

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

- In this day Christ is opened to the believing sinner as a Fountain for sin and for uncleanness (13:1).
- In this day the Lord God turns his hand upon his little ones, for whom Christ suffered and died, to save them (13:7).
- In this day our mighty Savior divides the spoils of his victory with his redeemed. — “*Thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee*” (14:1; Isaiah 53:9-12).

(Isaiah 53:9-12) “And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth. (10) Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (12) Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

We are told precisely what those spoils are in Psalm 68:18-20.

(Psalms 68:18-20) “Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*. (19) Blessed *be* the Lord, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, *even* the God of our salvation. Selah. (20) *He that is* our God *is* the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord *belong* the issues from death.”

A GREAT VALLEY

In this Day of the Lord, in this Gospel Day, the gates of hell may appear to threaten God’s church; but they shall not prevail against us. That is the promise of verses 2 and 3. **Then, in verses 4 and 5, Zechariah uses highly symbolic language to describe the accomplishments of our Lord Jesus Christ, focusing our attention upon the Mount of Olives.** The gates of hell can never prevail against God’s church because of that which our Lord Jesus has done and is doing for us.

(Zechariah 14:4-5) “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

toward the north, and half of it toward the south.
(5) And ye shall flee *to* the valley of the mountains;
for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto
Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before
the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah:
and the LORD my God shall come, *and* all the
saints with thee.”

What are these two verses talking about? When the Son of God came into this world in human flesh to redeem and save his people, the Day of the Lord arrived. How often our Savior appeared on the Mount of Olives. Indeed, the Mount of Olives was the very last sacred spot on which his holy feet stood. It was from this mount that he ascended to heaven, having finished redemption’s work upon the earth. Let us go often in our souls’ memory to this hallowed ground, let our hearts follow our ascended and exalted Savior, gazing in amazement as those disciples did on the day of our Lord’s ascension, contemplating the glory of our Redeemer. See him yonder, on the throne. Possessing power over all flesh to give eternal life to his redeemed, he is sovereignly executing all the blessed designs of his love toward us! Remember with joy and expectation the blessed promise of the angels who attended him as he ascended. — “*This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*” (Acts 1:11). Soon our blessed Lord shall come again “*to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*” (2 Thessalonians 1:10). That One

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

of whom Zechariah speaks here is our Kinsman Redeemer, the Lord our Righteousness, Christ Jesus the Lord.

He has taken away the wall of partition that stood between the Jew and the Gentile (Ephesians 2:14). The Mount of Olives, like the mountains surrounding Jerusalem, was made to “*cleave in the midst.*” The law stood like a great mountain. — “*Who art thou, O great mountain,? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain!*” Before our mighty Zerubbabel and his gospel, that mountain was laid flat as a plain, and the Spirit of God gushes out to sinners in a mighty river of grace (Galatians 3:13-14). The mountain departed and the hills removed; but the covenant of peace cannot be broken. Now peace is preached to him that is afar off and to those that are nigh (Ephesians 2:13-17).

With the mountain being divided, one half toward the north and the other half toward the south, a great valley, a new and living way has been opened to the new Jerusalem by which sinners have free access to God in the holy place (Hebrews 10:19-22); and the Word of the Lord that goes forth from Zion has free course throughout the world. Thus the way of the Lord is prepared. Every mountain and hill has been brought low (Isaiah 40:4).

The valley of the mountains is the place where Christ is found; and there his elect are found. It reaches unto

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

“*Azal*,” which means “the separate place.” The valley reaches to all whom God has set apart for himself. When God makes a way in the mountain (Isaiah 49:11), by making a valley, the way is opened to wayfaring men (Isaiah 35:8) who, though fools, shall not err therein. Called by grace, they shall flee to the valley of the mountains. There saints of God is found with Christ, to whom we flee from the dread and curse of the law, to whom we flee from the wrath to come, from the avenger of blood, who pursues us. When the law thundered against and the earth quaked beneath us, awakened by the Spirit of God we escaped for our lives, fleeing to Christ our Refuge, our High Tower, our Covert from the tempest. In him we have found rest for our souls.

WONDERS PERFORMED

When the Lord God comes in saving mercy and brings his elect into the Valley of Grace he performs his wonders for them and in them. They are described in Zechariah 14:6-11.

(Zechariah 14:6-11) “And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the light shall not be clear, *nor* dark: (7) But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, *that* at evening time it shall be light. (8) And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

summer and in winter shall it be. (9) And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. (10) All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. (11) And *men* shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."

In that great day, which Zechariah calls "the Day of the Lord," a river of living waters flows out of Jerusalem to the thirsty soul, Christ shall be enthroned in the heart of his redeemed, all the obstacles that stood like great mountains keeping the sinner from Christ are turned into a plain before his chosen, destruction are destroyed, and all the inhabitants of God's Jerusalem dwell in safety. Those are the things spoken of in verses 8-11.

