

The Sunrisen Blessing

by John Hames

The sermon explores the transformative power of the sunrise blessing in the life of a believer, emphasizing joy, surrender, and spiritual vitality.

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

Description

John Hames preaches on the significance of the sunrise blessing in the sanctified life, drawing from the story of Jacob at Peniel. The sunrise experience symbolizes the warm, comforting presence of the Holy Ghost that drives out sorrow and brings forth hidden gifts and powers in the soul. This blessing was a hallmark of the early Holiness Movement, bringing life, force, and push to believers. Living under the never-setting sun of God's grace in the sanctified life keeps the heart from breaking in times of trouble and brings a perpetual morning of freshness, sweetness, and glory.

Transcript

"And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him." Gen. 32:31.

The above sentence was written in reference to Jacob, after his all night struggle with the angel. And as he went forth across the brook that morning, we are told that "the sun rose upon him." In one sense it was part of the blessing he received that night.

We are convinced more and more that the sunrise feature belongs to the sanctified life. The Holy Ghost puts sunshine into the heart and life of God's people. His warm, glad, comforting presence drives out sorrow and sighing. The risen blessing is the best state for the soul to thrive in. Just as tender plants and flowers thrive better in rich, mellow soil on the eastern sunny side, in like manner, when the heart; and mind are flooded with light and love, all the soul faculties seem to open up and unfold their hidden gifts, and all the soul's dormant powers spring to the surface.

It was this peculiar feature that marked the early Holiness Movement. It was the glory and charm of the sanctified life. It melted opposition and disarmed prejudice.

The sunrise experience is a glorious one. It keeps the heart from breaking when trouble comes into the life. It is like a heavenly tonic to the drooping spirit. If the Church would only seek and obtain this blessing she would go forth like an army with banners. Instead of being a weakling whose piety is laughed at, this sunrise blessing would put life, force, push and go into the soul.

After Jacob obtained the sunrise blessing he went down a road that had a perpetual morning on it. There is a freshness, sweetness and glory known only by those to whom this blessing has come. The light is always on the path.

Sunrise, means spring time with its overflowing life. What is more beautiful than spring with its warm atmosphere, its bursting buds, with its fragrance filling the air? There is a warm, sunny south side to Christianity. The religion of Jesus Christ should be just as fresh and spontaneous as the spring morning. It was early in the morning when Christ arose from the dead. Christianity does not begin at sunset, but it is a religion of the morning. It will be an eternal morning when He comes again.

This sunrise blessing is given to us in Isaiah under the figure of the never-setting sun. We read, "Thy sun shall no more go down ... for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light." See Isaiah 60:20.

We know that it is the custom of earthly suns to rise and set. But here is a blessed experience which has no setting sun. You remember in the holy place in the ancient tabernacle, the first room was illuminated by the seven-pronged golden lamp. We are told that "the lamp of the Lord" at times burned low. The regenerated man knows the meaning of all of this. There are days when clouds overcast his spiritual skies and his light and experience are at a low ebb. The lamp burns low. Then too, in the holy place which St. Paul called the first veil, which stands for regeneration, there was a mixture of light; the light which shone from the seven-pronged lamp and the light which came from nature, the sun light.

But in the Holy of Holies which is a perfect type of the sanctified life, the only light was the soft, white, heavenly Shekinah which glowed between the wings of the cherubim on the mercy seat. This supernatural light was always there. No storm clouds or dark days affected its shining . The lamp might burn low in the first room, the holy place. But this soft white light steadily glowed beneath the hovering wings of the cherubim. How true this is of the sanctified life. Let all earthly light be put out and the sun darkened, the people who have the sunrise experience live under a never-setting sun.

We have known people who lived under the never-setting sun for half a century. The light was always in their countenance. They lived behind the second veil. There was a light which steadily glowed, burned and kept the heart warm the year around. We never met them but we felt blessed for being in their presence.

Some others, after years of victory, for some reason, have gotten under the declining sun. The shadows are unmistakable. The brightness has left the face, the restful look is gone from the eye, the throb from the heart. Their sun is setting.

Let us notice some setting suns and what caused them to go down. Some people's sun goes down in time of affliction. Affliction is God's school which He put, the elect saints through in order to polish, refine and educate them for the society of heaven. Some of the sweetest people the writer ever met, were bed-ridden saints. They never knew what a well day meant, yet they smile through all their tears and suffering. There was a softness in their eyes, a sweetness and tenderness in their voice. To be in their presence was like going into a mild climate on a cold winter day. They were living on the bright eastern sunny side of life.

