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SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 1994

NO MAN EVER SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN

Speaker: Bro. Colin Hollamby

Study #6

Confronting His Enemies: Christ Denounces the Jewish Rulers

Reading: Mark 12:13-40

Brother Chairman and our dear Brethren and Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We would just like to take up where our Bro. Dev left off, brethren and sisters, because he left us with some very serious matters to consider. And it's not that we're not considering serious matters all the time, but we were considering something which really does affect us all, when we were looking at the man who hid his talent in a napkin. It is a very real difficulty, brethren and sisters, for all of us, sometime or another, because this man was really a man, who decided that there was no seat for him on the arranging board. That there was no possibility of him being on the public platform; he may have only in his estimation been able to read. Brethren, if that is our thought, consider what the Lord did when He read.

When He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and was invited to read, He stood up to read, and He sat down to speak. He stood up to read and He sat down to speak; and there are precedence for that in the Old Testament, brethren and sisters, brethren in particular, because when Ezra the scribe read from the Word of the Deity, all the people arose and they stood for 4 hours while he read the book of the Law. There is perhaps, no greater thing, brethren, than to be able to publicly read from the Word of God. Because, when we speak it is our words, but when we read, and when we read from the Word of the Deity, we are not reading man's words. We are reading the Words of the ever living Deity. And sometimes, it is thought in our minds, very contrary to what the truth is, that because a thing is public, it is far more valued. In every way, brethren and sisters, a work of publicity is directly discounted in value in accordance with its publicity. Any work to be a work that is accepted in the eyes of our God, is better done in secret, and there is really then, no possibility of a dual motive being involved. Because, any work, brethren and sisters, is not a good work, no matter how good it may appear, if it is done with a duality of intention. There's only one thing that makes a work a good work, and that is if it is done to the honour of our Father, Who is in heaven. And so James it was who said, and we'd like to turn to it, because it's very much in harmony with our subject, NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN, James says in his first chapter and at verse 26, 'If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.' And he

goes on to say, 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world'. Brethren and sisters, there are no bouquets or public 'thank you's' for those who visit the fatherless and the widows. There are no banquets spread for those who keep themselves unspotted from the world, but that's pure religion, because when we do that brethren and sisters, we know that nobody is going to give us something in return when we do those things, and that's why James says, 'Purity of religion will be seen in the secret things'. Not in the open and manifest things. Purity of religion will be seen in things that are done in the closet.

And this whole week, brethren and sisters, has been entirely about hypocrisy and blasphemy. And in the chapter from which we read this morning, but actually not in Mark chapter 12 as we read from, but the parallel record in Matthew chapter 23, begins by giving a definition of what a Pharisee is. Because the Lord said, 'Do whatever they tell you to do, but do not after their works because they say and do not'. They say and do not, and as we know He went on to explain that in more detail, but in its very simplest elements, brethren and sisters, a Pharisee is one who says and does not. And there's a bit of Pharisee in all of us and it needs to be weaned out, and that's why we are here listening to the Word of God, because brethren and sisters, it can't be weaned out by our will power. Satan can't be divided against himself in his own kingdom; he won't accept that. And if we are trying to divide Satan's kingdom by will power, trying to dispossess one of the devils in the kingdom; it won't work. There's only one way it'll work and that is by us listening intently and being in complete and utter resignation. It was the Lord's secret, wasn't it? 'Not My will but thine be done', so that it means that we must know the will of our Heavenly Father, and having arrived at a knowledge of it, we are not satisfied with our present state of knowledge. We want more, and we want more so that the scalpel that He gives to us, the sword of the mouth of the Spirit, might be used to discern the thoughts and the intents of the heart, and that it might wean out those things that are offensive to our God, so that in the day of account there may be a person who is guileless and who stands before the Son of God, with all the focalizations of divine power, streaming from his eyes, and that we might be under that very great gaze, brethren and sisters, and that He might be able to hold us up and see right through us. Because, if our eye is single our whole body shall be full of light, and that means to say that if there is just one intent in our life, our whole body shall be full of light.

