

6826

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 1994

NO MAN EVER SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN

Speaker: Bro. Colin Hollamby

Study #3

Converting a Gentile; Discussion with the Woman of Samaria

Reading: John 4:1-26

Bro Chairman and Our Dear Brethren and Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We'd like to just take up one of the messages that the Lord left with Nicodemus in John chapter 3, before we move on to John chapter 4 this morning. The discourse with Nicodemus continues right down to the end of verse 21 in John chapter 3. But, yesterday, we only did read to the end of verse 13, and we left Nicodemus in a state of great confusion. He had been told that 'unless he was born again, he could not see the kingdom of God', and he interpreted by that, that the only way he could perceive of that occurring, was a literal rebirth from his own mother's womb. And if that wasn't enough, the Lord said to him, 'Well, Nicodemus, I want to tell you that not only do you have to be reborn once; but ye must be reborn twice; you must be born of water and of the spirit, if you are going to be in the kingdom of God'. And this man was obviously, extremely perplexed by that. So, the Lord goes on to give him a description of 'birth of the flesh' and 'birth of the spirit'; and Nicodemus in verse 9 says, 'How can these things be?' So, at every step of the road, the Lord was only making this man, more and more perplexed. He just could not ascend in mind to the level of the thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is a 'hallmark', brethren and sisters, of all the Lord's dealings with men, that He never, ever, descended to their level. He always wanted them to come up to His level, and while He did descend to give explanations from time to time, He really was bent on lifting their minds. And so this man only becomes more, and more confused, but he's left with messages, about which the Lord wants him to think.

And as we noted from the end of John chapter 2, the Lord held Himself back from the crowds; He wouldn't give Himself to them, but here He has singled out a man, to whom He gives a lengthy audition. But, when we look at the words, we find for example, in the most difficult passage that the Lord gives this man to understand in verse 13, there are only two words that have any more than one syllable in them. NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN, brethren and sisters! When we want to try to put our points across, we think up the greatest, superlative adjectives that we can find; but not this man. This man, just, so delightfully, uses the most simple language to describe the most profound things. He has indeed, the tongue of the learned. And the tongue of the learned is deliberately given here, brethren and sisters, so that this man, who was a badly bruised

reed; who was indeed, just a tiny smoking flax, and He wanted to fan that smoking flax into the full blooded rage of divine faith, so that the man might be fired by the truth. That engendered in him might be the spirit which he saw in the words that came from the lips of Him, about whom we can truly say, that they were flabbergasted at His doctrine; because He spoke as one who had authority, and He didn't speak as the Scribes. He never said, 'this is my opinion, and this is what I think, and I hope you understand my point of view'; HE SAID EXACTLY WHAT HE MEANT. And He meant what He said, and the authority that burned and etched itself into the minds of the people who listened, brethren and sisters, demanded that they examined what He said further. Especially, when He gives an audition to an individual, as He does on this occasion.

And the Lord says to him, in reply to his great consternation, He says, 'Art thou a master in Israel, and you do not know these things?' How is it that we have had the same schooling? How is it, Nicodemus, that you have been immersed in the law and the prophets, and you don't understand these things? 'Verily, verily, He said unto him, 'we speak what we do know, and we testify what we have seen, and you don't receive our witness.' And, Nicodemus, just by the way, if you are grappling with the concepts I've already presented, I've only told you yet of earthly things. How are you going to get on when I tell you of heavenly things?' And in the next verse, brethren and sisters, the Lord tells him of heavenly things. He tells him of things that have agitated in the days of Christ, that had agitated the minds of the most faithful men, right down through the history of the law and the prophets. And they had not been able to perceive the things that were standing before the visage of this man, Nicodemus.

'There were many prophets and righteous men, said the Lord, who desired to see the things that ye have seen, and they have not seen them'. And there He was, the focalization of all those prophecies of the Old Testament was standing before this man, and the thing that was troubling him, as he was so sorely perplexed about what the Lord had said to him, was, the age old drama, that had been on the lips of all the faithful through Old Testament times, and it's distilled for us in Job chapter 9 and verse 2. And Job says there, 'How can mortal man be just with God?' and this is the battle that is raging, apart from the matter of the kingdom, this is the battle that is raging, brethren and sisters, between the mind of this great teacher, and him who was the 'archon' of the Jews.

