

# The Light of the World

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Preacher: Mr Ian Murdo Macleod

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life. This is the second of the seven great I Am scenes that are recorded for us in John's Gospel.

And the historical background of this one connects us with the Feast of Booths which is recorded for us in chapter 7 or the Feast of Tabernacles.

This feast that was set out in Leviticus in the 23rd chapter and we also read of it in Deuteronomy chapter 16. And this Feast of Booths was the great feast in the Jewish calendar which it celebrated the completion of the harvest and it commemorated God's goodness to the children of Israel in their desert or wilderness wanderings.

It was a remembrance of that as well. And this feast had lasted for seven days and there were two great features which had primary significance in this feast.

Water and light. Every day at the feast the priest would take water from the pool, that is the pool of Siloam, and poured it out beside the altar at the temple.

[ 1 : 4 0 ]     And as we read of there, Jesus stood up on the last day of the feast and said, If anyone thirsts, let them come to me and drink.

And the second main feature of this feast of Booths was the lighting of four great lamps of the temple every evening.

So the temple was a blaze for light and this illuminated much of the city of Jerusalem as well. But at the close of the feast and on the last night, one of these great lamps was always left unlit to symbolize the full salvation which the Jews expected to come sometime in the future.

And it was at that point that Jesus said, I am the light of the world. And I'd like us just to consider this under three headings briefly this evening.

First of all, for us to consider the source of the light. And we consider that against, secondly, the darkness of the world.

[ 3 : 0 1 ]     And then we can consider some aspects of the light of the Lamb of God. So if we look at the source of this light, I think it's right and proper that we consider or just mention the importance of these I am statements that are recorded, that John records for us.

And their importance cannot be underestimated. And they provide one of the strongest links that we have between the Old and New Testaments, between the Old and the New Covenants.

And they truly emphasize the deity of Jesus. And if you recall from Exodus chapter 3 and verses 13 and 14, we remember there Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush when God was calling Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and to the land of promise.

And God identified himself to Moses as, with these words, I am who I am.

And he said to Moses that you go to the Israelites in Egypt and you tell them that I am has sent me to you.

[ 4 : 40 ] Because Moses was fearful that they wouldn't accept him as their leader. And Moses had asked God who should he say has sent him.

So God said, you say to the Israelites, I am has sent me to you. And we understand from that, from these words, that I am is God.

And these I am metaphors that we have here in John's Gospel, they truly identify Jesus as God. They emphasize the deity of Christ, that he was in the beginning and he was with God and he is God.

And as John tells us, he became flesh and he dwelt among us. And perhaps to properly explain this source of the light, you can turn with me to John and chapter 1.

I will read from the beginning of this chapter a few verses down to verse 13. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[ 5 : 56 ] He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. And there was a man sent from God whose name was John, and he came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.

He was not the light, but he came to bear witness about the light, that through light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but who were born of God.

Jesus is a true light, which enlightens everyone. And it's significant that he tells us here, and he tells the Pharisees here, I am the light of the world.

[ 7 : 20 ] And that is the light that shines into the darkness of our souls, when the spirit of Christ comes to dwell in us. When we are brought to faith, Jesus is the origin of light.

The first spoken words that are recorded in scripture, are these words, at the beginning of creation, let there be light. And God saw that the light was good, and he immediately separated the light from the darkness.

And in the Garden of Eden, before the fall, the light of God's presence, filled the world of Adam and Eve, and they had the blessing, of walking and talking with God, and having fellowship with God, in their innocent state, at that time.

In the Old Testament, in the tabernacle, the Shekinah glory of God, was recognized through the light, that was always burning, in the Old Testament temple.

And that indicated God's presence there. And in the New Testament, in the birth narrative of Jesus, we're told that his birth was surrounded by light.

[ 8 : 46 ] He was born at midnight, and yet the whole world was transformed by light. And there, we read of the greatness of the angels of heavens, and the stars shining in the shepherds, who saw the true light, the true source of light, in that light.

And at the transfiguration, of course, Jesus' own glory was apparent, through the light that shone from him, and out and around.

So there we have that true light, who is Jesus Christ, the true light of the world. That light of the world, that we all need, to shine into the darkness, of our souls.

