## Psalms

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Preacher: Garnham, Sydney (1899-1980)

[0:00] As the Lord may graciously lead the seat to direct your minds, your words, you will find in the 119th Psalm, and at verse 89.

Psalm 119, and verse 89. Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled.

In heaven. Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled. In heaven. Coming directly to the words of the text.

The one great need of every poor sinner, every praying soul. It's something that is stable and secure.

That is the one thing needful. Something upon which they can rest and rest with confidence.

[1:16] They have proved a little, if only in a little, that this can never be found in self. And all around us, we look around.

It's true as the hymn writer has declared it. Change and decay. In all around, I see, cannot be found there. And it certainly cannot be found in the enemy's camp.

Now, my dear friend, when we look within, the heart is deceitful above all things.

It never speaks the same language. Not two minutes alike. And every poor seeking soul will have to know something of this.

For one moment, the carnal heart is saying, well, what is the use of you seeking? Look at the magnitude of your sin.

[2:19] Look at the solemnity of it. How can you possibly? Where is the ground that you can ever hope for the mercy of the Lord? The next moment it is saying, well, don't worry.

Don't worry. Something will turn up sometime or another. Don't you get overly anxious about these things? Yes. Instability.

And the same thing, of course, I know that the carnal heart is governed and actuated by satanic influence.

There are many manifestations of that. We've read one in our reading this evening. You have it again in the Psalms. You have it many times in Scripture.

God has forsaken them. Pursue and overtake them. I will do this and I will do that and I will do the other. It's all in my hands.

[3:24] And how many times do we listen to it? How many times do we rely on what he said and fear that this is to be our portion?

I say we need stability. We need stability. Somewhere where we can rest with confidence. And where our trembling hearts can find some comfort and some help.

Well, here it is, friend. Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.

I want to look at this for a moment in a general sense. For I fear there can be, in all our hearts, if I speak for you as for myself, there can be a misguiding, misapprehension of these things.

Not if we're taught by the Spirit of the Lord. I don't mean that. But if we lean to our own understanding, we deceive ourselves.

[4:39] How many times have you known the experience when you come into distress of mind or heart? Whether it be in soul exercise or whether it be in providential circumstances and troubles befall and trials be said.

How many times do you come into distress of mind or not?

Never do that. You can quote, you can direct my mind to any passage of Scripture you like. Promise, precept, declaration, whatever it may be.

In all things, by prayer and supplication, make your requests known. Your requests. And the emphasis is upon requests.

For you have no ground to demand anything for them. And it's not even your expectations. But it's your requests. That's your requests.

[6:06] Not that you can convey knowledge, my dear friend. Let's be clear about this. You can never convey knowledge to the Lord. He knows that long before ever you did.

I knew it in all its detail. No, there are times when somehow we have a secret inkling, if no more, within our hearts that the Lord is going to change his purpose.

The Lord never can. He may change his way to that end. You read frequently, or at least you read a number of times in Scripture, the Lord repenting.

Now let's be careful about that matter, my dear friend. I've heard that word misinterpreted to the sadness of my own heart. The Lord never repents of anything that he's done, or his purpose, or anything else.

He will change his mind in relation to the end to which he is leading. But he's not changed his purpose. You can go, may I put it, close at home.

[7:25] You can go from here to Abingdon. I know two ways that you can go. There are probably several more. But I know two. You can go one way or the other.

But they both lead to Abingdon. And the Lord has fixed his purpose. The road to it, the means to it, is another matter.

And sometimes he's pleased to alter that, but he's not going to alter his purpose, my dear friend. However much we call. But he will bring our poor minds into conformity.

That's a different matter. That's a different matter. I've quoted in prayer the case of Job. Think of what he might well have pleaded for.

Rightly so. I need to go into the details, but he was in a terrible state. Promidential. He couldn't, surely it couldn't have been worse.

[8:31] Nothing could have been added to his distress. Yes. He was in a low place indeed. But I don't find him saying, well, I believe somehow the Lord is going to change his mind.

