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# The Anointing of the Holy Spirit



**T. Austin-Sparks**



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# The Anointing of the Holy Spirit

*by T. Austin-Sparks*

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# Chapter 1 - The Anointing to Minister

*Reading: Luke 3:21,22, 4:1,2,18,19; Acts 4:27, 10:38; 2 Cor. 1:21,22; 1 John 2:20,27; 1 Sam. 16:11-14; 2 Sam. 7:8.*

I am quite sure that many of the Lord's people are none too clear upon the different aspects of the Holy Spirit's Presence and ministry in the life of the believer, and that there is a good deal of confusion; that terms become mixed and there is not clear discernment of the specific significance of each term used in the Word of God. I mean the fact that we hear of those in the New Testament who were *baptised* with the Spirit, and *filled* with the Spirit, and *sealed* by the Spirit, and *anointed*; and it is important that we should be able to discriminate on these matters. It is not my intention to lead you out in such a discrimination, that may come itself as we go on. What I am concerned and occupied with is the anointing as representing some particular aspect of the Holy Spirit's presence and work.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit need not be something apart from, or distinct from, our definitely receiving the Holy Spirit. That is not always so. It may depend very largely upon the measure in which we apprehend the truth of the Spirit. There is that instance in Acts 19: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" making the receiving of the Holy Spirit something subsequent to believing. The context shows quite clearly that there was absolutely no light whatsoever upon the truth of the Holy Spirit, and those spoken to were in utter ignorance as to whether the Holy Spirit was. The question by the Apostle there was evidently asked because he had discerned the absence of what he knew to be an essential of a true and full life in Christ. That may be an exceptional case, for in most instances in the New Testament we find the Holy Spirit coming, possessing, and often filling at the time of believing and of the exercise of saving faith and of a consecration or surrender to our enthroning of the Lord Jesus. But I repeat, it is not necessarily a thing apart that we receive the anointing; it is a part of our understanding of the truth; it is something to be understood. In the understanding of it then, is particular value.

## **Anointing for all to Minister**

Now to get directly to this matter, it will be perhaps simplest if we immediately state what is the specific characteristic of the anointing of the Spirit. I think undoubtedly it is the vocational side of the Spirit's presence in us. The active functional side. The anointing has to do with vocation and action. We may have the Spirit, the Spirit may be in us, the Spirit may be very largely quiescent in us, very largely in shall I say a passive state or we in a passive state to the Spirit. The anointing is always intended to mean action and vocation, in relation to the purpose of God.

Were I not afraid of being misunderstood a little I should speak of it as the official side of things. When we use a word like that a large number of people who regard themselves as the rank and file, the ordinary folk, begin to visualise a class of people anointed who become the official class, and they regard themselves as being not in that specific class. They get back into the Old Testament and see certain ones anointed and set apart by anointing, and so they constitute mentally an Old Testament class all anointed on New Testament ground. I want to say immediately that you must not entertain that mentality. Anointing now is not for a class, it is for all the Lord's people. It never was, in the thought of God, for a class. Even in the Old Testament where you have certain ones anointed such as Aaron and his sons, they were only representative in the thought of God; they really did include all the rest of the Lord's people, and as the Lord looked upon them He looked upon all His people, and all His people were anointed in them, they were anointed for all, for all the people

laid their hands upon them; which meant there was identification between all the people and those who stood representatively for them. The principle is carried over into the New Testament and all the Lord's people are called into the anointing. I think John makes that perfectly clear in his first letter, from which we have read. He is speaking to "my little children" and he speaks to them of the anointing which they had received and which was in them and which taught them things. So that when we use the word "official" we are not speaking of any specific class of people; we mean that the anointing is that which marks out in the matter of vocation, of active service, of purpose in Christ.

Now you can trace that truth right through if you like. You can trace it from before the present creation, for evidently anointing was known before Adam was created. Ezekiel 28 speaks of one who was termed "The anointed Cherub that covereth." Lucifer was probably anointed to a specific office in relation to God's universal thought and purpose. It was position that was involved in the anointing. And then all the way through the Old Testament you find that the anointing carried with it something of an active character in relation to the purpose of God. It brought in action; it brought in vocation. It carried with it position, dignity, and various other features.

In the New Testament, of course, the thing is quite patent. With the Lord Jesus He was born of the Spirit; we have no right to say that the Spirit of the Lord was not with Him through the silent thirty years, but even then when He stepped across the line which divided between His private life and His public ministry there was that which betokened the anointing, and under the anointing through the opened heaven He stepped into His ministry, shall we say His official work. It was a stepping out into His heavenly vocation under, and by reason of, the anointing. And so it ever was.

The Apostles were forbidden to move, with all the fullness of doctrine which they possessed as to the facts of Christ historically, they were forbidden to move even after the commission had been given to go into the world, until that day when with the gift, the advent of the Spirit, they not only received the Spirit but the Spirit came also to them as the anointing for the commission. There was that aspect of it. They received the Spirit, they were baptised by the Spirit, they were filled with the Spirit, but they were also anointed in the same hour, which put them into a place of active vocation and made the commission possible.

The Apostle Paul following later, used these words which we have read from 2 Corinthians 1:21: "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." I think he was referring to himself and Silvanus and Timothy, but he was also linking the Corinthians with himself and the others in this anointing. It would be very profitable if we could stay to see how the second letter to the Corinthians makes that possible. The first letter is corrective; the second letter is constructive. In the first letter there is a need for shall we say pulling down false structure; in the second letter there is putting up a right structure. The first letter is a seeking to get an adjustment to the Lord, but the second letter sees an adjusted people commissioned.

The second letter to the Corinthians is service, as you know. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry": "this ministry," that is the key to the second letter. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy, we faint not: but we have renounced the hidden things of shame": "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." And our ministry is that shining forth of Christ in Whom the glory of God has been revealed in our hearts to destroy the darkening work of him who darkens the minds of them that believe not. It is ministry that comes in with the second letter. And so for that ministry the question of anointing comes in in the first chapter.

Now I have said enough to indicate that the anointing is specifically in relation to vocation and

action, and having said that we can see what it is that the Lord is desirous of saying to us in these days.

### **The Many-sided Ministry**

I want to say just one other general word, and it is this; that there may be well-nigh countless phases and aspects of the purpose of God, there may be as many aspects of the purpose of God or of its fulfilment, as there are believers. It may be that the purpose of God calls one into a factory, another into a workshop, another into teaching in a school, another into full-time ministry in the Word of the Lord at home or abroad. And so we might go over all the vocations here on earth of the children of God, and in every one of them if they are there in the will of God, some fragment, aspect, phase of the purpose of God must be bound up with it, and that being so it will be just as necessary and just as blessedly possible for them to be appointed to teach in a school, to work in a factory, to work in domestic duties, as it is to work in what we call "the ministry." Anointing, beloved, can go into the kitchen, into the school, into any place where God appoints, and anointing is just as necessary there as in any other place; and it is a very blessed thing to know that for all manner of work for the House of the Lord there is anointing. That is made very clear in the Word of God. And to have anointed school teachers and anointed factory workers and anointed domestic helps, and anointed everything, makes up the complete function of the House of God in all its ministries.

Now of course it is important that we should be in our work by the will of God, and I do feel there is a great necessity for more prayerful attention to the taking up of vocations under Divine guidance, in order that being in that in the will of God there may be anointing for it, because in that the whole purpose of God is bound up. I am not going to deal with what the purpose of God is for the moment. I am making merely general observations for the moment to move to something more specific from day to day. But anointing is not just for what we call a ministerial class, or for missionaries going abroad. Anointing is for every member of the House of God to fulfil a Divine appointment in the work to which God calls them while they are here on the earth. Anointing is both possible, and necessary, and it is for all. It is to fulfil the vocation; because whatever our earthly vocations, as we are led to them by the Lord, there is a heavenly vocation. There is that which is of God enshrined within that which we are led to by the Lord here on the earth, whatever it is.

Many have discovered in work which they would never have chosen for themselves, in vocations which they have oft-times sought to escape and get out of, that being held there or led there by the Lord and at last having come to the place where they recognise that that is the place where the Lord has put them, and they have accepted it with all their hearts and said: "Lord, I no longer chafe against this, I accept it and give myself to it for all Your will and purpose in it, and claim for this in Thy will all the enablement of the Holy Spirit," they have found there the fulfilment of some fragment of the great Divine purpose which they could never have fulfilled in anything else. The trouble is that so many people have got some false conception about the ministry and that the ministry is one thing and serving the Lord in this and that and something else is another thing. The ministry is that which the Holy Spirit enables you to do in any sphere and occupation to which the Lord leads you.

Now these are very general observations, but not without their importance when we begin to speak about the anointing, because I am afraid in speaking about the anointing of the Holy Spirit people will begin to get these water-tight compartment ideas and think that is for some exclusive spiritual work, being a "minister," a "missionary" going abroad, taking meetings yes, a lot of people think that, but it is not so. The anointing is for anything and everything that the Lord may call to: we may have the anointing there.

## David - a Great Example of Anointing

Having said that, I want to come to our subject more closely. I have read these portions from the books of Samuel, because very largely I think we are going to be occupied with David. David has within the compass of his life almost everything that we want to know about the meaning of the anointing. I am quite sure we shall never exhaust it in these messages, but I feel that the Lord will say some very precious things to us out from the experience and history of His servant David in connection with the anointing.

We read about the anointing of David. If you look at that chapter again, 1 Sam. 16, you will find that it comes in when God has finally rejected Saul, and Samuel is commanded concerning the anointing of God's own man, the man after His own heart. Samuel was evidently mourning very much for Saul, as the opening of the chapter shows, and the Lord reaffirms His rejection and commands him to fill his horn with oil: "...and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons." Samuel is a little fearful of taking this action. He is evidently afraid of Saul and wants to know how the thing can be done without his being involved in the perils of anointing a successor to a living king, or one to take his place. But the Lord leads him and leads him to Jesse, and as you know, all the sons of Jesse excepting David were called.

And the Lord gave Samuel these two things: "I have provided me a king among his sons": and then the Lord said definitely: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." The Lord knows the peril of this thing. The Lord knows how His purposes can be just turned aside, how easy it will be for His intention to be hindered or thwarted. The Lord is taking everything into account. He knows what is going to follow. He knows what this movement involves, and so He takes precautions in His words to Samuel, and says to him in a precautionary word: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Now that is precautionary against a repetition of what has happened. Eliab, this fine, tall son of Jesse, has been brought and he in his stature and appearance compared favourably with Saul, who was head and shoulders above all the rest of Israel. That is what he was in himself, and Samuel was in danger of being impressed with what a man was in himself, and to find that which would obviously without any difficulty commend itself to the people as standing in a line with Saul. That was underlying this whole thing; that there should be the selecting of something upon a natural basis which would commend itself for what it was in itself. And the Lord was rejecting everything, however fine and great it might be, which was something in itself; He was rejecting that. "I have rejected him."

And so they go on, and even Samuel well nigh broke down on this thing: "Surely this is he," said Samuel, and upon his natural understanding, upon his own judgment, upon what appealed to him himself, he would have acted and anointed one who could stand well before men, who could take his place amongst men for what he was in himself; and right through the whole range all that sort of thing the Lord rejected. The Lord rejected right to the last all that was something in itself and that could commend itself to natural men, commend itself to religious people as such. No! The Lord was going to have no repetition of this thing. He has rejected, and there is no way for what is something in itself by nature.

Well, there was no thought of bringing David. Samuel evidently remembered what the Lord said: "I have provided me a king among his sons." "Are here all thy children?" "Well, there is one other, but I did not think it worth while bringing him; he is more used to the sheep than anything else and he is out there looking after those sheep." "He is the youngest, the most insignificant, it is not worth while

bringing him; I did not think it mattered about him at all." I am afraid Samuel, in not a hopeful way, said: "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he comes hither."

An exceedingly perplexing situation. And so they brought David, and when they brought him in the Lord said: "Arise, anoint him: for this is he." Something is said about David which seems to contradict what I have said. Something good is said about him, about his appearance. It says that he was ruddy and of a beautiful countenance. I wonder why that? And why it should be put in the place where it is put. This is not put in a place where it is a point of commendation for the anointing. It is not made the ground of the anointing, but it does represent something when the command to anoint is given, for it is that outward expression of a secret history with God. That is what I want to get at.

### **Secret History with God**

You remember later when after the anointing and after seemingly David had gone back to the sheep, for he went back after the anointing and not until probably forty days after the battle had commenced was it that David was sent by his father with gifts to his brethren, and he heard the challenge of the giant, that some of the secret history came out. When Saul interrogated him he spoke about the lion and the bear and how the Lord delivered him. There was that one who amongst men had no place, who was rejected of men, accounted as not having any position or worthiness amongst men for recognition, but who had a secret history with God in the field, perhaps in the wilderness, and that secret history I think is bound up with what is said about his appearance. There is that which embodies something of God, that expression, that beauty, that ruddiness. It is put in that place, not as the ground of selection or choice, or approval, but as a testimony to something else in the background of his life. It is true that very often one whom the Lord chooses does seem to have something which commends itself to man; a countenance ruddy, a beauty that others take account of, and they say: "Well, it is quite clear the Lord has chosen that one, it is obvious the Lord has anointed that one," and they begin to think that that appearance, that presence, that beauty, that expression, is the ground upon which the Lord has anointed them: but never, never! The Lord never anointed anyone for what they were in themselves. The Lord only anoints on the ground of a secret history with Himself. David there was a background with God which brought him into his place amongst men, but it was not what he was in nature, in himself.

Notice with Saul, he was anointed at the beginning, but the anointing meant that there was something given to him which was not of himself and immediately Saul began to act out from himself apart from God, the anointing was withdrawn. That was the background of his downfall. He did not wait for Samuel, he acted from himself and not under the anointing. And he forfeited the anointing. Note this. While we may have the Spirit, beloved, we may receive the Spirit and the Spirit may abide in us as an indwelling Presence, and failure may take place in our lives, the Spirit may not withdraw from us because of failure now in this dispensation, that is, we may not lose the Holy Spirit because we make mistakes, but we can forfeit the anointing. The anointing is one thing and having the Spirit is another. The anointing represents the equipment for our vocation and we may miss that. The anointing has brought to some the spiritual ability perhaps to teach, or for some purpose or other of a practical vocational character, the anointing has been with them for that, and by wrong doing they have forfeited that anointing and lost, not the power to talk, but the power to *minister*: not the power to preach, but the power in preaching to reach men's hearts. The danger is we might go on with the office and lose the unction; and while we may not lose the Spirit we may lose the anointing.

### **Anointing Implies the Setting Aside of Man by Nature**

Now the very first thing which comes to us in David's life is this, that the anointing is that which sets



nature aside and takes no account of nature. That is very important. The anointing says most clearly throughout the Word of God that all this which follows is of God and nothing of man. And it demands that as its basis. The basis of the anointing is always the setting aside of man by nature. "Look not upon his countenance, or on the height of his stature for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." The Lord's eye was upon the heart of David away there following those sheep. "He chose David and took him from the sheepfolds." The anointing comes not upon the ground that man is anything in himself, but that everything is of the Lord.

If you follow that through you will see that it applies. Take it up with the Lord Jesus. The anointing unto His ministry did not come until He had been down into the waters of Jordan. Representatively He was acting as man and was going down into the waters of Jordan. His baptism, typical of His Cross, declared most clearly that everything from that point onward was of God and nothing of Himself, nothing out from Himself. "I do nothing of myself." In those waters He has, in type, passed out of sight, and now the anointing takes things up on that ground.

Paul received the Spirit when he went into Damascus and Ananias laid his hands upon him. He received the Spirit then, being baptised, but the manifestation of the anointing did not come for some time after that. Probably he was anointed unto his work when he received the Spirit, but the expression of that anointing was not for some time after that. He tarried two years in Arabia. Yes, he testified. You can fulfil an occasional ministry without the full meaning of your anointing being manifested. The anointing is for the specific thing in the purpose of God. The thing for which you are chosen, the elect vessel. And it is not until all that is of ourselves has been put aside, all our judgments, thoughts, preferences, that we come into the fullness of the anointing, because it is not until then we come into the fullness of purpose.