And that darkness, secondly, originated at the fall. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, they chose that darkness. And they thought at that time, that by doing what the devil said to them, that they could have more, than they had before.

But effectively, they lost it all. And so, we lost it all. Because they sinned against God, as our representatives. They immediately became, sinful human beings.

[ 10 : 11 ] And they lost everything, that they had. they lost their righteousness. They lost their holiness. They lost their, pure innocence.

And there was no going back on that. And Adam and Eve were, they were driven out of the garden, and they were plunged down, into the darkness, of a now, sinful world.

And, most importantly, they were plunged down, into that darkness, and away, from God's presence.

Plunged into, a spiritual darkness. And so, the result of that is, that we are all born, into sin. We are all born, as lost sinners, into that same, spiritual darkness.

And that is a fact, that we have, from the word itself. And when scripture, uses this word, darkness, it, it signifies, certainly one, of two things.

[ 11 : 15 ] It will symbolize, either sin itself, or darkness, will symbolize, the consequences, of sin. And that really, is a problem, that we all have.

The sin, that is in us. And it's sin, that has to be dealt, with, if we are to have, any hope. That darkness itself, as it symbolizes sin, was perhaps, very clear.

When Judas Iscariot, betrayed the Lord, and Satan, entered into him, and he went out, into the night, after all, was done.

And that is, very symbolic. And the sufferings, of Christ, at the point, of his death, death, they were, the exact opposite, of his birth. He was at, three hours of darkness, on the cross, during Christ's, spiritual sufferings, which occurred, at midday.

And yet, the whole world, was plunged into, a supernatural darkness, as our Lord, dealt, with the sin, of the world. Lord. This is a universal bondage, under which, mankind, all of us, labors.

[ 12 : 33 ] Everyone, who sins, is a slave, to sin. By nature, we are not free. We are all, slaves, to sin. And that's, what has to be dealt, with if we are to have, any hope.

hope. And the hope, that we have, is in the form, of our Lord, and Saviour, Jesus Christ. As he tells us, I am, the light, of the world.

Lord. And, there are many, parallels, to this, spiritual life, which can, just help us, to, understand, what he is saying here, and, which gives us, a bit of insight, into the same.

And, very simple insights, for example, when we consider, the purpose of light, the purposes, it's really to, one, one of the purposes, is to show us a way.

To show us a way, out of darkness. The light serves, as a guide for us. And it points, us in the way, that we ought to go. And the light, dispels the darkness.

[ 13 : 47 ] And as it does so, it exposes, the true reality, of things. And particularly, when a light, is switched on, perhaps in a room, that hasn't been in use, for a long time.

Then it exposes, all that's in that room. It exposes, the cobwebs, and the dust, and the dirt, and the unwanted filth, and the pollution, that clings, in these dark places.

And when the light, shines in, it reveals, what it's really like. And it can now, be cleaned, when that light, shines on it. And it's exactly, the same spiritually, and what happens, in a spiritual manner, to all of God's people.

That the light, of the gospel of Christ, shines in. And when it does, shine in, it reveals, what we're really like. It reveals, that what, what we're really like, inside in particular.

And, despite what we may, may think of ourselves, then, it reveals particularly, that we are sinners. And there's no getting, away from that.

[ 14 : 59 ] But it's that light, the light of the gospel, of Jesus Christ, that shines into us. And that shines in us, that, that, brings about the change.

Because we become cleansed. All of the, the wrong, and the evil, and everything, that is inside us, is cleansed, in the blood of the Lamb, when Christ comes into our lives.

And then, he sends his own, Holy Spirit, to dwell, within us. Now, Jesus is claiming then, to be this light, of the world.

And, there are three things, that we can understand, from this, that are, that are meaningful, to every, individual believer, as well.

But we can make, a parallel, from, the Old Testament, and the Exodus, of the Old Testament. What Jesus meant, by this, was that, he was representative, of the presence, of God.

[ 16 : 07 ] And in the book of Exodus, we read that, two, there were two pillars, a pillar of cloud, by day, and a pillar of fire, by night, which guided, the people of Israel.

