

I found this devotional in Spurgeon's Morning and Evening to be so powerful.

. . . For the people of Israel who are near to him.

Psalm 148:14

"Distance and separation were marks of the old covenant. When God appeared even to His servant Moses, He said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet";¹ and when He revealed Himself on Mount Sinai to His own chosen and separated people, one of the first commands was, "You shall set limits for the people all around."² In the sacred worship of the tabernacle and the temple, the thought of distance was always prominent. The majority of the people did not even enter the outer court. Into the inner court none but the priests might dare to intrude, while into the innermost place, or the holy of holies, the high priest entered but only once in the year. It was as if the Lord in those early ages was teaching man that sin was so utterly loathsome to Him that He must treat men as lepers put outside the camp; and when He came closest to them, He still made them feel the extent of the separation between a holy God and an impure sinner.

When the Gospel came, we were placed on quite another footing. The word "Go" was replaced with "Come"; distance was replaced with nearness, and we who previously were far away were brought near by the blood of Jesus Christ. Incarnate Deity has no fire wall around it. "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"³ is the joyful proclamation of God as He appears in human flesh. He no longer teaches the leper his leprosy by setting him at a distance, but by Himself suffering the penalty of the leper's defilement.

What a state of safety and privilege is this proximity to God through Jesus! Do you know it by experience? If you know it, are you living in the power of it? This closeness is wonderful, and yet it is to be followed by a greater nearness still, when it shall be said, "The dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people."⁴ Lord, haste the day!"

1) Exodus 3:5

2) Exodus 19:12

3) Matthew 11:28

4) Revelation 21:3

I am praying for you all!

In Christ,

Pastor Dean