

## INTRODUCTION

The gospels have much to say about the occasions when Jesus saw and looked at people. It was enough for the Lord to see them and their need. This was sufficient in itself to draw out His feelings of compassion and love.

Sometimes, this was true of **large multitudes**, concerning both their (i) *physical* and their (ii) *spiritual* needs.

Both Matthew and Mark introduce their accounts of the feeding of the five thousand men<sup>1</sup> with the same expression: 'Jesus went forth and **saw** a great multitude and was moved with compassion on them ...'.<sup>2</sup> But there the Gospel writers part company:

(i) For his part, Matthew then adds, 'and *healed* the sick'.<sup>3</sup>

(ii) For his part, Mark then adds, 'because they were as sheep having no shepherd, He began to *teach* them many things'.<sup>4</sup>

But though we read of our Lord looking with considerate eyes on vast crowds, more often we read about His reaction to **individuals or small groups**, when the needs which He saw (a) stirred His emotions and (b) triggered various words and/or actions.

## SIX WAYS IN WHICH INDIVIDUALS OR SMALL GROUPS BENEFITED FROM JESUS' LOOKS

### 1. Some received the benefit of His power.

Consider three individuals whom Jesus 'saw'; (i) one at a city gate, (ii) one in a synagogue, and (iii) one by a pool in Jerusalem.

(i) At the city gate of Nain (Luke 7). A dead man was being carried out for burial; he was 'the only son of his mother, and she was a widow'.<sup>5</sup> In one sense, then, all that the widow had in the world was in the open box ('the bier', the open coffin<sup>6</sup>).

There were many people present—'a great crowd ... with Him'<sup>7</sup> and 'a considerable crowd ... with her'.<sup>8</sup> But '**when the Lord saw her**, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep".<sup>9</sup>

His great heart throbbed with compassion for the bereaved lady and, therefore, He touched the bier to stop the bearers. He then said, 'Young man, I say to you, Arise'. And, when the young man sat up and spoke, 'Jesus gave him to his mother'<sup>10</sup> and 'all ... glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us" and "God has visited His people".<sup>11</sup>

(ii) In the synagogue (Luke 13). A woman was there with a 'spirit of infirmity', bent double for eighteen years, completely unable to straighten herself.<sup>12</sup> Doubtless, the dear lady had shuffled her way that day to the synagogue to take her place in the women's section there.<sup>13</sup>

**'When Jesus saw her**, He called her to Him and said, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity". He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight,<sup>14</sup> and she glorified God'.<sup>15</sup>

But the ruler of the synagogue didn't 'glorify God'! He was indignant!<sup>16</sup> It was the Sabbath! He didn't address Jesus directly but preached a sermon to the synagogue congregation: 'There are six days on which men ought to work; come on them therefore and be healed, not on the sabbath day'.<sup>17</sup>

The Lord responded, 'Hypocrites (in the plural because, clearly, the synagogue ruler was representative of others and spoke for them), does not each of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the manger and lead it away to give it drink. And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham (indicating her faith in God and her genuine piety), whom Satan has bound, lo, these eighteen years be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?'<sup>18</sup>

(iii) By the pool of Bethesda (John 5). It was another Sabbath. Lying by the pool was a man who had been sick<sup>19</sup> for thirty-eight years. '**When Jesus saw him lying there**, and, knowing that he had been in that condition for a long time, said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"'<sup>20</sup>

The Lord knew that it was, indeed, 'a long time' that the man 'had been in that condition'; for, when the man had been taken ill, He (the Lord) had been still in heaven!<sup>21</sup>

On the face of it, His question may sound rather odd to us. We may feel like saying, 'Of course, the man would have wanted to be healed'. But the man can hardly have been blamed if, by now, he had given up all hope of ever being well again; he had suffered countless disappointments: 'I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me'.<sup>22</sup> Our Lord's very question conveyed a promise of help.

Yes, *Jesus knew all about the man* ... but *the man knew nothing about Jesus*. When the Jews objected, 'It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mattress ... Who told you to take up your mattress?'<sup>23</sup> the man responded that he did not even know His name!<sup>24</sup> Had he lived today, the man who that day experienced the healing power of Jesus could have sung with truth and great depth of meaning the closing lines of the first verse of Bryn and Sally Haworth's hymn, 'What kind of love is this?':

'What kind of love is this,  
A love I've never known;  
*I didn't even know His name.*  
What kind of love is this?'

