

Oil for the Light

by T. Austin-Sparks

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and the need to seek His guidance and illumination in order to understand and apply the Word of God.

Duration: 22:17

Scripture: Exodus 27:20, Exodus 30:7

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the pressing need for a true knowledge and understanding of the Holy Spirit and His work. The speaker highlights that living in the good of the indwelling Holy Spirit would greatly impact and solve many of the problems faced by Christians and the Church today. The importance of the Holy Spirit's guidance and illumination is emphasized, stating that it requires intentional effort and exercise to truly know and experience the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. The speaker also draws parallels between the Israelites' need for the light of heaven during their wilderness journey and the Christian's need for the Holy Spirit's light in their pilgrimage through life.

Transcript

The 27th chapter, the book of Exodus. Book of Exodus chapter 27, at verse 20. And thou shalt command the children of Israel that they bring unto thee pure olive oil beaten for the light to cause a lamp to burn continually.

In the tense of meeting, without the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his son shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the Lord. It shall be a statute forever throughout their generations on behalf of the children of Israel. Oil for the light.

It is my growing conviction, dear friends, that the greatest need of our time is a true knowledge and understanding of the Holy Spirit and his work. Such knowledge, if spiritually apprehended, would really solve by far the greater number of the problems which beset Christians and the Church today. If only we really lived in the good of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

With all that that means, as a matter of light, how different everything would be. So I say again, the pressing need of our time is for such knowledge, such understanding. So what follows this morning is just a touching on the very fringe of that matter.

Not by any means an attempt to fathom it or exhaust it. This simple fragment, thou shalt command the children of Israel that they bring pure olive oil for the light. Notice this is a command to the Lord's people.

This is an imperative. This is a necessity. This is indispensable.

This is essential. Command. It is not optional.

Left to choice. This is an obligation. Command the children of Israel that they bring oil for the light.

Now first of all note the place of the light. The lampstand, as you know, was in the holy place between the outer court and the most holy place. It was in that place which in type is a between place.

A place between heaven and earth. Heaven and the world. There's the outside and there's the inside.

There is all that is here in this world on the one side, on the other side. There's all that which is essentially heaven. The very presence of God.

And in between heaven and earth this light was to be. A place which united heaven and earth and yet divided them. I think the meaning is what our Lord meant in his great prayer.

Seems to me that he was standing very much in this position. Then he prayed as in John 17. They are not of the world.

Even as I am not the world. And yet, and yet they are in the world. These are in the world.

I come to thee. They are not of the world. It's so familiar a truth.

Almost a hackneyed phrase. In the world but not of it. Here is an in between place which is the place of believers in this present dispensation.

At this present time. It is our place between heaven and earth in a very real sense. Well we know that don't we? We know that on the one hand we are here in this world right in us.

And it's very real. And yet it is just as real that we don't belong. We are not of it.

We're in an in between place. We know that we're not yet literally and actually in heaven. And yet, and yet somehow or other we are deeply linked with heaven.

The place between. That's where the light was to be. Or where the light was.

Place which defines heaven and earth and yet brings them together. There were no windows in that place. No windows in the holy place.

No provision was made for natural light. Natural light was excluded. But for this lamp stand it would have been totally dark.

All that was there represented type and symbol. All the values and the functions of that place were only possible, capable of being effective by a light which was not the light of nature. The light of the spirit.

The light produced by the oil. That is very true. And touches very closely upon my opening remark.

This holy place, this in between place, was symbolic of the position in which Israel were just at that time. They were out of Egypt. But they're not yet literally and altogether in the land of Canaan.

They were in an in between place and oh how they needed the light of heaven for that wilderness journey. There are two aspects of the Christian life. In Christ it is true we are seated in the heavenlies.

But Peter will tell us that we're still pilgrims and strangers. We're sojourners. Always the two aspects.

And on this side peculiar, peculiar position of God's people at the present time. The pilgrimage aspect. And this is true to very positive teaching in the New Testament.

In this life God has made no provision for natural life. If you and I are going on our way to reach God's full end, natural life for one thing will be no good to us. But for another God has ruled it out.

He has made no windows. That's the argument of the letter to the first letters to Corinthians isn't it? Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them. And the whole course of the chapter in which those words occur is God has made no windows for that.

Your reason doesn't come in here. The light of your natural judgment is not allowed here. It's all excluded.

The light that is here is the light from the oil. It's the light of the Spirit. So the argument of the first letter to the Corinthians is the argument about the Spirit isn't it? And what is spiritual for guidance, for judgment, for counsel, for the knowledge of everything of the Lord? No place for natural life.

Yet God's own provision for light, which is better than that, it's God's own light. Now look at the content of this place, the holy place. Well, in addition to the lampstand, the golden lampstand, you know, there was the golden altar of incense.

And then there was the golden table of bread of the loaves. Simple symbols that help us to understand the meaning of the light, the functioning of the oil, does this dear friend? And of course we know the symbolism is that the oil is the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is our light for the things of God. But this light is not just unto itself.