And he didn't plead with the Lord to change his mind. But he was unable to rest. He knoweth.

The way that I take it. Oh, I know it's familiar, my dear friend. But think of the blessing. This is faith. A God-given faith.

That where it cannot trace, it's unable to trust. And they don't believe there that Job could trace it all out. He could trust.

He could leave it to the Lord. We do need to remember this. And there is this fatalistic aspect that is prone to creep into all our minds.

[9:37] I've heard so much of it. I've become a little tired of it. I find enough in my own heart without listening to others in this matter. I was talking to somebody not known quite recently.

They were in great trouble. The question about that. If I had been in the same circumstances, it would have worried me terribly.

It didn't seem to worry them. When I spoke to them, they said, oh, it's all right. Something would turn up somehow. Have you ever had it?

Settling down upon our leaves in fatalism. Something would turn up somehow. Is this the way the Lord deals, my dear friend? You won't find any stability there, friend, to rest.

That's leaning to your own understanding. It's an awful thing, my dear friend. It's fatalism. I know a little of it, friend.

[10:42] I'm not a stranger to it. We need to be mercifully saved. From this state. Leaning to our own understanding.

Relying upon our own conjectures. No, we need something stable and secure. The psalmist here is saying, Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled.

Oh, it's settled forever. It'll never be changed, my dear friend. I want to say this, my dear friend.

The Lord will never change his purpose for any poor sinner. He'll bring that sinner into conformity, but he'll never conform his purpose to please that sinner.

We do need to be careful in these matters, my dear friend. For I fear it can creep into our poor minds, you know, that these things can even be looked upon as an evidence of grace, my dear friend.

[11:49] The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. And it'll deceive us, my dear friend. More quickly than anything else or anyone else.

No. We need a place of stability, friend. Forever, O Lord. Never mind circumstances.

Never mind enemies. Never mind anything that may arise. And never mind even your conceptions and mine. And your anticipations and mine.

I'm speaking in the human realm, of course, for the moment. Never mind about any of these. The word of the Lord is settled. He knows what he has appointed.

He knows what he is going to do. And the ways of the Lord are right. Says his word. Oh, they are.

[12:54] May I put it the other way around, my dear friend? If God could change his mind. Let's assume this just for a moment.

If God could change his mind. For the alleviation of your suffering. And to bring you out of distress. Do you ever think of the issues of it?

I mean, apart from bringing you out of distress and out of your trouble. If he can change his mind then, my dear friend, he may change his mind again. I, the Lord, change not.

Oh, I say, beloved, this is a firm rock upon which you and I can stand. And I'm changing God. Bearing in mind, of course, that his purposes are never arbitrary.

Never arbitrary. Always seeking the well-being of poor sinners. Yes. Forever, oh Lord.

[14:07] Never mind about the opposition. It's great. The Lord Jesus Christ himself can speak of that. He had to enter into mortal combat.

And he was led of the spirit, man. Solemn words. Led of the spirit. Specifically to be tempted of the devil. Oh, yes.

He knows what sore temptations are. For he has felt the same. But in spite of all the opposition. And in spite of all the rebellion in your heart and mine.

And the murmuring and the complaining. He will do as he has said. The armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth.

And none can stay his hand. I say, what mercy, friend. But what abiding comfort. What a sure place to rest, friend.

[15:11] He knows what he's doing. He knows why he's going to do it. Don't meddle, my dear friend. Don't bring this into line with your conceptions upon the human in any sense of the word.

You set about a lot of things. And you get halfway through. You know what you're going to do. At least what you set out to do. And you get halfway through. And you say, I'm sorry. I can't finish it.

You have to change your mind. The Lord can never change. Forever. Forever, oh Lord. Thy word is settled.

I say, this is the word, my dear friend. We need in the day in which we live. We're proving. We're proving now.

The instability. The unreliability of everything around us as well as within us. Nations of the earth come to the end.

[16:10] They don't know what to do. They don't know where to turn. They're fighting one another. In many cases, they don't even know what they're fighting about. They come to such a state.