The fact that the man was unaware of the identity of his gracious and powerful Benefactor is evidence that it was not the man's faith which had brought about his healing.

Following the sign-miracle, our Lord quietly slipped away and blended into the crowd.<sup>25</sup> Apart from His likely desire to avoid unnecessary and premature confrontation with the Jews, it was 'just like Him'<sup>26</sup> to meet a need and then to move on, not waiting for any credit, praise or recognition.

As the prophet Isaiah foretold of God's perfect Servant, 'He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street'.<sup>27</sup> Free from any self-advertisement or craving for the limelight, the Lord Jesus ever sought to avoid the publicity which His healings naturally attracted.

## **2. Some received the benefit of His sympathy.**

Think of Mary of Bethany. '**When Jesus saw her weeping**', we read, '**and the Jews which came with her weeping**, He groaned ('was deeply moved', possibly in anger<sup>28</sup>) in spirit and was troubled'.<sup>29</sup> Many Jews had come to comfort and console Mary and her sister<sup>30</sup> and had followed Mary when Martha had summoned her privately ('The teacher has come and calls for you') because they thought she had gone to the tomb to weep.<sup>31</sup>

Falling at Jesus' feet,<sup>32</sup> Mary exclaimed, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died'.<sup>33</sup> Personally, I do not understand her words (or the identical words spoken by her sister, Martha<sup>34</sup>) to imply any criticism of the Saviour for His earlier absence. Mary must have realised that, even if Jesus had left immediately when He received the message, 'Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick',<sup>35</sup> from her and her sister, He could not have reached Bethany before their brother's death. He would, inevitably, have arrived two days too late to prevent Lazarus from dying by His bodily presence!

If, therefore, Mary was expressing any recrimination with her exclamation, she must have been directing that recrimination, not at the Lord but, at herself and at Martha for not notifying Him earlier! They were certainly not voicing any criticism or rebuke of Jesus, as if they were saying, 'Why ever did you dawdle for those two days!' For my part, I read Mary's words simply as a general expression of regret and sadness.<sup>36</sup>

But, however we interpret Mary's words, there is no mistaking the significance of our Lord's action. Although (i) He knew Himself to be 'the resurrection and the life'<sup>37</sup> and (ii) He knew that He was shortly to raise Mary's brother from the dead, He 'shed tears'<sup>38</sup>—tears which led the Jews then present to acknowledge, 'See how He loved him (Lazarus)'.<sup>39</sup> Yet His tears tell

us that He loved, not only Lazarus, but Mary and the Jews also; He shared their grief and sorrow.

### 3. Some received the benefit of His care and thoughtfulness.

Consider the disciples during the incident at Caesarea Philippi, when Jesus 'began to teach' openly<sup>40</sup> that He 'must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed'.<sup>41</sup>

Peter then 'took Him aside (presumably, that he might not be seen to reprove the Lord in front of the other disciples) and began to rebuke Him.<sup>42</sup> But, turning round and looking on His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind me, Satan".<sup>43</sup> The Lord knew (i) that the other disciples shared the very same aspirations, ambitions and hopes as Peter and (ii) that they might easily have been led astray by Peter's remonstrance. For their benefit as much as for Peter's, therefore, a public 'rebuke' was necessary.

His consideration and care shone even brighter for His mother at Golgotha. 'When He saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing near, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son".<sup>44</sup> There were other women standing there (including Mary Magdalene and His aunt, Salome) but He had eyes for only one.

Perhaps, just for a moment, our Lord remembered the time He had entered the world through her womb ... perhaps He recalled the time when she had watched Him grow up as an infant, how she had washed, clothed and fed Him ... perhaps He thought of the thirty years they had shared together in lowly Nazareth. I do not know.

But I *do* know that His mother had now reached an age at which, in normal circumstances, she would have looked to Him, her first-born Son, for support. But, instead, she was compelled by her very love for Him to stand and witness His suffering the humiliating and agonising death of a condemned criminal.