We'd just like to go back into Matthew chapter 16 for a moment this morning, because in the confirmation that the Lord gave to the apostles on that occasion, after He had received from Peter, as their spokesman, that grand confession of their faith, we read of something that's very important there, in His confirmation of them, because He wanted to give to them meaningful, sustaining, prepared words, that through His discourse, the feinting to which they were subject, day by day, might be arrested. And that feinting is something that happens day by day in us, too. And it is only the words of the Spirit and the truth of our Lord, that will be really able to sustain us. They have been well prepared; they are a delicacy to the man of the Spirit, and when we partake of them, they will be strengthening and sustaining words. So the Lord said to Peter, 'that thou

art Peter and upon this Rock will I build My ecclesia'. It's not church, it just means pertaining to our Lord. We don't go to church, brethren and sisters, we go to worship the Almighty Deity through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. We are a people, a community of 'called out ones', so that we might form the house of the living God. And therefore, we ought to retain, very conscientiously the difference between the church and the ecclesia of the living God. And Christ says to Peter that the 'gates of hell shall not prevail against it'. Now, we know why people arrive at the event of death in their life; it is because of the condemnation that came upon Adam because he sinned. And here, brethren and sisters, the Lord is making, if we may say so, a grand boast, because He is saying that not only Himself but His ecclesia will be those who will triumph over the gates of the grave. And He hasn't yet, performed the sacrifice, by which and through which it is going to be accomplished. He was suddenly so sure in His mind, brethren and sisters, having set His face like a flint, to go to Jerusalem, there to accomplish the death that His Father had commanded of Him. There was no possibility in the mind of that man that He should flinch from such a course. HE HAD SET HIS FACE LIKE A FLINT; He was a polished arrow in the hand of the Almighty, having been prepared for the last 4,000 years, and the Deity is now, taking Him out of His quiver, and He's shooting Him to the mark, of the sin and the death that came as a result of Adam's disobedience. And that would have been extremely confirming for the apostles to hear those words. The grave, that insatiable, unseen place; that voracious receptacle for all flesh, is going to be conquered He's telling them, not only by Myself, but through the power of righteousness. I'm going to unlock the gates of hell; and they would have been extremely strengthened by those words, brethren and sisters, because that's what they wanted to know all about.

Is this the manner of man? How are these promises made to the fathers going to be confirmed and effected? And so the reason for Him, to overpower the gates of Hades is clearly presented before them, because He has got the key of the gates of the grave. Sin and death have no power anymore, they are being told. They are going to be overpowered; the strong man of the flesh has been bound and conquered. The grave has been unsealed they are being told. Captivity is going to be led captive, and we, brethren and sisters, who, through all our lifetime have been subject to the bondage of fear and death, have been released from that same fear, by a knowledge that in Him, the grave cannot possibly hold us; that in Him sin cannot win; and that's what they were being told, brethren and sisters, when they were told that the gates of Hades would not prevail against His ecclesia. That everyone of them who had taken up in faith the doctrines and the practices of our Lord Jesus Christ, would burst the bonds of the grave, and that after Him, it is a truth, that sin cannot win; and as He said to them, later on in John's gospel, He said, 'Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world'. There is no need to be in the bondage of fear anymore with words like that. And the Words the Lord is saying on this occasion, 'that the gates of Hades would not prevail against His ecclesia' would have sent those people, brethren and sisters, into a turn of mind that they couldn't really grasp at that moment. They wanted it; they needed it; but they couldn't really see how it was going to come about, because they knew that sin got a person into the grave; it would only be righteousness that could extricate Him from that place. And so, what they are being told, and what we are being told, all throughout the

length of the the Old Testament scriptures, is this, that resurrection as a doctrine of the Spirit, although it is hardly ever breathed in the Old Testament, resurrection as the doctrine of the Spirit is firmly established upon the sure foundation of absolute necessity.

