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GLENLOCK BIBLE CAMP 1981

HEZEKIAH - A ROOT OUT OF DRY GROUND

Speaker: Bro. John Martin

Study #7

I will break the Assyrian in My Land.

Reading: Micah 5

My dear brethren and sisters and our dear young people.

My voice is not that weak is it? I was given some medicine for my throat this morning, and I really believe I've got the spirit this morning, because when I looked at the label on the bottle, it was 30% alcohol! So we're in for a great time this morning! I'll probably quote the 28th chapter of Isaiah, 'here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept'; you know, that little drunken ditty?

Well, b&s, in that 5th chapter of Micah, as the prophet had said, 'this man shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall tread within our Land', now it's fairly obvious from the context of that chapter, that that man is the Lord Jesus Christ. Hezekiah was not born in Bethlehem, he was not the one that the prophet was speaking about in the ultimate sense. But there's no doubt about it, b&s, that generation when they heard those words from Micah who was a contemporary prophet with Isaiah, could relate them to no other than the great king. Who else could be the peace when the Assyrian would tread within their Land? Everyone would look to him and depend upon him, and where is he? He's on a bed of sickness, seriously ill, he's dying, b&s, rapidly dying, which I believe, was of extreme blood poisoning, quickly going out of life. And then we know, of course, of the remarkable cure which we considered together in our last session. And as we learnt then, b&s, it wasn't so much that a man was put under trial to test his faith, but there was a man in great fault; and Yahweh chose climatic circumstances to bring home to him, the awful nature of his neglect, that he might learn a great lesson.

And there are great lessons in life, b&s, and sometimes you know, we have brethren and sisters tell us, you should do this, you should do this, and you should do this; and we know in our heart of hearts that they're right, and we know that we've got those faults, but sometimes we're brought face to face with reality! and we realize that we've either got to do something about it, or else. And you know, it was a great act of mercy that Yahweh performed upon Hezekiah, for He didn't require Hezekiah to continue the kingly line. Hezekiah required Yahweh that he might be continued in the kingly line;

Yahweh was graciously including him in His purpose; He doesn't need Hezekiah or you or me, b&s, to continue His purpose, THAT WILL BE FULFILLED! but He graciously calls upon all of us, to do our part, that we might participate in that stream of life which will bring us all at last, to the great day of Zion's gladness.

Now in the 37th chapter of Isaiah, we have the destruction of the Assyrian. Hezekiah is on his feet, he's a new man in every sense of the word! His confidence, b&s, now is supreme, he knows within his heart of hearts that there is no problem whatever, that Yahweh has stood him up on his feet, and the very health that he now has, is a guarantee that Yahweh will defend Jerusalem! And the record is very simple, and you know, the very simplicity of it, b&s, is the power of it! Verse 36, 'then the angel of Yahweh went forth' ONE ANGEL; what a dramatic verse of scripture that is. 'Then the angel of Yahweh went forth', just one, and our minds go to the garden of Gethsemane, when the Lord Jesus Christ told His contemporaries there, b&s, that if He so required, His Father could give Him 12 legions of them! And here's just ONE, and that was all that was necessary to wipe out the cream of the Assyrian host. And you know, b&s, as I mentioned to you, if you turn and we won't at the moment, but if you'd like to have a look at this later on, in 2 Chronicles 32 and verse 21 it says there that the 185,000 only included the leaders and the captains of that army. What a great host was out there! if they had 185,000 generals, what an enormous host Sennacherib had put in that Land, not that they would all have been with him there, but I believe, they were dispersed through that Land, keeping guard over their conquests that they had made coming down from Assyria right down to the borders of Egypt. And spread through that Land there was a host like a host of grasshoppers, a 185,000 leaders taken out of that host, b&s, and what a description Isaiah gave, he said that 'Assyria had tread within the Land, and like a tall cedar stretched out his branches in all the glory of his pride, and Yahweh took the axe out of his hand, and cut off the top bough'. He didn't fell the tree, He just took the top bough off! and the pride of Assyria going up to its head, was lopped off the top. Or as he said in another place, 'He parted the neck' and He took the top of the tree off and the glory of that tree was gone! And although it may still have been a tall tree in the earth, still spreading its branches forth, it was humiliated, its head was gone, a 185,000 of its leaders.

And you know, b&s, there's been a lot of theories as to how that happened. As if we cared, but you know, when you read those theories of what might have happened, the plague, or the poisoning of the water, or all the multitude of theories, but one thing we're told about that slaying of the 185,000, it's a simple statement but it's profound in its import, it says this, that they woke up in the morning and when they went down there, they found out that they were all dead corpses. Now, of course, you can't have a dead corpse, a corpse is dead; and there should be a pause between those two words. They were all dead; corpses! What are we being told? Simply this, they never found a single man sick or dying; there wasn't any half-dead, 3/4's dead, they were all dead! and if you had a plague, b&s, whatever proportion it was, whatever magnitude, you would find among 185,000 surely some who were still dying! THEY WERE ALL DEAD, CORPSES. There was nobody dying, and in that there was the finger of God, and He touched all their hearts and in the glory of that poem we heard read so beautifully rendered last

night, 'they froze'. What a remarkable stroke, b&s, that was; what a glorious power our Heavenly Father has, what a devastating power He has, and you know, b&s, we will all be witnessing that very shortly, when the might of the Russo-Assyrian power will dash his flood against the neck of Jerusalem. WE will be with the Lord Jesus Christ, we will go with Him, b&s, from Sinai through Teman, and from the portions of the south, the march of the saints, we'll come in by the way of the east. The Lord will utter His voice and the heavens and the earth shall shake, and He'll be the strength of the children of Israel. And with a mighty stroke He'll bring that Russian down, b&s, and all the world will stand in awe of that! Oh, what a day we're looking for and it's not far away, b&s.