Surely, He must have seen the misery written across His mother's face as she stood there—helpless. His wounds bled but she could do nothing to staunch the blood. His mouth was parched but she could do nothing to moisten it. Arms which had once gently clasped her neck were outstretched out on the tree but she was unable to caress them.

Doubtless the Saviour knew that every lash of the soldier's scourge on His back had made her wince—that she had felt each iron spike driven through His hands and feet—that, when they twice<sup>45</sup> stripped Him of His garments, she had felt His shame keenly—that every cruel taunt and cheap jibe flung in His teeth had wounded and stung her too.

How then, we ask reverently, did the Lord feel, therefore, as, knowing all that she was suffering, from His cross He 'saw' His mother'?

When He said to Mary, 'Woman, behold your son', He was, in part at least, thinking of the past and was, in effect, saying His 'farewell', His 'goodbye', to her. For, as I understand them, those words marked the close of an earthly relationship which He and Mary had shared for a third of a century but which could not be taken through the grave.<sup>46</sup>

When He said to the beloved disciple, 'Behold your mother', He was thinking of the future and was making full provision for her.

### 4. Some received the benefit of His protection.

Sometimes what He saw displeased Him and, if necessary, He was quick to spring to defend and shield those under attack. Consider three such incidents recorded in the Gospel according to Mark.

(i) In chapter 3. First, by way of contrast, we read in the closing section of the chapter how 'His mother and His brothers' stood outside the house where He was, 'calling Him'.<sup>47</sup> When informed that they were outside, 'seeking' Him, He asked, 'Who is my mother or my brothers? And looking around at those sitting about Him, He said, "Behold my mother and my brothers. Whoever does the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother".<sup>48</sup> That was certainly a look of favour and approbation.

But earlier, as recorded in the opening section of the chapter, He 'looked around' with anything but favour and approbation!

The Lord was then in a synagogue and before Him stood a man with a withered hand.<sup>49</sup> Again, it was the Sabbath day<sup>50</sup> and the scribes and Pharisees<sup>51</sup> were watching Him carefully, hoping to find grounds to accuse Him of the capital offence of Sabbath violation.<sup>52</sup> The Pharisees had recently witnessed how He had previously defended His disciples when they had criticised them for plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath.<sup>53</sup> No doubt, they were hopeful that He would now Himself violate the Sabbath law, which they understood to prohibit every act not absolutely necessary.

The glares of the scribes and Pharisees declared loudly, 'Don't you even think about doing anything on this day of all days!' Unflinchingly, Jesus took up the challenge, called the man forward and asked them, 'Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil; to save life or to kill?'<sup>54</sup>

'If you have', He was saying, 'the power and the opportunity to good and you do not do it, in effect, you have done evil<sup>55</sup> because, by taking no action, you become responsible for the need's remaining unmet. If I have the power to heal this man's withered hand (and I most certainly do) and I refrain from doing it, then I am as responsible for the fact that he continues to have a withered hand as if I myself had caused it to be withered in the first place'.<sup>56</sup>

'To save life or to kill', He added. By these words, the Lord explained that, although the man's infirmity was not life threatening, nevertheless, in principle, all human actions (and nonactions)—no matter how small and seemingly insignificant—tend in one of two directions; the extreme in the one direction is to give life and the extreme in the other direction is to take life.

Challenged by His question, the scribes and Pharisees kept silent, refusing to answer.

'And **He looked around on them** in anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, and He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand". And, when he did so, his hand was restored.<sup>57</sup> And the same eyes which had earlier swept around a group of men with favour and approbation now blazed momentarily<sup>58</sup> around a very different group of men with anger at their unbelief and, possibly, at their refusal to answer His question.

(ii) In chapter 10. Having heard the Lord's teaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage,<sup>59</sup> His disciples were taken aback, concluding that, if the case were as He taught, it was better not to marry at all.<sup>60</sup> Jesus had then spoken of those who 'made themselves eunuchs for the sake of kingdom of heaven'.<sup>61</sup> In all likelihood, His disciples completely misunderstood His point, and so, when fathers<sup>62</sup> brought their young children for Him to touch them,<sup>63</sup> the disciples were in no doubt that Jesus would have little or no time for the little children.

