

Bethel Pulpit

Sermon 310

The King's Chambers

**Sermon preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton,
by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,
on Lord's day morning, 10th April, 2011**

Text: “*The King hath brought me into His chambers*” (Song 1. 4).

What matchless condescension, Zion's great and glorious King, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that He has dealings with unworthy sinners, that He loves them, that He left heaven for earth to die for them, that He graciously draws them to Himself, that He blesses them, that He holds communion with them!

“The King” – that is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ – “The King hath brought me into His chambers.” Now this was an answer to prayer, and it was a sudden answer to prayer, and it was a quick answer to prayer, because she [the church, the bride of Christ] felt afar off, and she could not be satisfied with being afar off, and she wanted to be brought near. She wanted that union with her beloved Saviour. And so she prayed for it: “Draw me, Lord; draw me.” And very quickly she received the answer: “The King hath brought me into His chambers,” drawn me to Himself, blessed me, revealed His love to me.

So this beautiful word this morning is an answer to prayer, and it is a mercy if when we are in a far-off condition, we are not satisfied with it, we are not complacent about it. It is a mercy if when our hearts feel afar off and feel cold and dark, if there is that burden that the Lord will do something, that He will draw us near, that He will bring us to Himself. So it is a beautiful word, and we have the prayer before it. But even this word itself – do you feel concerned to turn that into a prayer? Often it is a good hearing when you can turn the text into a prayer. Lord Jesus, dost Thou bring Thy beloved people into Thy chambers? Dost Thou so favour them? Then in love and mercy do it for me. In mercy, in love bring me, an unworthy sinner, bring me into Thy chambers. It would be a wonderful thing if this word is graciously fulfilled amongst us this morning, fulfilled in our hearts: “The King hath brought *me* into His chambers.”

I just want to linger a moment on two little points before really coming into the subject. One is the word *brought*, and the other is *brought into*. These are real, good, gospel words and expressions. There is so much in the Word of God of sinners being brought to Christ, brought by grace, brought out of the world, brought away from their past life, brought

to repentance, brought to prayer, brought to the blood-sprinkled mercy seat, brought out and brought in, brought to Jesus, brought along. There is so much of this being brought. Two old hymns come across my spirit. One is this:

“He *brought* me to the banquet,
Else I had never come.”

That is true. And the other:

“Loved with everlasting love,
Brought by grace that love to know.”

“The King hath brought me.” O but this word *into*. That is what we long for. We meet together on the Lord’s day and in the week. We have this glorious gospel. O but we want the Holy Spirit to bring us in. We hear and sing and read of the blessedness of God’s people. O we want to be brought in. And when the text is given out, we do not want to be excluded from the text. We do not want to be left out. We do not want to be passed by. We want to be brought in. It is that point: to be a partaker, not just a bystander or a spectator or an onlooker. “The King hath brought me *in*.” That is what we long for. We want the King to bring us in, to bring us in among His people, to bring us in to the blessings of the everlasting gospel.

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” Well, I want to dwell here. This is real, vital godliness. Mr. Gascoigne used to lean over the pulpit and say, “How long is it since you did business with heaven?” This is real godliness. There is a kind of religion about in places almost like this: a sinner is saved; “once in Him in Him for ever”; and that is it. He is saved, and then one day he gets to heaven. In some Evangelical circles there is that today: the believing, the beginning, and then, well, various activities and so on. But in real religion there is the knowledge of Christ, there is looking to Him, there is walking with Him, there is the closer walk with God, there is the nearness, there is the union, there is the communion, and living souls cannot really be satisfied otherwise. William Huntington said he abhorred that religion when persons could say how they were blessed forty, fifty, sixty years ago, and not much going on since. It is a wonderful truth, a glorious truth, “Whom once He loves He never leaves, but loves them to the end,” but God’s people want to experience that love. They want to walk with the Saviour. They want to

love Him in return. They want the nearness to Him. They cannot be satisfied when it is dark and hard and cold and dry and barren. So the cry ever must be, “Draw me, Lord; draw me to Thy feet.”

“Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side.”