Resurrection as a doctrine of the truth, is established on the sure foundation of 'absolute necessity', the promises of God could never, ever be fulfilled without it. And therefore, resurrection to new life is also firmly established on that basis. And we'd just like to turn to Romans chapter 5, brethren and sisters, to show that the apostle Paul was very aware of this, and he made it a condition of our life today. In Romans chapter 5 and verse 21, maybe we should read from chapter 6 and verse 23 first, because the apostle says there, 'the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord'. Very simple things, we all know them well, but do we know so well the verse that is contained at the end of chapter 5 verse 21? It doesn't say the same as verse 23 of chapter 6, it says in verse 21, 'That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord'. There's two words there, brethren and sisters, that are very, very important. And those words are, through righteousness. Through righteousness; the gift of God is eternal life by Jesus Christ. But it can only come through righteousness, and that means righteous works. It means 'work', but it doesn't matter whether we walk our legs to the knees, or work our fingers to the elbows, it won't be that that gets us into the kingdom of God. It means, brethren and sisters, that we ought to walk our legs to our knees, and that we ought to work our fingers to our elbows; but even after that it is a gift, which no man deserves. And so where do we sit with the man who had a talent, and digged a hole in the earth and hid it? He thought that there was nothing for him to do, because everything seemed to be public and everyone seemed to like to pat the persons on the back, who did something in public. We've seen, haven't we, brethren and sisters, from John chapter 5, that if that's our intention, we're not even believers. WE'RE NOT EVEN BELIEVERS! And the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul are clearly showing to us, that unless we work, there is no gift. And unless we yield the same kind of service to our Lord Jesus Christ, as we willingly gave to King sin, when we were under his dominion, and we willingly served him, because it was attractive to serve him, according to the lust of the flesh. Unless we serve in the same degree, there's no gift. There's only wages for a man who serves King sin; but there's a gift for men and women who serve King grace.

And that's telling us something. It's telling us something, brethren and sisters, that we don't very often carefully think about, and that's this; that the terms under which King grace has offered us the free gift of eternal life, are far more stringent than the terms under which King sin will pay death, because the reward is altogether greater. The responsibilities are going to be altogether greater. King sin is an autocratic dictator. And he will pay exactly what a person deserves, and no more and no less. King grace is also a master; and unless we are found totally in his employ, we will never receive the gift of life eternal, because there is nobody who can put King grace in debt. We all put King sin in debt, and he pays us what we ask of him; King grace is able to give something far greater, provided we through righteousness are under the dominion of

King grace. And it's only righteousness, brethren and sisters, that the Lord is interested in. And what's righteousness? It's doing right things for the right reason. And when we do right things for the right reason, it doesn't matter how big or how small they are, they're all accounted profitable, to Him who called us to His service. Not that He's getting anything more back from what He invested in us; but everything, brethren and sisters, that is done right and with right intention, causes honour to flow to the honour of our God. It's a great thrill in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ, to see a person, who is constrained by his love, to do what is right, for the reasons that are right. And he's receiving exactly what he wants, and we will likewise receive exactly what we want. The gift of eternal life in the age to come!

Let us then come back into Isaiah chapter 49, because in Isaiah chapter 49 there is a call to us in verse 1, 'Listen, O isles unto Me; and hearken, ye people, from far'. There is a call to the far flung nations of the Gentiles, far flung from the nation of Israel in which place these things were accomplished. 'Yahweh hath called Me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of My name. And He hath made my mouth' ( not any other part of the body), 'He has made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His (open) hand' (not His male fist) 'in the shadow of His open hand hath He hid Me, and made me a polished shaft; in His quiver hath He hid me; And said unto me, Thou art My servant, (O Prince with El), in whom I will be glorified'. Thou art My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified, and those words are saying, brethren and sisters, that the Deity was going to be 'tearing up in the life of the servant'; that for 4,000 years there had been a polishing going on in hiding. And that in the Deity's quiver, ever since sin came into the world, there was a sharp arrow. And with all those 4,000 years of preparation, He was getting ready to bring out His sharp arrow. And He's going to aim it very surely, at the temples of diabolos. And so why and how has He equipped this sharp arrow? Well, it's altogether in His mouth. It's in His mouth. It's not anywhere else, it's in His mouth, because James says, 'if a man is able to bridle the tongue; he will be able to bridle his whole body as well'. And here is a man who is made sharp in the mouth; it's a sharp two edged sword and we are going to see, brethren and sisters, that the men who dared to take Him on in verbal gladiatorship, were cut to pieces by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of Him, of whom it is said, NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN!