Certain, then, that the Lord would not want be bothered with children, His self-appointed bodyguard 'rebuked' those who brought them to Him.<sup>64</sup> '**When Jesus saw this**, He was indignant<sup>65</sup> and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not prevent them, for of such is the kingdom of God".<sup>66</sup> He then folded the children in His strong carpenter's arms 'and blessed them'.<sup>67</sup>

(iii) In chapter 11. Here we read of the second occasion that the Lord Jesus cast out those who bought and sold in the temple.<sup>68</sup>

We note that, in advance of this action, the Lord had, first, '**looked around at all things**' and had then gone out to Bethany for the night.<sup>69</sup> It was on His return the next day that He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves and so forth.<sup>70</sup>

The Lord explained His actions in terms of the words of Isaiah, 'Is it not written, my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations; but you have made it a den<sup>71</sup> of robbers'.<sup>72</sup>

The court of the Gentiles, which should have been available for prayer and the worship of the true God, was occupied by tradesmen—in part, by 'the Bazaars of the sons of Annas'.<sup>73</sup> Men came to pray and to bring their offerings to God but were 'robbed' and deprived of their spiritual privileges by a corrupt and money-grubbing priesthood. That which Jesus saw stirred Him (out of compassion and love) to spring to the defence of those who were denied the blessing of the special place appointed for them to bring their intercessions and their praise to God.

It is most important that we understand what it was made the Saviour angry on each of these occasions. That which made Jesus angry in Mark 3, in Mark 10 and in Mark 11 was certainly not (a) some petty injury done to Himself or (b) some personal insult, such as was once delivered Him by the inhabitants of 'a village of the Samaritans', who refused Him hospitality—following which He simply passed on to another village.<sup>74</sup>

Our Lord's anger was roused, rather, when others suffered hurt or loss by being deprived of that which was for their good and blessing. It was, that is, love and compassion

- (i) for the man with the withered hand of Mark 3,
  - (ii) for the children and their fathers of Mark 10, and
  - (iii) for the would-be worshippers of Mark 11
- which provoked our Lord to indignation and anger.

'Time would fail me to tell'<sup>75</sup> of the occasions when ...

### **5. Some received the benefit of His straight speaking.**

By way of example only, I point to our Lord's encounter with a rich young ruler.<sup>76</sup>

The incident concerns a rich<sup>77</sup> young<sup>78</sup> ruler<sup>79</sup> who approached Jesus with a question about obtaining eternal life. The man claimed that, from his youth, he had observed those commandments in the law which were concerned with adultery, murder, theft, false witness, fraud and respect for parents.<sup>80</sup>

However, this exemplary young man knew in his heart that more was required of him than mere outward conformity to the law; hence his question, 'what do I still lack?'<sup>81</sup>

'**Jesus looking at him** loved him', we are told, 'and said, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me"<sup>82</sup>

The Lord knew the man's heart, that riches held the supreme place there—that what the man really worshipped were his possessions and his riches. The Lord's loving (albeit stringent) demand 'touched the poisonous swelling as with a sharp lancet when He called for surrender of wealth ... it was this man's money which stood between him and eternal life'.<sup>83</sup>

It was for this reason that Jesus put His finger on the dominant idol in the ruler's life and told him first to give away all his possessions and then – and only then – to 'come and follow' Him.<sup>84</sup>

We should note that the commandments which the man claimed to have kept were all 'man-ward', taken from what is known as the second table of the Decalogue.

In effect, the Lord Jesus took him back to the very first commandment of the first table, which was 'God-ward'; namely, 'You shall have no other gods before me'.<sup>85</sup>

Tragically, faced with this demand, the ruler's brow clouded over<sup>86</sup> and 'he went away sorrowful'.<sup>87</sup> The price was too high. But Jesus had spoken straightly to the man and would not pare down His requirements to make them easier for him to accept.

In each of the cases we have considered so far (from that of the multitudes with their physical and spiritual needs to that of the rich ruler), that which the Lord Jesus saw moved Him to do something or to say something or, at the very least, to feel something.

But there is one recorded instance when the Saviour's 'look' was itself His response to a painful situation. I refer to the dramatic moment when ...