If Paul was anointed when he received the Holy Spirit in Damascus there were two years in Arabia, although he testifies in Damascus; and then at least a year in the assembly at Antioch. Doubtless he had bits of ministry; doubtless others were seeing that he had the Spirit; doubtless features of an Apostle were developing in him; but then at the end of at least three years the Holy Ghost said: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," and they laid hands on them and sent them away. And now the anointing is going to be manifested along full and specific lines in ministry; He has waited for that. The anointing may have been there. The Spirit was undoubtedly there, but now he is coming out into the work for which he was a foreknown and foreordained vessel, and for that the full measure of the anointing is manifested.

What happened in those two years? I have no doubt that those two years in Arabia were years in which Saul of Tarsus was disappearing very much. Speaking to the Romans, he says that he serves God in his spirit and in newness of spirit. That represents a big change and you can see the difference between the old spirit in which Saul of Tarsus served God and the new spirit in which Paul the Apostle served God. He was disappearing as Saul. He was coming into a subjection in the House of God which was not natural in a man like Saul of Tarsus. If anything was foreign to a man's nature, subjection was foreign to Saul's nature. You cannot imagine Saul of Tarsus being subject to anybody. But now twelve months in an assembly at Antioch, having had to submit himself for guidance in the assembly at Damascus which he was going to destroy, represents a big disappearance of Saul of Tarsus. And when this is done, this setting aside, he becomes just one of an assembly amongst the rest, then the power of the anointing can be manifested and lead him out into the full work of his life. It is always on that basis. David was not counted amongst his brethren. The Lord Jesus disappearing in the waters of Jordan. Saul of Tarsus disappearing into Arabian desert, and, *as Saul*, disappearing from view even in the assembly of God; and then on that ground, the anointing, that is the vocation,

the service.

Now that may take time, beloved. It may take time to get rid of us. There has got to be some deep, secret history with God before the full meaning of the anointing can be known, or manifested. It may take years to do that, to bring us to the place where it is not the work for the Lord, but where we can do nothing for the Lord, and unless the Lord does it all, nothing will be done. It is thus that we come into the thing for which God chose us. The anointing can be manifested in all its meaning just as soon as we disappear. And I am not saying merely that we disappear as sinners, but also as preachers, workers, religious organisers, as figures, something to be taken account of. Any kind, any form, any measure of the expression of that horrible self-life, self-consciousness, that wants to be taken account of, that wants to be noticed; there are thousands of ways in which this horrible flesh works to be taken notice of even in the most spiritual of the Lord's people; that spirituality itself very often is taken hold of as a means to be taken account of: to be holy in order that others may recognise how holy we are. To be so burnt up with zeal for God that others may say: "How that man pours himself out for God." The flesh can get into the most holy thing, can come along the most intensely spiritual lines; it can lie back there of all our most sincere aspirations; our spirituality and devotion to be taken account of.

The flesh works so subtly and God only knows when it is mastered, when it is sufficiently subject to allow of Him manifesting the anointing and bringing us into the fullness of our vocation. Some of us have been very devoted to the Lord, and very earnest in service for the Lord, but have had our own ideas about the work of the Lord, and we have come to see afterwards that they *were* our ideas, although we believed at the time that they were the Lord's ideas; that we were in something that we fully believed to be all of God, and the Lord has had to put us through a test that has shown us that with all our honesty and sincerity, the thing was not so much of God as we thought. He has had to do it by grinding to powder, until we were in a state really willing to have the Lord's best and fullest. We would have said with tremendous emphasis, with all our heart, we were willing for the Lord's will, and if the Lord had tested us out upon the letting go of some long-standing tradition, something with which we had sentimental associations, something which seemed to us was all right, and He had said: "Now put that on the altar, break with that, let that go" we would not have done it; we could not have done it. The Lord has had to do deep things in order to make those things sink away and lose their hold on us; even the things which we believed to be all according to God's full purpose have had to come to the place where we have let them go.

Our judgments about God's work, and our calling, and our ministry, and our work, those all have to go into the melting pot, and we have to get to the place where the Lord can really do anything with us. We cannot come to that place, to that position, by simply declaring we are there. You cannot stand up in a meeting and say: "I am willing for God to do anything with me." These things cannot be done under the emotion of an hour or an appeal. It sometimes takes God years to bring us to that place. And I sometimes wonder how many of the saints that have trodden this earth have ever got there: if there is not some point where, if He put His finger, He would meet with some question. The Lord only knows. This represents a deep work where man, even religiously, as such, disappears and the Lord Himself becomes everything. Then the Lord can move us out into the fullness of His purpose and when we get into the fullness of His purpose then the fullness of the anointing is there to meet us in that. The anointing is only manifested in the measure in which we are in the purpose of God. The more we are in the purpose of God, the more the anointing will be manifested.

### **The Anointing is God Committing Himself**

Now we would not speak about the anointing as some *thing*. The anointing is God committing

Himself and when you see that you see why all that I have said is so true. What is the anointing? Acts 10:38: "Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." That anointing meant that God had committed Himself to Jesus of Nazareth. That is not setting aside His essential Deity, but in relation to His ministry that is said. God had committed Himself to Jesus of Nazareth. You remember it is said of the Lord Jesus Himself that He would not commit Himself unto them because He knew what was in man; *therefore*, He would not commit Himself. Do you think God, Who knows all, is going to commit Himself to man in his natural state? What would man do with God? What would our flesh do with God if only we could use God? Think of God putting Himself at our disposal and saying: "You can do with Me what you like." We would make God the very means of making ourselves God. We would seek to make ourselves Very God by using God to that end. We would bring ourselves into prominence. He demands the Cross as the basis of our anointing.

There is no anointing without the Cross. There is no anointing only as man in what he is in himself disappears from view, and as the Cross is wrought in us more and more deeply, putting us aside, so more and more we come into the eternal purpose of God and therefore, into the anointing. That is, God commits Himself. It is a great thing when God commits Himself. What is not possible when God commits Himself? That is the anointing. You see the anointing brings with it a dignity. It is God in evidence. But that dignity of God can never mark any life which has its own dignity, its own honour, to consider. God has ever been honoured most in those who are most empty of themselves. Dignity! Why, the humblest and weakest child of God and servant of God, anointed with the Holy Ghost, has compelled the great of the world to acknowledge something greater, something mightier, some factor they could not account for as being of nature. There is a dignity which comes with anointing.

The child of God is not a poor weak, cringing thing that is down on its face to everything else of this world. The anointing carries that which speaks of God; quiet confidence, dignity, assurance; not domination, not assertiveness, but dignity. That marked the presence of the Lord Jesus amongst men. The Rulers and the Authorities did not know what to do with Him, how to get the better of Him. It was quiet dignity. They were up against something more than man, it is moral and spiritual elevation. And meekness which is the meekness of Christ is a mighty quality, a tremendous thing, a powerful thing. Someone said at Keswick that people often interpret meekness as being weakness; but the meekness of Jesus Christ is never weakness, it is God. God has committed Himself. That is the anointing. You see, that is just the fringe of things, but it is where we begin. David, not allowed a look in by man, becomes the chosen of God because of a secret history with God.

Beloved, it is not what you and I are before man, of our own making; it is what we are before God. We have often said that it is personality; but what is personality? Personality is character formed in secret with God. That which comes out of the secret history with God. It is that that registers itself upon others. It is secret history with God. And all our own natural abilities simply have to recede to make way for the Lord, then a new set of faculties comes in, which are born in the secret place with the Lord. To have the anointing then we have got to have a secret history with God, and if others are to be moved by the Spirit of God through us it can only be as we come out of the secret place where we have been dwelling with the Lord and having everything dealt with there by the Lord; judged, corrected, influenced, adjusted; where we have been learning the Lord.

If we were to dwell upon David's lion and David's bear as a mighty conflict in the secret in which the Lord was bound up, we know what that may mean. Those terrible conflicts in secret where we learn the power of God in victory over the lion and the bear; those awful beasts of the Satanic realm and of

our own natural lives. We have learned the mighty power of God in secret victory. It is that that brings the anointing into public; that, and nothing else.

## Chapter 2 - The Anointing For Purpose

We have the Book of Samuel open before us and we take up that one thought that anointing relates to specific purpose and vocation, and that we are anointed unto or for *that*. So it is necessary for us, in order to understand the working of the anointing, to bring into view the purpose of David's life, and therefore, the purpose of his anointing.

### Why David Was Raised Up

The purpose of David's life... We open the first book of Samuel and we see the state of things in the first chapter and onward. Here we have the spiritual condition of the Lord's people in general gathered up representatively in their spiritual head, Eli. Eli represents the general spiritual condition of the people of God. Eli is in a state of weakness. Weakness characterises him in every direction and every connection. He is unable, through weakness, to rightly govern, lead, or maintain the spiritual life of the people, and his personal state corresponds to their state, and their's to his. The people of God are in a state of spiritual weakness and impotence in the days of Eli.

### Loss of Spiritual Vision

Eli is in a condition of almost entire, though not absolute, blindness. His eyes are dim. His vision had become very much shortened. His natural state of vision represented the spiritual state both of himself and of the people. It says: "And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." There was this almost entire blindness, the shortened vision, the veil. Eli's hearing of the voice of the Lord was also in a state of ineffectiveness. His spiritual ear had lost its keenness. When Samuel came repeatedly to him about the voice, it was not until the thing had happened several times that Eli either jumped to it or drifted into it, that it might be the Lord, it *must* be the Lord. Eli was not hearing the voice of the Lord; Samuel was. And even when Samuel was hearing the voice of the Lord Eli was very slow in discerning that it was the voice of the Lord. The spiritual state of the people of God was just that, they were not hearing the voice of the Lord; they had not the ear to hear what the Spirit was saying.

There is such a great deal of difference between having ears to hear doctrine, teaching, and to have an inner ear which hears the Lord. The Lord never said to the Churches in Asia: "He that hath two ears to hear let him hear," He said: "He that hath an ear"; which is a different thing altogether; "let him hear what the Spirit saith." We cannot hear what the Spirit saith with outward ears. Only the inner organ hears what the Spirit saith. Eli was dull of hearing, and that was the spiritual state of God's people so far as the voice of the Spirit was concerned. Weakness, deafness, blindness and consequent disorder.

### The Divine Order Upset

The Divine order amongst His people, the Divine order in the House of God was all upset. It says: "And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord." Evidently the custom was for the lamp to go out then, but that was contrary to the Word of God. The Word of God stipulated definitely that that lamp should never go out. But here, as though it were the accepted thing "And ere the lamp of God went out." We have not to look far for other and more terrible signs of disorder in the House of God; Eli's sons, for instance. And so the heavenly order was not being reflected in the midst of God's people. The heavenly system had no counterpart there. That which was in the thought of God

had no representation amongst men spiritually. Contrast that with those great chapters in Chronicles where Solomon completes the temple and dedicates it, and see the state of things at the time of dedication. Oh, what a mighty change. What a difference. Death has given place to life; darkness to light, disorder to order, weakness to strength, shame to glory. There you have got David's life-purpose. David was brought in in relation to things as they were in the days of Eli in order to carry them to be what they were in the days of Solomon; and he was anointed for that. Make that contrast and then you have got the key to David's life.

### **Hannah the Fruit of Godly Grief**

We take up this book of Samuel again and we come upon Hannah. There are the conditions, we have outlined them. And then this woman comes before us and we are again to be impressed with the anguish of this woman's heart. The story is told and placed on record of what was going on in Hannah's heart, and it was not merely a natural thing. It is true that her husband had two wives, and the other wife had children and Hannah had none, and naturally could have none. That might be thought to be the ground of her distress, but, not so. If there was some natural element in it, that was not the whole ground. I have no doubt and no hesitation in saying that Hannah's concern and distress was not merely because of the natural state in her own personal life, but it was because of the Lord's testimony. How do you come to that conclusion? By this fact, that here is a woman who naturally could have no child, and then in answer to prayer, by an act of God, that great desire of her life is granted, and then it goes on to say that she weaned the child. Of Sarah, it says that "when the child was weaned," but it says of Hannah that "she weaned the child," representing an eagerness and handed him right over to the Lord, gave him to the House of God and left him there, which would be altogether set against any idea that this woman just wanted this child for her own gratification.

No woman with natural ideas about this thing would be so ready to part with the child. Having been looked down upon and despised, scoffed at by others because of her childlessness, and then when she has that which is an answer to that scoffing, which is her vindication, and which could just answer to the life-long desire of her heart, to at once hand that up; you cannot reconcile these things unless there is another factor, and that factor is, she was concerned about the spiritual state of the Lord's testimony, and she saw that in this son of hers, given by an act of God, there was a possibility of removing or changing the spiritual conditions which prevailed in her day. She had come into line with the interests of God through her travail, and she gave her son as soon as she could in the Lord's interests to change that bad state of things. Yes, her concern was for the Lord's testimony as much and doubtless more than it was for her own satisfaction and gratification and pleasure. There, then, her natural state is seen we are speaking of spiritual principles all the time which lie in the background a great heart-concern for God's testimony, God's interests, spiritual things amongst the Lord's people, and yet naturally no possibility of serving those interests. Strange, was it not? God triumphs where nature says "impossible."

Oh, you are reading deeper, some of you are understanding that the Lord may lay upon us a great burden for His interests, for His testimony. He may call us into fellowship with His own heart in its suffering and anguish about spiritual things amongst His people, and then we discover with all our agony, anguish, and travail, there is absolutely no possibility in us by nature of serving that thing one bit; that nature cannot come to help in that thing, that we by nature, are bereft of all powers to fulfil any ministry in that direction. There is comfort for some of us here, but on the other hand there is also warning. This thing applies in two ways. It applies in this way, that if the Lord's great purposes are really going to be served through us, then nature has to be brought to an end, and it has to be God coming in from the other side, all of God. That means humiliation for us. That means, our going down to a place where we are very conscious that we can do nothing, the Lord must do it all. On the

other hand, the same thing applies in this way, that God does bring us to the place, or He may even constitute us on the principle that we realise how barren we are, utterly devoid of any resources which can avail to serve this great Divine end, and He does it in order that something might be done. Take the Word of God and you will see.

Take the women who were in Hannah's state and you will at once find that there is something there very significant. The fact that Sarah was in the same category, and the typical teaching of the life of Isaac representing the spiritual side of God from heaven breaking in in resurrection, and you see that that came through the utter inability of nature to provide anything. Now Hannah is in that realm and is constituted upon that very basis. You and I have bemoaned our natural uselessness. It may not be that we always knew it and saw it. It may be that we of old thought that we could do something, and we assayed to do it; we had some idea of our ability to do it. God knew how useless we were. The day came when He made us to see it, and we saw that for this work, whatever we might be amongst men on the earth, for this spiritual work we had nothing, we were as barren as we could be and then it was revealed; and we said: "What can be done?" And yet we had a greater concern than ever, we had a great burden for spiritual things; but now there is this great contradiction in our experience. Now when we are more anxious and concerned for the interests of God in His people than ever we were in our lives, now we are more conscious of our utter impotence. The two things are brought together in the Divine sovereignty. Nature cannot help in this; but when we come to the full realisation of that fact, we have come to the place where God can begin to do something in relation to existing spiritual conditions, and it will be of God. Yes, but this costs. And Hannah had to go through a time of being misunderstood by the official and professing religious leaders.

You see the two things. A great spiritual concern unto an agony for the Lord's people and the Lord's testimony. The deep realisation of utter barrenness to serve those interests, those ends, and yet a pouring out of the heart to God about this thing; not accepting it as closing down all possibility, but taking God into account; bringing God into the situation, and while nature says impossible, and the state of things cries back that you are useless in this matter, yet God is a factor, and believing God, with all natural uselessness and with all the state of things which calls for something, she pours out her heart to God. Her cry to heaven about this thing brings her into collision with the religious powers that be; and as she poured out her heart Eli in his blindness, in his dullness, his lack of sensitiveness to spiritual things, watched her and said: "This woman is drunk," and sought to drive her away: misunderstanding by the official religious class, the traditional order of things.