But just before we do, look at verse 4. Verse 4, brethren and sisters, opens to us a little window in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, because the serpent is saying in verse 4, 'I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with Yahweh, and my work with Elohim'. And you can see, brethren and sisters, quite clearly, as was easily seen in Matthew chapter 16, and the end of John chapter 6, that here was a man, Who was subject to like passions as we. That when He looked round about on the things that He was accomplishing in His own life, He said, 'Well, the results look as though I've spent my life and my strength in vain'. If He can say it, what about us? What can we really expect to accomplish in a lifetime, if the polished shaft of the mouth of the Son of the Deity, can say that? And that's telling us something, brethren and sisters, it's telling us that WE'RE IN A DAY OF SMALL THINGS, and we had better not despise the day of small things, because, even the Son

of God did not appear to have accomplished very much in His own life. And when He surveyed the scene that was around Him, and possibly very much at the time at the end of John chapter 6, when multitudes of His disciples went back from Him, He would have had feelings like that. He would have thought, 'how's this all going to work? what's the value in my life? And yet, He would have very quickly thought again, 'Yet surely My judgment is with Yahweh'. We lay our life, brethren and sisters, at the feet of Him who judgeth righteously. Our lives are not to be determined on what they seem to accomplish, because the only thing, perhaps, that we will ever accomplish, is allowing that word to work in us, to have free course in our life. It may not be any more than that, but brethren and sisters, if we do that, we will not have hidden our talent in a napkin or put it under the earth. Because pure religion and undefiled before God, is to do things that men despise, and in which they find no great honour or credit. And true religion, true virtue, is estimated by the secrecy in which it is done, not the openness, the secrecy in which it is done.

Now, let us turn up the record of Mark chapter 12. In Mark chapter 12, as we have seen from Isaiah chapter 49, we are seeing a battle of wits. We are seeing a battle that was really very foolish for these men to take on. But, Mark chapter 11 really begins to set the scene for us in verse 27, because now, the Lord is in Jerusalem. He has shown the apostles that there is a way that leads up to Jerusalem, in the which He is going to be betrayed, the chief priests, the scribes and the elders are going to take Him and put Him to death, but He's going to rise again the third day. And so they come to Jerusalem, in verse 27, 'And as He was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes and the elders, And they say unto Him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

That's a very important question to settle, brethren and sisters, whenever there is a difference between two people. We will always find, that whether we're talking to some interested friends or whether we're talking among ourselves, and there's a difficulty of understanding a certain passage, and somebody says this and somebody says that. There's only one thing we really need to settle, and that is authority. In any discussion wherever it might be, between any two people, anywhere at all, at any time, there's only one issue to really settle. WHO'S GOT THE AUTHORITY? And these men, now come to Him, and they say, and they question Him in this very basic thing. They can see where the difference lies; they can see why they are taking one course and He another, and so they want to know 'where do you get your authority; and who gave you this authority? Notice who they are; 1. they're the chief priests, 2. they're the scribes, 3. they are the elders. And when we come in Mark chapter 12 we can find that there were three classes of people who came to the Lord to try Him with what they thought were hard questions. And they were conducting a verbal battle with Him. It was a battle of ideas; it was a battle of the philosophies that they held. But, it was a battle that was firmly established on whose authority are you using. We won't look at verse 29 to the end of the chapter 11, brethren and sisters, we want to go over into verse 13 of chapter 12.

Here are the issues that are clearly laid before us. They send unto Him certain of the

Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch Him in His words. Fancy anyone even trying that! Fancy anybody even thinking that they had a chance of catching this man in His words, because, NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN; they admitted that. They had seen that never man spake like this man, and look at the combination of the men whom they send to try and catch Him in His words. They are the religious leaders of the day and the political leaders of the day; they are certain sections of the community of that time, who hated one another's insides. They couldn't stand one another. The Pharisees because the Herodians were lording it over them; they were the leaders of the peoples in those days. Herod was one of them; they were the Idumeans, the Romans having given them power over the Holy Land, and the Pharisees hated them, but when they had a common enemy, as it is often said, 'Necessity makes strange bedfellows'. And, brethren and sisters, these men had got together before; these men had got together right back in the days of Saul, the King of Israel; because he had made a little collaboration with a man by the name of Doeg, who happened to be an Idumean. And you know what the result of that was. And here is history repeating itself; the Pharisees and Herodians are sent to 'catch Him in His words', and they say something about this man which was obviously very true. They say to Him, 'Master, we know that thou art true, and Thou carest for no man: and Thou regardest not the person of men, and Thou teachest the way of God in truth'. We know all that! The sarcastic and the servile, flattering way in which they said it, brethren and sisters, would have had to been heard to be believed, but they were all words that were true. He didn't regard the person of any man. No man would stop Him saying what He said. He was invested with the authority of His Father; He came to speak His Father's Words and He had no fear of what He was going to say. So they pose Him with a question, and remember who they are? They're the religious leaders of the day and they're the political leaders of the day. They've got Him in a net that He can't get out of, because if He dares to answer in favour of the religious leaders of the day, the Herodians are going to have Him; and if He does the opposite, the Pharisees are going to have Him. So they've got Him in a situation out of which there is no way out; and they pose Him a question and they say 'Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?' You answer us 'YES' or 'NO'. We won't be satisfied with any other answer; yes or no. Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or no? So He says to them, 'Well, why do you try and draw Me over a line? Why do you try to draw Me over a line? Show me a penny! And they held up a denarius and on the denarius was Caesar's image. Brethren and sisters, we have to understand the mind of a Jew, to realize the gravity of what they're doing with Him. Because, as far as the tribute to the temple was concerned, these Pharisees wouldn't even touch Roman money. They wouldn't even touch it; they said it's unclean, and therefore, we can't touch that money for tribute; but we can use it for business alright, but we can't use it for the temple tribute. But, that's not the question they're asking; they are asking 'Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not? Shall we pay our taxes or not? And the Lord asks them to show Him a penny. And He holds it up to them and says, 'Whose image and superscription is this? And they say, 'Well, it's Caesar's'. And He answers them, brethren and sisters, in an amazing way, a way in which all the inflation of the occasion, was totally deflated by a sharp two-edged sword. And the mouth that had been polished for 4,000 years, brethren and sisters, and in preparation, just went straight through the middle of what they saw to be a trap. And completely thrust into