### **6. Peter received the benefit of His look.**

I refer to the occasion when '**the Lord** turned and **looked at Peter**, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said, Before the cock crows today, you shall deny me three times'.<sup>88</sup>

At that moment, Jesus was being led out<sup>89</sup> from the place where He had appeared before the council during the night to spend a few hours in some form of a cell before being brought back before the council early in the morning for a formal so-called trial with its predetermined verdict and sentence.<sup>90</sup>

*En route*, Jesus was led past a charcoal fire<sup>91</sup> which the guards<sup>92</sup> and the servants of the High Priest had kindled<sup>93</sup> in the middle<sup>94</sup> of the High Priest's courtyard below.<sup>95</sup>

Around the fire, the guards and the servants gathered to warm themselves for it was cold.<sup>96</sup> Peter joined them as they sometimes sat<sup>97</sup> and sometimes stood<sup>98</sup> near the fire.

The servants of the High Priest were shortly to mock Jesus, to beat Him with their fists and to blindfold Him.<sup>99</sup> At that point, He would not be able to 'look at' anyone!

But, for one brief moment, His eyes met those of the unhappy apostle. And that single glance told Peter that Jesus knew *everything*—that Jesus had recognised his face and his voice ... that Jesus had heard his every word, including his dreadful oaths!<sup>100</sup>

For the Lord to have spoken even one syllable to Peter at that moment would have been for the Lord to betray Peter, because, under close questioning, Peter had repeatedly denied that he even knew Jesus. The Lord could not afford, therefore, to make the slightest gesture of recognition. He wasn't able even to slacken His pace. But then He did not need to! He compressed everything He wanted to say to Peter into His one look.

Perhaps His look reminded Simon Peter, not only of Jesus' prediction of Peter's failure<sup>101</sup> but also of the very first time they had met. On that occasion, Andrew (Peter's brother and one of the disciples of John the Baptist) had left the Baptist to follow the 'Lamb of God'.<sup>102</sup>

Andrew found Peter to tell him, "We have found the Messiah". Andrew then 'brought him to Jesus. **Jesus looked at**<sup>103</sup> **him** and said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which is by interpretation, 'rock'<sup>104</sup>)<sup>105</sup>.

And in the High Priest's courtyard, Jesus 'looked at' Peter again but Peter certainly didn't feel much like a 'rock' now!

Among other things, the Lord's look reminded Peter: (a) of his empty promises and self-confident protests of loyalty: 'I am ready to go with you to prison and to death'<sup>106</sup> and, of course, (b) of Jesus' own specific foretelling of Peter's repeated denial before the cock would crow.<sup>107</sup> It has been well said that, 'Peter, called to "deny himself",<sup>108</sup> denies his Lord instead'.<sup>109</sup>

But who can tell all that was in that look. A look blazing with anger, such as he had once directed at scribes and Pharisees on account of their unbelief?<sup>110</sup> Certainly not! A look of disappointment? Perhaps. A look of pain? Almost certainly. But there was so much more.

I do not think it fanciful to suppose that the Saviour's changeless and limitless love spoke through His eyes that night. In the full knowledge of all that Peter had said and done, that single – that solitary – look declared, 'Peter, I still love you and, Peter, come what may, I always will'. We can, surely, be confident that, in Jesus' look, Peter read both his own forgiveness and his Lord's unquenchable love for him.

Shortly before, Jesus had assured Peter of His prayer for him: 'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you (the 'you' being plural, signifying the apostolic band), that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you (the 'you' being singular, signifying Peter personally) that your faith may not fail'.<sup>111</sup>

Certainly, as has been noted, combined together, 'the prayer and the look had availed. The prayer had kept his faith from failing, but the look had broken his heart',<sup>112</sup>

It has been well said that 'Christ heals with more ease than any other: other physicians apply pills, potions, bleeding; Christ ... can cure with a look. When Peter had fallen into a relapse, Christ looked on Peter, and he wept. Christ's look melted Peter into repentance; it was a healing look'.<sup>113</sup>

Now, in the High Priest's courtyard, Jesus reached out, with His look, to save the same man from sinking into the depths of utter despair as He had once reached out, with His hand, to save him from sinking into the depths of the Sea of Galilee!<sup>114</sup>

And you and I can rest today in the knowledge that to us, our all-seeing<sup>115</sup> Saviour still extends:

**1. His power to help;**

2. His sympathy in times of sorrow;
3. His consideration and His care;
4. His protection for the weak and oppressed;
5. His faithful words of rebuke, spoken always in love; and, if we fail Him ...
6. His forgiveness and the assurance of His unquenchable love.