And oh, when some people of God really do become tremendously exercised about His interests, where they look out upon the state of things amongst the professing people of God, when they are hurt by the blindness, dullness, weakness and disorder and find themselves incapable of accepting that state of things as according to God's mind, and their whole being revolts against such a *regime* of spiritual death and disorder, that brings them at once into collision with the religious powers that be, and they are thought to be fanatical, eccentric, extreme, extraordinary, singular, and they suffer. It is not at the hands of the world they are suffering. The world is always ready to appreciate downright earnestness, but religious people are not always prepared to appreciate it. The official system of things does not want its condition upset, broken into; and therefore misunderstands and misinterprets all genuine exercise about the Lord's interests. And such an instrument, a vessel, brought into fellowship with God's heart, has to pass through a time of having all its genuine, true, heart exercise before God interpreted as the motions of an unbalanced mind, or something like that. You are reading deeper than I am saying, but this thing just speaks to our hearts. Well, that is Hannah.

### **Samuel the Power of Prayer**

Now out of that Samuel comes. Samuel comes out of that exercise, that travail, that concern. Samuel comes in spite of that misunderstanding and he is the link between things as they are and things as God intends and desires them to be. Samuel becomes the link between the bad state and God's better state. Samuel marks a transition from one *regime* to another. The book of Samuel is the book of transition and Samuel is the link.

What does Samuel represent in spiritual principle? If we know that, we know what the link is, what that thing is which marks transition from a bad state to a good one, and it does not require a profound study of Samuel's life to get to the predominant significance of it. Samuel represents the place and power of prayer in a day of transition. You can say of Samuel, if you like, his life is prayer. Read Psalm 99: "and Samuel among them that call upon his name". Read Jer. 15:1: "Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out from my sight, and let them go forth." A tremendous statement. Of all the names of mighty men, Moses and Samuel are thus distinguished. We know how Moses stood between the people of God and interceded so that it even looked, interpreted naturally, as though Moses changed the mind of God, as though through his intercession Divine intentions were changed and God repented Him. Moses stood in the breach, and by his intercession moved heaven. And Samuel is linked with Moses, as much as to say that these two men are the last word in power with God in intercession and prayer.

So Samuel comes out as the principle of prayer in a day of transition. That is the link between a bad state and a good one, things as they are and things as He intends them to be. Transition is marked by that mighty prayer. Out of Hannah's travail is brought this transition instrument of prayer. Mark the life of Samuel and see how he called upon the Lord. "Cease not to pray to the Lord for us," said Israel to him one day. That was a testimony. That was saying, in other words, Samuel's life was a life of intercession for Israel and they said: "Do not stop it, we owe everything to your praying to the Lord for us." So Samuel comes out as the principle of prayer, but remember, in order to have power with God in prayer we have to learn to know the voice of the Lord in our own hearts. Samuel's early years were years of learning to know the voice of the Lord. Even when Eli was not recognising that voice, Samuel was being taught to recognise the voice of the Lord; and to be able to speak to God with power we have to have that spiritual intelligence which knows when the Spirit speaks to us. We have to know the Lord's voice in order to be able to speak to the Lord. That is important. It is a basic necessity to a life of prevailing prayer. It is not just a life of pouring out to God petitions and requests, but a life of intelligence, speaking to God because God has spoken within. We speak back to God because God speaks in us. All that brings us to David.

We must not close without mentioning that David comes in through Samuel. David comes in through this prayer link. The instrument of recovery and of the fullness of the testimony comes in through travail in Hannah; through that reaching out to God in spite of all natural disqualifications and uselessness; and through that prayer-life of Samuel David comes in and he is anointed for what? in relation to all that, to bring the testimony to fullness and to finality. The end of David's life and work is the ark of the Lord at rest in the House of God, constructed entirely according to the Divine dictate. David comes in for that. He is anointed in relation to the testimony of the Lord in its fullness and finality. That is the end which marks his life. The subsequent purpose of David's life and anointing was the fullness and purpose of the testimony of the Lord.

### **Anointing is unto the Whole Testimony**

For what are we anointed? To be preachers, evangelists, teachers? Individually anointed to be any one of those, or anything in itself? Never! We may be anointed to fulfil our ministry along any one of



those specific lines, but always related to the whole testimony. If an evangelist uses his gift from God of evangelism as something in itself, be sure that life will be limited. It will stop somewhere, and at the point where that life and that work stops, there will enter something which speaks of that life having missed its fullness and that ministry having failed of the whole purpose of God. That is the tragedy of having an organised system of evangelism which recognises evangelists as something in a watertight compartment and does not carry the work of the evangelist on to the work of the teacher, the pastor, "for the perfecting of the saints." What applies there applies in every other direction of the anointing. It is the whole testimony, not fragmentary. Anointing is one, is relative, is entire, is connected with the fullness and finality of the testimony of Jesus.

There will be much gathered into David's anointing, as we shall see; many who come into association with him as the anointed one, and derive their ministry as it were from his anointing, but it will all be related to one thing. Our individual anointing in Christ is not that we should be constituted something in ourselves, but that the full testimony of the Lord Jesus should be realised through every anointed member. The whole testimony is in view.

I think in the Old Testament there is nothing to compare with David's life for revealing the whole purpose of the anointing. There are other wonderful illustrations of it, but when you get to the end of David's life you have brought in the House of God in magnificent splendour, greatness, fullness, completeness and glory as you have it nowhere else in the old dispensation. This time was always referred to as the pivot, the summit of Israel's glory. David is always looked back upon as the very highest peak of Israel's history. Why? Because of that which marked his life. It was the House of God constituted wholly according to God's mind, with the ark of the testimony there at rest having reached finality. He was anointed to that; and it is only the Old Testament figure of the Lord Jesus as the Anointed One, and we coming into His anointing for the purpose of a universal display of His glory. That is the object of anointing the full testimony of Jesus. Anointing is related to the testimony in fullness.

I have no doubt but that today you are able to see a parallel, to a very large degree, between spiritual conditions as they are amongst the Lord's people generally and as they were in the days of Eli. The more spiritually alive we become the more we recognise how things are falling short of God's full thought, and recovery is the order of the day: but it is along the Hannah, Samuel, David line, if there is to be a recovery of the full testimony of Jesus. Not in some earthly system of organisation or material representation, but a vessel which contains the testimony of Jesus in fullness. If that is to be, this is the way and the way of the anointing is for that. The testimony may only be represented by a small vessel at the end, but it will be in spiritual fullness, which is spiritual greatness.

I want to close with that strong note. The anointing is for that. Have we the anointing? Have we the Spirit? Why, beloved, if that is so, the Holy Spirit has anointed us within unto that very thing. Think of it. God has committed Himself to that end. God is with us for that purpose. To have the whole testimony of Jesus recovered. That is our hope and assurance. How shall it be? Hannah, and the "impossible." How shall it be? Nature cannot help. We cannot do it. All the time nature comes back at us, much as we may groan and travail, nature comes back and says: "You are out of it, you cannot do anything." But that makes room for God, and the anointing comes in there. I glory in this that the anointing came in through Hannah and Samuel. It cannot be done by us. The anointing has come for that purpose and there are no limits to the possibility of the anointing because it is another way of saying that God committed Himself to that. How did the Lord Jesus go through to the full accomplishment of His testimony? By the anointing, "...who through the eternal Spirit offered himself. "...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; *for God was with him.*" God has

committed Himself. And unto the Body of Christ, the Church which is His Body, and to those members when they come into a right relationship with Himself, God has committed Himself for the fullness of the testimony.

# Chapter 3 - The Anointing Gives the Value to Life

*Reading: 2 Samuel 16:13-18.*

Just to take one step backward in our meditation in this matter of anointing, may I remind you of that all-inclusive truth that in the purposes of God it is the anointing which gives the value to the life. It is not natural gifts or qualifications, or anything inherited or cultivated. It is not what we have by birth or what we gain by training that becomes the basis of the value of our lives in relation to the purpose of God. However much afterward the Lord may make use of any such things, the Lord never makes them the essential ground of the value of our lives to Him. This, of course, is quite patent from the fact that very often it has been men and women without any of these things, either by birth or acquirement, whom the Lord has used very mightily for very great purposes.

It is true, on the other hand, that men and women of natural gifts and acquired abilities have been used, and the fact that it is true in both cases means that there is necessarily something other; and that something other is the anointing. I just want to re-emphasise this, that it is the anointing which gives the value to life. It is very important that that should be settled in us once and for all. I know how elementary that is, and yet I am quite disinclined to say it and just pass on. It is a thing that can be said, of course, in a mental way; that is, a thing which we recognise as a bit of truth, and say it. On the other hand, it can be a thing that is said out of some very deep work of God in our lives, the result of a good deal of painful history. And inasmuch as there is a great deal of that painful history back of that truth, when it is a spiritually apprehended truth, therein is the value of the fact. It is the anointing which gives the value to life. Immediately any man or woman begins to regard anything they may have as natural gifts or acquired quality or ability as being in itself the ground, or basis of their being used, they are on the highway to disaster and sooner or later the bottom will fall out of everything for them, and they will find themselves in such a position as to make them say that they wished they had never touched the work of God at all.

On the other hand, it is a blessed fact that the anointing does give a value to life which may never be possible of acquiring or attaining in any other way. If we have the anointing we have an equipment and a value given to life which is something more and something different from all that we may attain or obtain by nature. Forgive the repetition, but it is basic to all that we are saying, to see that the anointing gives value to life. The Lord kept David to that. Even toward the end of his life when he had a great deal of prosperity and success and came into a great place, and the Lord had done wonderful things both for him and through him, and he had a long and illustrious history behind him, the Lord sent His prophet to David and said: "I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be prince over my people, over Israel"; reminding him of his humble origin and that it was from a very ordinary we might say outside position place where others gave him no recognition, it was from that that the Lord took him and brought him into all this; and He kept that fact before him, that the basis of all that was done in the life of David to make him the greatest king that had ever sat, or ever would sit upon the throne of Israel (with the exception of the Lord Jesus) was in virtue of the anointing, and not because of anything in David himself. It was the anointing which gave value to his life.

The Apostle Paul readily admits that that was the secret of everything in his life. Whereas naturally

there might have been some claim made to greatness, ability, and we know how natural men have made a great deal of the natural abilities of Paul, he himself is brought by the Lord to the place where he is the first to admit that the secret of anything and everything of value in his life for God, in the purpose of God, was the anointing, it was not in himself.

One mentions this that we should come back to God's zero unto God's full purpose.

### **The Anointing Relates to the Testimony**

Then we have said that the anointing is connected with the testimony. We said that David's life purpose was the bringing of the testimony to fullness and finality, and it was for that he was anointed. Now because of familiarity with these things, I am afraid we take a good deal for granted, and I am in danger perhaps more than any other of assuming that you know what I am talking about, and I have to be pulled up now and then and reminded that I am assuming too much. This phrase, the term "testimony" with which some of us are so familiar; we may perhaps be taking for granted that people know what we mean by this phrase, therefore it becomes necessary to say a word or two about the meaning of "the testimony."

When we say that David was raised up specially to bring the testimony to fullness and finality and rest in the House of God, what do we mean by "the testimony"? Of course, we know David was a type of the Lord Jesus and that looking on to the Lord Jesus, the Greater David, we see that He came and was anointed for the bringing of the testimony of the Lord to fullness and finality and rest in the House of God. The testimony is one testimony whether it be in David or in Christ, whether it be in the Old Testament or in the New: it is one testimony. In the Old it will be in types and shadows and symbols; in the New it will be in spiritual principles and spiritual values; but the testimony is one and it is called ultimately "The Testimony of Jesus." That phrase, as you know, occurs five or six times in the book of Revelation. Then it is used in the Epistles also, "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you." Now what is the testimony of Jesus? To answer that fully would take very much time. I want to summarise it into three or four phrases, or sentences.

The testimony of Jesus is firstly, Who Jesus was and is; laying the emphasis upon the Who. Secondly, the testimony of Jesus is what Jesus was and is, with the emphasis upon the what this time. Thirdly, the testimony of Jesus is what Jesus did in His cross. And fourthly, the testimony of Jesus is what God eternally purposed concerning Him. As far as I can see those four things cover the whole ground of the testimony of Jesus. You will recognise what a tremendous amount there is gathered up into that. The first, Who Jesus was and is, relates to Himself and covers all the ground of the Person of Christ; and that has engaged and employed theologians ever since Christ came into the world, and is still the battleground of truth.

### **The Person of Christ**

I should like to just say here, especially to my younger brethren, that there is a very important place for spiritual theology. Do not think of theology merely as a technical line of study. Sooner or later you will find yourself involved in the tremendous conflict which rages over the Person of Christ; you will not escape it. You will find that the Devil's deepest and most acute subtleties which he seeks to introduce into the highest realms of spiritual interpretation are related to the Person of Christ, and if he can trip up the most highly spiritual men upon the question of the Person of Christ, he has wrecked and ruined that man's ministry for all time. Remember the Devil's trap most deeply and carefully laid for the most highly and deeply spiritual of God's servants is concerning the Person of Christ, and the more you go on with the Lord the more the enemy will seek to catch you on that

question, because he knows that caught on that matter he has struck at the heart of everything, and you are a finished man if you wobble on the Person of Christ, or if there is the slightest suggestion of untruth, error, in your apprehension of or presentation concerning the Person of Christ. It is the most consecrated and spiritual men and women at whom the Enemy strikes that particular attack to get them somewhere out of the straight concerning the Person of Christ; and spiritual theology (I put those two words together because I do not mean theology merely as a technical study but theology spiritually pursued) is an important thing for our consideration.

Well now, "WHO Jesus is" as being the foundation of the testimony has to do with Himself, the Person of Christ. Let me say it again, that every error, every false teaching, every false system, every opposing religion in this world will be found to have right at its heart the question of the Person of Christ. Many will go a long way in the recognition and acknowledgment of Christ, but the ultimate thing that Christ is God is denied, is not admitted, and that is where there is a parting of company. Well, now I am not going further on that. Number one in the testimony of Jesus is as to Himself.

Number two, as to WHAT Jesus was and is, is as to what He is in relation to man, and there is one word which explains that, it is the word *representative*. In what He was in Himself He did something altogether apart from man, as God. But what He did as representative He did as in organic union with man, and the deep meaning of the incarnation is that; that He organically came into as a part of the race, and therefore became the representative. And there is the representative work of Christ in His birth, in His life on earth, in His work, in His death, burial, resurrection, and heavenly position and work now, as representative. The testimony of Jesus embraces what Jesus was and is, and that relates Him to man.

Thirdly, what Jesus DID in His cross. That embraces the universality of His death, His burial, His resurrection and His reign. That is the testimony of Jesus. The universality of His death, burial, resurrection and reign.

And finally what God has eternally purposed concerning Him relates to His sovereign Headship over all nations as King of kings and Lord of lords. That is the testimony of Jesus.

Now in those four sentences you have summed up all that is in the Bible, and that is the testimony of Jesus. You can trace those things throughout the Old Testament and throughout the New, from Genesis to Revelation. But there is a further word to add. That testimony is deposited in a vessel. That vessel is called "the Church which is His Body," and the testimony is deposited within that vessel in two ways. One, as the sum of revealed truth; and two, as the power of that truth inwrought. The deposit of the testimony of Jesus within the vessel is the truth, as the truth is in Jesus, inwrought by the Holy Spirit. So that it is not truth that is only objective, apprehended by the mind; but truth that has become Life, our very being, made a part of us in experience; that by the Holy Spirit.

Of course, you have only got to sit down now and go back over that ground. The testimony deposited within the vessel the Church which is His Body of which I am a member, revealed and inwrought by the Holy Spirit concerning the Person of Christ, what He is in Himself. Has the Holy Spirit revealed the Lord Jesus to you? Not just that you believe in and assent to the proposition that Jesus is the Son of God, but has that come to me by the Holy Spirit? Has that become a part of you by the Holy Spirit? As to His representative work; have you seen, or are you seeing, by the Holy Spirit, what Christ was and is representatively, and is that becoming Life to you? That all wants breaking up.