Now that is the difference between real religion and false, between the people of God and those who only make a profession of the Lord’s name. You are so grateful that the Lord has blessed you, that He has saved you by His grace, but you want to know His presence; you want to know His love; you want to be kept near Him; you want to be at His feet; you want to be delivered from prayerlessness, from hardness, from deadness, from indifference. And this prayer for it: “Draw me,” and then may the King in matchless condescension and love and mercy, may Zion’s glorious God and King bring me into His chambers.

Well, in the imagery here we have the King’s palace, and in the King’s palace, the King’s chambers. I cannot remind you too often of this: whenever we come to the Song of Solomon, it is beautiful language, it is figurative language, it is poetical language, but it is not speaking of fantasies and imaginations. It is speaking of vital things. It is speaking of real religion. The King’s palace, the King’s chambers and the King has brought me in.

Well, first of all there is a *reception room*, a receiving chamber. Some of these stately homes have that reception chamber. Well, the King has a reception chamber. Written over the door is this: “This Man receiveth sinners.” O what a mercy! What a mercy, the King’s palace, the palace of our great God and King, our Lord, our Creator, but,

“Sinners are freely welcome still
To Christ, the sinners’ Friend.”

So if there is a door at the palace, you know what some of the old preachers used to say: the knocker on mercy’s door is not too high for children to reach. I think it was Mr. Dawson of Bethersden who used to use that expression. There is a knocker; it is the knocker of mercy; it is not too high for children to reach. O that knocker on mercy’s door! And how pleasing it is to the King. You remember perhaps the second part of

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. There was someone going along with Christiana. When she came to the palace, she was so trembling, she hardly dared knock at the door, but she picked up the knocker and her hand trembled so much that her actual trembling knocked on the door. And Bunyan in his own quaint way said that inside, that feeble knock came with a thunderous sound, and he said that a smile came over the King's face. That is it:

“The guilty, vile, and base,
The wretched and forlorn,
Are welcome to the feast of grace,
Though goodness they have none.”

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” It is that being brought, brought as a sinner, brought feeling your need, brought confessing your sin, and there for the King to smile upon you and to welcome you as His guest. “The King hath brought me into His chambers” – that place, that chamber where even sinners are received. You do not always want to stay outside. Perhaps you are like Esther: “So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.” But no sinner perished there. When you enter you will fall humbly at His feet, and no sinner can perish at Jesus' feet.

You know the way you enter this reception chamber. We have it in the closing chapter of Hosea's prophecy: “Take with you words.” You have to speak; you have to ask. “Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.” Now that is the way the Lord receives sinners, and that is the only way He ever can receive sinners – *graciously* – because sinners do not deserve it; sinners deserve the door to be shut; sinners deserve to be cast out. O but what a prayer: “Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously”! O what a mercy that “this Man” – this glorious Man – “receiveth sinners, and eateth with them”! “The King hath brought me into His chambers.” Well, may there be an entering into that first chamber today where the Lord in love and mercy receives the venturing sinner.

Now there is another chamber. It is (would you say?) *the chamber of washing*, the chamber of cleansing. In eastern homes in Bible days, and especially in kings' palaces, when a traveller entered, often it was the servant who would come and wash his feet. How Peter objected to it! He said, “Lord, Thou shalt never wash my feet.” “If I wash thee not, thou hast

no part with Me,” which means you and I can never be partakers unless washed in the blood of Christ. You can understand Peter saying, “Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.”

“Plunge us in that crimson ocean,
Thy atonement made for sin.”

“If I wash thee not.” Can you stand before a word like that? As a sinner you cannot appear in the presence of a holy God unless washed.