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'Lord, in all Thy power and glory,  
**Still Thy thoughts and eyes are here;**  
**Watching o'er Thy ransomed people,**  
To Thy gracious heart so dear'.

(J. G. Deck: the hymn entitled, '*Lamb of God! Thou now art seated*'.)

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> 'Beside women and children', Matt. 14. 21; cf. Matt. 15. 38
- <sup>2</sup> Matt. 14. 14a; Mark 6. 34a.
- <sup>3</sup> Matt. 14. 14b-21.
- <sup>4</sup> Mark 6. 34b.
- <sup>5</sup> Luke 7. 12.
- <sup>6</sup> 'The term for bier, *σορός*, is used only here in the New Testament and refers to an open coffin, a plank, where the shrouded and anointed corpse lay', Darrell L Bock, '*Luke 1:1-9:50 (Baker Exegetical Commentary)*', comment on Luke 7. 14.
- <sup>7</sup> Luke 7. 11.
- <sup>8</sup> Luke 7. 12.
- <sup>9</sup> Luke 7. 13.
- <sup>10</sup> Compare the action of the prophet Elijah, following the raising of another only son of a widow, who 'delivered him to his mother', 1 Kings 17. 23.
- <sup>11</sup> Luke 7. 14-16.
- <sup>12</sup> Luke 13. 11.
- <sup>13</sup> 'Having arrived, she takes her place in the back of the auditorium, and, of course, on the side where the women sat', William Hendriksen, '*Luke: New Testament Commentary*', comment on Luke 13. 12-13.
- <sup>14</sup> She could look up for the first time in eighteen years!
- <sup>15</sup> Luke 13. 12-13. This woman was one of seven cases in the Gospel of Luke where people 'glorified God'; Luke 2. 20; 5. 25; 7. 16; 13. 13; 17. 15; 18. 43; 23. 47.
- <sup>16</sup> Greek word, *ἀγανακτέω*; cf. the use of the word in Matt. 20. 24; 21. 15; 26. 8.
- <sup>17</sup> Luke 13. 14.
- <sup>18</sup> Luke 13. 15-16 (literal translation).
- <sup>19</sup> Seemingly suffering from paralysis.
- <sup>20</sup> John 5. 6.
- <sup>21</sup> See, 'Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age', Luke 3. 23.
- <sup>22</sup> John 5. 7.
- <sup>23</sup> John 5. 10, 12.
- <sup>24</sup> John 5. 13a.
- <sup>25</sup> John 5. 13b.
- <sup>26</sup> With an eye to W.L. Stone's hymn, '*It's Just Like Him*', the refrain of which reads:  
"It's just like Him" to take my sins away,  
To make me glad and free,  
To keep me day by day;  
"It's just like Him" to give His life for me,  
That I might go to heaven and ever with him be'.
- <sup>27</sup> Isa. 42. 2.



<sup>28</sup> See C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel of John*, pages 398-399; Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John (NICNT)*, pages 556-557; D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, page 415.

<sup>29</sup> John 11. 33.

<sup>30</sup> John 11. 19.

<sup>31</sup> John 11. 28-31.

<sup>32</sup> We meet Mary of Bethany only three times in the Gospels and each time she is at the feet of Jesus, Luke 10. 39; John 11. 32; 12. 3. This is the central of the three occasions when we find her at His feet.

<sup>33</sup> John 11. 32.

<sup>34</sup> John 11. 21.

<sup>35</sup> John 11. 3.

<sup>36</sup> For further details, see page 2 of the notes on *The Resurrection of Lazarus*, attached to the Monday Musings for 12 July 2021; the relevant Musings can be accessed at <https://voicesforchrist.org/writings/195>.

<sup>37</sup> John 11. 25.

<sup>38</sup> John 11. 35. A different word is used to describe the 'weeping' of Jesus than that used to describe the 'weeping' of both Mary and the Jews in verse 33.