their hearts which staggered them in His answer, and He said. 'Well, what we should do is render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; but, just remember, He says, Who's holding that penny up? And in whose image and whose superscription is on the image that's holding the penny up?' Well, it was God's wasn't it? These were men who were suppose to have their Father's name written in their foreheads. These were men who should have had their intellectual capacities, filled, not with vain traditions of the elders, but with the knowledge that had been filled in the mind of Him who had a mouth like a sharp sword. And there were two images; the image of Caesar and the image of God. And He says, 'I want you to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, but unto God, you unstintingly give to Him, what is His, because you are in His image and you ought to have His name written in your foreheads. Your intellect ought to be full of the character and the person of the Deity', that's what He said to them. And so, they marveled at Him, and having heard the way in which they were completely despatched, there are other people who come to Him and say, and these are the Sadducees and they say that there is no resurrection, and they asked Him saying, 'Master, Moses wrote unto us, if a man's brother die and so on and so forth, whose wife shall she be of them in the resurrection?' The Sadducees didn't believe in resurrection, brethren and sisters, they didn't believe in angels, they didn't believe in spirit beings; and further than that they only believed in the first five books of the bible, so look what the Lord does!

He turns them back to Exodus chapter 3, to which we will go. And in Exodus chapter 3, we remember that it is the occasion of the burning bush, and in this place, we are told in Exodus chapter 3, 'Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of Yahweh appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: 'An angel, they didn't even believe in them, and the very quotation that the Lord has turned their attention to, takes in an angel. And He says to them, or the record goes on, Moses said in verse 3, 'I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when Yahweh saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob.' And that's all the Lord quoted; and He said, 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living'. Now, it's sad, brethren and sisters, but we have to think very carefully about that. That's what the Lord wanted His detractors to do, because those people of whom it is testified, in Exodus 3 and verse 6, that God was the God of; they'd been dead for 200 years. And God is not the God of the dead; He's the God of the living; they all live under Him. So there were 3 men whom the Sadducees thought were in the grave forever, and He turned to their scriptures and He convicted them out of their scriptures, the only place that they believed was valid, He convicted them that angels were real; He convicted them that men will be resurrected from the dead, because these men live unto Him and they've been in the grave 2000 years.

But not only that, brethren and sisters, He showed them something else as well. He said, 'I am the Elohim of thy father, and I am the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of

Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob'. Who are they? They are every individual, male or female, Jew or Greek, bond or free, who have ever taken on the truth in their life, and have lived it faithfully, and will be among the redeemed. What a blast to give these men; not only has He proved to them that resurrection will be a fact, because God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living; but He's taken them to a place in their law, which proves the resurrection of everybody who is in Abraham, in Isaac and Jacob. And they thought, brethren and sisters, that they could tangle Him in their words. They thought that they had a sitting duck. They thought that they had a man Who couldn't lay claim to a proper authority, and He's turned to their authority as they thought, and He has completely thrust that sharp sword with two edges into their very hearts, and He has shown to them, that it's fairly useless to try a verbal gladiatorship with Him, of whom it is said, THAT HIS MOUTH WAS MADE LIKE A SHARP SWORD. He had been given the tongue of the learned so that He might give a word of strength in season, to Him that is weary, but sadly now, brethren and sisters, those men, who through the last three and a half years, have had so much evidence given unto them; they have become so entrenched in their own fleshly pride, that they have now become His enemies.