And you know, when you read this 37th chapter of Isaiah, and you look in verse 37 of that 37th chapter, 'So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god', his personal god for there are gods and lords many in Assyria, b&s, but here was the patron god of Sennacherib, his god. And whilst he's in the embrace of his god, the sons of his own bowels put a sword through him. And you know, it wouldn't have surprised me if a prophet had walked into the temple and said, 'where are the gods of Assyria?' You know, there's a dramatic record, b&s, and now where are the gods of Assyria? And you know, all of this was done, I believe, without Hezekiah or his troops ever seeing that Assyrian! because the last record we have of Assyria, was that Sennacherib had been 30 miles south at Lachish. He had moved up to Libnah to meet a challenge from the Tirhakah, the Ethiopian king of Egypt; Rabshakeh had gone back to meet up with his king that they might meet that new challenge, and when he walked away, Hezekiah was virtually told, 'you'll never see him again!'.

And there, b&s, in the city of Jerusalem you can imagine the spies coming in, the scouts coming in, racing through the gates, absolutely beside themselves with excitement, 'you'll never guess what's happened? The cream of the army is gone, there is consternation in the camp of Assyria, they're pulling up their tents everywhere, there's marching orders abroad, the whole of the host of Assyria is moving out of the Land'. It took them 15 months to clear that Land of them, as the prophet Isaiah said, 'this shall be a sign' and so they're still caged up in Jerusalem but day after day, news came of further continuance of troops moving out, moving out and going away, and they never saw them again! What a remarkable prophecy that was, and you know, b&s, historians have marvelled at this, that the Assyrians were so apt to leave their steels and their monuments with all the inscriptions chiseled in them of all their conquests. And for 80 more years they were still to be made, nowhere, just nowhere can they find a record of any boast of a conquest of Jerusalem, and nowhere in the history of that nation can they ever find that they ever came near that city again. And yet there are a multitude of conquests left on record by Assyria, but never Jerusalem and historians have said, that quite apart irrespective of their belief or disbelief in the biblical record, that it is absolutely true, that what Isaiah said came to pass. As I said before, b&s, it wasn't easy to believe that, and it was a long sign that Isaiah gave them. 'A wicked and adulterous generation seek after miraculous signs'; a faithful generation got a sign of long drawn out duration in which they had to exercise faith in consistency, b&s, against the current events of the day! That of course, is something that is a challenge to ourselves.

What I thought I'd do now, rather than go into the negative aspect of Hezekiah's pride, which I think is quite a tragedy in this man's life; it's just to mention that little fact to you, b&s, by way of exhortation to us all! That it's quite a tragedy, that having made his wonderful vow before God, that Hezekiah should be lifted up in pride; and the record says that 'Yahweh left him'. That's quite wonderful when you read that in a sense, because men, b&s, are as good as their God; that is, they are as good as their God is with them! Whatever we are in the truth, whatever goodness may be within us, it's been put there. There is no good in man, Hezekiah's man, David's man, your man or my man; there is no intrinsic value whatever in flesh and when Yahweh left him to his own resources, and whatever that phrase means (we don't know), but circumstances were brought to bear, no doubt, whereby Hezekiah could think about himself; and Yahweh left him in those circumstances, to concentrate upon self!

And he did concentrate upon self, b&s, without his God, he turned immediately to self. And you know, with all those great vows, because of the bitterness of my soul, he said, 'I will walk as if I was in God's presence for the rest of my life'. And the ambassadors of Babylon came down, and Isaiah 39 and verse 2 says, and you can read it with me, and note the emphasis, 'And Hezekiah was glad of them and showed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not'. Look at the use of the personal pronoun, as if they belonged to him! And you know, in the wonder of the moment, b&s, in the glory of the triumph and in the great ambassadors that came from Babylon, Hezekiah momentarily forgot, that all that he ever had belonged to Yahweh, and he showed them his house, his treasure, his armour, his dominion and so on! And what a tragedy that was, and you know, when I read through that chapter and I was studying chapter 38, and I was being locked into that chapter and seeing the great sincerity and the intensity of that man's vow, my eyes slipped into chapter 39 and I read that verse, and I knew, b&s, as if I'd never knew anything else in my life, I knew exactly what Isaiah was telling me.