And so these two great minds are coming together, and they are battling over heavenly things. The one whose plain of thinking is very low, and the other One, who will not descend to it, but Who wants to get that low mind, somewhere up near his level of thinking, so He says, 'No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven'. Now, brethren and sisters, this is the drama of the ages, How is heaven ever going to be open to man? When and how will there ever be true access into the throne of grace? They've seen it typically in Old Testament times; they have thought that the effectiveness of animal sacrifice will be sufficient to have their sins forgiven and to approach God, but not the faithful. The faithful never accepted that, but, the matters that are to be revealed in the things concerning the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, have not yet been opened. Heaven,

itself, has not been opened. The way into the Most Holy has not been laid out for them, and so, they were vitally interested in the subject, How are we ever going to get into heaven itself? How are we going to have access into the presence of the Majesty on High?

And we might turn our attention for a moment to the second of Samuel chapter 7. In the second of Samuel chapter 7, we know we have the promises that were made to David, but, at the end of the giving of those promises, David makes a very open confession and a query to the Deity. In this chapter, we know the promises as they begin at verse 12, and we know, brethren and sisters, that as verse 14 says, there is a promise of a king, who shall sit on David's throne, in the presence of David, after he is resurrected from the dead, and that Yahweh will be his Father, and that the Son will truly be the Son. And David says in response to all these words, in verse 18, 'He went in and sat before Yahweh and he said, Who am I, O Adonai Yahweh? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Adonai Yahweh, but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. Thou hast told me, says David, of the way in which Thou wilt open up heaven, by having a Son. But, David is still grappling with the concept, and he says at the end of that verse, 'And is this the manner of man, O Adonai Yahweh?'

Can we see what David is asking, brethren and sisters? He is grappling with the concept of somebody doing the work of mediation between himself and his God. And he knows that the Deity cannot accept anybody except on the basis of sinlessness or righteousness. And he says, 'How is a man like me, going to accomplish that?' And he's baffled by that, and so he asks, 'Is it going to be a man like me? And the answer was not given there, because it was a matter that was left in abeyance. The answer is, He will be a man like David, but he will be a man very unlike David, because God would be His Father and He would be the Son of God.

And so when we come back into John chapter 3 and at verse 13, and we could take a lot of other quotations, brethren and sisters, to illustrate these matters, but in John chapter 3 and at verse 13, Nicodemus has his eyes wide open; the Lord is beginning to open the crack that is in his heart, and He's done it by giving him, more and more complexing things to consider. And He says, 'No man hath ascended unto heaven', no man yet has breached the gap between earth and heaven. Remember what Jacob saw as he lay his head upon his rocky pillow? And he saw Yahweh at the top of the ladder, and the great gulf that was between the heaven and the earth, was reached by a ladder. That great gulf, brethren and sisters, was breached by a man, who said in John chapter 1 and verse 51, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon who? Upon who? Not the Son of God, not the Son of God, the Son of man. He would be the Son of man that would bridge heaven and earth. And what is so surprising about the Son of man bridging the gap between heaven and earth? Well, the surprising thing is that there would be one who would be called 'the Son of man', who would not be the son of a man, but would be the Son of man, who would be able to bridge the gap. And the title 'the Son of man' brethren and sisters, where ever it occurs, when the Lord Jesus is

given that title, is indicative of the fact that He was a perfect specimen that had been developed out of the race of man. A perfect specimen who had been developed out of the race of man, and that to David, would have been a surprising concept. Is this the manner of man, O Lord God? How is mortal man ever going to be made just with God; well, it's going to be one of the race, but He's going to be a special one of that race. And though he is the Son of man, He is going to be a sinless specimen of the race, and that's the way in which 'heaven would be made open' and the angels of God, therefore, would ascend and they would descend upon the Son of Man.

Now, brethren and sisters, let us go back to John chapter 3 and verse 13 and see what it says. It says, 'No man has made the bridge', no man has been the restorer of the bridge, no man has breached that gap. 'No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.' Now, to put this in its context, brethren and sisters, let's come back into Deuteronomy chapter 29, because in Deuteronomy chapter 29, there is a new covenant made with the house of Israel, just before they pass into the borders of the Promised Land. It is figurative of that new covenant, which Yahweh will make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, in which, ungodliness will be turned away from Jacob. It's the covenant that will be established with them on a national basis when Elijah has done his work.