And this, marked the presence, of God, with them, in a dramatic way. And at no time, during their wanderings, in the wilderness, did the people, of Israel, forget, that the presence, of God, was with them, every step, of the way.

And this light, also signifies, the protection, of God. And the cloud, by day, which was with the children, of Israel, was important, to the people, of Israel.

Because, it was, a primary means, by which, God, protected them. When the Israelites, were fleeing Egypt, and they were moving, towards the Red Sea, Pharaoh, and his army, were bearing down, on the people, of Israel.

But then, that pillar of cloud, which had been, leading them, to the Red Sea, moved from that position, in front of them. And then it moved, to the rear. And it stayed, behind them.

[ 17 : 19 ] And it came, between, the armies of Israel. The armies of Egypt, sorry. And the children, of Israel. And throughout the night, as the people, crossed the Red Sea, then the cloud, brought darkness, to the Egyptians, but light, to the Israelites, so that, neither side, came near the other, all night long.

And when the Israelites, had crossed, to the other side, God lifted, that cloud, released the water, she had parted, and Pharaoh, and his army, were crushed, by the wind, and the waves.

Just a great example, of the protection, that God gives, his people. And this light, also signifies, the guidance, of God as well. The light, represented God's guidance, for the people, of Israel again, when they were in the desert.

Because, he couldn't recognize, any of the landmarks, as they were traveling, through that desert, for that 40 years. And he didn't have any, clear way, or clear knowledge, of the way, that he had to go.

But when the cloud, moved, the people, followed the cloud. And when the cloud, stood still, then, they remained, where they were. And, as the light, of the world, then Jesus, is our guide.

[ 18 : 44 ] And he guides us, by his word. And he guides us, by his spirit. As we read there, John the Baptist said, I am not the light, of the world.

But I am preparing the way, for the true light. And I bear witness of him. And Jesus, is that true light. John later testified, that this true light, when he said, behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away, the sin, of the world.

And the glory, and the being, of Jesus Christ, is linked to the light, that we all need, in our lives. This light, that comes, into the darkness, that's the emphasis, the light of the gospel, the light of God's truth, that is manifested, in Jesus Christ.

The light reveals the truth, about, real freedom. And Jesus says, you shall know the truth, and the truth, shall make you free.

Jesus then, the light from heaven, he came into this dark world, and he alone, offers us, this hope of salvation.

[ 20 : 06 ] That's, the messianic hope. And, very often, when, when you hear, of a person, coming to faith, in Jesus Christ, then, the light, and the darkness, is very often, mentioned then.

We talk about, a soul, that is, that is brought, from darkness, to light, brought out of the darkness, of sin, and into the light, of the gospel. That's very often, the contrast, that is made.

And, when we look, at this light, then we consider, the Lord's, sufferings on the cross, for us. And, we consider, that empty tomb, and the resurrection.

And, we consider, the woman, who went to the tomb, early in the morning, just as light, was breaking. And, here again, that is very, symbolic, and very relevant, in what we're, considering here.

That light, that was, breaking through, from, from the darkness, of the tomb. That same light, that was, now dawning, on, on the whole world. The morning light, of the resurrection, shining through.

[ 21 : 23 ] That great hope, that is rooted, in the death, and resurrection, of Jesus Christ. And, signifying, the victory, over sin, and the devil, and the victory, over death.

It's very clear, that, at times, this light, can be, repulsive, to some people. People, who, want nothing, to do, with this man, Jesus.

But, what this light, really does, is, it reveals, to each one of us, the truth, about ourselves. Our, imperfections, are, contrasted, to the, perfection, of Christ.

The light, reveals, the truth, about Christ himself, that he truly is, the lamb of God. And, the light, reveals, the truth, concerning, the way of salvation, that is recorded, for us, in God's word.

And, the instruction, that we have, to follow, that light, to follow, the Lord Jesus, to repent, of our sins, to confess, our sins, to turn away, from them.

[ 22 : 39 ] And, they place our faith, and hope, and confidence, in Jesus, who, has spoken, directly, saying, I am, the light, of the world. And, that same light, when a person, comes to faith, it causes growth, and it gives, reassurance, and it gives, direction, to that person, in their, Christian walk.