And He now proceeds to deal with them, as He deals with enemies. We are now seeing that tongue, brethren and sisters, so sharp, sharpened through the polishing of the Deity, for all those years of preparation because it was in the fullness of time that God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law; it means to say that all of that period of time, the Deity was making the preparations correct. That He was sowing everything in that intent, to bring forth His Son, so that He might with His polished arrow, that has been hid under His open hand for so long, might be put into the bow. And the string might be drawn back to its utmost tension, and that it might fly towards the mark that the Deity had in mind. These men have now become His enemies. And He'll treat them as He treated enemies.

And so we see in that third incident, that is contained in Mark chapter 12, a rather beautiful statement by the Lord Jesus Christ, as this lawyer comes to try Him. The third of the classes, who want to know by what authority He does these things. And so in Mark chapter 12 we read that one of the scribes came, verse 28, 'and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, he asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; Yahweh our Elohim is One Who Shall Be. And thou shalt love HE WHO SHALL BE THY ELOHIM with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment than these. And the scribe said unto Him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He: And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, IS MORE THAN ALL WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES'.

Brethren and sisters, if we know something about the law of Moses, that is an outstanding interpretation of one of the offerings under the law. An outstanding

interpretation! And the Lord answers and He says, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask Him any more questions'. How did the thrust that the Lord gave on that occasion quench all the fiery darts of the adversary? How did it? Well, brethren and sisters, that man understood what the burnt offering was all about.

And the burnt offering is all about total dedication, and if we were to have the time to go back in Leviticus chapter 1, we would find that the way in which the burnt offering was dealt with, was that it was completely skinned, so that anything under the surface of the man, who was 'represented by that offering', would have been divinely scrutinized, so that any cancer that was not visible before the skin was removed, would be dealt with. And if there was a cancer underneath, the priest would have thrown the offering away and invited the offerer to go and get another one, please. And then when it was all dismembered and all the internal parts of it, i.e. the bodily functions apart from the vital organs, were thrown away, it was completely cut up and dismembered and washed thoroughly inside and out, and it was laid upon the altar in a very special way. It was laid out upon the altar of burnt sacrifice, out in the courtyard of the tabernacle, with its head there, its vital organs there, and its flesh there. And it means to say, brethren and sisters, that if a person is going to offer to God, anything at all in dedication, HE'S GOT TO OFFER, FIRST HIS HEAD, (his intellect), IT'S GOT TO FLOW THROUGH INTO HIS EMOTIONS (the truth is not only intellectual; it's emotional as well) AND IT MUST BE SEEN BY THE DICTATES THAT IT GIVES TO THE FLESH (so it does what God says it ought to do). And here is a man, brethren and sisters, who has laid that out to the Lord Jesus Christ and He says, 'you're not far from the kingdom of God.'

But, the man actually said more than that. The man actually said more than that, because he quoted from two verses in the Old Testament, one of which is Deuteronomy 33 verse 10 and the other one which is Psalm 51 and verse 19, both of which talk about WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS. And on both occasions in Deut.33 and Psalm 51, it is not talking about offerings under the law of Moses; it's talking about offerings that will be made in the kingdom of God, when total dedication will be possible. It's talking about offerings that will be made in the kingdom of God, when that which we hunger and thirst after now, brethren and sisters, will be able to be satiated. Whole burnt offerings are only mentioned 3 times in the bible. And the 2 places in the Old Testament tell us how to interpret this occasion. That's why Jesus said to him, 'thou aren't far from the kingdom of God'. He was a very wise scribe, and so the Lord, after this event, after these two greatest minds in Israel had come together almost, the Lord decided that He would ask them one question. And so we're seeing now, that to every parry, to every thrust by them, there was a parry. And the parry, brethren and sisters, turned into a grand thrust. And look at the thrust that He gives to them. Jesus answered and said, verse 35, while He taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore himself calls his own son, Lord'. David therefore himself calls his own son, Lord. How can these things be the Lord said to those men? How can it be that a father calls his son his ruler? And the people had to think very carefully, because that's what God wanted them to do;

that's what Christ wanted them to do; and it's what He wants us to do, brethren and sisters. What is the answer to that puzzle?