Take any one aspect; the Lord Jesus there at the right hand of God as our representative; there as the

sum total of all the spiritual and moral perfections that God will ever require of us, and He is there as us in the presence of God, perfect. God already has perfected humanity in His presence in the Person of the Lord Jesus; and that stands to our account and God is not now trying to get perfect humanity. He has got it and He is trying to impart it to us. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to impart Christ to us through obedience and faith. Has that become a part of our very being? That is to be revealed and inwrought. It is not a suggestion, not part of the Creed; when you see that, it makes all the difference to you. That is what I mean by revealed and inwrought. That is also in every other phase and aspect of what Jesus was and is. As to what He did in His cross; something revealed to us by the Holy Spirit and made a part of us. We see that He died not only *for* us but *as* us. Has that been revealed by the Spirit, and has that entered into us so that we know that when He died we died, when He was buried we in Him disappeared from God as a thing upon which the judgment of God rested; when He was raised we appeared in Him on a basis where there is no more condemnation, judgment passed for ever, and now no condemnation on resurrection ground? All that may be "Romans six," still in the Bible, but it may be revealed to our hearts and become a part of our very life. That is what I mean by the testimony of Jesus deposited within the vessel, the Church which is His Body of which we are members. We are called to have a deposit of that truth revealed and inwrought into the vessel of the testimony.

Now when we said that David was raised up in type for that, we see that realised with the temple built according to a revealed plan; David received the pattern of the House by revelation, and then under his orders, instructions and energies the House was constituted according to that plan, and you see it carried out to a detail, and then the ark of the testimony brought there, at last at rest in the House of God. The staves drawn out, never to take another journey, at the end of all its movement, in rest, in finality in a perfectly constituted House. David is a type of Christ in Whom the testimony is fully realised, perfected, brought to finality in the rest of God, in the great comprehensive: "It is finished." The testimony of Jesus: unto that David was anointed; unto that Jesus was anointed; unto that we are anointed. The testimony of Jesus in fullness and finality. Well, that is a large parenthesis by way of seeing the objective, the purpose of the anointing. The Holy Spirit is in us as the anointing in relation to that.

Now two things immediately follow anointing, when anointing is intelligently or spiritually apprehended.

The first is this; hell is provoked. In the light of what we have said about the testimony of Jesus that is perfectly understandable, you do not expect anything else. If there is a rival to the Lord Jesus in this universe, and if there has been from before this world was, an unholy ambition and determination on the part of that rival to have the place which God has eternally appointed for His Son as King of kings and Lord of lords, and then the anointing means that it is unto God's intention concerning His Son, it brings us immediately into conflict with the rival, and the rival immediately comes into active opposition to us. So that hell is provoked immediately the anointing is apprehended spiritually. And that works out in experience. Find anybody who has any measure of apprehension of the anointing and enters into it, and that one enters into spiritual conflict. Here is David. "And the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward." What is the next thing? There commenced that long drawn out conflict in which the evil spirit in Saul was after the life of David. (I hope the statement: "now an evil spirit from Jehovah troubled him (Saul)" does not occasion you difficulty. Everything in this universe is under the sovereignty of God, the Devil, demons, and all things. It does not mean these evil spirits are in favourable co-operation with God intelligently and intentionally, but it does mean that God sovereignly uses them.) Here is an evil thing, an evil intelligence which obviously is dead-set against the object of the anointing, and that comes into positive and direct activity and operation from the day of David's anointing. He is a

marked man, and now that thing is after his life because of the anointing. The anointing has provoked that. The anointing has drawn that out. The Adversary has come out into the open because of the anointing.

Take the Lord Jesus; anointed at Jordan, the next phase is an Adversary in the wilderness, the mighty assault of hell. Take the Church. Anointed at Pentecost; next, hell stirring up, not against men and women as such, but against the anointing. Take Paul, a vessel chosen and anointed; he is pursued and persecuted by every possible device; hell is after that man because of the anointing. Yes, one of the immediate issues of the anointing is that hell is provoked, and mark you, what I have said about the measure of apprehension very largely governs the measure of hell's provocation. The larger your apprehension of the eternal purpose concerning Christ, the larger your spiritual grasp of the testimony of Jesus, and your stand in that, the larger the measure of hell's antagonism. Or to put it another way the greater will be your experience of suffering at the hands of the Enemy. If you have but a small apprehension, a fragmentary apprehension of the testimony of Jesus, and are standing for that fragment you will have opposition proportionately, but if you have a large revelation you will have a large antagonism. The higher you go the more directly you meet the naked forces of hell. The Church of the Ephesian position comes to wrestle with principalities and powers, the world rulers of this darkness, and the hosts of spiritual wickedness in a naked way. That may explain a lot.

Now this very provoking of hell has to be considered in two ways. It has to be considered firstly along the line of Satan's antagonism, for undoubtedly he is with all his being and resources antagonistic to the testimony of Jesus unto which the anointing is given. There is his antagonism and we have to recognise that. But there is this second fact, that God's permission is granted to that antagonism; which means that God is over all, even the antagonism. God's permission is given because the very anointing itself has a specific relation to Satan's overthrow. Satan has got to be overthrown in this universe. How will he be overthrown? By the anointing. The anointing is for that. How can he be overthrown unless he is given permission to come out into the open and fight? Yes, the Lord Jesus is anointed. Shall we say He goes out into the wilderness and Satan comes out against Him? No! The Spirit led Him into the wilderness. What for? The fact of Satan's antagonism and animosity is patent. But the fact of the anointing is also patent, that Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit. The anointing has now been manifested experimentally in power over the Enemy. We may say that we are anointed for conflict, and the anointing for conflict is for the overthrow of the Enemy, and God's permissions are not given to the Enemy to overthrow us but that he might be overthrown. I think that is grand. Of Pharaoh it is written: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth" and so Pharaoh is given a fairly free hand to go a long way so that the Lord can show how much further He can go. These are things which we do not always bear in mind when we are up against the Enemy and he is up against us. But let us remember that God's permission is given the Enemy to come out against the anointing in us that in the power of the anointing he may be overthrown. In this matter we cannot help but feel that the Enemy is very blind. The Lord has blinded him. If he knew the very anointing he is attacking is to overthrow him, where would be the wisdom of keeping on his attack? But that is where the sovereignty of God comes in.

So we find David after the anointing very soon brought into the place where his life was assailed and threatened, simply because of the anointing. David might well have said: "Well if I had not been anointed I would not have had all this: it is this anointing that has caused me all this trouble." The question is raised, would I sooner not be anointed and have an easy time and escape the Devil, or do I choose to abide under the anointing because of the purpose of God in view? David was put into the throes of those alternatives more than once. When he went down to Achish, the King of Gath, on two occasions it was because he was in the throes of that conflict, he was up against the consequences of

the anointing so acutely that the flesh broke down and sought a way out; faith wavered and looked for an easier path, a covering from the consequences of the anointing. We shall often perhaps be in that position. If only we were not in this thing God has called us into, we would have an easier path. Yes, we should, but at the expense of the testimony of Jesus and God's eternal purpose. Which shall we choose? Our comfort or God's glory? Our ease or God's heart desire? I want to remind you that the anointing which brought, and brings into conflict, is the very secret of the ultimate triumph. Not our might or power, but the anointing. Yes, we may waver like David, we may break down sometimes; inwardly, we may know we are not on our feet, we have collapsed. We may seek some resort of quiet from the battle, inwardly faith may tremble, but blessed be God.

David's wonderful history shows how that man under the anointing though in himself often weak, sometimes failing, breaking down, yes, sometimes sinning, nevertheless triumphant, not because of what he was but because of the anointing, while the heart is right. And no one can read the Psalms, which are the life of David, without seeing that although David was a man of weaknesses, faults, not without sin, he was a man whose heart was right toward the Lord. If he sinned there is no man who is more deeply grieved, anguished, over sin than David. His heart is right and the anointing goes on and brings through. The anointing brings into the trouble, but the anointing brings out into victory in the end, and the Lord does not by the anointing bring us into trouble to let us get out of the trouble in our own strength, or to get through on our own resources. It is the anointing which brings us through. In the end we shall all have to say: "Lord, I am finally in triumph but not because I did it; there was that Other, that Someone in me responsible for this; that was the anointing."

There is the second thing immediately following the anointing or running parallel with it, or is interwoven with it. It is our training. Call it discipline if you like. I want you to notice that the anointing comes first and then the training. This is a reverse of things from the world order. When the world is going to choose a man or woman to occupy a high place, all their training has to be done first and they have to have reached a place of efficiency and qualification to occupy that position. The Lord's order is just the opposite. He anoints, and then on the ground of the anointing starts the training. It may not be that we have entered into the full consciousness that we have been anointed, but having been anointed, without any feelings or sensations whatever, without any consciousness of it, in relation to the purpose of that anointing God begins spiritual history and we pass through a great deal of spiritual history which is connected with the purpose for which we have been anointed. That is not so complex and difficult as it may sound.

You and I here today, in the day that we consecrated ourselves to the Lord, in the day that we received the Holy Spirit, in the day in which we were made actual members of Christ's Body and came under the anointing, God in His mind had a specific phase, aspect, or fragment of the one great purpose, the testimony of Jesus, for us. That is, we were individually in the mind of God marked out to fill some particular ministry in relation to that whole testimony, to make some peculiar contribution to the whole, we were marked out in God's mind for that and we were anointed for that. We may not have known what that was, and we may not have been conscious of the anointing, but God from that day began history, and if the Lord has His way and we do not get in His way, do not put our minds, wills, desires, in His way, but if He has a clear way with us, a response, a yielding, a willingness to have Him and all that He wants, the history through which He passes us and which He passes through us is all in the direction of bringing about the purpose of the anointing, that the power of the anointing might be made manifest in that connection. It might be years after we are able to look back and say that we know the Lord has been with us, we know we have had the Spirit, but now we can see in the light of the thing into which the Lord has brought us, that particular work, that particular aspect of the testimony to be fulfilled, that particular thing by which our lives are marked and characterised. We see that everything in the meantime has been calculated to fit us, prepare us,



make us ready for this, and now in this the Spirit of the anointing is operating, in power, in freedom. Yes, but that was all there in the mind of God in the beginning. The anointing was there for that, but the anointing required training.

Beloved, if God took us through that training without having the anointing, there would be nothing of us left. If you and I had not got the Holy Spirit in us as the Spirit of anointing, and God put us through that history, we would go out; moreover we should lack that essential intelligence which is a part of the anointing. I do want you to recognise that the anointing carries with it spiritual intelligence. "And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "And as for you, the anointing which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that anyone teach you; but as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you ye abide in him" (1 John 2:20,27). Three times over this thing is emphasised, that intelligence is a part of the anointing. "And ye know..." What do we know? Well, it may be the barest knowledge, which amounts to this: "I know that which God is putting me through is related to something, I know that, but I do not know what it is, I do not know why it must be this way, but I know that this is not outside of the realm of God, that there is something in view; that thing holds me." It may be just that, but that is the value of the anointing. You have that much intelligence.

You may be able to see by the anointing how things are working together, how two things are just harmonising in relation to the purpose of God. You may be able to see why it is necessary that certain things do happen. God has called us to something which is to be utterly of Himself. Then His training of us for that is that there shall be utterly nothing of ourselves. Now when the Lord is doing that emptying out and grinding to powder so that there is nothing left at all, but for the intelligence of the anointing we might go right out, but the anointing says to us: "Yes, this is all in line with the thing and the end is that all is to be utterly of God and therefore there must be nothing of you; it is all logical and you will have to expect this." God trains upon the anointing because the anointing brings that support, and that growing intelligence concerning the Lord's discipline, chastening, training.

Now take David. All his real experimental history in relation to the ultimate purpose came out of his anointing. I mean that from the time of his anointing he entered into the real training, the real discipline; all that he went through was training. Why I am so drawn to the life of David is because shall I say it is so human. I mean that there are few, if any, in the whole Bible apart from perhaps Saul who are more autobiographical than David. He is always talking about his own spiritual experience in a right way. Always telling you his heart. You have a wonderful unveiling of what went on in the man, what he went through, and when you read it (I think that is why the Psalms have gained such a great place, because they are heart-talks of personal secret history with the Lord) you see that it was all so in keeping with the anointing.

Is David to be the prominent representative type of the Lord Jesus as King? Oh, then the Lord will have to deal with him in a peculiar way, take him through strange experiences, bring him to the place of such absolute dependence upon Himself where the man is so humble, so lowly, so self-less, and the Lord is everything. How I would just love to be able to wander through David's life here for an hour or two touching some of those magnificent points which carry so much value when you look at them in the light of the purpose of God. An anointed man must not vindicate himself; see how the Lord vindicates an anointed man when he does not try to vindicate himself. On many occasions David was very near to trying to vindicate himself and the Lord saved him, and the Lord saved him simply because of the anointing.

You remember that occasion when David, rejected, pursued, hunted, one day sought help, sent for help from a man who had plenty, and was refused; not only refused but insulted. And David in

himself was so provoked that he determined to have his revenge and he went with his men, and the wife of that other man heard of it and came out to plead with David, and reason with him and dissuaded him from his revengeful act. Only a little while afterward that man died by reason of his own excesses and David thanked God that he had never laid his hand upon that man, that he had left it to the Lord, that he had been delivered from revenge. An anointed man must not do that sort of thing. The Lord saved David from doing a thing which would have been forever a blot upon the anointing. The Lord intervened and took the matter in hand, and beloved, if we are really anointed the Lord will look after our interests, we need not seek to revenge ourselves. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." That sublime instance of David refraining from touching Saul when Saul was in his hand! The man who was making his life well nigh a misery to him, right in his hand, and he could have delivered himself of that nuisance. But no, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed." An anointed man must not do that sort of thing.

Now all that is full of meaning, full of illumination concerning the anointing; the experiences through which we are led to train us here. How can you and I spiritually and morally reign if we have been guilty of revengefulness because some personal desire of ours has been thwarted? We can never come to God's Holy Hill if we have been guilty of that as the Lord's anointed. It is training you see, on the ground of the anointing, in keeping with the anointing. And so we might touch this life at almost any point and see how the Lord is training in relation to the anointing, and see that all that dark period was permitted of the Lord as an essential part of training for the throne. It was connected with the anointed purpose, and in our difficult, dark times (I wish the consciousness of it was always with us, I wish it was as easy to abide in it as to say it) the dark time of suffering, rejection, desertion, ostracism, through which even the anointed are allowed to pass as part of the training in connection with the anointing. It is all related to the testimony of Jesus. David is, as we see, so rightly a type of the Lord Jesus in this. He is anointed, but the anointing did not deliver him from rejection and suffering. It led him into it that he might reign the sufferings, and glory. Anointed ones do not escape suffering. The anointing means suffering, but the suffering is not the end, it is the way of triumph for in the end: "if we suffer, we shall reign." The anointing involves those two things. So the two first things which immediately follow and result from the anointing, are (1) the provocation of hell, and (2) the commencement of training unto the purpose of the anointing.

The Lord make this all very helpful to us and bring us by it to a fuller apprehension of our calling in Christ, the fullness of the testimony.

# Chapter 4 - The Assembly as the Anointed Vessel

*Reading: 1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Chronicles 5:1, 9,13,14; Exodus 30:22, 23,26; Luke 4:10-18; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14.*

Continuing our occupation with the matter of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we are now turning to that aspect of this great truth which brings the assembly of God into view; and what we have before us is

## **The Assembly as the anointed vessel.**

By linking together passages as we have done above we are only bringing counterparts into view. We first of all saw David anointed personally. Then we were seeing the great inclusive, all embracing purpose of David's life, and his anointing in relation to the whole testimony. In the passage in 2 Chronicles we see that purpose realised and that anointing which was upon him personally now manifested upon the temple; shall we say a collective thing: out of the personal anointing has come the collective anointing. The one leads to the other, the second is the justification of the first. The glory of the Lord filling the temple, the cloud taking up residence in the whole comprehensive order of things in the temple is the explanation of its full intent as to that individual or personal anointing which was upon David at the beginning. Then we have brought another two things together. The Lord Jesus anointed personally, separately; declaring the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him; that is Christ Personal; and alongside of that 1 Corinthians 12:12,13, the one Body and the one anointing definitely mentioned, with its tremendously striking and impressive statement that: "as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is (the) Christ" the definite article there: "the Christ."