In the time that remains, I want us to look at the wonders described in verses 6 and 7. Here, the Lord God declares by his prophet that in this day of grace, as we walk with Christ in the valley, "**at evening time it shall be light.**"

(Zechariah 14:6-7) "And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the light shall not be clear, *nor* dark: (7) But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

pass, *that* at evening time it shall be light.”

A MIXTURE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS

The first thing we see in verse 6 is that throughout this Day of the Lord, this Day of Grace, there will be a mixture of light and darkness. Young’s Literal Translation translates verse 6, — “The precious light is not, it is dense darkness.” Joel describes the scene in the same graphic, figurative language (Joel 2:30-32; 3:14-16).

(Joel 2:30-32) “And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. (31) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. (32) And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.”

(Joel 3:14-16) “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision. (15) The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. (16) The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

shake: but the LORD *will be* the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.”

Perhaps this word was given by the prophet to teach us that God’s providence is ever a mystery to us. The wheels of providence, as Ezekiel described God’s works, are always moving (Ezekiel 1:15-19).

(Ezekiel 1:15-19) “Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. (16) The appearance of the wheels and their work *was* like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work *was* as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. (17) When they went, they went upon their four sides: *and* they turned not when they went. (18) As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings *were* full of eyes round about them four. (19) And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.”

Both the Romans and the Greeks, in their ancient writings compared Divine providence to a wheel. But Ezekiel got his doctrine by the direct revelation of God himself. That makes his doctrine authoritative. Divine providence is like a wheel in at least three ways.

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

That part of the wheel that is now on top will soon be on the bottom and the bottom will soon be on the top.

— In other words, God brings about drastic, unexpected changes in the lives of men, in the affairs of nations, in the affairs of this world and in the affairs of his people as it pleases him.

- Poverty and Riches
- Sickness and Health
- Tranquility and Turmoil
- Fame and Ill-Repute
- Peace and War

(Isaiah 45:7) I form the light, and create darkness:
I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

There is one part of the wheel that is always the same and never turns. — **THE AXLE!** We undergo many changes. All our lives are checkered with change. But the axle upon which the whole machinery of providence turns is always the same. That axle is God's everlasting, covenant love and grace.

- God never changes (Malachi 3:6).
- God's purpose never changes (Job 23:13). — "*He is of one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.*"
- God's love never changes (John 13:1).
- God's grace never changes (Romans 11:29).
- God's faithfulness never changes (2 Timothy 2:13, 19). — *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he*

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

cannot deny himself.” — “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.”

When a wheel moves real fast, the only thing you can see is the exterior circle. — That can be terribly confusing. Instead of looking at parts of things, we need to look at the whole course of events in history, in our lives, in the affairs of God’s church, and so on. When we look at things as a whole, we see one round circle of symmetry, teaching us that God is wise, and just, and good.

Illustration: Kerri Coffey to Henry – *“I’ve had a rough day, Pawpaw; but I’ve had a great life!”*

Still, the dispensations of God’s providence are neither clear nor dark, neither day nor night. In the church of God, where the Sun of Righteousness has risen, it cannot be dark night. Yet, until we reach the perfection of heavenly glory, we can never enjoy perfectly clear day. That is the way it is with us in our daily experience. Is it not? We are not children of darkness, but of light in the Lord. Yet, while there is so much error and corruption remaining in us, it is not perfect day (Isaiah 50:10).

(Isaiah 50:10) “Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? let him

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.”

When Isaiah says God’s saints walk in darkness and have no light, he does not mean for us to understand that in an absolute sense. — The word “*light*” here means “brilliance,” or “clear-shining light.”

- We always have the light of God’s truth, but not of his countenance (Psalm 4:6; 80:3; Song of Solomon 5:2).
- We have the light of God’s Word always, but not of God’s favor (Psalm 88:46; Lamentations 3:1-18).
- We have the light of God’s goodness and grace in Christ always, but not of assurance.
- We have the light of God’s promises always, but not of his presence.

The fact is, true believers often walk in darkness concerning the state and condition of their souls! — I can identify with **John Berridge**, who once said, “For my own part, since first my unbelief was felt, I have been praying for years for faith, and praying with some earnestness, and am not yet possessed of half a grain.”

- Indwelling Sin!
- Spiritual Trials and Conflicts!
- Satan’s Temptations!
- Horrible Falls!
- Worldly Trouble, Care, and Sorrow!

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

“*Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? **Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.***” If I cannot trust God in the darkness, I do not trust him at all. If I trust Christ only in the light, my trust is not in Christ but in my experience. God’s promises were made for dark times! May God give me grace to trust him in my darkness...

- Without any Evidences of Grace!
- Without anything to Confirm His Word!
- Faith without support is God honoring faith.
- This is the way we grow in faith.