And you know, I can't explain to you, there are moments in bible study, when one sees something that is so meaningful, that you can't miss the import of it! It's very simple but you know, you can learn it and learn it, but sometimes it's almost as if the prophet breathed it into your face, and when I went through that 38th chapter and sat back at the end of it, making my notes on it, and thought what a marvellous thing that was, and I leaned back and I just sort of looked through what was coming up next, and I read through that; and it was almost, b&s, and I'm not being dramatic here, I really mean this, I can't tell you how I felt, it was almost as if Isaiah opened the door, and said, 'John, so much for human vows from the best of men', and I believe that's the import of that! It wasn't recorded there, b&s, merely to denigrate Hezekiah, it was recorded for posterity, so much for human vows from the best of men? And we learn a great lesson from that, b&s, and it's better to leave it, isn't it? to thank God for His mercy and to pray that He might help us to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, and asking Him to strengthen us to do those things, rather than us promise Him that we're

going to do ever so marvellously in His service. It's better to be humble about that! 'so much for human vows from the best of men!'

But now come with me and we'll look at some of the wonderful prophecies of Isaiah, as it related to that Assyrian; you know, as I said to you before, b&s, Hezekiah would have leant very heavily upon the words of this wonderful prophet. And a wonderful prophet he was, a very eloquent man, whose language has gone down in history as some of the most glorious language in all literature, the language of Isaiah. And he had much to say about the Assyrians, in his 17th chapter for example, prophecies like this would have given Hezekiah great encouragement. And in the 17th chapter of Isaiah we read from verse 12, 'Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas', now bear in mind that he had previously likened the Assyrian to a 'flood'; these words reminds us of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ of the nation, of the sea and the waves roaring. And Isaiah goes on and says, 'and the rushing of nations like the rushing of mighty waters. The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters, but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and they shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. And behold, eveningtide trouble; and before the morning he is not'. You know, they're dramatic words, 'behold, at eveningtide as night fell, trouble; and in the morning, he's gone! They were dramatic words, b&s, and that's exactly what happened; here he is coming towards Jerusalem, the scouts are coming in, the ground's covered with them. The sheaves of their spears like the twinkling of the stars, like we were told last night, upon blue Galilee, rolling towards them like an invincible flood, behold, trouble. In come the scouts in the morning, he's gone! what drama is in those words, b&s, and they were the sort of thing that Isaiah told Hezekiah. And you can imagine Isaiah using the language that he has in his book, eloquent language; it wasn't the words, b&s, of a prophet who didn't know how to use his voice, obviously Isaiah knew how to use it. The way in which this prophet has written demands that it be delivered in wonderful terminology, in wonderful eloquence and I can see Isaiah telling him, and describing this rolling flood that's coming; changing the figure to chaff, which is a dry thing and as thistle-down before the whirlwind. Those little white things from all the thistle which are blown out and before the whirlwind rolling away; at eventide trouble, in the morning, he's gone! and they were the wonderful words of the prophet. And Hezekiah would have dwelt on those words!

You turn with me to Isaiah chapter 30, b&s, here's a marvellous dissertation upon the destruction of the Assyrian. You know, we lean upon the words of scripture and the prophets, and in the 27th verse of Isaiah 30, 'Behold, the name of Yahweh cometh from far, burning with His anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: His lips are full of indignation, and His tongue as a devouring fire: And His breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people', and then in verse 30, 'And Yahweh shall cause His glorious voice to be heard'. Now you see what I mean, b&s, how do you think Isaiah said that? the very words demand an eloquence, and I believe that's the secret of the power of Isaiah, that the very words that he was given demanded that eloquence. And 'Yahweh shall cause His glorious voice to be heard', and you know,

b&s, he'd spoken of lips and tongue and breath, and Rabshakeh had come up there and said, 'these are the vain words'; well they're not vain words! For says verse 31, 'through the voice of Yahweh shall the Assyrian be beaten down'. And the voice of Yahweh said to the angel, 'Go!' and the word of command, b&s, was the death sentence for 185,000 noblemen.

'And His lips were full of indignation, His tongue said 'Go' and His breath breathed death, as that poem told us last night, that as they went passed, the glance and breath of the LORD froze them in death. Well, they weren't vain words, Rabshakeh! Well, what a wonderful prophecy that was, b&s, and then Isaiah said this, in verse 32, 'And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which Yahweh shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it'. I want to translate that for you from the RSV, 'And with every stroke of the staff of punishment which Yahweh lays upon him, shall be accompanied with timbrels', and there Isaiah pictures Yahweh with a great rod, Assyria was the rod of His anger, b&s, that brought that rod down against Judah. He wrenched that rod out of their hand, and he beat the Assyrian down with that rod; this is the figure of Isaiah's words and every time the rod came down, whack on the back of the Assyrian! there were the timbrels going bang, bang, and these tiny little timbrels, percussion instruments, with the little bells around them as you've often seen them making the tingling sound, and who played timbrels? Who played timbrels in the bands of Israel? the women did! Why? wait till you read about them.