<sup>39</sup> John 11. 36.

<sup>40</sup> Mark 8. 32a (*παρρησία*); rendered 'plainly', ESV. See the article, 'παρρησία' by Heinrich Schlier, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, volume V, pages 871-886, especially page 881.

<sup>41</sup> Mark 8. 31-32a.

<sup>42</sup> Mark 8. 32b.

<sup>43</sup> Mark 8. 33.

<sup>44</sup> John 19. 26.

<sup>45</sup> Matt. 27. 28, 35.

<sup>46</sup> It is quite likely that Mary and the Lord met again very soon after His death, during the 'forty days', when 'He showed Himself alive' to His disciples 'after His passion by many proofs', Acts 1. 3. Certainly, we know that Mary was present among the 120 disciples at the 'upper-room' prayer meeting immediately following the Lord's ascension, for we read that then the apostles 'continued steadfastly in prayer, with the women *and Mary the mother of Jesus*', Acts 1. 13-14.

Yet, even if Mary did meet the Saviour during that forty-day period, their relationship would have been very different at that time. For then she would have been simply a disciple along with the others. The Lord Jesus would then be no longer her son; on the other side of death and resurrection, He would be to her, as to all His people, a living Lord and Saviour.

<sup>47</sup> Mark 3. 31.

<sup>48</sup> Mark 3. 33-35.

<sup>49</sup> Mark 3. 1.

<sup>50</sup> Mark 3. 2, 4.

<sup>51</sup> Luke 6. 7.

<sup>52</sup> Mark 3. 2; cf. Exod. 31. 14-15.

<sup>53</sup> Mark 2. 23-28.

<sup>54</sup> Mark 3. 4.

<sup>55</sup> Note, 'to him who knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin', James 4. 17.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. 1 Kings 13. 4.

<sup>57</sup> Mark 3. 5.

<sup>58</sup> 'The tenses of the Greek verbs indicate that Jesus was angry momentarily (aorist tense), but His attitude of compassion was persistent (present tense)', Thomas Constable, *'Expository Notes on the Bible'*, comment on Mark 3. 5.

<sup>59</sup> Mark 10. 2-12; cf. Matt. 19. 3-9.

<sup>60</sup> Matt. 19. 10.

<sup>61</sup> Matt. 19. 12.

<sup>62</sup> There seems little doubt that the young children were brought by their fathers (and not, as claimed by William Hutchings in his well-known Sunday School hymn, by their mothers – from 'Salem' or anywhere else). The word 'those' in 'his disciples rebuked those that brought them' is masculine, both in Mark 10. 13 and in the parallel account in Matthew.

For the fathers to have brought their little ones would have been consistent with what we know of Jewish practice. Speaking of the blessing of little children in the synagogue, the ancient Jewish law stipulated, 'After *the father* of the child had laid his hands on his child's head, he brought him to the elders one by one, and they also *blessed* him, and prayed that he might grow up famous in the Law, faithful in marriage, and abundant in good works', G. F. Maclear, *'St Mark (Cambridge Greek Testament)'*, page 135.

In all likelihood, therefore, it would have been the fathers who brought the babes to Jesus for Him to lay His hands on them and to 'pray', Matt. 19. 13. And the Lord did exactly what the synagogue elders did when fathers brought their children to them—He '*blessed*' the babes, Mark 10. 16.

<sup>63</sup> Mark 10. 13a.

<sup>64</sup> Mark 10. 13b.

<sup>65</sup> The same word (*ἀγανακτέω*) as is used of the ruler of the synagogue in Luke 13. 14; see note 16 above.

<sup>66</sup> Mark 10. 14.

<sup>67</sup> Mark 10. 16.

<sup>68</sup> Mark 11. 15-16; cf. John 2. 14-16.

<sup>69</sup> Mark 11. 11.

<sup>70</sup> Mark 11. 12a, 15.

<sup>71</sup> '*σπήλαιον*, "a grotto, cavern"', W. E. Vine, *'Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words'*, article 'Cave' 2.

<sup>72</sup> Mark 11. 17; quoting from Isa. 56. 7.