So David. He was a venturing sinner. He prayed to be received. “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” You know what the hyssop was. It was a little bunch of herbs that the Jews used for sprinkling the blood. You remember on the day of the Passover it was a bunch of hyssop that was used to apply the blood. It is a personal interest in the atonement, a personal interest in the death of Christ. “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” You say, What can be whiter than snow? Well, I think you know the answer. We saw it last winter. The snow – wasn’t it beautiful! But it was not so white the next day, not so beautiful the next day, especially where the cars had been. “Whiter than snow.” “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” It is a wonderful mercy that, “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.” And perhaps some of you say, Yes, that is alright for the people of God, for the house of David, for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. But Bunyan did not take it like that. Bunyan used to talk about “Jerusalem sinners,” the chief of sinners, those who literally wounded and crucified the Lord of life and glory, and it seems that some of those who literally crucified the Saviour, were blessed on the day of Pentecost and led into the King’s chambers and were washed from all defilement in the blood of Christ. What does it say over the door of this chamber? “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” Some wretched sinners have crept into these chambers. One was named Manasseh. You read the account of Manasseh. In his cruelty he was the kind of man like Hitler or some of these evil men that we read about in the Middle East.

There never was such a sinner. But he was brought, for the Lord brought him by grace, brought him to repentance and brought him into the King's chambers and he found mercy.

“That sacred stream, from Jesus' veins,
Was free to take away
A Mary's or Manasseh's stains,
Or sins more vile than they.”

Some have felt like that godly Scottish minister, Hector McPhail, who was so tried and tempted but he felt he could lay hold on Manasseh's skirts and creep in beside him. And didn't he hear a voice saying, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief”?

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” Now there is another chamber in the King's palace, and that is a beautiful chamber. It is *the chamber of rest*. Didn't Bunyan's Christian when he came to the House Beautiful, find there was a chamber of rest for weary pilgrims? “There remaineth therefore” – in Christ – “a rest to the people of God.” In so many of those kings' palaces, they had a beautiful room where when the burning midday sun was high, everything was cool and quiet and shaded and where the weary could sit down or lie down and find peace and rest. “There remaineth therefore” – in Christ – “a rest to the people of God.”

When the Lord brings you by His grace, at first you do not know any rest. He brings you out of that state of unconcern. He brings you out of all that vain rest, that false rest, that empty rest, and there you are, “still seeking rest,” says our hymnwriter, “and finding none.” Some of you have known that experience, some of you for a short time, some of you for a long time. Gadsby says, “I cannot rest without my resting-place.” That grace which stirs up your nest, that grace which is dealing with you, that grace brings you along and brings you in and brings you to the chambers, and “there you find the gospel rest.” You know what is written over the door of this chamber: “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” – that resting on the merits of Christ, that resting on His finished work, that resting as a sinner on His atonement. It is solid ground to rest on. It is not false security. It is a comfortable bed to rest upon, the infinite merits of Christ, His finished work.

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” But we need Him to bring us in. You long to get in, but if only the King comes and takes you by the hand and brings you in, finding that resting place in Christ in believing! But then there is the time of sorrow; there is the time of trouble; there is the time of affliction. There are things in the world; there are things in the church of God; there are things in your family; things with those you love. There is your health, your circumstances, tomorrow, the unknown way. What does the King say? “Come, My people.” It is, “Come and welcome!” “Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.” O that resting place in this chamber of the Lord’s love and mercy, and it is no wonder in that ancient prophecy of the coming of the Saviour we have this word: “And His rest shall be glorious.” It is a foretaste of eternal rest. O says the psalmist, “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.”

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” And then there is *the banqueting chamber* you have in the next chapter. “He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love.” Because living souls need rest, but living souls have an appetite that the world can never satisfy. The house of God sometimes is the banqueting house; the preaching of the gospel is the banqueting house; the Lord’s supper is the banqueting house. And she says, “He brought me.” “He brought me to the banqueting house.”

“Here every bowel of our God
With soft compassion rolls;
Here peace and pardon, love and blood,
Is food for dying souls.”

And what next?

“While all our hearts and all our songs
Join to admire the feast,
Each of us cry, with thankful tongues,
‘Lord, why was I a guest?’”

That is it. “The King hath brought me.” You will say, Why me, Lord, when thousands perish in their sin, when thousands rather starve than come? Why me? “The King hath brought me,” unworthy me, a sinner like

me, one who was unconcerned like me, one who loved the world more than Christ.

“Why was I made to hear Thy voice,
And enter while there’s room;
When thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?”

“The King hath brought me.”