It is no new thing perhaps to most of us, but it has to be brought again before us in this particular connection; for what is clearly said there is this, that this anointing upon the Lord Jesus is a collective and corporate anointing, and that for present and future universal purposes Christ is so vitally one with all His members that the members, joined to the Head, have the effect of being one Christ. Not meaning that Christ ceases to have a personal and separate existence, but now, for the manifestation and expression of Himself, and for the full realisation of Himself, He is no longer just a separate individual entity, He is the Head of a Body, and He is Head and Body by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has made the Head and the members one entity, which is called "the Christ." "For in one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit," the Spirit of the anointing, the Spirit of the Anointed, the Christ, one Christ, the Christos, the Anointed a tremendous statement! Thus the assembly becomes the anointed vessel, the Body of Christ, anointed in union with Him: "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." Now to give a single emphasis to that I read the passage from Exodus 30 in connection with the making of the holy anointing oil and underline the clause: "thou shalt anoint the tent of meeting." Everything else in it and about it was to be anointed likewise, but I select the inclusive and comprehensive thing: "thou shalt anoint the tent of meeting," that is the assembly. It is the tent of meeting, the tent of the congregation, the tent of the assembly, and it is to be anointed.

## **Corporate Anointing**

Now let me just say a few words on the matter of corporate anointing.

This matter of corporate anointing with which many of us are so familiar has to be brought into view as the Lord leads. Let me say the simplest thing about this, that the New Testament knows nothing of merely separate, individualistic anointings. I did not say individual anointing, I said individualistic anointings. Of course, you will have to understand the usage of words to appreciate that distinction. The anointing does come upon us individually as members. We are not all one member, but many, and every member is anointed, but there is a difference between an individual anointing and an individualistic anointing. That which is individualistic would mean that the member is a separate thing, something apart, detached. That is what we mean by individualism, which is one of the isms that is not recognised by the Lord. It goes into the category of false teaching; individualism. That is, that which makes any man or woman something in themselves apart, a law unto themselves, a separate entity; one by themselves doing their own work, thinking their own thoughts, even religiously and spiritually. There is no such thing in the eyes of the New Testament as individualistic anointing.

Let me put that in another way. There are not so many anointings as there are individual members of the Body of Christ. While every member will receive the anointing, it will always be the anointing and not his anointing or her anointing; it will always be the one anointing. You do not receive one anointing and I another. I can put that more plainly. You do not receive one Holy Spirit and I receive another Holy Spirit. There are not so many Holy Spirits as there are believers. There is one Holy Spirit.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." The anointing is one anointing and that anointing is not, in the first place, given to the members. That anointing is made to reside on and within the Lord Jesus as Head of the Body. It is the Head which receives the anointing always. The rest of the Body gets this benefit by reason of its relation to the Head and comes into the good of the anointing by being organically united with the Head. And the anointing is upon the Lord Jesus as Head of the Body the Church. Our receiving of the anointing is as we come into the Body of Christ and under the sovereign Headship of the Lord Jesus as anointed. This one anointing is for all members, but only by reason of corporate and organic union with Christ as Head. So that the anointing is one anointing and not many anointings. All the members share in the anointing, but never do get a separate anointing from the rest, in the thought of God. Now that has a very wide range of meaning.

### **God is against Division**

That, in the first place, means that God recognises no independence, spiritual independence on the part of His people. God never goes with a spirit of independence. God never goes with a spirit of separation. God never goes with a spirit of detachment. Now I am afraid I must come back and be very elementary in explaining that. I am saying "a spirit of detachment," "a spirit of separation." There are times when by reason of denial of foundational verities of the faith there has to be withdrawing, but that is not a spirit of separation in the sense in which I am using the term. I mean that disposition to be exclusive, to be separate, to be detached, to work apart, to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, to work and act independently of other believers with whom the Lord has joined us in Himself; the spirit of separation. The Lord is not with that, and never goes with that.

The direction of the Holy Spirit is always toward fellowship and oneness; for this reason: that the

Holy Spirit has come in relation to the testimony of Jesus. That which He did in His Cross is a very vital part of the testimony of Jesus, that which He did to destroy the disintegrating effect of sin and the Devil's interference with God's creation. The whole direction of Satanic activity is to divide, to split up and cause friction, warfare, conflict. That has been the effect of sin and Satan. God's one unity of a universe was broken to fragments by Satanic interference, and the whole universe was shot through with discord, with schism. Calvary sees that work of the Devil dealt with, and that is why the Lord Jesus right on the threshold, the verge of His cross, just as as it were He was stepping on to the altar, prayed the prayer of John 17: " ...that they may all be one even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." That is the prayer with which He goes to Calvary, and that prayer was answered in Calvary. That prayer has been wholly and fully answered in the Cross.

Beloved, you and I *in Christ* will never be more one than we are. You say that is a poor look-out! In ourselves the oneness may be weak and lacking but in Christ you and I are organically one, sharing one life. In the Christ Who is at the right hand of God there is the unity of the born anew ones which can never be improved upon. That is a testimony in heaven. The Body is one, says the Word; it is one in Him, in the Head. The Holy Spirit's presence in all the members of the Body constitutes a oneness deeper than consciousness, reason, feeling, recognition; a very life basis, a oneness is constituted deep down in every child of God like the oneness which exists between the Father and the Son, and when we get to heaven, although then we shall enjoy that oneness to the full without interference of this old-man-element which divides and limits the fellowship now, when we get to heaven and enjoy it we will not be more one then in reality than we are now. It will be manifested.

We are never commanded to make the unity of the Spirit, we are exhorted to keep it, to guard it. That means that first of all we must take it as existing. The body is one, so also is the Christ. He prayed that prayer as He went to the cross, and in the Cross that prayer was answered. The testimony of Jesus includes that great truth that by His Cross He has conquered the Enemy, and destroyed that part of the Enemy's work which brought disruption into God's creation. And in the new creation that spiritual, organic oneness is not only recovered, but established beyond the reach of again being destroyed. We shall come to the enjoyment of it only as we come to heaven, as we leave earth. I am not speaking literally, I am speaking spiritually. As we are linked with anything on this earth which is of a dividing character, then we miss the glory of the oneness of the Body and the oneness of Christ. The more earth-bound we are religiously, ecclesiastically, the more we fail of that heavenly reality of the oneness of the Body. Or to put it the other way, the more we come to our heavenly position the more we find it impossible to allow man-made systems, which divide believers into groups, to operate and govern our lives. We are out of it, set free, because the unity is in the Head in heaven and as we come to the heavenlies we come to Ephesians where the Body is seen in its oneness. Now the Holy Spirit has come as the Spirit of that testimony and, therefore, one Spirit making one Body, and the Body becomes one by the Spirit.

### **Organic Oneness**

I have often illustrated these spiritual things by the human body and its double system of control. This body of ours physically is a unity. While it has many members, organs and functions, yet it is a unity, and it is made an organic unity, one thing, by a double system of control. One is the blood system, the other is the nerve system. The blood system makes the body a whole as an organic living thing. Strangle any one member, stop the circulation, and before long that member ceases to be an active part of that organism. The whole blood system makes the body a single active living unity. The other is the nerve system. We know that every needle point of this entire physical body is governed and controlled by the nerve system. Now this whole nerve system has its base in the head, so that we cannot touch the most minute point with the finest needle without touching the head and

registering that touch by reason of the head. The head it is that registers all that. We know it by reason of the base of the nervous system in our heads. We have said that if you take a needle and you understand the brain, and with a fine needle go from point to point in the brain you can put out of action any member of the body. You can put the right hand completely out of action by just touching with a needlepoint in the brain. You can put out the whole of that side by touching a point in the brain. Now the Body of Christ is a counterpart of that spiritually.

### **Oneness in Life**

The blood system which makes our physical bodies one organically while in action, has its counterpart in the Divine Life that is given to us in new birth. We receive Life in Christ and that Life in the whole body is one Life. The great circulation of Divine Life through the Body is the basis of, not only the oneness, but active oneness in relation to Christ. If the Life is strangled, if that circulation is interrupted, then the wholeness of the Body is spoiled. If two members only, brought into relationship in the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, indwelt by the Divine Life, should come to a place where one of them has violated the spiritual laws of Divine Life and thus arrested the circulation, those two will no longer be able to work together, they will no longer be able to cooperate and help one another. There has come about an arrest upon the active principle of corporate Life in the Body. So that an Achan can arrest the progress of all Israel on the principle that Israel is a corporate whole governed by one Life; and when one member violates the laws of that Life all the Body is brought under arrest. To put it the other way round; when all the members have a full tide of Divine Life flowing uninterrupted and unhindered, then you get a mighty corporate movement. That is how it was at the beginning.

Now Ananias and Sapphira represent the Enemy's effort to interfere with that corporate Life and to check the movement of the whole Body, and it was said to be a sin against the Holy Ghost, and the seriousness of that thing is just this, that Satan had interfered and they, in complicity with Satan, had threatened the entire movement of the Church in those days. Now you have in Ananias and Sapphira a literal outworking of that passage in 1 Cor. 3:16: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." 1 Cor. 6:19: "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?" What I want you to notice is that those two passages do not refer to the same thing, they are not to be put in the marginal reference as synonymous. This passage in chapter 6:18 refers to our human physical body, as you notice the context: "Flee fornication but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you." Clearly the physical body is there in view.

Well, sin against the physical body as a temple of the Holy Ghost is a very grievous thing, but this is an even more solemn thing in chapter three. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." That is collective, corporate; that is the assembly. That is not the physical body. That is the plural, not the singular; the "ye are" there is the House of God. Now note what God says: "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." See how jealous God is for the Body of Christ, the House of God, the Assembly. Saul of Tarsus came very near destruction on the Damascus Road. Ananias and Sapphira came to judgment in death because in truth the Devil had captured them to arrest and destroy the corporate testimony in the House of God as it was launched on its way in the beginning. It was a blow against the oneness of the Body under the one anointing, and that met this word: "him shall God destroy."

Beloved, it is a terrible thing to put our hand upon the assembly, it is a terrible thing to touch the

Body of Christ. Psalm 105 puts that very plainly: "yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." Now the assembly is the anointed vessel and we see that the Enemy is out to thwart the mighty effect of that one anointing, to interrupt the progress of it. The one Life is seen there corresponding to the blood system. This is the one Life by which we move, which is our energy; Divine Life given to us.

### **Oneness in Intelligence**

But then the nervous system in our physical body has its parallel in the corporate Body of Christ in the Holy Spirit; He is the Spirit of Life. These two things cannot be separated, but there is a difference. The Holy Spirit is the intelligence of this oneness; the nerve system by which we are made aware of things. We have the intelligence of the whole Body by the nerve system because that is registered in the Head; and the Holy Spirit, the one Spirit makes the Body one in action by a registration of the Divine mind. How important it is to have spiritual intelligence in order to have the Body perfectly functioning. These two things go together. The eyes of the heart had to be enlightened by a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in order to see the full meaning of the Body of Christ. That is the Ephesian position. The Apostle is praying "that that that." Notice the successive "thats" governing his petitions, and all those petitions are in relation to the Body's union with Christ. The basic thing is: "having the eyes of your heart enlightened" there being given "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him."

We shall blunder on and make all kinds of messes and confusions if the Lord does not give us spiritual intelligence; if we do not recognise that the anointing is meant to bring to us intelligence as to the Lord's mind. 1 John 2:20,27 comes in again to our help. "And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things," and of that is said, "and is true and is no lie." That chapter, 1 John 2, is a chapter of antichrist and Christ, Christ and antichrist. Many antichrists shall come and declare themselves to be Christ, assume the garb of Christ, the language of Christ, the phraseology of Christ, the doctrine of Christ, many of the ways of Christ; but still antichrist, so subtle, so impossible of recognition by the ordinary intelligence even at its best. Over against the antichrists with their well nigh perfect counterfeiting of Christ is Christ the Anointed; but the antichrist is the christ without the anointing. How are you to know where the anointing is, that is, where the Christ is? The anointing in you tells you whether the anointing is there or if the anointing is not there. The anointing is one anointing and recognises His own expression, and where He is and where He is not. Have you got that? The anointing is one.

Someone or some system comes and poses as Christ the Anointed, but is not the Anointed. How are you going to know that the anointing is not there? By the anointing which is in you which is one anointing, which does not have any fellowship with that. But when that which is of the anointing is present, the anointing in you flows out to that. That is something only the anointed ones have, something we cannot define, and is not something mental. You are not able to sit down and put it on paper, where the antichrists are wrong; it is the anointing in you that tells you before you can reason or analyse. That is not misjudging, but you know because the anointing in you teacheth you. "How do you know?" "I cannot tell you, but I know." That is, the Lord in me does not let go to that, does not flow out to that, does not give liberty and sanction to that; and I must wait until the Lord does; sooner or later I will have the explanation of this. There is all the difference between that and our natural suspicions and prejudices.

Oh, that the Lord's people would know the Holy Ghost and be delivered from all that bondage which comes along the line of eternally suspecting everything with which they come into contact. Beloved, if in your heart the Holy Spirit witnesses to the fact that I also am a child of God, that is all you want

as a basis of fellowship and we ought to flow together; and to refuse that is to violate the principle of the oneness of the Spirit. Well now this intelligence which corresponds to the nerve system is all linked up in the Head and that is what Paul means when he says: "We have the mind of Christ." How do we have the mind of Christ? The anointing! It does not mean that any one of us has reached the place where we immediately know the Lord's will about every detail in our lives. The anointing does not work out in that way immediately.

There are many things about which you and I are not sure as to the will of God, but we do know this, that if we are walking in the Spirit and the anointing is free within us that if we take or assay to take a step out of line or out of time with the Lord, the Spirit does not go with us and we know that we go on our own to do it. This is simple but it is true. We have to get on with it. The Spirit of Jesus suffers us not. It may only be a matter of time; it may be a matter of finality, that that is not the Lord's will for our lives. The intelligence of the anointing is the Holy Spirit Who would give to all the members the one mind of Christ. I cannot conceive of an organic unity having half-a-dozen contradictory and conflicting minds.

You say, well how do you account for so many godly, consecrated people being entirely different in their attitude towards certain vital things? I do not know that I am called upon to account for that, and certainly I am not called upon to judge any man, but I do venture to say this, that it can easily be accounted for by the measure in which the Cross of the Lord Jesus has been wrought into those lives. Which means this, that still there may be a clinging to something of good which is not the Lord's best, and that means that the Holy Spirit is not free to lead out of the one into the other; and there you get the difference. We are not saying who may be right or who may be wrong, but that there are differences, and it may be accounted for usually by the Cross not having been wrought sufficiently in one or the other. I am certain of this, that the deeper we are baptised into the death of Christ the more we shall know of the oneness of the Spirit, because that is the ground upon which the Spirit operates, the death of Christ. Well now, that covers some ground as to the corporate nature of the anointing. It is only perhaps by way of illustration, but I think it is useful in bringing to us the fact with which we are dealing, that the anointing is one, the Spirit is one, the Body is one.

### **Anointing and the Divine Order**

Now there is a further aspect. That means that by the one anointing we are brought into a Divine order. If you like another word, which is not as good a word in some senses and yet conveys its own meaning, we are brought into a Divine system. Some people do not like that word system, and it is always used by them in a bad sense, but I want to redeem the word from that realm and I want to say that there is a Divine system, there is a heavenly system, there is an order of the heavens. The tabernacle was a pattern of things in the heavens, which means, as "Hebrews" tells us, there are the other things themselves which are a heavenly system and order; a system comprehensive, detailed, minute; and the tabernacle is only a reflection, a type of the heavenly system beyond which must be the heavenly order and system.

Now note, Christ and His Body are not only a "One new Man," they are an order, if you like a system. Christ is represented by the tabernacle. Christ is represented by the temple, and there you have a very detailed exhaustive system put into operation, but both the tabernacle and the temple are figures not only of Christ separate, but Christ and His people; one people, one Body. So that the tabernacle and the temple clearly represent the Church as a heavenly system. Not man-made, not man-conceived. Remember that in the tabernacle and the temple not one fragment was left for human ideas. All human ideas about that system were ruled out. Man's thoughts and judgments about this thing had no place whatever. When it says that the Lord filled Bezaleel with the Holy Spirit unto all



manner of workmanship, that means that the anointing ruled man out and left no room for man's judgment in this; that every detail to a thread was by government of the Spirit; what was to be used, how the thing was to be used, how the thing was to be made, the thing to be made, every thing by government of the Spirit. It is a heavenly system in which man has no place for his judgment. Christ is that. The Church which is His Body is that. And what you and I have to look for, beloved, is the spiritual principle back of everything in the Scriptures, a heavenly principle. If we simply take the Scriptures as they are written and begin to put them into operation, what shall we have? We shall have an Old Testament temple system with priests, vestments, rites, and all that sort of thing. If we put the New Testament as it stands in the letter into operation we shall have an earthly system.