<sup>73</sup> 'Many of the traders charged very high prices, taking cruel advantage of the pilgrims who came from the countryside and from foreign lands. The traders had to pay for permission to have their stalls in this area, and it seems they had to pay the leading priests. Later Jewish tradition remembered one place as "the Bazaars of the sons of Annas"', Allan Millard, *'Discoveries from the Times of Jesus'*, page 82.

<sup>74</sup> Luke 9. 52-56.

<sup>75</sup> From Heb. 11. 32.

<sup>76</sup> Matt. 19. 16-22; Mark 10. 17-22; Luke 18. 18-23.

<sup>77</sup> 'He was *very rich*', Luke 18. 23.

<sup>78</sup> 'The *young* man said', Matt. 19. 20.

- <sup>79</sup> 'A certain *ruler* asked Him', Luke 18. 18.
- <sup>80</sup> Mark 10. 19-20.
- <sup>81</sup> Matt. 19. 20.
- <sup>82</sup> Mark 10. 21.
- <sup>83</sup> Alexander Maclaren, '*The Gospel according to St. Mark*', page 77.
- <sup>84</sup> Matt. 19. 21.
- <sup>85</sup> Exod. 20. 3.
- <sup>86</sup> 'When the man heard this, gloom spread over his face', Mark 10. 22 (Good News Bible). The word which Mark uses (*στρυγνάσας*) signifies 'to be gloomy' and is translated 'lowering' as a description of the sky in Matt. 16. 3.
- <sup>87</sup> Matt. 19. 22.
- <sup>88</sup> Luke 22. 61.
- <sup>89</sup> 'Jesus must have looked on His erring Apostle either from the chamber in which He was being tried, if it was one of those chambers with open front ... or else at the moment when the trial was over, and He was being led across the courtyard', F. W. Farrar, '*The Gospel according to Luke (Cambridge Greek Testament)*', page 380. With W. Manson ('the Lord, who is in the courtyard', '*The Gospel of Luke: The Moffatt New Testament Commentary*', page 252) and R Kent Hughes ('In the heat of his denial, Peter was oblivious to the shuffle of feet as Christ was being led out into the courtyard—and certainly he was not prepared for the excruciation of the next moment', '*John: That You May Believe*', page 337), I favour the latter. In any case, the Lord was in some place from where He could see Peter and Peter could see Him.
- <sup>90</sup> Luke 22. 66 - 23. 1.
- <sup>91</sup> John 18. 18.
- <sup>92</sup> Matt. 26. 58; Mark 14. 54.
- <sup>93</sup> John 18. 18.
- <sup>94</sup> Luke 22. 55.
- <sup>95</sup> Mark 14. 66.
- <sup>96</sup> John 18. 18.
- <sup>97</sup> Matt. 26. 69; Mark 14. 54; Luke 22. 55.
- <sup>98</sup> John 18. 18.
- <sup>99</sup> Mark 14. 65; cf. Matt. 26. 67-68; Luke 22. 63-64.
- <sup>100</sup> Mark 14. 71
- <sup>101</sup> Luke 22. 31-34.
- <sup>102</sup> John 1. 35-37, 40.
- <sup>103</sup> 'ἐμβλέπω ... This verb implies a close, penetrating "look"', W. E. Vine, *ibid.*, article 'Look', A. 5. The same verb is used in Luke 22. 61.
- <sup>104</sup> 'Doubtless in Aramaic the expression was *kēpā*', a word meaning "rock"', D. A. Carson, *ibid.*, page 156.
- <sup>105</sup> John 1. 41-42.
- <sup>106</sup> Luke 22. 33. But it was not long after, that the man who then protested, 'Lord, *I am ready to go with you to prison and to death*', would hear that 'Lord' challenge him, '*Could you not watch with me one hour?*' Matt. 26. 40.

<sup>107</sup> Luke 22. 34.

<sup>108</sup> Luke 9. 20-23.

<sup>109</sup> W. Manson, *ibid.*, page 252.

<sup>110</sup> Mark 3. 5.

<sup>111</sup> Luke 22. 31-32.

<sup>112</sup> J. G. Bellett, '*The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ*', page 53.

<sup>113</sup> Thomas Watson, '*The Soul's Malady and Cure*', *A Body of Practical Divinity*, page 749.

<sup>114</sup> Matt. 14. 30-31.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. John 1. 48.