Well, I'll tell you where we read about them; on one notable occasion when the Red Sea closed upon Pharaoh and his host, and drowned the host of Pharaoh and swept away the pride of his army and the horses and horsemen thereof. It was Miriam that lead the women in dances with timbrels; 'Yahweh is a man of war' and they banged those timbrels and all the bells tingled. Why would the women do that, b&s? because you see, women don't go to war, but they love their husbands; their brothers and sons that do go, and whilst their husbands, brothers and sons are over there fighting the enemy, the hearts of the women are with them! They never leave them in thought; there's anxious thought and care and when they see them coming home flying the banner of victory and the women want to enter into that in the spirit of it, b&s, they want to be part of it. They don't want to be excluded from the plan and purpose of God, so they run out with their timbrels and as the soldiers march in triumph towards the city, the women surround them, banging their timbrels and hearing the description of the battle. You know, 'David has slain his ten thousands', they said when he came back from Goliath and the women ran to meet him and they gloried in their triumph as he came into the city. And here are the eloquent words of that prophet, and who was beating that timbrel? Who else but the daughter of Zion! She hadn't fought in the battle! she never saw the enemy again! She hadn't hit him, he was hit down there somewhere between Jerusalem and Libnah, but she wanted to be with it, she wanted to show her part in it, b&s. She wanted to show herself one with her LORD, and every time she saw the rod come down on their back, she banged her timbrels, and so will we!

It won't be our power that brings the Russian to his knees, it won't be our power that

does that, b&s; you know, it's still true, that He shall do it alone! Oh, the saints will go up as the army of Yahweh, true they will, and a sword will be put in their hand but it won't be their power, and we will be there as the bride of Christ, and when we see our husband, lay the great strokes of Yahweh on the back of the atheistic power of Russia, the anti-Semite, when we see that rod come down, we will bang the timbrels of our hearts in agreement; and do you know, you talk to brethren and sisters today, and we can all see the reason for judgment. One time people use to say, that Christ wouldn't do these things, now they can see that He's got to, and we all beat that timbrel in agreement because we hate this rotten stinging world, and when it comes crashing to the ground, we will bang on those timbrels with all our might and with all our heart; they were the eloquent words of the prophet, 'Come on daughter of Zion', every time He hits them, you hit your timbrels. Marvellous, b&s, absolutely wonderful words! And the voice of Yahweh was glorious, as Isaiah said it before the king, to instil in him that faith!

But you know, Isaiah's prophecy about the Assyrian went back before Hezekiah. In the 14th chapter, here's a prophecy delivered in the days of Ahaz; verse 28 says, 'In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden', so in the last times of Ahaz, in the very year that King Ahaz died this burden was placed upon the Assyrian. Verse 24, 'Yahweh of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall His yoke depart from off them, and His burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched upon all the nations. For Yahweh of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?' and do you see, b&s, the point of that? He had said to Ahaz, 'ask a sign of Yahweh' and Ahaz said, 'I don't want a sign'; he got one any way! But you see, b&s, Yahweh reserved the ultimate triumph until that man died. And Ahaz went to the grave, b&s, an unrepentant and unforgiven sinner, and to him it was not revealed that Yahweh's power against the Assyrian was a practice for the world. And that's what Isaiah is saying, this is a mere practice, I've purposed to do this with the whole earth and with all the nations, and who's going to stop that? says Yahweh. And He waited till that man died to tell the nation that; he wasn't worthy to be told that! and he wouldn't have understood, b&s, he had no faith in Yahweh to meet the Assyrian, little faith he would have that Yahweh could conquer the earth! So He waited until he died to tell Hezekiah that, and He broke the Assyrian in His Land, to show them that the day would come when He'd break the power of Gentilism in every country in this world.

And this is Yahweh's purpose and who shall disannul it? None shall disannul it, b&s, that's glorious language; you know that's the language that we read and the language of the destruction of the Assyrian, 'I'll put hooks in thy jaws', 'I'll turn thy back' 'Art thou not he of whom I've spoken by my prophets', language which we know so well, and are so familiar with in the book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel 38, and you know when we turn to that chapter which quotes the book of Kings in the 38th chapter of Ezekiel, b&s, (I'd like you to turn to it now!) we're going to bring this right down to our day, our moment, our time; and here are the words of 2 Kings 19 quoted in the 38th chapter of Ezekiel, and the 17th verse, 'Thus saith Adonai Yahweh; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time

by my servants, the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years, that I would bring thee against them? B&S, nowhere, nowhere in the prophets of Israel has it ever been prophesied that Gog would come against the Land of Israel, except in this one. Yet God in giving him his name of Gog, He says, 'art thou not he of whom my servants the prophets have spoken', but you will search the prophets in vain, for the mention of Gog. And the nearest you'll ever come to it is in the words of Baalim in the Septuagint version, and he wasn't talking about that, because that, b&s, wasn't written until hundreds of years later. And when Ezekiel made that statement, nowhere in the prophets, anywhere where you could read, that Gog is mentioned, and yet God says, 'you're the one that I've been talking about all the time'. Well, where was he?