THE LORD KNOWS

Now, watch this. In the midst of these heavy, cloudy days, we have this blessed assurance. — “*But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night.*” **So in the second place, I want you to see that with regard to all that we experience in this day, the Lord knows.** The eye of our God is upon all these things. His hand is in them all. They are known to the Lord. He takes notice of them, and orders and disposes of all for our good, according to the counsel of his own will. He who has numbered the hairs of our heads will never forget to be gracious. That ought to be enough to sustain our souls. **The Lord knows!** — “*He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*” (Job 23:10). — “*The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*” (Psalm 1:6). — “*He knoweth thy*

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

walking through this great wilderness” (Deuteronomy 2:7). “He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him” (Daniel 2:22).

(Acts 15:18) “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”

(Psalms 37:18) “The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.”

(Psalms 103:14) “For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.”

(Psalms 139:2) “Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.”

(2 Timothy 2:19) “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

(2 Peter 2:9) “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:”

(Psalms 37:18) “The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.”

(John 21:15-17) “So when they had dined, Jesus

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. (16) He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. (17) He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

Third, Zechariah here promises that there shall be light in the evening. — “*But it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light.*” **First and foremost, this word of grace refers to that wondrous, miraculous, irresistible work of God the Holy Spirit that he performs in the hearts of poor sinners in the gift of faith in Christ.** Oh, when Christ is revealed in the heart of a sinner who has been engulfed in thick darkness, it is evening time in his soul; but it is a strange evening time, for it is an evening time of light!

Sunrise at sunset is contrary to nature; and the rising of the Sun of Righteousness is the wondrous work of God’s free grace. Has such an event taken place in your soul? It

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

is evening time in the soul, engulfed in midnight darkness, before first the Lord shines in the heart. Then, suddenly, when we have lost all hope and the darkness of guilt and sin and shame is so great that it is felt darkness in our hearts, the Lord surprises his chosen with the light of his mercy, love and grace. When the darkness is so great that we cry, “*My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God*” (Isaiah 40:27), God commands the light to shine out of darkness, and shines in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

As it is in the beginning, so it is throughout this Day of Grace for God’s people.

- It is in our weakness that Christ’s strength is manifested and made perfect.
- We often cry with Jacob, “*All these things are against me!*” But in the evening, we find that all have been for us.

The Lord often brings darkness, that his light may be more strikingly brilliant in the evening. He hedges up our way with thorns, that the almighty hand that removes them may be more plainly seen. Oh! it is blessed to be brought low, to be surrounded with difficulties, to see no way of escape, and have all human resources fail, that our extremity may be his opportunity, so that when we are most low, Christ may be most high and exalted.

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

Are you stripped, humbled, convinced of your nothingness? Oh, look away to our all-precious, all-suitable, all-glorious, all-gracious, all-compassionate Lord Jesus. Hear what he promises. — “*At evening time it shall be light.*”

(Isaiah 41:17-18) “*When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. (18) I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.*”

Certainly, this is a promise to God’s saints in the evening time of life in this world. I have seen it verified on numerous occasions. Two in particular stand out in my memory. As a young pastor, back in 1976, I flew out to Washington, DC to visit a dying friend, **Bro. Harold Martin**. He was one of my deacons. I had the privilege of watching him die in Christ. These are the very last words my friend spoke before losing consciousness: “Preacher, it’s good to come to this point and know that everything’s under the blood.”

In the spring of 1992 my wife, Shelby, and I drove up to Richwood, West Virginia to visit our dear, faithful friend, **Bro. Darrell McClung**. He was dying with cancer; but he was perfectly at ease. We had a blessed, blessed visit with Darrell and his wife, Betty. Darrell’s

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

last words to me were, “Brother, my hope is in that Man in heaven whose blood has washed away all of my sins and given me perfect righteousness before God. Thank God for Christ. I thank God for the blood of Christ. I am thankful to know that there is a Man in glory who is my Substitute. My hope is in him!” Yes, for the dying believer, “*at evening time it shall be light!*”

Illustrations: “*I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*” — “*Him.*”

The Choir Singing

Then, when this Day of the Lord’s Grace is finished and the Day of the Lord’s Glory is begun, in heaven’s wondrous blessedness, “*at evening time it shall be light*” forever!

(Revelation 21:1-5) “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (2) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. (4)

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

(Revelation 21:22-23) “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. (23) And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.”

(Revelation 21:25) “And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.”

(Revelation 22:1-5) “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. (2) In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. (3) And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: (4) And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their

LIGHT IN THE EVENING

foreheads. (5) And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

In heaven no drooping nor pining,
No wishing for elsewhere to be.
God’s light is forever there shining —
How beautiful heaven must be!

Pure waters of life there are flowing;
And all who will drink may be free.
Rare jewels of splendor are glowing —
How beautiful heaven must be!

Amen.