The glory, that is also, revealed in that light, that will be there, through the endless, ages of eternity, is recorded, for us, in the book of Revelation, in chapter 21.

And, I'll just read, just a few verses there. Revelation 21, and, at verse 22. And, I saw no temple, in the city, for its temple, is the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb.

And, the city, has no need of sun, or moon, to shine on it, for the glory, of God, gives it light, and its lamp, is the Lamb. And, by its light, will the nations walk, and the kings, of the earth, will bring their glory, into it.

And, its gates, will never be shut, by day, and there will be, no night there. They will bring into it, the glory, and the honour, of the nations. But, nothing unclean, will ever enter it, nor anyone, who does, what is detestable, or false, but only those, who are written, in the Lamb's, book of life.

[ 24 : 13 ] And, just as God, safely did, the light, from the darkness, at the very beginning, of creation, that is also, the last thing he does, as we are told, in scripture.

He separates, the light, from the darkness, in eternity. Those, who refuse, to believe, and trust, in Jesus, are cast, into outer darkness, where there is not even, a glimmer, of light.

Without Jesus, there is no hope. And so, it leaves to ask the question, are you, walking, in the light of, Jesus, in the light of, God's word, tonight?

Or, are you trudging, your way, through, the darkness, of this world, step by step, and day by day? And, well in his love, then, God freely offers, hope to everyone, if you will just, place your, your faith, and trust, and hope, in Jesus, and in his finished work, on that cross at Calvary.

What he asks is, that you give him yourself, and that you allow, his light, to shine into the darkness, of your soul, and to cleanse you, from all your sin, and from all the evil, that is within you, to be cleansed, in his blood.

[ 25 : 45 ] Jesus says, to us this evening, I am, the light of the world, and may this light, reveal, the truth to you, this truth, that will, truly set you free, from that bondage, of slavery, and sin.

Amen. So, bow your heads, in prayer. Lord, our God, as we consider, your word, once again, this evening, and we pray, that your word, will be, blessed to us, and, for those here, who are still, in that darkness, Lord, that by your grace, you would enable them, to call out to you, and to turn, from the way, that they're on, that your light, may come into their lives, and that they may come, to know Jesus, as their personal savior.

We pray, Lord, that, as we go out now, into the week ahead also, we pray, that, this word, your word, and your light, that it will be, a lamp to our feet, and a light, to our path, in all that we do, and that, we would seek, to follow, Lord, and to, to be close to you, and that we would seek, in everything that we do, to give you the glory.

Help us, Lord, to walk humbly, in our daily walk, day by day. Help us, Lord, help us, we pray, because, we need that help.

We pray, that you would keep us, because we just, cannot keep ourselves. Give to, each and every one, to lay hold of Jesus, to lean on Jesus, and to place our faith, and trust, and hope, and confidence, in him alone, for life here on earth, and through the endless, ages of eternity.

[ 27 : 55 ] Amen. We conclude now, in Psalm 36, from Sing Psalms, and the verses, marked, five to nine, page 44, of the Blue Psalm books, Psalm 36, Sing Psalms, at verse five, your steadfast love, is great, O Lord, it reaches heaven high, your faithfulness, is wonderful, extending to the sky, your righteousness, is very great, like mountains, high and steep, your justice, is like ocean depths, both man and beast, you keep, how precious, is your steadfast love, what confidence, it brings, both high and low, find shelter, in the shadow, of your wings, the feast, within your house, and drink, from streams, of your delight, for with you, is the source of life, in your light, we see light, we sing these verses together, five to nine, to God's praise, praise, your steadfast love, is great, all I had, it reaches heaven high, your faithfulness, your faithfulness, is wonderful, extend into the sky, your righteousness, is very great, like mountains, high and steep, your justice, is it, my fortune, dem, both man, and beast, you keep, how precious, is your steadfast love, what confidence, it brings, both my, and low, fine, shall, stir in, the shadow, of, your wings, they feast, within, your eyes, and drink, from streams, of, your, in, lake, for with you, is the source, of life, in, your, light, we, see, life, now, may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest and remain, and abide upon each one of you, now and always,

Amen.