But, in chapter 30 of Deuteronomy we read these words in verse 11. And here is the issue of mortal man being made just with God. This commandment, in chapter 30 of Deuteronomy and verse 11, 'which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Nether is it beyond the sea nor in the depth, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it'. And that saying, brethren and sisters, that's the answer to the great gulf that existed in Old Testament times between heaven and earth, between the Father and the Son, was not going to be accomplished by human endeavour. It's not in heaven that we might send a man up there to arrest it and bring it down to us; it's not beyond the sea, that we might send a strong man there, that he might capture it and bring it back to us; it's altogether being done by the Divine hand. And human achievement will be totally excluded from it. And that's what the Lord Jesus is telling Nicodemus. And here is Nicodemus, he's in the leadership of a movement that wants to grasp the power from the Romans. And he doesn't even yet know upon what basis, reconciliation will take place. And there, before him, brethren and sisters, is the focalization of the divine work. IT'S HIM, WHO IS SPEAKING TO HIM; here is a man, who is totally untouched by human achievement; He is a product of the divine spirit; He is a focalization before Nicodemus, of the Father's Spirit. It's veiled in human flesh, but, IT IS THE FATHER'S SPIRIT; IT IS THE WORD MADE FLESH, and He says 'No man hath ascended up to heaven, except, the One who came down from heaven'.

And how did He come down from heaven? Because He was conceived in the womb of His mother, by the power of the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. HE WAS A DIRECT

PRODUCTION OF THE FATHER, without the invention of the will of man. And so, standing before Nicodemus was the man of whom he was speaking. NO MAN HATH ASCENDED UP INTO HEAVEN, except the One who is standing before you, Nicodemus, and He came down from heaven. And do you know where He is right now, Nicodemus? Right now, He is in heaven, because there is nothing in Him that has anything to do with human achievement. And when the Prince of this world came, they found nothing in Him; they found nothing in Him that was of the work of the flesh, and they could not convict Him of anything, so much so, that Pilate said, 'I find no fault in this man'. And scrutinize Him though they would, they could not find anything wrong with this man. And so, the Lord Jesus Christ was able to show to Nicodemus, the principles upon which he would be able to receive the gift of grace, if he only listened to what was being said.

Now, just to conclude this, brethren and sisters, we would like to go over to Romans chapter 10, because in Romans chapter 10, lest we have misunderstood the principles that are in Deuteronomy chapter 30, the apostle Paul takes them up in Romans chapter 10, and he says this, and this is why we can be so sure that the Lord Jesus Christ, is presenting Nicodemus with his greatest need; his greatest need was to know the way into the kingdom of God. And in verse 5 of Romans 10, 'Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Messiah down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But, how is the righteousness of faith accomplished? Well, it's accomplished like this, 'The word is very nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach'. Now, was Nicodemus a man of faith? No, he wasn't a man of faith. If he was a man of faith, he could begin to understand what the Lord was talking about. But, he couldn't understand anything the Lord was talking about. And so, brethren and sisters, we can see that these men, Nicodemus being a spokesman for them, they were concentrating on 'what are you going to do? when are you going to call fire down from heaven to destroy the Romans? what are the steps that you want us to initiate so that we can accomplish these great things? Well, He said, 'Nicodemus, don't do a thing, because the word is very nigh thee; even in thy mouth and in thy heart. It's the word of faith which we are preaching. And we speak that we do know, and we testify what we've seen, but you're not receiving our witness. And you can see, brethren and sisters, that grappling, that tossing and turning in the mind of this man, was the very low level upon which he thought; and the high level unto which the Lord was drawing him slowly upwards, and He gives him a very severe castigation, doesn't He, in the end of John chapter 3, where He says to Nicodemus, 'if you really were a man of truth, and I hope you are, you wouldn't have come to Me by night, because those that love evil, work in the darkness. And if you want to come to the light, Nicodemus, you've got to take courage in both hands, and you've got to forget about all your circumstances; you have to forget about all your friends and relations that might draw you back; you must come 'to the light'. And slowly and surely as we know, the record depicts it, brethren and sisters, there was a man who must have considered well, what the Lord Jesus Christ said, and if we just go back into John chapter 3, into the very next verse, we can find out

that when the crucifixion came, Nicodemus was one of the very, very, very few people, who had come to grips with that, in any sense at all.

