

Bethel

Prayer Meeting Addresses

Number 37 Flowing Together

Reading: Jeremiah 31. 1-14

1 At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

2 Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.

3 The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.

4 Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

5 Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things.

6 For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God.

7 For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.

8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and

her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

9 They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

10 Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.

11 For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.

12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.

14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord.

Address

What a wonderful cluster of blessed verses we have here, speaking of God's ancient people, and looking forward to gospel days! "The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness" – Israel delivered from the sword of Pharaoh and from the sword of the destroying angel, delivered through the blood, brought into the wilderness, finding grace there in the manna, the smitten rock, the overthrow of their enemies. "When I sent to cause him to rest" – leading them on, leading them to Canaan to find a resting place there. And all these things fulfilled in Christ.

Now God's ancient people here were in trouble. They were in Babylon. They were in captivity. But the Lord reminds them what He did for them in the past, and that same blessed truth: what the Lord has been to His people, He always will be. Did He bring them out of Egypt? He will not leave them now; He will bring them out of Babylon. And if His love was ancient love, it was not only ancient love: it was everlasting love. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

The greater part of these verses which I have read to you speak concerning Israel being brought out of Babylon, out of captivity, back to Jerusalem, sweetly prefiguring the gathering in of sinners to Christ and to the blessings of the gospel. They say so many things about the way they are going to be brought back.

There is just one thing specially laid hold on me, the point I want to linger on this evening: this flowing together. As they are brought back, "they shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord." This is a most blessed point, beloved friends, and it is perhaps better experienced than explained: this flowing together.

I just mention two or three things. A sinner made nigh to Christ brought there through grace by faith, pouring out his heart to the Lord, knowing some returns of love and mercy, and O what a flowing together there is to the goodness of the Lord! And then sometimes the communion of saints, when friend meets friend, and when the Lord's people in communion are able to speak of their hopes and fears, their joys and their sorrows, and O what a flowing

together there is to the goodness of the Lord! And then in public worship, in the house of God, listening to the preaching of the gospel, and O there seems to be such a flowing together, heart united to heart! In prayer:

“While one is pleading with our God,
May each one wrestle too.”

There is a flowing together. And sometimes in holy gratitude, and sometimes in worship, when the people of God appear *as one*. It is that *together*. It is a great gospel word, union with Jesus, union with one another.

“Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord.”

It is flowing together.

Now to put it very, very simply, I am sure you have all seen it on a rainy day like these days we have had recently. You are inside the house and you can see a drop of water running down the window pane, and you can see another drop of water, and there the two of them are and they are coming down that window pane – you have all seen it – and they meet together, and what is it? Well, there is just one now. There are no longer two; there is just one, and they flow together as one down the window pane to the bottom of the window. Now this is just a very simple illustration, but that is it. May we know more of it personally and with our friends and family and loved ones and in the church of God – this flowing together.

They ... *shall* flow together to the goodness of the Lord.”

*This address was given at Bethel Chapel, Luton, by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,
on Monday, 2nd July, 2007*

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How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those that love the Lord,
In one another's peace delight,
And so fulfil his word!

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart.

When free from envy, scorn, and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.

When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows;
When union sweet and dear esteem,
In every action glows!

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

J. Swain