

**T. Austin-Sparks:**

Reading: Psalm 51

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star" (Revelation 22:16).

I think it is a very wonderful thing that the Bible almost finishes with a word about David, and I think that you will agree with me. Here, right at the end, our Lord is saying: "I Jesus... am the root and the offspring of David." 'As the root, David came from Me. As the offspring I came from David.' That is why the Lord here calls Himself by the simple name of Jesus. He says: "I Jesus have sent mine angel." Now the Apostles and New Testament teachers very rarely used that name, for they almost always spoke of Him as the LORD Jesus, or Jesus Christ our Lord. It was very rare for them just to use His name 'Jesus', because that was the name before His resurrection and exaltation. 'Jesus' was the name of His humiliation, the name of the One who died for us, the One who was made sin in our place. 'Jesus' was the name of the Saviour: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). 'Jesus' was the name of the One who "humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8). And here, right at the end of everything, He says: "I Jesus" - "I Jesus... am the root and offspring of David."

David! That name brings back many things to us. David was the greatest king that Israel ever had, but what was his greatness based upon? We have read that Psalm, but did you notice the inscription at the head of it? Here it is:

"A Psalm of David:  
when Nathan the prophet came unto him,  
after he had gone in to Bath-sheba."

This Psalm is one of the most terrible things in the Bible! It is the Psalm of a man whose heart is broken because of his sin and because of the terrible nature of it. Do you remember the story?

There was a man named Uriah and he had a very beautiful wife. At a time when Israel went out to battle David, instead of going out with his forces, went up on to the housetop, and from there he saw this very beautiful woman. His passions rose within him and he said: 'I must have that woman! She is already married to Uriah, but I must have her somehow.' So he said to his captains: 'I want you to put Uriah in the front rank of the army and then go forward to meet the enemy. Then, when the enemy attacks, let the army fall back and leave Uriah alone.' That is what they did and, of course, the plan succeeded. Uriah was killed, and then David's captains came back and said: 'Uriah is dead.' David sent to Uriah's wife, Bath-sheba, and said: 'Uriah is dead. Come and be my wife.' So David got Bath-sheba, as he had planned, but the Lord said to Nathan, the prophet: 'Go to David and tell him a parable of a poor man who had but one sheep, and of another man who had many sheep, but this man who had the many sheep stole the one little sheep belonging to the poor man.' And as David listened to the story his wrath rose within him and he said: 'The man who would do a thing like that is worthy of death. He shall die!' And Nathan said: 'Thou art the man!' David had committed murder by planning to do so, and, do you know, by doing that he had put himself right outside side of all the Lord's sacrifices for sin. The laws of God through Moses had provided for a sacrifice for every other kind of sin. There was even a sacrifice for the man who killed somebody by accident, for the man who did kill somebody but had never intended to do so, but for the man who thought it out and planned it, then carried it out, there was no sacrifice. That was called 'blood-guiltiness', and there was no sacrifice provided by God for that. Such a man might bring his offerings, his sacrifice and his burnt offerings, but God would take no pleasure in them, and that is where David was in Psalm 51:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness... Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin... My sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow... Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me... Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation... Thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it: thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering."

David is saying: 'I have not anything that I can offer. I have put myself outside of all God's provision. My condition is absolutely hopeless, but for one thing, and that one thing is Thy grace.'

Do you think now that it is a wonderful thing that the Bible ends with: "I am the root and offspring of David"? To

## The Greatness of God's Grace in Jesus Christ

put that in another way, the Bible ends by saying that God's grace is greater than the greatest sin, and is sufficient for the man who has no hope. I think it is a wonderful thing that after this God did make David so great, so that his name is one of the greatest names in history.

Solomon was the second son of that woman Bath-sheba, and the very name 'Solomon' means for us the greatest glory in the Bible. Jesus Himself will acknowledge that. He spoke of "even Solomon in all his glory" (Matthew 6:29), but "a greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42). First of all, you have this wonderful greatness of Solomon from a man who had sinned like David. How can you explain that? It is explained because a "greater than Solomon is here". In what way is Jesus greater than Solomon? Because He will take someone who has gone to the deepest depths of sin and raise them to the highest place in glory. That is greatness indeed! It is the greatness of the grace of God which has been brought to us in Jesus.

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches." What is the greatest testimony of Jesus in the Church? It is what Paul calls "the exceeding riches of his grace" (Ephesians 2:7).

So we end our studies in Revelation upon this very high and glorious note. Jesus says: "I am... the root and offspring of DAVID". Fancy Jesus associating Himself with David! That is grace indeed!

But remember that there was something in David. 'If there is no sacrifice provided by Moses for my sin, there is a sacrifice provided by Jesus.' David said: "Thou delightest not in sacrifice... thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

The message speaks for itself. It is too great, too wonderful for words! How great is the grace of God in Jesus Christ! And the way into that grace is not by any works that we can do, nor by any offering that we can make. It is by a broken and a contrite heart that comes to the cross of Jesus and sees there God's sacrifice for sin which no other sacrifice can put away.

And so we sing:

"Plenteous grace with Thee is found;  
Grace to cover all my sin."