### **Sisters in the Assembly**

Supposing we simply take hold of certain injunctions in the New Testament and give them out as *such* to be obeyed. Women must wear their hats in the assembly; that is in the Word of God. But supposing that is as an injunction made a law for meetings? I venture to say you will not get very much spiritual value out of it, probably you will kick about it. You can have Christian legalism just as much as you can have Jewish legalism. When the Apostle talks about having the head covered and uncovered in the case of the woman and the man, and when he talks about women not teaching or usurping authority over the man, and all those things, if you put those into operation as merely cold injunctions, you will have a formal system with very little Life and profit in it. There will certainly be no unction, it will be "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." And you will apply that with the rigidity of Romanism and it will resolve itself again to a matter of priestcraft and man domination. Get back of those things and get the spiritual principle.

There is a spiritual principle behind a woman wearing a hat in the assembly. One of the most glorious principles, which will lift out of rebellion on to a level of being willing to wear a hundred hats! What is the principle? Christ is set forth as Head of the Church which is His Body, everything is subject to Christ and by reason of being subject to Christ derives all its good. There can be no gain to anybody by not being subject to Christ. All good comes that way, all blessing comes that way; the absolute sovereignty of the Lord Jesus over us and we completely surrendering to that is the way of blessing. He is the Head of the man. "The head of every man is Christ" "...and the head of the woman is the man."

Man is the head of the woman as Christ is the Head of the man. "Now wives be in subjection to your own husbands." "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it." What is the principle? That by not usurping authority over the man and assuming the office of teacher, that is, taking the place of sovereignty over the man, there is the upholding of a heavenly principle. There is given to sisters in the assembly the tremendous honour of representing the heavenly principle that all profit comes by subjection to Christ, and that is illustrated in the assembly by their taking that place. It really elevates them to being literally personal representations of the principle of the Church's subjection to Christ. There must be here some practical illustration and outworking of a heavenly order. That is why the Lord has given us these various means of expressing a heavenly order. It is a matter of the Lord's way of fullest blessing, and not one of law or comparative value.

### **Baptism and the Lord's Table**

We have baptism. I have often been argued with on this wise, "Well what is the need of the water, of the baptistry? It is a spiritual thing after all; our death with Christ, our burial with Christ is a spiritual thing, water can make no difference to that, and in spirit we enter into it; the water is not necessary."

Does the New Testament teach that? The New Testament teaches that that way is the Lord's way, and that that water, while it has no virtue in itself, while in itself it makes no difference, that is, the water does not put us away forever, that instant we disappear under the waters does not mean that we go out of sight forever; nevertheless, it is the means of a testimony, that we, as a part of that old organism, that old creation, have disappeared with it from the eyes of God.

I am not holding a brief for a mere method, I am simply saying this is a figure, and the Lord has given it to us as a way of testifying to a great spiritual reality; but He asks for that testimony. It is a part of the universality of this work of the Lord Jesus. We have the Lord's Table. None of us believes that the loaf literally is Christ, and that at a given moment Christ actually enters into that piece of bread, and that when we take that bread we literally take Christ. Or that the wine is changed into the blood of Jesus Christ, which we drink; we do not believe that. We might argue, as many do, that we receive Life from Christ spiritually and that it is all unnecessary. Is it? The Word is: "Till He come." The Lord is asking for a representation of a heavenly order, of a heavenly thing. It is not the thing in itself, but it is the spirit that is in the testimony. It is not an ordinance, it is a testimony.

Now you come to the testimony which has to do with the corporate nature of the anointing, spiritually. In the baptism we have disappeared as a part of the old creation from the sight of God. After that God never looks upon a truly baptised one as a part of the old creation. He does not look at you or me as a bit of the old creation, however much there may be of the old man remaining. In the death of Christ we disappeared as a part of the old creation. In my baptism I took that position. I have come to understand more about it since I was baptised, but on the basis of my amount of intelligence then the Lord accepted the whole and undertook to lead me into it, and therefore it is not necessary to be baptised every time new light is given. In that we passed out of the old creation. In coming up we are typically raised together with Christ as a part of a new creation. But what is the new creation? The new creation organism is not like the old creation organism which was an organism all upset; every joint in that great body was dislocated; every function was operating in the wrong direction, it was a reversed peristalsis, all working the wrong way.

### **The Laying on of Hands**

Now in the new creation, in resurrection union with Christ it is an organism, not an organisation, which is the Body of Christ. When you have testified to the fact that you have passed out of the old in the death of Christ, and passed into the new in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, you find you come to the place where there is a testimony to the corporate nature of that organism as under the One Spirit, the one anointing. Ananias is sent to Saul of Tarsus and the two things go together. Saul's baptism was a testimony, and Ananias laid his hands upon him as a testimony. Later, two or three years, when Paul was going out on his life-work for which he has received the anointing, they at Antioch laid their hands upon him. Why? Was that a mere form, just a kind of courtesy? No, that is a Divine principle. And we find these hands stretched out again and again not always by apostles, but by representative members of the Body of Christ, acting only in a representative not an official, or ecclesiastical capacity but in a representative capacity; that is, acting for the Body; reaching out their hands and laying them upon this one and that one. A testimony to what? The one Body! This is an act of identification.

The hand is given as an act of oneness; being laid upon the head it means that that one has come under another Head, the Headship of Christ; coming into the one Body under the one Head, the one anointing. That laying on of hands is invariably associated with the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit is associated with it: which means that the testimony to the oneness of the Body which is borne by that act of identification, is a testimony to the one anointing, and the Holy Spirit Himself witnesses to that

one anointing; so that Paul, great man though he was, an elect vessel as he was, with the commission that he received in such a wonderful way, cannot, with all, commence his life-work without being made by the Lord to recognise that that life-work is the life-work of the Body of Christ; his ministry is the ministry of the Body and not his; and they, representing the Body lay their hands upon him and in effect say: "This means that you are going out to our ministry and we are with you; we shall always be with you in it spiritually in prayer." Never think of yourselves as men who have gone out from the Church to fulfil your own life-work, but as those who go out with the church to fulfil the ministry of the church. There is a great deal of difference, and that truth is to be maintained.

We are often charged with having extraordinary phraseology. There has got to be a good deal of correcting of phraseology, and it is not that the phraseology which we use is wrong phraseology. Again and again we hear people talk about the Chinese Church, the African Church, the American Church, the English Church; that there shall be established a Church in Africa, or a Church in India, or a Church in China. That phraseology is wrong to the root, and absolutely contrary to the New Testament, and Paul never used phraseology like that. The Church, the Body of Christ, is one, and the only right way to speak of it is to say, the Church in Africa, the Church in China, the Church in Egypt; one Church, one Body. You say there may not be much in phraseology? There is a lot in phraseology! If the New Testament principles had been maintained, what a strength there would have been. Supposing every man and woman that had gone forth with the Divine commission had gone forth with the whole Body of Christ behind them, what a different story would have been told. If the Body of saints had committed themselves to stand with those two as they went to different lands, what a different story. There is spiritual value in that. That was the meaning of the laying on of hands as they sent them forth; they said, "We are going with you, this is not your ministry it is ours." It is a Divine order, a heavenly order, and we have to look back of things for spiritual principles; and here is the principle of the oneness of the Body back of all. As we recognise that, and come into line with it, then the anointing is manifested.

Do we want to know the real value of the anointing? We can know it if we come into the heavenly order. If we violate the heavenly order and begin to organise the Lord's work and do things as men do things in the Church, if the Holy Ghost does not choose and appoint, but we do it by ballot, or in any other way, we may miss the anointing. It is the Holy Ghost Who should choose the elders in the House of God. "Separate me" different from: "Let us have a committee and ask So and so to do this and that and something else." A heavenly order carries with it the anointing; violation of the heavenly order means we have to take the responsibility ourselves.

These things are important in order that we should know the blessedness and greatness of the anointing. The anointing is power. Now the Old Testament men were anointed with a horn of oil, and the typology of the Old Testament makes a horn always to be the symbol of strength, and the oil a type of the Spirit. "The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward," because Samuel had taken the horn of oil and anointed him. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" but remember the coming of the Spirit carries with it the fact that we have parted with all orders made by man and come into the heavenly order. That is involved. And so the power of the anointing is expressed on the ground of very definite laws, the law of a heavenly order, and Christ represents that heavenly order, for after all it is only learning Christ. It is not so much a study of principles as coming to know the Lord, and to know the Lord is to do things in the way the Lord would do them, and not as man would do them. The more we know the Lord, the more we realise the difference between the way that man does things and the way the Lord would do them.

# Chapter 5 - The Anointing and the Body

*Reading: Psalm 1:5; 2:6; 15:1; 23:6; 65:1-4; 84:1-4; 87:1-3.*

I have selected those passages to give us a key as we continue from the point where we closed the last chapter on the assembly as the anointed vessel. I want to come again to this matter in general for a moment before we make some further practical applications of the truth.

We are thinking of the Church which is the Body of Christ, His Assembly, as the anointed vessel of the testimony of Jesus; which testimony we have explained and defined. We have seen that David was anointed with the thought in God's mind that he should bring that testimony typically to fullness and finality in the House of God. That which comes out with Solomon in the Temple in the greatness and fullness and glory is the issue of the anointing of David. Although David did not actually build the Temple, his life made it possible, his history with God was the basis of it. On the ground of his history with God, which Solomon did not have, he received the revelation. It was David who had the revelation of the temple, not Solomon; and moreover, David accumulated the wealth for the Temple. All that Solomon had to do was to carry out the revelation; and Solomon, being David's son, represents the issue of David's life in vocation, in work, in the purpose of God. Solomon and David are one in principle; they are two aspects of one thing.

## **David and the House of God**

Now it is tremendously impressive and significant, therefore, to see what a large place the House of God has in the life of David. Take the book of the Psalms of David. You find that these Psalms are spontaneous impromptu outflowings from specific experiences. David is brought into a situation, passes through a spiritual experience with a very literal background; and out of that experience and from that very literal background there emerges a Psalm. If you have not worked your way through the Psalms of David with their background, as far as it is possible to trace it, you have missed one of the most precious things. The headings will very often give you the key. Take Psalm 34 and you find that David sang that Psalm as he emerged from a trap. He, as we know, fell into a state of doubt, he lost momentarily his assurance concerning the inevitable triumph of the anointing which was upon him. Much pressure, prolonged adversity and suffering had so reduced him as to bring into him a question as to whether he would really get through and survive; and he therefore in principle doubted the anointing. When we do that there is always a trap waiting, and Ahimelech (otherwise Achish, both the same person) was resorted to, and so David went down to Achish or Ahimelech, and the lords of the Philistines saw him and said: "Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying: Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?" and he was a marked man, and now whereas he had said "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul," he saw that he might die by the hands of the Philistines, so he had not really got out of his difficulty. And then he feigned himself mad a shameful phase of experience through which to pass for an anointed one; but he escaped. Ahimelech said to his lords: "Do I lack madmen, that ye have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

I do not know whether Achish saw through it and this was his way of finding an escape for David, but at any rate David escaped and what I like about it is that David did not put it down to his own artfulness, that he had by a trick got out of his difficulty, but he came out from Ahimelech's presence singing Psalm 34 and went straight to the cave of Adullam. It was born out of an experience, and he

recognised that not his wit or cunning but the Lord's goodness had delivered him from that trap. There was something deeper than merely escaping from a natural embarrassment. There was a great spiritual deliverance from all the ignominy and shame into which an anointed one had been brought. It was evidently a heart revulsion and not merely a trick to get himself physically out of an awkward situation; a heart revulsion from this whole thing. I mention it by way of illustrating this general truth, that these Psalms were born out of fragments of spiritual history with a literal background. Now take the numerous references in the Psalms to the House of God in the light of what we have said and seen. You will find that these Psalms being born out of spiritual experiences, with their reference to the House of God mean that David's spiritual life was bound up with the House of God. This man is so largely linked in his inner being with the House of God. He sings of its glories, he expresses his longings, and he has as his highest ambition to dwell in the House of the Lord for ever. It is the House of the Lord that bounds the horizon of this man, and all his spiritual experiences are in relation to it. Then in the end, in type, the House of God is a realised thing as the spiritual expression of his life.

### **David and Christ**

Now we have said that David was a type of Christ. Note David anointed, and the prominent and all-inclusive thing in his life is the House of God; anointed therefore in relation to the House of God. Now the Lord Jesus, the Anti-type. The object of the Lord Jesus, dominating His whole being, was the House of God. Use the other terms if you like, "My Church," or The Body of Christ, the spiritual Temple. The one great expression of His earthly life was: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up;" and again: "I will build my church." The object governing the life of the Lord Jesus was His Church, and He was anointed in relation to that; that comes out of His passion instantly. All the types of the Old Testament bear out the truth that what emerges from the passion of Christ is the Church. If Adam passes into that sleep and comes out of it with his bride, that is Christ and the Church. The Calvary death and the resurrection with a Church, His Body, "...even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it." And so you may follow all the types of the Old Testament. Whether it is Joseph and Asenath, or Isaac and Rebekah, or any of the numerous types of the Church; you will find that they all bear this out, that the object and concern, the dominating interest of the Lord Jesus is His Church, and to secure His Church He was anointed; it was in the power of the anointing that He secured His Church.

### **The Holy Spirit and the Church**

The one tremendous issue of such a comprehensive conception is this, that the object of the Holy Spirit is the Church the Body of Christ. Not the Church as we know it on the earth, the organised system, but that spiritual body, that heavenly thing. The object of the Holy Spirit is that. Within that compass there may be many, many things; the salvation of souls, and pure evangelistic ministry, the building up of the saints by pastoral and teaching ministry; the number of things may be countless as to Holy Spirit activities, but remember the one all embracing object of the Holy Spirit is the Church. To be brought to fullness in Christ, that is basic to all else. That is not something which is introduced at an advanced point in spiritual life, although with many of the Lord's people that does not become apprehended, grasped until they have been the Lord's for a long time; but that is really at the beginning of everything from the standpoint of God. The anointing is given very often in advance of the spiritual history relative to the purpose of the anointing, but the anointing has that in view, the Holy Spirit has that in view. If the Holy Spirit is with us He is with us not for any personal or departmental purpose but He is with us with His own vision, His own object, and that is the Church the Body of Christ, and all His activities within us will be with that in view.

Oh that we could and did see the specific purpose of the Holy Spirit, the all-inclusive object of the anointing. When once we have seen that we are in the way of understanding almost everything that the Lord does. We are in the way of interpreting so much experience, and we are in the way of accepting so much more than we would accept without that apprehension of the full purpose of the Holy Spirit. To see what the Lord is after is a great help in moving with the Lord in His demands, His requirements. Now then, if that is true, if the Church, the Body, the Assembly is the all governing purpose of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, then the Lord will give a tremendous place to the laws of life of the Body of Christ amongst His people who are truly going on with Him. Their whole history will be governed by that and the Lord will press that in principle upon them, and all their crises will be relative to that.

It is a tremendous help to see that a crisis to which the Lord brings us which is costly, which involves a good deal for the time being, perhaps of suffering, misunderstanding, difficulty, is not just some personal thing so far as we are concerned, and that the Lord is nailing us down to some peculiar line which applies to us and is our affair. No! That crisis with all its costliness and suffering is relative to the whole purpose of God, and our individual experience is relative to the absoluteness of God's purpose; that there is nothing which is merely an isolated experience, a personal thing. All God's eternal and universal purpose is bound up with our personal experience, and when we get our personal experience set in that universal and eternal background of God's purpose there is a motive large enough for us to pass through the crisis in a yielding way.