It is to throw its rays upon, to light up, to illumine this whole matter of prayer. And I'm quite sure I carry you with me when I say what a tremendous need there is that the people of God should know how to pray in the Spirit. If only we knew how to pray in the Holy Ghost.

That's a New Testament phrase, praying in the Holy Ghost. We need that. We never really get very far without that.

We'll be going around in circles. You see, the Lord from time to time called a halt in this journey for the setting up of the tabernacle again with everything that it contained, but right in the center, this thing, the light in the holy place upon this matter of intercession and prayer, the altar of incense. It is as though the Lord was saying we can't get any further until we have put a new emphasis upon this matter of prayer in the Spirit, praying in the Holy Ghost.

Our future, our progress, our fresh stages will require that we get into the Spirit of prayer again, and we get prayer in the Spirit. Now, it's difficult for me to convey all that I am feeling about that, but, dear friends, you will grasp the point. If in our own prayers, our own prayer life, privately, and when we came together, we come together for prayers, the Lord's people, we were really praying in the Spirit, how much further we

should get? Instead of praying in our own judgments, our own feelings, our own impulses, our own ideas, our own reasoning of what ought to be, what we think should be, and so on, and uttering a lump of things out of our own natural light, if the Holy Spirit took hold of our praying, and we prayed in the Spirit, even one thing, how much further we should get? See, I do not believe it's possible to pray a thing in the Holy Ghost without an issue, without something happening, without something being reached, some moving taking place.

Look again in the Book of the Ends. That's just how it was, you see. They prayed in the Spirit, and that did not mean that they just prayed in a kind of feeling.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Light, see, and the Holy Spirit knows what God wants. He knows all the purposes of God, all the designs of God, all the ways of God, all the times of God. He knows when the time is due for such and such a thing.

He knows exactly how that thing ought to be done. He knows it all. He is the Spirit of Light.

Pray in the Holy Spirit, and you pray right on for the things that God intended, and they must be. And I can do no more this morning than just make this appeal that you and I seek the Lord yet more earnestly, that our prayer life shall be in the Spirit, illumined by the Spirit. We shall pray in the intelligence and the understanding of the Holy Spirit.

So the oil for the light has a relationship to prayer in the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, this light was thrown upon the table and the bread, and that surely indicates that we must feed upon the Word of God in the illumination of the Holy Spirit. This is the extra factor that is so necessary.

I feel perhaps more necessary today than ever if that's possible. You can take this book, the Bible, and from the same book, using exactly the same scriptures, get a hundred different positions, in every one of which is in conflict with the other. That is what has been done.

That is what nearly all the different aspects and forms of Christianity today build themselves upon scripture, support their position by scripture, and very few of them can stand together. They're contradictory, if not antagonistic, to one another. They take one thing out of the Word of God, and you get these different views which are absolutely in conflict with each other, and yet built upon scripture.

And that can be extended over so many things, so many ways. Well, what are we to do? How are we to know? Not by leaving the scripture and arriving at our own conclusions and judgments, but we need the Holy Spirit to tell us what the scripture means. There's something, you see, extra to the Word.

The Spirit gave this Word, and He knew what He meant by it. And He never meant two conflicting and contradictory things. He's not like that.

The Spirit's mind is one mind. Always very consistent is the Holy Spirit, and there are no contradictions in the Bible where the Holy Spirit is concerned. There are in our natural light interpretations or apprehensions.

Do you not see how important it is to bring oil for the light? That in the Word of God, upon which we've got to feed, it is our bread. Christ has come to us as the bread in the form of the Word. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word, every word.

Christ is the living Word as the living bread. But oh, we need the Holy Spirit to illumine this Word, and to interpret, and to convict, to save us from contradictions. Ah yes, but the Holy Spirit has no windows for our reasoning and our interpretation, natural light.

Here everything is shut up to Him. Shut up to Him. Everything else excluded.

Well, time's gone. I think you see what I meant, the tremendous importance in our day of the Holy Spirit, knowing the Holy Spirit. And my last word is this.

Beaten. Bring pure olive oil. Beaten.

There's got to be definite exercise about this matter, of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It just does not happen, come about. It does not just come about.

We've got to get down to this matter. The real exercise and energy, and make, shall I say, a business of it. Lord, Lord, roll out my judgment.

Roll out my feelings. Roll out my likes and my dislikes. You come by Your Spirit and have absolute preeminence in my heart, in my mind, as I pray, as I read Thy Word.

See, it's business. Beaten out. Real exercise about the place and the work of the Holy Spirit in our personal life with the Lord, and in our collective life.

One does long to hear that note in our prayer gatherings, real laying hold to Lord. Now, Lord, tonight, in this hour, we must come into the mind of the Spirit about it. Real laying hold of God.

Beating it out. Understand. Command children of Israel that they bring pure olive oil.

Beaten. For the light.

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