Well, b&s, he was in those northern powers who came against the Land of Israel, who were merely, b&s, tools in Yahweh's hand brought against a hypercritical nation, destroyed and brought in these by divine power as a practice for the last great and the mightiest drama this world has ever seen. Now I want to try, if I possibly can, in a few seconds, to impress you with something! You'll believe me I know, that's not the point I'm trying to make; I want you to try, b&s, in a few seconds to realize who we are, what we are, and where we stand. It has been said to me around this camp, that these studies have been good, and I appreciate that! but they say 'it's wonderful drama', I appreciate that too! and I know that it is; but, b&s, whether it be the drama of Noah's flood, the drama of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the drama of that tremendous destruction of the Assyrian outside the walls of Jerusalem down south, whether it be this or that drama, I want you to know this, that if God built those dramas up to a tremendous climax for Hezekiah, what do you think He's going to do for His Son? Have you ever seen or read any dramas where the climax is an anti-climax? Even in human literature and drama, that's never done! but all that goes before is but a trial and a practice run for the last one; and what I'm trying to say is this, imagine what you and I are going to see from here on! and I'll tell you what I think we're going to see in broad outline because nobody will know the detail.

I believe, b&s, that we're going to see in the very near future, the Iron Curtain roll aside to reveal a power, that all the statistics quoted by Christadelphian lecturers have fallen short of, and which the world will gaze at and shrink in terror at. And that having checkmated I believe, the use of those universally destructive weapons, Russia will roll into Europe with a power, b&s, that the world will stand back and utter a scream of terror, 'who shall make war with the beast?' And the implication of that question is, NOBODY! I believe at that time the Pope of Rome will have reached the plateau of his power and will be known as the man of sin, the son of perdition, a relation of Judas Iscariot; and he will be sitting upon the throne of glory, and I believe at that time, that he will rule the Russians. I believe he will be greater than the Russians, prophecy demands it. And his legions, b&s, which Stalin scoffed at and said, 'how many legions can the Pope put in the field?' will not be tanks, guns or any such things, but the enormous force of superstition, and he will have instilled that into his followers to such a degree, that the Russians will come to see that he will be a useful cooperator in the subjugation of Europe and prophecy sets, b&s, the son of perdition in the Word, not as being subservient to the dominions of the Gog, but their dictator. And we will see laid down in this world rules for people to follow or else, and the little peeps and mutters that we hear

now, that Christadelphians are considered non-religionists because they do not believe in the Trinity, will be nothing to what will be going forth in that day! And the mark of the beast will be enforced down the barrel of a gun, and there will be a conviction in the heart of the Pope and of Russia, that one thing is needful for the conquest of the world; that if Russia thinks that oil wells are important, if Russia thinks that encircling the globe is important, then the Pope will teach him a salutary lesson that he will never rule the world until he gets rid of that accursed Jerusalem and makes Rome the eternal city. And there will be a cooperation of powers and the leg will be formed, the colossus will stand up higher and higher and higher, Daniel's image will be built and an awful shadow will fall right over Israel, and the 3 million Jews will be in the jaws, b&s, of the dragon and the bear ready to crush the existence out of them! And they will sweep down into that Land, will brush America aside like a feather bed, Britain will be pushed across the Jordan, and feebly cry across the Gaul valley, 'have they come to take a spoil?' powerless as the mighty pincher movement of Russia grabs the Middle East and crushes Egypt; and when all else is done, Britain pitifully squealing over here, America prostrate, the world trembling, b&s, in abject terror, little Jerusalem, and the flood of the Assyrian Russia rushing up to crush it out of existence. Ahah! and in the morning he is not! That drama, b&s, will leave Hezekiah's looking like a Sunday School picnic; and we'll be there!

Do you think that God's set the world stage for His Son to step out into an anti-climax at His glorious feet? You see, it was the voice of Yahweh that brought the Assyrian down, but this time, b&s, it's His feet! Incandescent like brass, standing on Olivet that will trigger off the earthquake which will rock this world so vehemently that every edifice of man will come to the ground, and the slain of Yahweh shall be from one end of the earth unto the other, and the whole topography of the Land shall be altered and Zion shall be lifted up. That's the stage, b&s, that's being set now, for the entrance into this world of the Son of God. And we who are living now, that's sitting here having the wonderful invincible mercy of God, we will be the generation of people, more privileged than any other generation, to see these things alive until Christ comes! Until the others are brought with us at what stage of that drama, who knows? at what exact stage, who knows? but here we are brethren and sisters, and our minds go right back to the garden of Eden and running from the garden of Eden we think of all the faithful men of old, we come through Hezekiah which burns in our minds at the moment, and none of them are here today, and we are here and we're seeing the stage set for the greatest of all dramas. B&S, go home and thank your God for your position! for many righteous men have desired to see the things that we see, and have not seen them. And watch the signs of the times and from here on, b&s, as it has been going on for some time now, you will see an acceleration, an acceleration and the world getting out of control and Christ will come!