Other suns set under misunderstandings. Some even sour and go down under this. In the south we have a wild fruit, which is very sweet when it ripens, but it is not good or fit to eat until the frost bites it. Then it sweetens and becomes very tasty. God's saints need this very thing to bring out the fragrance in their lives. When the cold frost of misunderstanding comes, it should serve to sweeten and ripen us for heaven. Dr. G. D. Watson in his comment on the Song of Solomon 4:16, brings out this thought. "The bride in this

song says, 'Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.' The north wind brings cold, and cuts the fragrance from the flowers, whereas the south wind brings warmth, causing the flowers and spices to blossom. Both winds are necessary to shrub and flower.

We need the softness of the Holy Spirit, like a south wind, to open our desires, to win us and cause us to unfold the secret parts of our souls in perfect abandonment to our Lord. And then we need the cold winds from the north to chasten our souls, to cut the fragrance out of our hearts. We need the baptism of tears, the touch of the winter frost, the cold, unkind treatment of our acquaintances or our relatives, or our Christian friends. We need the presence of occasional severity or hard times. We need the harsh words, the slights, the neglect of our fellow creatures. We need the buffeting of Satan to bruise the sweet spices of our affections, in order that the delightful odors may exude from us, in order that we may be rendered mellow, and gentle and submissive and longsuffering. And thus the fragrance of God's grace within us flows out and is scattered on the air.

Some people's sun sets at an open grave. "Why does God take our loved ones?" they say. God knows best how to wean us from the earth, by taking our loved one to Himself. If it were not for the messenger of death paying us a visit and hanging crepe on the door knob, we would become too earthly minded and unduly attached to the things of earth. But with the taking of our loved ones there is a pull toward the skies. While death seems cruel and harsh, yet God never intended for His servants to go into despair when the hearse makes its stop at our little home. We have known a number of God's children who have paid several visits to the cemetery, and looked into more than one open grave. Yet through it all there was a light in their countenance, showing they were living under a never-setting sun.

Disappointment is another sunset in some people's lives. It is indeed difficult to define the word disappointment. It covers such a large range in life. It brings such finer sufferings, pangs, throbs and hot tears to the eyes. It seems to belong to this life. No one is exempt from it. It is a kind of schooling in sorrow. Through it we learn some of our most costly lessons. Bereavement, loss and disappointment under the blessing of God prove to be three of our greatest earthly teachers.

There is a disappointment with some, in the religious world. Some one did not get the office they had hoped for, longed for and had even seen afar off. Yes, and ran to meet it and died without it. The writer saw a certain preacher once with his eye fixed on a certain office in the conference, which he was not qualified to fill. And when our brother failed to get the desired place, his sun set. His health failed, he went under a cloud, he never seemed to be the same again and soon afterward died, no doubt with a broken heart. In other words his sun went down.

There is a disappointment in people whom we loved and trusted. We doubt if there is a keener pang felt or known to the human heart than to be disappointed in love. "The coldness of an old-time friend hurts peculiarly. The stab of Pompey's dagger goes deeper than the sword of strangers and avowed enemies.

"In a world like this, of eclipse, cloudy days, black nights and frequent sun sets, the sight of a man with a constant gleam of peace, joy and victory in his spirit and on his countenance; with a holy gladness in his eyes, and the exultant note of moral triumph in his voice is a spectacle so evidently divine, so unearthly, so supernatural that logic and argument are powerless in its presence; opposition sinks down before it and a mighty yearning swells in the breast of the beholder to enter upon a life and possess a blessing so manifestly sent down to the human race from another and better country. This sunrisen blessing is replete with sweet compensation for every loss, full of indescribable reward and glory."

But let it be remembered the sunrised blessing which Jacob received at Peniel was no mere accident. It was the result of an all night wrestling and praying, suffering and surrendering. We are told the angel wrestled with him. Why? To conquer, subdue and break his will. Jacob paid a price for his blessing. We are told that he was left alone. That is where God must get every one of us. It takes everything we have to obtain this blessing. We too, like Jacob must be left alone. Everything we own and everybody must be sent over the brook. All must be put on the altar. Not one single thing can be reserved. God must subdue and conquer us in every part of our being. Then as we lie low at His feet, saying the last yes to His will, and as we "let go" and "let God," the resurrection power of the risen Christ flows into our innermost being, enabling us to rise with Him and walk a sunlit pathway which has a golden sunrise at the end.

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