

Bethel

Prayer Meeting Addresses

Number 8 The Dew

Reading: Hosea 14

1 O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.

2 Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.

3 Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

4 I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

5 I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

6 His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

7 They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

8 Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.

9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

Address

The last two or three times at the prayer meeting I have gone through a passage verse by verse. Now this evening the approach will be just the opposite. To me there is one word that stands out clearly and powerfully in this chapter. This word has been mentioned in prayer. This word has been prayed for, and that is *dew*. What is the whole of our religion without dew? Job said that the dew lay all night upon his branch. Apart from heavenly dew, our religion is dry and arid and barren. Apart from heavenly dew, our preaching is dead and only in the letter. The old preachers used to speak about the sweet, bedewing influence of the Holy Ghost. Now that is what we want: power, unction, savour, dew, and they all come together, and it is not something anyone can work up. It is something that comes down. Don't we read, "As the dew that descended"?

You see, it came down. “The dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.” Where? On the mountains of Zion. That is one answer. Where? Another answer is this: where the dew descends. “He smiles, and my comforts abound; His grace as the dew shall descend.”

In Zion, everything comes down. Nothing flows from beneath. Nothing rises from beneath. Nothing comes, not originally, from our carnal heart. It all descends. It all comes down. We have that wonderful word of Moses abundantly fulfilled in the gospel ministry: “My doctrine” – that is the doctrine of Christ and Him crucified – “My doctrine shall drop as the rain, My speech shall distil as the dew.” Sometimes when the Word of God comes graciously, it comes like the rain. It is some particular sermon, or it is some particular text, or it is some particular passage of Scripture. You can see the rain fall. You can hear the rain fall. Now the dew comes imperceptibly. You cannot see it; you cannot hear it; but you know it is there because of its effect. But sometimes with a child of God the very Word seems to be distilling in your heart. You cannot go back to some particular occasion or some powerful application. It may just be the spirit of the Word and there it is distilling in your heart. Now that is what we need personally and as a church. We need the doctrine of Christ to fall as the rain in our hearts and also sweetly to distil as the dew.

The effect of the dew is to moisten, to soften, to refresh, to revive. I understand that in Palestine the dew is accounted an exceedingly precious thing. There are areas of that country where for weeks, months at a time there is no rain at all. But there is quite a heavy dew and life is maintained because of the dew. It means all the difference between life and death. Now surely this is the Lord Jesus speaking: “I will be as the dew unto Israel.” It is not just that He sends the dew. He does, but, “I will be as the dew unto Israel” – the precious visits of the Lord Jesus, those precious visits which so sweetly bedew the souls of His people!

You see, the dew penetrates. A friend of mine in Haslingden wanted a pair of really strong boots and in the end he saw a pair of boots in a shop window, and they were literally standing in a bowl of water. The point was that they were so strong, so stout, that even stuck in a bowl of water, no water would penetrate to the inside. But the advertisement said this, that they will stand everything but the dew. For some reason, even these stout boots could not keep out the dew. When my friend asked about it, will they keep everything out, they said, “Yes, sir, everything but the dew.” It penetrates where nothing else will. This is what

is so lacking in our religion. We want penetration, something to penetrate right in our hearts.

“I will be as the dew unto Israel.” Then you see the gracious effect. “He shall grow as the lily” – beautiful, fragrant, attractive, pure. But lest any should think that under the influence of heavenly dew there might be weakness, his roots shall be as Lebanon. No roots like the might roots of the cedars of Lebanon! You see the effect of this heavenly dew is to cause you to send your roots down, to cling more closely to Christ. One of our hymns prays for this blessing:

“Winds from the north and south, awake,
Take of the things of Jesus, take.”

Now this is it:

Diffuse Thy kind celestial dew,
Bring pardon, peace, and healing too.”

*This address was given at Bethel Chapel, Luton, by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,
on Monday, 2nd June, 1986*