### **The Value of the Universal Background**

I do feel, beloved (and let me say this especially to those who minister) that one of the most powerful and effectual ways of leading the Lord's people on in the truth to the acceptance of the truth whatever that truth may be, the acceptance of say the truth of Romans 6, identification with Christ in death, burial, resurrection, or any other aspect of the whole truth; one of the most powerful and effectual ways of leading people on in the truth is by giving them the universal and eternal background of that truth. If we take truth in fragments, in a detached way, and begin to hammer those isolated truths home upon people as something in themselves, we have not given them an adequate reason for accepting them, it has simply become some personal thing. But set truth in the light of the eternities, past and future, in the light of God's eternal purpose concerning His Son, and say: "Now that is why you should die, accept your death in Christ's death; that is why you should be prepared to let go your natural life, that is why you should embrace this light, because it is not merely a personal matter, but it relates in an organic way to all the people of God throughout all ages, from eternity to eternity." "It is a part of a tremendous whole; there is nothing in the purpose of God which is isolated to individuals, it is all relative." And if you can bring in the eternal background of every fragment of truth and every Word of God, you have given a sufficient motive and a sufficient dynamic for the acceptance of that.

To put it round the other way. You refuse light, you refuse truth, what does that mean? That it simply is you that suffer and you are perhaps prepared to accept the consequences? Oh, no, it does not stay there. Our refusing to go on with the Lord in any bit of light, truth, revelation, just sends us out in that measure of the whole fullness of Christ. And I ask you, what do you want in your relationship to the Lord? Would any one frankly say: "I do not want the fullness of Christ"? Now test it. Would you definitely stand by and say: "I do not want the fullness of Christ, that is not my desire or wish." I venture to think that you would honestly say: "I want the fullness of Christ." Beloved, you cannot have it as an individual. No individual can have the fullness of Christ. You can be filled with Christ in your measure, but it is going to take the whole Body of Christ to realise His fullness, and that is what the Body is for. We shall individually become a part of the fullness of Christ in relation to all

saints, and the fullness of Christ will depend upon our fullness of relationship with the whole purpose of God in His work. You can have a little bit, much less than the Lord intended, by refusing truth, light.

### **The Whole Church Necessary to the Fullness of Christ**

This leads me to these practical applications. The Body is necessary to any kind of fullness. The assembly, the Church is necessary to any kind of fullness. Not only afterward, but now. Do you want to know fullness now in this way, and that way, in experience spiritually, in service, in life? The Body is necessary to any kind of fullness. That is, that separateness or non application of Body principles means limitation. It means that we shall go just so far and there we stop. There is no end, no limit when we come into the revelation of the Body. While we remain separate units in the Lord we are limited. Of course, I have said: "when we come into the Body" and "while we remain separate units"; perhaps I ought to add "in spirit" because if we are in Christ we are in the Body, but it is the acceptance of the revelation, the truth, the following on that brings us into fullness. The body is necessary to life. Now the Body can be represented by two or three. As we have often said, it was never the Lord's way or intention that there should be individual servants of God alone. The Lord's law is the law of the Body even in the going out two by two, and if ever a servant of God in the New Testament became isolated in a wrong way, that servant of God got into difficulties before long, even though it was Paul. We find the going very stiff and very hard and baffling, but when Sylvanus and Timothy were come down Paul was caught up in spirit and testified, "I found not Titus," and so he lost an opportunity at Troas for which he had been longing. You see the Lord does not stand by a violation of His own principles if those principles are not very carefully watched over by the people who have intelligence about them. I do not mean the Lord has never succoured and helped an isolated servant of His. He does graciously, providentially, sovereignly, but that is not His highest, and He will seek to show that that is not His way.

### **The Strength of Fellowship**

A Body principle is necessary to life. We know it in experience. We may be moving toward a state of spiritual death, utter weariness of mind and body, and then immediately ahead of us there is a gathering of the Lord's people, and nature says I am too tired to go to that meeting, and if nature prevails there is no gain but loss. For those who have learned the secrets of the Lord the attitude is taken, "Yes, but the flesh must not govern this, I shall find my life there." So a wearied and jaded and exhausted child of God faces what all around in the flesh argue is utter folly. They go because they know what will be the result, and they come away in life, the weariness and tiredness gone, giving place to a wonderful inflow of life which they have found in the fellowship of the Lord's people. That is true to experience. Some of us know very extraordinary experiences of being really ruled completely out on a physical basis, and we have not taken that as the criterion, we have lifted our heart to the Lord. The question is not am I fit, but what do You want? And while natural wisdom would have said "No never," sometimes the Lord has said: "Yes, I want you there," and there has been a getting up in faith and the result has been life, and not a return to the old condition. This principle has worked out. The Body is necessary to life.

Some of you will be thinking of those twos or threes who never are able to have a larger fellowship of the Lord's people. I have said that it is not the Lord's way to have one alone anywhere in His service because of the life principle bound up with the two or three. There is another thing to be said, that physical proximity is not necessarily the governing thing in this matter if it is not possible. The corporate Body is not a physical thing.

Where it is possible to have the fellowship of the saints the Lord holds our life to it, makes our life to be a part of it; where it is not possible the spiritual truth may still work, provided we stand on Body ground, provided we recognise the spiritual oneness of the Body and appropriate its values. You may be in some part of the world alone and may be grievously assailed in some way or other. It is possible for you to stand there in your place many miles distant from other saints, and say: "Lord, I appropriate by faith all the values of my fellowship with the saints" and there is value in that. It is an attesting of God's truth. What is the value that is in that? It is the value of which we are speaking. The Holy Spirit operates in relation to the Body and not in any detached way. He is the Spirit of the One Body. And for the Holy Spirit geographical proximity is not a controlling factor. The Holy Spirit can minister through the body to the scattered members. Now these things for some may seem strange, but they are working principles, and God would have all His people in the good of this truth. And, beloved, what a tremendous difference it would make in the work of the Lord and in the spiritual experience of all the Lord's people today if this truth were governing their hearts.

### **Fellowship and Life**

The Body is necessary to life; the ministration of life to individual members from the other members is a law of the Spirit. That is the principle in the physical realm back of the calling of the elders and their anointing with oil in certain physical crises. It is not just a rite, an ordinance; it embodies this principle that elders are representative members of the House of God, they stand as the House of God, that is all. They are not ecclesiastics, or officials, but they represent the House of God and when they come it is bringing in the House of God. In effect it is bringing in the Body of Christ.

You cannot send over to all the globe to gather together all the members of the Body of Christ to pray for you, but the Body comes in through representative members and they anoint with oil, the symbol of the Spirit of the one Body, and they lay hands on the sick, and that is an act of identification, identifying this suffering one with the One Body and the One Spirit, and what happens? Well, life is ministered. That life may work out to the healing entirely of that sickness as we have known it to do. That life may work out not to the removing of the disease or sickness, but to such a quickening as to enable to endure or carry on, or rise up in spite of weakness, and do the Lord's work. The principle is not the principle of removing the state of mortality, but of quickening the mortal body with Divine life. The effect is different in different cases but the principle is one, life is ministered and you see it is corporate. The Body is there in representation and the Spirit is there as the Spirit of the One Body, and the Body in the anointing involves life. The Body is necessary to life. And the Lord jealously guards that as we saw in the case of Saul stricken on the Damascus road; Ananias and Sapphira touching the Body and meeting judgment; and as we have in 1 Corinthians 11:30: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." "...not discerning the Lord's body." The Lord is jealous for His Body. Violate the principle of the Body or ignore it and you suffer, therefore the recognition and discerning of the Body is necessary to life, to fullness.

### **Fellowship and Safety**

Then the Body is necessary to safety. If David found his life in the House of the Lord, as undoubtedly he did, David also found his safety in the House of the Lord: "help out of the sanctuary." "He shall hide me in his pavilion." His safety is in the house of the Lord and that is carried over spiritually into the Body of Christ, the Assembly, the House of God.

May I speak of this safety in one direction alone. Safety in the matter of deception. There is nothing, I think, which more swiftly opens the way to deception and error than ultra-individualism, separateness of spirit and action. I am going to say some things which, if you do not understand them



do not worry, and please do not go away and use them against me because you have not understood them. But it is in this connection those things are said by Paul about women and their covering. They have been given a privileged place in the House of God, representing the principle of the Church's subjection to Christ as Head. Now the apostle is very careful and explicit about those things and he speaks of Eve being deceived and transgression coming in through Eve, not through Adam, deception coming in through Eve, and he links with that these other things, that if a woman forsake her covering, which is simply symbolised in her head attire, when she is in heavenly things, if she forsakes that, she forsakes her protection from deceiving spirits. For that reason we see (you will bear with me I am sure, you sisters, I am only trying to get at spiritual principles) that almost invariably when a woman has assumed the place of authority in spiritual matters it is not long before you have got an excess of some kind, or a twist, perhaps a false doctrine. Touch spiritual things out of place and out of order and you are exposed at once to deception. You see that the covering is symbolised in the natural material thing, but it contains a spiritual principle. What I am saying is this, our safety from deception is in the Body, and being saved from independence of life and separateness of action. Our safety is in the fellowship of saints. The Body is necessary for a right vision and functioning. It is necessary for life, necessary for safety.

We have illustrated this before by this physical Body of ours. If any of the organs of our bodies were separated from the rest of our body they would lose both their form and their functioning. It is by reason of their place in the Body and their relation to all the other organs that they keep both their form and fulfil their function. And the Body is necessary to keep us in order and to help us to function aright. If we get out of fellowship with the Body there will be abnormality of some kind. We shall become unbalanced, we shall not derive the benefit of the Holy Spirit's imparted revelation to others, and, oh, what we owe to that! The Lord does not reveal all His truth to one man, He spreads His revelation over all His saints, and even the most Godly, the most consecrated can learn something from someone else spiritually; and the Lord ordered it so, even among His prophets and even amongst His Apostles, so that Peter will say: "Even as our beloved brother Paul has said..." There are some things hard to be understood, nevertheless, Peter is acknowledging the revelation given to Paul. And Paul got his function through the Body as well as his instructions. "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." He got his instructions from the Body. And then at Antioch the Holy Ghost said: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Light and action, revelation and vocation are bound up with the Body. The Body is necessary for position and function.

Now a closing word. The Body is necessary for discipline. It is all very well for us to say we are perfectly willing to be subject to Christ. Everybody would say that. Listen: "I was sick and ye visited me, I was in prison and you came unto me" "Lord, when saw we thee sick or in prison and came unto thee?" "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me." That is the Body truth. Christ is sick in that member, Christ is linked with the sickness of that member.

# Chapter 6 - Countering the Anointing

## David and the Philistines; or the Spiritual and the Carnal

*Reading: 1 Samuel 16:13; 17:1.*

"Now the Philistines..." That that should come just there carries with it a very great significance. The word "Now" is a very important word. It is the peg upon which hangs a very great deal. That just at this point where David's anointing has been carried out, almost immediately, within so short a time afterward, the record takes this turn, "Now the Philistines..."; and with the introduction of the Philistines there at that point we are brought face to face with one of the greatest phases of the anointing, the meaning of the anointing.

The Philistines were the chief enemies of the testimony of the Lord. We have seen that David's life was marked by the Divine purpose of bringing the testimony of the Lord to fullness and finality; which purpose is seen fulfilled when the ark of the testimony is at last deposited in the sanctuary of the temple, and the glory of the Lord fills the House of God. That is the purpose of David's life. It was for that he was raised up, unto that he was anointed. We are now brought face to face with the chief opposition and antagonism to that anointing, represented by the Philistines. As you go through the books which contain the record of David's life, you will be tremendously impressed with the great amount of contact he had with the Philistines; with what a large place the Philistines had in his life. It is a most impressing thing, and, being made aware of it, as you go to these books you cannot fail to see how large a place the Philistines took in the life of David and in the life of Israel in the days of David.

You will also be impressed, if you care to make a survey of the books of David's life, with the tremendous place the Philistines had in the Old Testament. In the books of Judges and the books of Samuel, the Philistines are mentioned at least two hundred and four times. Then in Joshua, Genesis and Exodus together, you have them mentioned another eleven times; two hundred and fifteen times up to the end of Samuel. That surely means something. That is a round figure, it is not less than that. We want to allow the weight of that to come home to us and see the proportion in the books which contain the life of David. It does bear out what we are saying, that if David was raised up specifically in connection with the testimony coming to fullness and finality, and if he was anointed unto that particular purpose, then the very place which the Philistines hold there in his life represents something which must be taken account of and we must look into this and see the meaning of it.

### Who Were the Philistines?

The Philistines; who were they? They were not natives of that part of the world. They were, in the first place, a wandering people of a war-like nature and well trained in war. They were, therefore, really a menace to the peoples on the earth. They were trained and very efficient fighters, and some of the other greater peoples of the earth found the Philistines a very real handful, and found them to be more than a match for them. Now they came toward the land of promise, the land determined by God to be the land of Israel, they menaced that land before Israel came to it and they gained a very strong footing in that land. Eventually they dominated a large area of it, and so great was their influence and their power and their domination, that they gave their name to the whole of the land, and the name Palestine is simply the land of the Philistines. Palestine means the land of the

Philistines. It is their name. That has stuck to the land ever since they got their footing in it.

Now the Lord brings Israel into the land. It is sometimes called the land of Israel, but over against that title, over against that Divine designation, over against that which represents God's purpose, thought and intention, there is fastened upon that very territory the name of the Philistines, so that they dispute the title of this land with Israel, and it really is a conflict of title, a conflict of a name.

### **The Nature of the Philistine Menace**

Running parallel with that you have the fact that the Philistines were the chief foes of Israel, and that the nature of their opposition was this, that they were always seeking to lay their hands upon and interfere with the things of the people of God. You know how in Samson's day they menaced the people, the land, and the Judges, and were always seeking to get hold of the one who in his person collectively represented the Lord's people. Just to get their hands on Samson, just to discover the secret of his ascendancy, the secret of his power. They were probing the secrets of spiritual power and authority, to get hold of that secret in order to destroy the ascendancy of the Lord's people. So, at last finding an ally in Delilah, they got to the secret of Samson's power, which was Israel's power, as represented by their Judge; and getting the secret they soon destroyed Samson and brought things again into subjection. The thing which was central to all that, was that they might be able to set their god over against Israel's God, and humiliate the God of Israel.

Thus, on the great day when blind Samson is brought out of prison, and made a spectacle before the hosts of the Philistines, the Philistines' shout and glorying was that Dagon was greater than Jehovah, because, look, here is the representative of Jehovah, here is the one in whom the people of Jehovah is gathered up; look at the poor specimen he is, defeated, broken, blinded! He represents the power of Jehovah. It was the gods of the Philistines. There is a spiritual background to this thing, and how the enemy exalted. The enemy, the Devil is exalted and glorified when the natural man, the uncircumcised, uncrucified flesh gets hold of spiritual secrets and uses them. Follow that principle all the way through. Later you know it is the ark, the ark of the testimony as the embodiment of Israel's power and glory, representatively; and the Philistines capture the ark and they put it into the house of Dagon, with the intention of again humiliating Jehovah in the presence of Dagon. We know that Dagon came down.

The Lord is able to look after His own interests even when His people are failing Him. But the object is the same, the two things go together. Philistines laying hold of holy things and using them, with the result that the glory of the Lord is veiled and the glory of the Adversary is manifested. Then the Philistines still pursuing this unholy quest to know Divine secrets, to possess spiritual secrets in order to gain power, ascendancy, looked into the ark, opened the ark, investigated this thing to possess secrets in order to be in power. You know the result. They were smitten by the Lord and from city to city, in the five cities of the Philistines, that judgment spread; but the two things are going on all the time; a wanting to possess Divine secrets, to have those secrets in hand in order to have power, personal power, and that results always in the dishonouring of the Lord and the glorifying of the Adversary.

### **The Spiritual Parallel of the Philistines**

Now you can see from that, without our going any further and drawing in any more data, what is before us. "Now the Philistines." They are known in the Scriptures as the uncircumcised Philistines; and that gives the clue to the whole thing. We know from our New Testament what the spiritual meaning of circumcision is. Let us look at it. Colossians 2:9-13 "...in whom also ye are circumcised...

in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." What is the circumcision of Christ spiritually? It is the putting away of the body of the flesh. It is said here to be something into which we have been brought. We have been brought into the circumcision of Christ, that is, putting away the body of the flesh, and that was representatively set forth in our baptism. The Word says when we were baptised, being buried with Him in baptism, we took our place in the circumcision of Christ; that is, the putting away of the body of the flesh. Our baptism was a declaration that we in the body of the flesh had been put away in the death and burial of Christ. That is circumcision spiritually interpreted. That is the spiritual meaning of this thing that runs through the Scriptures. God never intended it to be merely an outward and objective thing, He always had a spiritual principle back of everything, and the spiritual principle back of the historic circumcision was just this, the putting away of the body of the flesh.

