign position

by the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. All authority is Mine! That was the power of the church later on, of the apostles, and that was their testimony by which they overcame.

A new dispensation, the dispensation of the Spirit, we know that that is included here. It is not mentioned, but we know that, although this commission was given here like this, another of the evangelists recorded it in this way: “but tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Then the book of Acts begins with, “Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you” (Acts 1:8). So that right here, interwoven with the commission, is the new day, the new dispensation of the Spirit, in which everything is spiritual in its character. Also inherent here is that transition through the cross out on to the other side, for here they are out on the other side.

So all these other mountains, with what they signify of spiritual principles, are gathered into this final one, and the point is this — you have got to have that in order to be in the commission. It is no use taking hold of these words at the end of the Gospel, ‘The Great Commission’ as it is called, and giving it to anybody, saying, If you are saved, get on with the great commission — “Go ye, and make disciples of all the nations.” There may be disaster along that line, you have to have a background, and basis, a heavenly position, otherwise this world and its principles will break you. You cannot meet the situation in the nations unless you are in a spiritual position.

I have said that the need is a higher position, higher ground, and oh, how clear that is! I have said that for years, but I have never felt the force of it so much as when I was in India recently — the need for the servants of God being on higher ground to be able to cope with situations, things which arise in ‘missionary work’ as it is called; and for the most part they recognize that. What we need is a higher position. There are different ways of putting it, but that is what it amounts to. The carrying out of the commission demands a mountain position, a higher ground, which includes these things about which we have been speaking. This is the basis of the commission.

A mountain in Galilee

They “went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them”. They are now in *Galilee*. It is not Jerusalem now; it is outside Jerusalem; it has moved away from Jerusalem. Take out of that what you

like. But they are in *Galilee*, the place where He performed His first sign. “This beginning of His signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee” (John 2:11). That sign was the turning of the water into wine, the new wine of the kingdom; the new life; something higher which everybody had to admit was higher than anything that had been. You will not find that in Jerusalem now. The Ethiopian had been up to Jerusalem and tasted its wine, but, going away a disappointed man, he found real wine in the desert away from Jerusalem. It is not there now; that is merely formal religion; that is merely earthly. It is in Galilee — the new wine and the better wine and all else that is, in principle, bound up with the first inclusive sign in Cana of Galilee. Yes, it is there that the last touch in commissioning His disciples is found. He will come back yet to the Mount of Olives and go up from there, but the commission is away up there in Galilee. Oh, said Nathanael, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth” (John 1:46), Nazareth in Galilee? The commission comes out of Galilee. “A prophet is not without honour save in his own country” (Matt. 13:57). That was Galilee before. But the sign, the place of dishonour, reproach and rejection has become the place of world conquest. This is a mountain in Galilee.

Heaven governs all

So it is the high place of the commission, the place where heaven and earth are in touch with one another. But heaven governs all; “All authority has been given”. The word there literally is ‘has just been given’. It opens the door to rather interesting suggestions — “All authority has just been given unto me in heaven and on earth.” And you remember His words to Mary: “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father” (John 20:17). It suggests that there was a movement between heaven and earth during those forty days after the resurrection. “I have not yet ascended unto My Father.” “All authority has just been given unto Me.” Was He moving to and fro between heaven and earth? Well, it is only a suggestion, but even the suggestion carries the fact that now heaven is brought into touch with this earth to govern it. Sovereignty from above in Him is moving in relation to this earth to take out from the nations a people for His Name.

Well, all that means for us is that there is a place to which the Lord would bring us where heaven really is governing. That is the point, a high place with the Lord where we are not left to our earthly resources, left as a prey to things down here; not left just to do the thing which will pass when

we pass, but everything comes out of the eternal heavens and is stable, vast, sufficient and eternal. Yes, everything from above.

The Lord, then, is seeking to have us on higher ground, and on that higher ground we find Him in fulness for all that is needed here.

Concluded.