How did they arrive at a conclusion? How were they convicted by what He asked them? They were convicted alright, brethren and sisters, they positively knew the answer. THAT NO JEWISH FATHER EVER CALLS HIS SON 'LORD', so therefore, there's only one conclusion, and the conclusion has to be, that He has convicted them that David's son is also the Son of the Living God. David's son has to be the Son of the Living God. No wonder, brethren and sisters, that they didn't like to argue with this man. No wonder it is testified that NO MAN EVER SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN!

And if we don't think hard, we won't find the answer to that question, will we? We've got to think very hard to do that. These men were so skilled in Jewish law and biblical understanding, brethren and sisters, understanding the laws of God, they would have seen the thrust in a fraction of a second, and they were cowed into the dust. And they didn't ask Him anymore questions after that.

We'd like to conclude our considerations together, by going right back to the start, in Isaiah chapter 50, because in this place we are told in verse 4 that 'Adonai Yahweh hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. Adonai Yahweh hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.' And what He's telling us, brethren and sisters, it this; that if we're to be anything like Him; if there is to be any sort of a reflection of Him in us, there's just one organ, just one organ, that we can't afford to give to any other source of wisdom or knowledge. There's just one organ; it's a very delicate organ; it's a very special organ. It's the only faith by which faith will come. And it's the ear; and He said in modern parlance, He said, I don't care whatever happens to anything else on my body. I don't care what happens to it; but there's one thing I do care about, that's my ear. He was given by that means the tongue of the learned. He was given a tongue in whose power is either death or life. Either death or life, and if it is true that it is the hardest member to control; it must be, brethren and sisters, our most valuable, potential asset. It must be our most valuable, in potential, asset. And with what are we going to make it move? Is our tongue going to be as choice silver as the tongue of the just is? Is our tongue going to be a healthful and wholesome provider of sound, prepared, healthful, wholesome, truthful, honourable, virtuous words? Is our tongue going to be able to use knowledge aright as Solomon says, 'the tongue of the wise is able to do'. Is our tongue going to be a tree of life? Is our tongue going to be soft enough to break a bone? Is our tongue going to be a power for rebuking those who are going astray? Is it going to be employed in that way? Or is it going to be arrogant and boastful and godless and vicious and malicious, and razor sharp in it's deceit? Is it going to be serpent like?

Are we going to be like the Psalmist in Psalm 141 where he prayed that Yahweh might 'set a bar on the door of his mouth', because we freely acknowledge its danger? We

have come to consider some of the sayings of a man, who completely bridled the tongue and therefore, was also able to completely put in hold, put in bridle, His whole body. His tongue was that which was given to Him by the Deity. He had especially equipped this man, this polished shaft, so that it might be the tongue of the learned. He wasn't given the biceps of a wrestler; He wasn't given the legs of an athlete; He wasn't given the looks of a film star, nor the voice of an entertainer; HE WAS GIVEN THE TONGUE OF THE LEARNED. And brethren and sisters, every single one of us, even if we were bed ridden, have been given a tongue. We've all got a tongue; what are we going to fill it with? It's the hardest member to control, but when it's controlled, it will be a tree of life and healthful and wise.

We've looked at this man, Who is the polished arrow of the Deity, hid in His Hand, and finally strung in His bow, so that it might speed toward the mark of sin and death, to release us from their grasp. We've seen some of His stunning powers of reason. We've seen the delightful simplicity of the words which He chooses to present to us, very profound matters, and whether it was stilling the storm on the Sea of Galilee, or whether it was calming 'Legion', He demonstrated a skill with words. He demonstrated a power of reason; He demonstrated the powers of illustration that are completely unmatched in any other man. NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN, brethren and sisters, fancy trying to entangle Him in His talk! And what do we see when we look at this man? We see that at twelve, He was able to stun the leaders of His day, with His questions and with His answers. And when we finally see Him, even in silence, condemning His opposers, condemning His judges, and making them seethe with rage. And finally, in death, we see a noble head drooping upon a heaving chest and saying, 'IT IS FINISHED'.