And in John chapter 3 and at verse 14, He goes on with another dimension to this man, confusing him even further, and He says, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must' (who?). Now, brethren and sisters, we always say don't we, that the gospel of John is that which depicts Him as the Son of God, and it does! It depicts Him as the Son of God; and it depicts Him as the Son of God, by portraying Him as the Son of man, who made the bridge between heaven and earth. Because, what other explanation could there be for a Son of man to be sinless? than that He was also the Son of God. And so, 'the Son of man, says the Lord, 'is going to be lifted up, just in the same way that Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness; that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have eternal life'. Nicodemus, 'God has so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life'. And we've got to leave it there, brethren and sisters. There are some very wonderful concepts that are contained, especially in verse 13. I, personally, have found them to be at this stage, unfathomable!

We have presented, brethren and sisters, what seems to be a fairly easy dimension to those words. We can grasp it; let me assure you, brethren and sisters, that I am quite certain there are far deeper things contained in that verse, and there are a lot of verses in the Old Testament and in the New, that have to do with 'ascending and descending' which will open up that matter, so that maybe another bible school wouldn't contain them. That's the grandeur of what's in verse 13. And that's why the Lord said, 'Nicodemus, I've only talked to you about earthly things yet, now, I want to talk to you about heavenly things. And He just gives us, one little brief glance into heavenly things; so simple in their words and yet, what a depth, what a gravity, what an expanse there is, brethren and sisters, in the words of the man, of whom it is truly testified, NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN!

And so, we turn our attention to our next consideration in John chapter 4. And in John chapter 4, we have the incident of the woman of Samaria. Now, I suppose we all know where the Samaritans came from. The Samaritans were a group of people who lived in the immediate area, north of Jerusalem, in the area of Samaria, where the kings of Israel set up their palaces, and they were persons who were a mixture of the religions of the nations, whom the Assyrians conquered. And to protect their own interests, the Assyrians would conquer a nation, and they'd take people of that nation, and of that nation's religion, and mix them up with other people of other nationalities and religions; so that there would never, ever really be got up, a movement of insurrection among those people because of their differences of religions. They were very clever in that way, and the Samaritans therefore, came to be a mixture of the religions of the gods of the nations and the true worship of the God of Israel. They were settled by force, under the king of Assyria before Babylon. They ensured that there would be a lack of cohesion in that area, so that they need not fear rebellion.

Now, brethren and sisters, we know that this particular story concerns drinking from a

well, and it concerns a vessel that goes down and it comes up again. And if the Lord Jesus Christ is truly the One, of whom it is said, in verse 13 of John chapter 3, 'that no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that came down from heaven', we certainly know that He ascended again, don't we? So that a descent from heaven or rather an ascent to heaven, implies a descent from heaven, and that's the very action in which this woman is going to be engaged, for the Lord. Out of which He is going to teach her the message of the true living water, which is going to issue forth from the well-springs of the mouth of Him, Who had the tongue of the learned. And it is intensely interesting to see, the methods that He adopts to go about that.

We could have highlighted it, out of the incident of Nicodemus; we're going to highlight it this morning, brethren and sisters, because it is a very important message for all of us. Now, the record says in chapter 4 and at verse 1, 'When therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples), He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.' We can obviously see, that the Lord could see what the potential was.

Here were the Scribes and Pharisees, who were vitally interested in the movement that John the Baptist made and began across the other side of Jordan, when He baptized. And all the nation were coming out to him to be baptized. And they were very worried about a new movement starting, and now, there's another movement starting, because the Pharisees have now heard, that the Lord has made and baptized more disciples than John. And you can see, brethren and sisters, through the veil, that they're very concerned about the beginning of another movement. And they can see it's portent among the people. They know for sure that if this movement keeps growing, it's going to resist them; it's going to be a power that is greater than themselves!, and they're extremely worried by that, and it caused the Lord to disappear from the area of Jerusalem. He could see what danger lay ahead.

And so He went back to the area of Galilee, and He must needs go through Samaria because the road goes through the area of Samaria. He could have chosen another route; He could have crossed the Jordan and gone up the east side of the Jordan to the Sea of Galilee, and crossed again there, into the area of Galilee, but He chose to go through the route of Samaria. And while He is going through the route of Samaria, He comes to a city of Samaria, which is called Secure, in its old testament name, it is the city of Shechem, and the word Shechem means 'a burden bearer'. It is in a very lovely location in the land of Israel. It is in the most fertile place of the land of Israel; it is in the very spot to which Abraham was led, when he first made an altar in the land of Israel, and there had the promises confirmed to him, in Genesis chapter 12. And this particular area of Secure or Shechem, happens to be between two mountains. It's a lovely, lush valley between the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim; they are the mountains of blessing and cursing of the law. It is a place, brethren and sisters, which is very, very famous in Israel's history. Even the foolish Reoboam consorted at Shechem to establish himself on the throne. He knew what it meant to Israel, and the fact that it means 'burden bearer' gives us the idea of two great big shoulders, between which was

a hanging valley, a very lush and fertile place, and its name is 'between the shoulders or the burden bearer'.