They've got to fight. To relieve their feelings. With regard to management, one can go on at length. I don't want to spend too much time on this.

But, my dear friend, what you and I need today is somewhere straight. A resting place. And here it is, friend.

The only resting place. A rock, indeed, in the time of every storm. Though the waves and the billows may beat upon it, it'll stand.

It'll stand. I don't want to break this open a little, if only a little in the time of life. Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.

[17:17] What does it mean? Well, just three aspects for our purpose this evening. First of all, it's settled in its purpose. It's settled in its purpose.

And if time was to go on another million years, my dear friend, it wouldn't make any difference. For the end of the million years is settled in the mind of God.

What a resting place. What a resting place. I'm not suggesting that we should discard from our minds the circumstances in which our lot is cast.

We need to be concerned about national events and the national position and condition. But let us remember. Let us remember. Let us remember.

There's one that reigns. That rules. We have it in the revelation of God with his ancient people.

[18:19] There they are, down in Egypt, under the iron hand of their taskmasters, and in their conception there was no way out. None, whatever. God said, I will deliver.

I will deliver. It doesn't matter who's holding them. It doesn't matter who opposes them. I will deliver. And may I remind you of this, mighty friend.

Whatsoever was written for our... Whatsoever was written before time is written for our learning. Do remember that word, learning.

We've got to learn by these things. Not to settle down on our leaves. Not to say, well, Israel murmured and so I can murmur.

No, we are to learn. We are to learn. We are to learn above all that here is one that stands in the midst in glorious power.

[19:21] Oh, I almost stopped to comment in our reading. There are several verses there. Read it again at your leisure, my dear friend.

And see, Moses and the children of Israel. In this glorious song. Oh, Lord God, who is like unto thee, they said.

Glorious in power. The purpose of God. There it was. At the Red Sea, you see it again.

They were making their way north. Canaan. Canaan. Canaan. Canaan. Canaan. Canaan. It's only 21 days away. They soon get there. Oh, the Lord said. Speak unto the children of Israel.

That they turn. And he shut them in. There's nowhere. Oh, yes, there is. The Lord has purposed.

[20:22] You see, if they had gone the northern way. What about the Egyptians? Oh, the Lord said. No, I'm going to deal with the Egyptians as well as Israel.

> I'm going to deal with the whole matter. I don't do things by heart. I'm going to deliver Israel. But I'm going to destroy Pharaoh and all his hosts. Make them turn and come down to Paharoth.

> And I'll shut them in. And then we shall see it. And Pharaoh shall know. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord. Let's forever remember that.

Whenever the Lord delivers your poor soul out of trouble. The enemies know it. They do. It doesn't pass Satan's knowledge, my dear friend.

As God displays his mighty power. And we are to learn by these things. Not to do. Not to do as Israel did.

[21:27] But to seek grace. To be preserved from it. To be made the subjects of the glory of the mighty power. And the purpose of God. His purposes, he says, the hymn writer shall ripen fast.

Unfolding every hour. Every hour. Every hour. Every hour. And the demonstrations and the manifestations of it. That you have known yesterday and last year.

And the year before. Thou shall see greater things than these. There is much yet that is laid up in store.

Let thine eyes look right on. Be watchful. Strengthen the things that remain. That are ready to die.

And the Lord. That is. Ah, I feel. Looking unto Jesus. Relying upon him. He knows the way that we take.

[22:28] It seems sometimes, you know. I can't help feeling this. I've known it. Speak to my own heart. If I don't speak to you. It seems sometimes we come to the footstall of mercy.

And we've got to try and describe to the Lord. To make sure he's got it right. I've been at prayer meetings. I don't want to be too hard.

I don't want to sit in judgment. Not doing that. Trying to portray this blessed, blessed truth. And I've been to prayer meetings. Pastorless churches.

And I've heard them praying for a pastor. You've probably been in the same position. And you've heard them pray. Lord, send us a man after your own heart.

As if the Lord would. A man that's going to divide the pressures from the vile. As though the Lord would. Or wouldn't. We've got to describe to the Lord what we want as a pastor.