“’Twas the same love that spread the feast
That sweetly forced us in;
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perished in our sin.”

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” Well, what about this banqueting house? In Isaiah chapter 25 there is a wonderful description of the banquet. After it is introduced, we read that the Lord will swallow up death in victory. “O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.” You say, Whatever is the connection there? Well, whether it was a true story or only a legend, I think all of you have heard of the sword of Damocles. The story was this: that Damocles invited all his guests to a banquet, but as they sat at the table, they looked above their head and there was a drawn sword suspended by a thread. It is said not a single person could eat a mouthful of food. They kept looking up at this sword that was so perilously hanging over them. Well, whether it is true or just a legend, no sinner can enjoy the feast when there is the dread of sinking into hell.

So you have the glorious banquet, but He has swallowed death in victory. It is not a sword over them: “His banner over me was love,” the love of Christ from everlasting. “I have loved thee with an everlasting love.” That is what has drawn her into the banqueting house. “With lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” This drawing of lovingkindness is a great point in real religion, and I would press you on this and hold you fast on it – when you find an attraction in the things of God, if you have an attraction in the things of God, if you are sweetly drawn to the Saviour, you are sweetly drawn to His Word, sweetly drawn to the throne of grace – these are the things. It is a mark of His everlasting love. His banner over you is love. That is why He has drawn you. She is drawn, she is graciously led, she is brought into the banqueting hall.

People have said sometimes if they are invited to a banquet and it is a very important occasion, they are so concerned if they should dress properly and behave properly, and are eating properly. It is some great person, but doesn't it make a difference if when they arrived that great person was waiting for them at the door and he smiled at them and welcomed them and brought them in and told them to make themselves at home! Beloved friends, as I understand it, that is the figure here: the King hath brought me in love. He wants to have you there. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

"The King hath brought me into His chambers." That is the place where your soul will be satisfied. If your religion is real, there will be a holy appetite, a holy hungering that the world can never satisfy, the world can never fill, but Christ can and Christ does. He says, "I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread." Because these are the poor who come in, who are welcome. It is free; it is without money; it is without price. Who can really speak of the rich provisions of the gospel – all the promises of God, all the glorious truths of the gospel, all the divine attributes, all the character offices of the Saviour; especially the wonder of His love, especially His gracious presence? "The King hath brought me into His chambers." "He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love."

"The King hath brought me into His chambers." And then perhaps especially *the chamber of sweet communion*. Now that is what living souls long for, this nearness to the Saviour, to feel His gracious presence, to be made nigh by His precious blood, to know real worship at His feet, to know that blessed access to the throne of grace. Well, surely some of you at some time in your life have known something of it. "His sweet communion charms the soul." But that is the difference between true religion and false. Perhaps we do not know very much of it, but our religion, if we know nothing of it, is weighed in the balances and found wanting.

"Here pardoned rebels sit, and hold
Communion with their Lord."

Sometimes it is in the house of God. Sometimes it is at the Lord's table, because do not forget the Lord's table is spoken of as the communion of the body and blood of Christ. O but to know this nearness, this access, this

communion, this closer walk with God! And we need the King to bring us there.

“The King hath brought me into His chambers.” These are beautiful things. Perhaps to many of us they are beautiful things in our desire for them, our prayer for them, our longing for them. These blessed realities are not fantasies, and really what is our religion apart from these vital things: union, communion, knowledge of Christ, nearness to Him, experiencing His presence, knowing His peace, feeling His love? Well, may we pray it: “Draw me, Lord; draw me, unworthy as I am; bring me into Thy chambers, Lord. Bring me into that sweet union and communion with Thyself. Bring me there in mercy. O may I be able to bear this humble testimony: ‘The King hath brought me into His chambers,’” because living souls can never really be satisfied without it.

And then it is as a little foretaste, and then the eternal consummation of this in *the heavenly chambers* that the Lord spoke of as *many mansions*, and all these blessings there in all their fulness for guilty sinners. “In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” And then the forty-fifth Psalm fulfilled: “They shall enter into the King’s palace.” And this word fulfilled eternally: “The King hath brought me into His chambers.”