And He comes to this place, and it never ceases to amaze us, brethren and sisters, how that the Lord Jesus Christ could control not only Himself, but everything that happened around Him. That's amazing! There was the power that He had been given, brethren and sisters, to not only control Himself under every circumstance of life, but He was in a position to control everything that was around Him. And it's truly amazing to see how these matters were controlled. He came to that city, 'near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now, Jacob's well was there. That's the place where Jacob had dug a well, therefore, Jesus, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well; and it was about mid-day'. And it says there, 'there cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me to drink'. And there's just a little parenthetical statement which says, (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat). Brethren and sisters, we don't even understand the gravity of the Lord's action. That was so absolutely taboo, for a Jewish man to speak to a Samaritan woman, that in our society, we just can't understand the great gulf that He has already breached, and it just happens to be, that His disciples aren't there, at the moment he asked the woman to give Him to drink.

Now, this request would have been made in the utmost propriety and dignity; it wasn't a matter of 'give me to drink'. He would have approached that woman, brethren and sisters, in an extremely dignified and upright manner, and would have addressed her in those terms, yes! but words, which straight away have begun to breach the awesome gap that is between those two parties. And we can't really see that in the record, but it just must be so, when we have described for us, the tremendous leap, a man, a Jew, has made to even speak in any way at all, to a woman who is a Samaritan. And that's what the answer is, isn't it? 'What is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?' It was a very, great leap! And Jesus answered and said, 'If thou knewest the gift of God', brethren and sisters, look at what he said already.

He's made an accusation against her already. He has already told her that she's quite ignorant. 'If thou knewest', is that how we would approach our interested friends? even after they'd made contact with us? If you knew anything about the bible, you wouldn't be where you are now? Well, that's what He said to her; 'If thou knewest' Lady, He says, you're ignorant! You don't know Who it is that speaks to you, you don't know the gift of God! What an abrupt opening to a hopeful convert; and yet, brethren and sisters, it must have been said with a diction that didn't put her off side, because if we were the woman, we would've probably run a mile a minute, hearing those words come from the lips of a man, who shouldn't be talking to us any way, according to the social customs of the day.

And He goes on to say, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water'. Brethren and sisters, we just want to concentrate, this morning, for a few moments on the aspect of ignorance. And we try to understand now, just what the

Lord is saying to that woman, when He accuses her of ignorance. Jesus said the same thing to Nicodemus, 'Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?' If someone accused us of ignorance like that, in matters related to the bible, we'd be very upset. And now we want to see the gravity about which the Lord is speaking, when He accuses these people of being ignorant, because that's what He's saying.

Ignorance, brethren and sisters, comes in two forms. And ignorance, whether it's willing or whether it's just ignorance, are the two greatest enemies of the truth; they are the two greatest enemies of the truth. **IGNORANCE AND WILLING IGNORANCE**, there's really no other enemies to the truth. And we'd like to take our minds to a passage in Isaiah chapter 44 that explains this very clearly to us. Isaiah chapter 44, we remember the occasion, because it's talking to us about the man who goes out and cuts down a tree. And he uses some of it to warm himself; he uses some of it to bake his food, and then with the residue, he marks out with his pen and pencil, he marks out the figure of a god. And he cuts it out to a figure of a god; and he falls down and worships it. And look at what God says about that happening in verse 17 of Isaiah chapter 44. 'The residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god'.

And what does God say as a commentary on the activities of that man?, 'They have not known nor understood; for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of the tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?' You see, brethren and sisters, what can you really do about a man who is ignorant? especially if he's willingly ignorant?

Verse 20 of Isaiah chapter 45 says, 'Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save'. **THEY ARE IGNORANT!** And we will find, brethren and sisters, that ignorance and idolatry go hand in hand in the bible. And when a person is ignorant therefore, when a person is either willingly ignorant or ignorant, all they can really be, says the scriptures, is idolators. That's all they can be, and that's just how important the Lord Jesus Christ saw, the addressing of the issue of her not knowing. And of Nicodemus not knowing. And, brethren and sisters, we live in an age, about whom, the Lord Jesus Christ says, 'Ye do not know that you are wretched, and miserable and poor and blind and naked'. The world tells us, **IGNORANCE IS BLISS!** If we in any way endorse that, brethren and sisters, if we in any way endorse that, we are saying, that none of us should be here at a bible school. We are saying, that the best thing that we could possibly do is to throw the bible in the fire.