You know, in the 5th chapter of Micah which we had read for us this morning, here's a contemporary prophet, b&s, and what did he have to say about the Assyrian? We read again from the 4th verse, speaking about the Ruler from Bethlehem, 'He shall stand and shepherd in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty of the name of Yahweh His God, and they (Israel) shall abide; for now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth. And

this man shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our Land: and when He shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against Him seven shepherds, and eight principal men. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and in the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall He deliver us from the Assyrian'. You see, the seven men (shepherds) and eight principal men, who I believe primarily applied to Hezekiah and his 6 Levites, and the 8 heads of houses that he chose with him. But you see, b&s, those men it says shall waste Assyria and HE will deliver us. The plural is changed to the singular, why? because those 15 men are 1 man, and the one man is the Lord Jesus Christ in multitudinous manifestation, b&s. That's who it is! and you know, 7 and 8 not only denotes actual numbers but is a principle of the scripture, because Ecclesiastes says, 'give a portion to 7 and to 8', by which it means, give within your means and above your means. 7 and 8, if 7 is the perfect number then 8 is one more! And applying it to our Lord Jesus Christ in the singular sense, when the Russian horde comes in, b&s, as Yahweh only wanted one angel against the Assyrian, He'll only want one man against the Russians because He's sufficient for the job (7) and more than sufficient (8) for the job. And that's the point that Micah is making here, and what will He do with the latter day Assyrian? What sort of destruction will come upon the Russians? He will waste the land of Assyria with the sword and the land of Nimrod and the land of Nimrod right up to the entrances thereof. You know, b&s, you don't have to be an Einstein to understand that! for Nimrod founded the very first kingdom of the kingdoms of men. And what that's telling us is this, that Christ will not cut off the top bough of the cedar, but He will smash the feet of the image and it will come crashing down and the little stone will go over it, b&s, and pulverize it into powder. It won't be lopping off the top bough, it will be knocking off the bottom, and He will take His conquests right up the channels of the kingdoms of men to the very entrance of the gates of Nimrod, the first founder of the first kingdom of men and smash it forever! That's what Christ will do, b&s, that's a magnificent prophecy and that was spoken by a rough old country prophet out there. These are glorious words put into the mouths of very humble and very wonderful men.

And you know, Micah, speaking not only of the conquest of the Assyrian and the deliverance of the city of Jerusalem, b&s, oh look, these are magnificent words! he talks about the gathering of Jacob. If you can't see that this relates to our age, I'm suggesting, take your sunglasses off! it's absolutely glorious. Look, he says in verse 7, 'the remnant of Jacob' (read these words with me) 'The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from Yahweh, as showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men'. Now we know what that is, night falls the dew forms, in the morning as the sun arises and slants its rays along the ground, and glinters along the grass, there it all is, the globules of dew refracting the sun's rays; the prismatic glory of it all is before our eyes. Gone!! hour to hours gone, where has it gone? Taken, b&s, but what did the dew do for us? Not all of it went because some of it saturated the ground and helped that plant; it was a blessing in the night. But when the time came, Yahweh took it away 'and the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people, (notice the addition of the word 'Gentiles'), as a lion among the beasts of the forest, a young lion among the flocks of the sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver'. So Christ

comes and there now we've got a picture of a lion on the other side of a milling flock of sheep; and Christ wants that lion here, here boy!, and he doesn't go round, he goes through and there's blood and wool everywhere and he clears a path to come here.

Now there are the two figures of the courting of Jewry home; now you have to be blind not to see the implication because, b&s, the greatest dispersion of Jews today, relatively speaking are in America and Russia. Now you think this is a prophecy which doesn't relate to any other age but ours, this is a prophecy for us; the greatest concentration of Jews are in America and Russia. In America they've settled down in Wall Street like a wonderful material Jew, and every time the sun rises in Wall Street and those globulated Jews sparkle, they all have a dollar sign in them. And the Jews have settled in America as a marvellous blessing, and Yahweh's going to call them home, and the Yanks are going to rush out and say, 'don't go, don't go, don't go! he's gone! the Son of righteousness will evaporate them and bring them home in clouds of witnesses. And in Russia, b&s, they've chained them up and they say they can't go home; 'here boy!' like a young lion and the Russian flocks in front of them, 'here boy', and there goes Russian fur and Russian blood and Russian bones, and they plow a path through. You know Isaiah put it this way, 'I will say to the north, give up, and I'll say to the south, keep not back'; see the point? I'll say to the north, give up, a lion among the flocks. I'll say to the south, keep not back, a Jew being evaporated by the power of the Son. Now there is a remarkable prophecy and the concentration of Jewry today in those two centres, b&s, is a remarkable sign of the times! And Micah saw his people coming home when the Assyrian would tread within the borders and this man would be the peace when the Assyrian would do that!

And we're going to see all that, b&s, all of us, and I thought as we brought our studies to a finale, perhaps just a few remarks upon the 122nd Psalm which we can sing together at the end of this session, one of the Songs of Degrees, that we might appreciate, b&s, the feelings of Hezekiah as he poured out his soul unto God in these Songs of Degrees, as he brought them together, to show the gratitude that we ought to feel for Yahweh. I've chosen just to make a few pointed remarks about this Psalm, b&s, I'm not going to give you an exposition of it at this time, but I feel it will bring together the thoughts of Hezekiah, and perhaps the thoughts of us all as we study this Psalm. Just a few remarks on it!