Well now the Philistines are called uncircumcised Philistines. What does that mean? The uncrucified flesh. The body of the flesh not put away. It is the flesh, the natural man, the carnal principle coming in and laying hold of spiritual things. Such are the Philistines. When you get that sort of thing it is not long before you get monstrosities, abnormalities, for you notice with David, "Now the Philistines" is followed immediately by Goliath of Gath, one son in a household of giants. This giant is the representative of the Philistines, and the Philistines are gathered up representatively in him. He steps out as their champion and representative, and on behalf of the rest of the Philistines he personally challenges all Israel. He is a monstrosity, he is an abnormality, which means that the Philistines are an abnormal people in this sense. And when you get a carnal man or woman laying hold of spiritual things, you have got a situation that is a very, very difficult situation; it is an abnormal situation.

You can deal with the natural man alone, but what can you do with a natural man who has got hold of spiritual things? You can never get over that situation by argument. He as a natural man, knows all you know spiritually. There are lots of people who have got hold of all the Christian doctrine and principles; you can teach them nothing, but they are as carnal as they can be. You cannot teach them anything. They are unteachable. This fact proves them carnal. You can tell them nothing, they know it all. What is to be done with them? Nothing but to have their heads cut off! That is speaking typically. They have got to be laid low. They are abnormalities and there is nothing for them but to die. The only thing is to die, and it is not a very pleasant thing for a carnal man in possession of Christian doctrine to die. A man who knows he is all sinful and blind, and dead spiritually, well, he is prepared to accept the setting aside of himself; but the man who thinks he knows all about things, who has got hold of things of the Lord and is in the work of the Lord, and yet is not a crucified man, his death is going to be a most humiliating thing, and there is nothing more humiliating than to see that giant laid low, and to see by what means God brings that giant low. He brings it low, not by any great force of nature at all. David lays aside the armour of the flesh proposed by Saul, the equipment of man offered by the carnal mind of Saul. Lays it all aside and refuses it, and takes the simplest of means, and did not say: I come to you with my sling and stones but, in the Name of the Lord. And the giant, the abnormality looks down upon him, disdains him: "Am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves?" When that which in itself is nothing is God's anointed means for dealing with this giant, the humiliation is terrible.

It is far more difficult for someone who is right in the work of the Lord fully and actively, and preaching and all the rest of it, to come down to the death in Christ than it is for someone who has never touched the things of the Lord. The uncircumcised Philistines; that which seeks to enter into the realm of, and take possession of, the things of the Lord, and is not crucified. It is the natural man, the carnal man taking hold of the things of the Lord, taking hold of spiritual principles, seeking to possess spiritual secrets in order that it may be something. Now that may be applied in numerous

ways. The Lord must make application as far as we are concerned.

### **Separation What it is**

We can put the Philistines into one word; it is this. They represent the principle of an unseparated life; and separation in this case is not just separation from the world as we speak of separation from the world, its amusements, and so on. In this case it is separation from the flesh, from self, from the old life and nature even in the work of the Lord, the things of the Lord; separation from all that we are by nature. Now over against that you get David, and you will find that the Lord's dealings with David all the way along were in order to get him and keep him clear of carnal means. The Devil's effort all the way through David's life was to get him mixed up with carnal things in order to destroy the purpose of his anointing.

Saul is the first one who seeks to entrap him. Here is the young man who in himself is nothing, as we see at the beginning: "Look not on his appearance," here is the young man who has not been chosen or accepted, but is left out of the count when the sons of Jesse pass before Samuel for anointing. The young man who in himself is not taken into account by men, but is brought under the anointing; and then so soon after the purpose of his anointing begins to develop, he has to meet the main enemy and antagonist of that purpose. Immediately he steps out to that oh how cunning is the Devil immediately he steps out to take the first step towards destroying that opposition to the testimony, there is a trap laid for him through Saul, a carnal man, with his proposal that David should have a suit of armour. Saul offers a suit of armour and brings it and puts it on him, and if David had assayed to go with that he would have fallen. But anointing makes for spiritual sensibility, and David says: "I cannot go with this" and so he casts the natural, carnal equipment aside and goes in the Name of the Lord, stripped down to just faith in the Name of the Lord; that is his weapon. That is his spiritual equipment. That is the power of the anointing; the Name of the Lord.

The anointing always implies that the Name of the Lord rests upon us. But you see there was a carnal trick there, a snare to get him on to carnal ground, and how can the flesh slay the flesh? How can an uncrucified man slay an uncrucified man? If our flesh rises up to meet the flesh in someone else there will be no spiritual victory. The victory is only when we meet flesh in the spirit, and do not react to flesh with flesh, carnal meeting carnal. So David had to meet the uncircumcised and uncrucified flesh not with fleshly equipment, but in the power of the anointing alone. Again and again these traps awaited him.

We saw one or two of them earlier. Losing his faith in the Name to a large measure, he took refuge in a Philistine city. He got on to Philistine ground. What is the result? He was useless, absolutely helpless, and he was made ashamed. How can he save Israel on Philistine ground? The Lord delivered him. You see, if he cannot be openly defeated by the Philistines he will be subtly ensnared by the Philistines if possible. If the flesh in open conflict cannot get the upper hand, the flesh will come round to the back door, and on a basis of compromise try to get us to lower our standard, and weaken us, and make impossible the bringing of the testimony to its fullness. But the Lord's object with David was always to get him to stand clear of any Philistine element. We know one outstanding instance. When the ark of the testimony was to be brought up again, David made a new cart, put oxen in the cart, and put the ark on the cart; we know what happened. The tragedy, the arrest and months of delay while David had to go through discipline in which to discover God's way of carrying the testimony not on a Philistine cart.

*They* had made a cart and put the ark on it when they wanted to get rid of it. God's idea was that consecrated Levites should carry that ark, not a mechanical contrivance of man's making. A

Philistine idea introduced in relation to the testimony brings disaster always. David was caught. He learned his lesson. David, after a few months delay he said: "The Levites ought to carry the ark." The Lord had shown him his mistake and revealed His way to him. The Lord does that. You see on the enemy's part there is a scheme, a plan, a plot laid, if possible to defeat God's purpose in bringing the testimony to fullness and finality, by getting the instrument for that purpose on to carnal ground. Again and again David was in peril of leaving the ground of the anointing and of therefore being deprived of his very life-work simply by adopting some carnal method. The Lord's dealing with David all the way along was to get him to that place where he personally represented the principle of the testimony, which is the death, burial, resurrection in Christ; utter separation from the flesh in the circumcision of Christ. "Now the Philistines"!

### **What the Testimony Is**

I do not know how much more to say in this connection just now. Perhaps it will be as well if I try to gather it up in two or three simple ways. First of all, let us remember what the testimony is. The testimony is, in a word, the Lord Jesus. It is represented by the ark, as we know. The ark is the representative of the testimony. For the sake of those who may not be quite so familiar with it let us remind you of what the ark was. Well, to begin with, it was a chest of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold; those two things. Those two things are types of the person of the Lord Jesus, the acacia or shittim wood, His true humanity; the pure gold, His Deity. God and man joined in one Person. The true humanity of the Lord Jesus and the true Deity and Divine nature of the Lord Jesus brought together in one person.

Then on the lid of the ark was the mercy seat, blood sprinkled, where God said He would meet His people in their representative, the High Priest, and speak there. "Between the cherubim and the mercy seat I will speak." The mercy seat is the meeting-place between God and man, where God is heard, listened to, and where He in His Word governs. We are told in the New Testament that the Lord Jesus is set forth to be a propitiation; the literal word is He is set forth to be a Mercy Seat. The Lord Jesus is the Mercy Seat. He is the Place, the One in Whom God speaks to man. That is the beginning of the Hebrew letter: "God... hath in these last days spoken unto us in his Son..." God speaks in Christ and God meets man in Christ. The Lord's own way of saying that was: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." God meets man and man meets God in Christ, but only in virtue of the shed and sprinkled Blood. By the Blood of the Lord Jesus there is made possible a meeting of man with God; and in the Lord Jesus God has spoken and, that being the governing principle of our life, God speaks in us.

God rules the life of His people by what He says in Christ the Mercy Seat. Within the ark there are three things. The tables of law, the golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. The tables of the law, the revealed mind of God for His people. 2 Corinthians 3 and 4 will explain to you what that is spiritually on New Testament ground. The Apostle there takes up the reading of the law by Moses as an illustration. When Moses read the law to the people from the tables of stone, he had come down from the mountain and he had to put a veil over his face for the people could not look upon him. The Apostle says: "When it shall turn to the Lord the veil shall be taken away" for "God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." What are the tables of the law on New Testament ground as the New Covenant? It is God in Christ, revealed in us. God's mind in Christ, revealed in our hearts. The Apostle says in 2 Corinthians 2 and 3 that it is not written now on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of our heart, not with pen and ink but by the Holy Spirit. You see it is the Holy Spirit revealing the mind of God in Christ in our hearts. So that Christ is the revealed mind of God taking the place of the tables of stone.

The ark is Christ with the revealed mind of God in it, and now it is Christ in you the hope of glory. The golden pot of manna, the heavenly, spiritual, miraculous sustenance of the Lord's people here in a wilderness where nature can provide nothing, where the essential resources of man do not exist, where all man's labours to produce a harvest are in vain. Take a plough into a desert and see if you can develop a harvest there. In the desert where all the resources of man, of nature fail, God from heaven miraculously provides sustenance for His people. John 6:31, "Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness." "I am the bread of life." Christ is the Manna for His people. This is the testimony, that where nature can do nothing to help us spiritually, Christ is everything to us. Christ is our life, that is the testimony.

This is a very practical thing, beloved, that Christ by the Holy Spirit is revealed in our hearts to show us the way of the Lord for our lives; and Christ by the Spirit ministered to our inner man to sustain us and cause us to live a heavenly life in the world. That is the testimony. The rod of Aaron placed within the ark signified the priesthood which God had chosen. The other eleven rods did not bud, the twelfth did, and became the symbol of a living priesthood; and priesthood is gathered up into the Lord Jesus. The Hebrew letter makes that clear. The living priesthood. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." You see the ark of the testimony with its very contents is all Christ, and it has the centremost place in the life of God's people. It is the very symbol of God's presence in the midst, and Christ in us speaks of God with us. I dare not go into any more detail.

You see Christ is the Mercy Seat, the Ark, the Manna, the Living Priest, the Law, the Blood; that is it is the Blood of Christ, the Blood of sprinkling. It is said "I will meet with you between the cherubim." The cherubim where the Name is called. It is the Name of Jesus. Christ is the Name and Christ is the glory. It is all Christ, that ark. Now the testimony of Jesus is just all that, and all that has got to be brought out to its place of fullness and manifestation and final settlement in this universe in the midst of His people. What the Lord is after is to bring that testimony to its fullness and finality, and He does it by the anointing. Our anointing is unto that. We are anointed by the Holy Spirit for the testimony's sake, that God may at last have that testimony in its fullness manifested to the universe. That is the object of the anointing.

### **Countering the Anointing**

Now the second thing, the thing that will thwart, that is if we dare to touch these holy things with the flesh; if there is any uncrucified natural man about us that is taking hold of the things of the Lord; if in an uncrucified way we seek to probe into the secrets of the Lord and use the secrets of the Lord in our own wisdom, strength, our own glory, to get position and recognition and reputation for ourselves. Only crucified men can bring the testimony to fullness. Only the really circumcised in the circumcision of Christ can work in the power of the anointing. No Philistine element may come in here. The Enemy's effort all the way along with us will be to get some carnal connection, some carnal ground, in order that he may destroy the purpose of our anointing and defeat the end of God in bringing His testimony to fullness and finality. Remember that! Oh, we must not have a place.

There is not one of us who would not quite eagerly take the ground of "Not I but Christ" in declaration, and yet we may have a will of our own, that we will this or that; for we have a like of our own, we like this and do not like that; we might have a desire of our own, we would desire this and not that, we would go this way but not that way. We have got to come to the place where all that which originates in ourselves goes into death, and we are in a place where we are perfectly open to the Lord for His will, whatever it is, however much it may go against our likes or contradict our ideas, or upset our acceptances. We have to be in the place where we are down before God, this

carnal man absolutely slain, and we are open to the Lord spiritually to go the Lord's way. Otherwise the anointing cannot work, the purpose of the anointing cannot be realised. God's dealings with us are all to get rid of the flesh; not simply because the Lord wants to slay us.

He deals with us as He does in order to get us in the place where the fullness of the power of the anointing can operate and where His glory can come in, and where His testimony may be carried forward through us to its full expression. That is only possible as we quit the scene and the Lord Jesus occupies it, and we can truly say it is no longer I, but Christ.

This then is a summary of spiritual history. David anointed in relation to the testimony in fullness; immediately the coming in of the subtle purposes of the Devil to work in him the principle that can defeat the end of his anointing, and that principle is the principle of "I," the strength of self, the strength of nature, the flesh, the carnal element. That is how the enemy makes the mischief, robs the Lord of the glory, and takes the glory to himself. The Lord deliver us from the Philistines. The Lord make us mighty against the Philistines. The Lord give us to have no compromise with the Philistines. The Philistine nature is in us by nature, and we must take the uncompromising attitude toward the Philistine in us, for the Philistine is bent upon occupying the territory of God and giving *his* name to that which should bear the name of the Lord.

It seems to me a tremendously significant thing that the very land God meant to be called by His own Name and to be the land of Israel, should up to this day bear the name of the Philistines. Why? Simply because Israel never wholly quitted the ground of the flesh. The trouble with Israel all the way through is that they would not stand upon their separation unto God. Their whole history was one of links with the forbidden nature, the uncrucified nature, and the Philistine got the advantage and fastened his name upon that which ought to have the Name of the Lord. May it not be true in our case. We should bear the Lord's name and not the Philistine's.

This one thing before we close this chapter. When at last the Lord broke through to David and showed him the House of God, He had been preparing him for this all the way along. David had not had the revelation of His life purpose all the way through, God had been making him ready for it, and at last when he was ready the Lord broke through and revealed to him the House of God, the Temple; and David got the vision and the pattern of it and the purpose for it fully in his heart. The very next thing is that David went out and dealt with every one of those enemies mentioned in the book of Judges. The book of Judges is a book full of different peoples who menaced Israel in the days of the Judges, and weakened, defeated, and brought Israel into bondage. It is the long story of years and years of weakening at the hands of different peoples. The book of Judges is a book of reproach and shame and disgrace. God's Israel was in the hands of these many peoples round about. You notice immediately David got the vision and purpose of the House of God in fullness, he went out and dealt with them finally. It says to us that the House of God can only come fully into being as all those things which are a menace to the people of God are dealt with one by one and finally settled; all those elements which are fleshly elements trespassing upon the things of God are absolutely to be put out of action. It is a glorious thing, it is an inspiration! Whether he understood it all or not, he got a vision of the House of God in fullness and immediately went out to deal with all those people one by one you come up against them in the book of Judges which had been the weakening force.

The House of God must be built upon the ground that nothing of the flesh of any kind whatsoever can have a co-existence with the House of God. That is why Solomon was a man of peace, of rest; because David had made it possible. The House of God is always a house of rest; upon this principle, that the enemies have been dealt with and settled, put down. That is why the Church has come into being on the basis of Calvary's Victory. Because in Calvary Christ met every foe to the Church, and



dealt with it. It is a House of rest. You and I as members of Christ's Body are His spiritual temple on the principle that we have entered into the rest He has secured by having defeated all our foes.

The basic thing for the testimony is that the Philistine has got to be dealt with, every uncircumcised element has got to be ruled out, and the anointing is unto that. The enemy wants to destroy the anointing by somehow getting a Philistine element into our walk, relationships, attitude, judgments; anywhere. May we be saved unto a full and complete victory over the Philistines.