Why has God given to us all this knowledge and all these principles, so that we may remain ignorant? Who of us, brethren and sisters, don't want to know and understand

more, about the plan and the purpose of our God? Who of us do not want to get immersed in the things of the scriptures, because to have any other attitude, really means that we hold ignorance as bliss, and therefore, the less we know about the principles of the truth, and how they ought to govern our lives, the better men we will be. Well, if we just take our minds back to the Old Testament scriptures, particularly, in offerings under the law, and we look at the law of the sin offering, every department of Israel is addressed, from the nation, to the high priest, to a ruler, to a common person, to a poor person, to a very poor person. Six different offerings are mentioned, and everytime they are described, it is prefaced by, 'If a soul sin through ignorance'. Ignorance, brethren and sisters, puts a person in a false relationship before God. Ignorance is our enemy; all of us, and for us to realize that, is halfway to making right the difficulty. We need, brethren and sisters, to give ourselves, to give ourselves to thinking about the scriptures. It's not so much, if we may say, at the expense of maybe upsetting somebody, it's not so much the pouring over concordances; it's not so much finding out what all the words mean; it's thinking about the concepts that are presented.

And our thinking about the concepts that are presented, brethren and sisters, can be done in the way that God wanted it to be done. And the way in which God wanted it to be done, was by us giving Him a little bit of time. And that means in real meditation, in real meditation; strong thought. There are things especially in John's gospel, brethren and sisters, that you won't find the meaning to any other way. NOT ANY OTHER WAY! I personally, have found that by experience that there is no other way to find out what some of the things in John's gospel mean, than by thinking about them. And thinking about them, and thinking about them; and in our life today, in western civilization especially, our time is so robbed by our professions, that we haven't got time to thing any more. You just think for a moment, about Bro. Thomas and Bro. Roberts. Bro. Thomas took six weeks to write the book 'Elphis Israel', six weeks to write it. He didn't have electricity; he didn't have the kind of microns that we have; he didn't have many of the things that we have, and we also know the kind business, that is the extent of business he was engaged in. And I'm not talking about his doctoring, I'm talking about his business in the truth. And he had time; in six weeks to write Elpis Israel. How many of us have read it from cover to cover? In a lifetime? and to know the gems therein contained. It will enlighten their ignorance.

And here are we, brethren and sisters, in these days, of which it is said, 'that we are living in the days of Laodicea, and they're greatest difficulty was that they didn't know their own state. And how do you tell a man who is sick, that doesn't believe he's sick; that he's sick.? How do you tell a man who is drunk, who will confidently say, I'm as sober as a judge, how do you tell him he's drunk?

Brethren and sisters, it is probably the greatest problem of everybody sitting in this room, because we fail to take the divine scalpel of truth, and because we are afraid to use it on ourselves. We don't really like to have portrayed, we really don't like to get out of our pocket, the difficulties, the cancers, that are in our own lives. And, here was the Lord Jesus faithfully addressing the cancer that was in that woman's life. And you can see by her response, that she didn't enjoy it one little bit. He was never interested in

putting people on good terms with themselves. He wanted, brethren and sisters, to be able to help people; to benefit them, and that was at the expense of the exposure of the flesh every time. The Word of God has been made to generate hostility. It has been tailor made to promote enmity, and that enmity is going to be felt by us, as it was very vigourously felt by that woman. And we know the remarkable results that were attained, don't we? We know that there were amazing results attained by that one little opening that the Lord gave as He controlled those circumstances. He just happened to get there at the right time. And his disciples just happened to be out of the way, because they would have jumped on Him like a ton of bricks, and say, 'Don't talk to that woman because we know that we're not allowed to talk to that woman.' And He in the silence of the day, in the middle of the day, when she just came along innocently to draw water at the well, He opened up a little conversation ; He accused her very vigourously of not knowing where she stood, and somehow by the very great dignity and majesty of what He said to her, and the tone of voice He would have said it to her, brethren and sisters, SHE OPENED HER EAR, and she heard, the tongue of the learned, give to her a message that was able to fan this bruised reed; that was able to fan this smoking flax into a divine fire of full blooded life. NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THAT MAN!