It's a Song of Degrees, the word 'degrees' means 'to go up' and because the Songs of Degrees were set to the pilgrim songs, they were going up to a higher place, 'maalah', to go up to a higher place, and wherever they came from, b&s, irrespective of the geography of the land, above or below Jerusalem, wherever they came from they went up when they went to Jerusalem. And Psalm 122 speaks very eloquently, b&s, of a pilgrim making his way to the city of Jerusalem; and it's like a word picture of a man going to Jerusalem for the first time, and he's absolutely thrilled with all that he sees, and he speaks about the gates, the city, the house of Yahweh, the thrones of judgment, the walls, the palaces. He looks all around about him and he sees everything and he's wondering about it all and he's overcome with it all, because his whole life has been bent towards that city; and he's been invited up there and he was glad, he says. 'I was

glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of Yahweh'. Who said that to him? Other pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem, other pilgrims on their way passed his door and said, 'come with us, we're going to Jerusalem'; I was glad, he said, and do you know what he was glad about, because he knew in verse 4 that it was a commandment of Yahweh, the testimony of Israel was, that they should go there, b&s. I don't doubt for one moment that when the Jews were told to go three times to Jerusalem, they were sad! people said, 'do we have to go to bible school again, for crying out loud, it's too much trouble. I'm sick to death of it!' This man didn't feel that way, he said 'I'm glad' and you know, in the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy which we quoted in the life of Hezekiah, Yahweh said this shall be the central sanctuary. He said, when you get there rejoice! and there are some people who go to camps like this, I don't doubt, and some that go to bible schools (I hope they're a minority) who go for their kids sake and say if it wasn't for them we wouldn't be here! I'm glad I'm here!! I don't want to go home, b&s, I'm thrilled and I have to do the work, but it's lovely work; it's thrilled me and I've learned a terrific lot; I don't know what you've learnt but I've learned a terrific lot, I'm glad I'm here! It's a wonderful thing to come together and we ought to be glad to be here, and we go up to the house of Yahweh.

'Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.' You know, in the Hebrew it really says this, 'Our feet have been standing within thy gates', we've never left the place; and to go to Jerusalem, b&s, physically to go there was to only know that we've always been there. Our hearts were there, our minds were there, our souls were there; we've always been there, that's what the pilgrim's been saying. And I well remember my own trip to the Land, and I'm not saying I'm a great righteous person by no means, but I do say this, that when I was to go to the Land, I didn't know I was going to the Land. Circumstances in my life would never have permitted me to go, b&s, but circumstances that were brought to bear, took me there; but because I thought I'd never get there, I made a study of the Land. I well remember giving talks at the bible school on the geography of the Holy Land to audiences who 90% had been to the Land and I had not been there, and I was teaching them what it was like. I'd studied it so minutely because I loved the place, and I can tell you now with all the depth of sincerity in my body, that when I stood on the Land of Israel, I believed I had been there all my life! because I had never left that place and it was exactly like I had pictured it. And I loved every minute of it, and that's what the pilgrim felt, 'he was glad'.

And he wasn't just glad to go to Jerusalem, b&s. He was glad to go to the gates of Jerusalem. What did he mean by that? I'll tell you what he meant by that, in Psalm 87, and these are the words which Hezekiah would have us to appreciate, and here's a great lesson for us in life. You listen to these words, here's the importance of the word 'gates', 'His foundation, says verse 1, 'is in the holy mountains. Yahweh loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob'. Now look at the phraseology, the gates of Zion are set against the dwellings of Jacob, Zion is spiritual, Jacob is natural, and I'll paraphrase for you what that is saying. And this is exactly what it's saying, 'Yahweh loves the places where Christadelphians gather together where nobody owns it, more than He does our own private houses'. Nobody owns a gate, and the point the Psalm is making, b&s, is this that because in those days the exit and egress of that gate stood for

the whole city, it wasn't only the seat of justice, it was the seat of commerce; it was where ambassadors met the king, the king met the people, it was where everything was done, so it represented the whole city but nobody lived there! And the pilgrim was glad when people came out of their own private dwellings and said, 'let's go together and live as a family where nobody owns the place'. And that's Glenlock, Murray you've lost it! nobody owns this place, we're all here, b&s, at the gates of Jerusalem. And you know, for all the facilities that are here, Yahweh loves this more than He loves your private house, and I don't care how good it is! And that's what Hezekiah saw; Jerusalem is a city that is compact together, and it is! and you know that phrase 'compact together' has been rendered in another place, b&s, by the word 'to have fellowship with'. It has that connotation because as I told you before the broad valleys of Samaria in particular, and the wide open stretches and reaches of the Negev from the south and the broad coastal place in the west, all give way as you move in, to a more confined and confined and confined area until brethren and sisters who were walking along very openly in Samaria are now bumping into each other and Jerusalem is bringing them all into fellowship! And the pilgrim found as he went down there glad to keep the commandments of Yahweh, he found as he went down there more and more brethren and sisters packing into the caravan as they went down there, one after the other, streaming together, and as each of the files came in, pressing them all in, and by the time they got to Jerusalem their arms were around each other.