[23:31] And he comes into our daily lives. We've got to somehow kindling in our poor minds. We've got to explain to the Lord. My dear friend. He has said before they call I will answer. And while they're yet speaking with I here. The answer's fixed before you start. Because his purpose is settled.

And he'll never alter it. My dear friend. You can storm the gates of heaven. And not one shot or one tittle will fall. You'll do as he will.

But always, I repeat. Always seeking your eternal welfare. Of course. We are exhorted to call upon him in the day of trouble.

What for? I will deliver thee. I will deliver thee. He didn't say it once. He didn't say how. But he said I will deliver thee.

[24:36] When I see fed. When you've learned the lessons. Ah, my dear friend. The purposes of God. The eternal purpose.

It's settled in heaven, my dear friend. Out of reach. Of the claws of satanic influence. And out of the claws of unbelief.

And everything that opposes. There in heaven. Sealed. Shattered. Gratified. You can carry this.

I have the time. To dwell upon you. You can carry this. Into every aspect. My dear friend. Isn't this a blessed thing? When the sinner is first brought.

Under conviction of sin. And bows his head. And wrestles. And pleads. And agonizes. In anguish of soul. For pardon.

[25:34] And wonders how it can ever come to him. And yet he can do no other than plead and wrestle. Settle in heaven. Settle in heaven.

Jesus Christ came into the world to save such as he. Yes. And therefore the trembling heart begins to take the word.

And to plead it. Thou hast said. Thou hast said. Dear old Jacob. Thou hast said. I will surely do thee good.

Now make it good. As you've got good grounds. My dear friend. To go on that ground. Thou hast said. You'll never forfeit his word. His purpose is fixed.

He knows what he's going to do. In fact he's done it for tomorrow. It's all fixed for tomorrow. And every agency that he is going to use.

[26:34] My dear friend. Will be there. Will be there. Oh I. I see this so blessedly. I've used the figure more than once.

Let me repeat that. There are many many more of them. But dear Jonah. Jonah. He said. I'm not going to do what the Lord.

No. I know. I'm not going to do that. I shall run away. The Lord is watching. Go on Jonah. You run. You run. You run. And I'll follow you.

In fact I shall go before you. Do you know what happened? But get this clear. Get this clear. This is a sovereign purpose. And power of God.

Jonah is a child of God. He's got to be delivered. But how? He comes to the point. When the men in that boat. Tipped him overboard.

[27:32] Now what's going to happen? Oh it's all right. The purpose of God is fixed. I've got a fish. They quibble and they cavil.

And have done for years. Whether that fish can swallow a man. I don't mind whether he can swallow a man or not. He swallowed that man. Don't cavil so much about. The ifs and buts of the human mind.

The Lord has said. I've got a fish. But get this clear. Jonah's coming. And he's dropping. And the fish is coming.

But Jonah didn't go too far. And the fish swim over the top. And the fish didn't swim by before Jonah got there. Immediately. And the fish.

Immediately. At the very moment. They met. Because. Omnipotence had ordered it. Omnipotence had ordered it.

[28:31] The purposes of God shall ripen fast. Unfolding every hour. The bud may have a bitter taste. It did to Jonah. But sweet will be the flower.

And Jonah never forgot it. And while he was in the fish's belly. He learned the important lesson. That salvation was of the Lord. He proved it now.

That's the purpose of God. I say. What a resting place. You feel you've been thrown overboard.

There's nothing can prevent you from drowning. But the Lord has got fish. Or he may have something else. I don't know. He may change his purpose.

In relation to the avenue of it. But it is. The ultimate purpose will be accomplished. Whether it's to be swallowed by a fish. Or whether it's to be landed.

[29:27] Upon some land. He'll deliver. So I quote he called upon me in the day of trial. I will deliver thee. It may never come the way you expect it.

Nor the time you expect. It'll come because I've got control of it. Here. And the psalmist. Even in the following verse. The following our text.