And they prayed for each other in verse 6, it says, 'because of the house of Yahweh my God, I will seek thy good. Verse 8, 'for my brethren and my companions' sake, I will say, Peace be within thee', because he could see, b&s, in verse 8, that if peace was in Jerusalem, that he was with his companions because the city had crowded them together. And what a wonderful thing that is, and who went up there? Hezekiah said in verse 4, 'whither the tribes go up', and I want to make a point here, b&s, and I was going to finish on a joyous note, and I will but this ones sharp. Because I love standing over the bible feeling about 8-1/2 feet tall, when you've got this book in front of you; I'm not going to tell you this, this verse is. 'Whither the tribes go up', that word 'tribes' of course, used for the tribes of Israel, is a Hebrew word which means 'to branch off', 'shebet' and it's the ecclesias that have all branched off. Ephraim and Manasseh, Zebulon and Naphtali, Gad and Asher, and so on, and they had all branched off and gone their own way, and Ephraim set astride the centre of the Land and had Shiloh in their territory. And they were known in the prophecy of Isaiah that they were the best ecclesia in the world; I didn't want anything to do with anybody else! There were those in the land of Galilee, Zebulon and Naphtali who'd strayed so far from the truth, that they didn't see themselves part of the ecclesia at any rate. And across the Jordan with Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, well, between us there's a great gulf fixed; perhaps it's a good thing, it's our defence from our brethren!

But the next sentence says, 'that they're the tribes of Yahweh'. I'd like you to think about that, you see, b&s, I don't belong to the Enfield ecclesia, I belong to the ecclesia which meets at Enfield. And I mean it! I don't feel any particular loyalty or allegiance to Enfield at all, but I feel a tremendous responsibility to the ecclesia, which in my case, for convenience sake happens to be at Enfield. It's an ecclesia of Yahweh and if that's not corrected in the very near future, there will be disaster! 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem'

where all the ecclesias meet, that's Hezekiah's message and that's why those invitations went out everywhere; for all to come home, b&s, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem! 'They shall prosper that love thee', and do you know, in that verse it's all poetic, it's like a song, it was set to a song, the word 'pray' is the word 'shaal' the word 'prosper' is 'shalah', the word 'peace' is 'shalom' and the word 'prosperity' is 'shalvah' and as they sang that song, shaal shalah shalom shalvah, there was in the Hebrew language a wonderful harmony, b&s, because all the ecclesias were there. All the ecclesias were there, shaal shalah shalom shalvah, because they were altogether and there was harmony, poetic harmony in that and they were praying for the peace of Jerusalem, 'for there says verse 5, are set the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David'. B&S, that verse is saying, there are sitting, there was sitting there (notice the margin) 'for there do sit the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David'. If you were a pilgrim in the days of the Law of Moses, b&s, you would make your way to Jerusalem and you would find the Levites standing before Yahweh representing the house of Levi; and Leviticus and Deuteronomy are quite explicit about that. The Levites stood before Yahweh, but lo and behold, the pilgrim arrives there, it's a new Jerusalem, it's got to be because the judges are not standing they're sitting, and they don't belong to the house of Levi at all, they belong to the house of David. And b&s, it's just as well they do, because if Levi stood for the uncompromising attitude that stood aside from the sin of their brethren, David's house stood for the towering principle of mercy, and that's what we're going to find seated in the house of David. He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, and that house, b&s, the seat is based upon mercy.

What a marvellous Psalm that is! 'Peace be within thy walls' and b&s and young people, there is no peace outside the walls; peace be within thy walls, and may it be, b&s, that as day passes day until our Lord doth come that we will ever remember that, and we'll ever remember that peace is within the walls of the city of truth. We have a strong city, we have a strong city as sung in the land of Judah where Jerusalem is; salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks and within those walls is peace. Do you know, b&s, the peace of the world which is coming with our Lord Jesus Christ is a special brand of peace. Haggai said, 'in this place will I give peace'. Jesus Christ in weeping over the city said, 'if you only knew the things which belong unto your peace'. The brand of peace, b&s, is Jerusalem's brand of peace and it's identified by brethren and sisters being companions together, hedged in by its mountains, closed in by its walls, divested of all their own personal belongings, divested of all their own personal views and opinions about their particular ecclesial strengths, divested of everything else except the need for mercy, that when they are within those walls, b&s, the walls that I've been talking about, then and then only, will they have peace. And if ever we want anything in the ecclesial world today, it's peace! and even before our Lord Jesus Christ returns, it is still possible in every ecclesial centre, to have our own little Jerusalem. And peace can come if we recognize those principles, and when we finally go there we will be able to say, our feet have always been standing here!

He was a pretty wonderful man wasn't he, was Hezekiah? It's not my exposition of him that I'm giving you, b&s; I believe that's a faithful following of those verses. It's a

wonderful thing, if you don't believe me, then don't sing the last hymn, but if you do sing it with me, because I'm going to with all my sore throat! Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! We're companions together, b&s, we're all hedged in; we've been hedged in here by circumstances perhaps which are not of our making but we've loved it. And the day is coming when we'll be hedged in, in greater circumstances, when the facilities of that temple which we won't require being in immorality, we'll be such that the world will congregate there in glory and beauty and power, and the Assyrian will be broken, b&s, and Zion will be free! May we all, lift up our voices and our hearts and sing together, Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!