Thy faithfulness is under all generations. Thou hast established the earth. And it abideth. They continue this day.

According to thine ordinances. For all are thy servants. He's using this. He says. I look around.

And there's the earth. You created it. You're sustaining it. And the same with thy word. Thou didst give thy word.

[30:27] And thou wilt fulfill thy word. It's settled forever. In the purpose of it. In heaven. And then hastening on.

What about the promise of his word? Oh. Oh. Those sweet and precious promises. Oh. I know. Yes. I know.

You need the application of them. Yes. There are many. There are many that would tell. Tell you. They told me. Many times. They're all there. You know. Three thousand of them.

You've only got to take what you want. I've tried it. My dear friend. I find. I've hardly got hold of it. And the devil's knocked it out of my hand. Forgive the language.

You know what I mean. Nah. Friend. But when omnipotence seals that blessed promise to my soul. I've got it. Friend. The whole earth wouldn't shake it.

[31:25] I speak from experience. Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled. What hath God said?

What hath God said? I'm not going to begin to quote. There's been too many of them. But you're familiar with the promises. The word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever.

And I say it matters not what circumstances may come. Not that we just call them. Forget all about them. We're never intended to do that.

But we're not to rest upon them. We're not to look around and say. Well where is it all going to end? Where is our hope? Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

That's where we're resting. And his promise. While the earth remaineth. You know more about this than I do. You work on the land.

[32:33] While the earth remaineth. Seed time and harvest shall never fail. How many times have I heard farmers in my family say.

You know there'll be no harvest this year. God says there will be a harvest. God says there will be a harvest. He doesn't say it'll be the same quantity as last year.

Or more than last year. Or anything else. You can read the 65th Psalm. He waters the ridges along. He does it all.

Except the ploughing and the harrowing and the sowing of the seed. He leaves that to you. That's all you can do. And when you've sown the seed you've got to come away and leave it.

You can't make it grow. It's in his hands. His promise is set. The sun shines and it's raining.

[33:28] What do you do? You look round for the rain. Why? Well you expect it to be there. Why do you expect it to be there? Because the Lord has said so.

He has equally said rest in the Lord. Do you do that? Because he has said it. Forever a Lord thy word is settled.

And he that settles the matter of the harvest and everything else upon the earth. He that causes that bush and that blade of grass to grow. Is the same Lord that is declared that he will be all things to his people.

And the vilest sinner out of hell shall know and prove the veracity of it. It's settled in heaven. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

You completed it at the throne. Thou hast said it Lord. And I'm a sinner and nothing at all. Said the hymn writer somewhere. But Jesus Christ is my all and in all.

[34:34] It's true. The promises of God are yea and amen. In Christ Jesus. There's the powerhouse for them.

There's the powerhouse. It's finished he cried. What's finished? Everything's finished. Everything's finished. Your sin is finished yes.

The opposition's finished. The end of the world is finished. It's all finished. Because it emanates from death.

It applies to it. It is finished. It doesn't explain it. Because it embraces everything. Your time here upon earth is finished.

It's finished. As he appoints. He gives life. He takes away their breath and they die. Because it was his promise.

[35:35] It seems to be someone to live here forever. Thank God. I thank God. I'm at the end of my life. And not the beginning.

In the terrible conditions that prevail. But I don't want to be fatalistic. I want to rest in the omnipotent hands. In whom I hope my life is resting.

My life's minutest circumstance. Subject to his eye. I prove that my dear friend.

Only a week ago. Only a week ago. I was here last Sunday week. Sitting at the back of the chapel. Listening to the Lord's servant.

And after the service. My wife and I went home. And we travelled. We travelled through. The distance between here and Abingdon.

[36:34] Where there were no houses. No telephone. No nothing. It was alright. When I got comparatively a few yards from my home.

I had a puncture. I lifted my heart to the Lord. In humble gratitude. I could see wonderful mercy. I might have been out in the wild.

It was a cold night. No. The Lord said. I'm going to go after you. Come on. You drive home. That's all. Your times are in my hands.

And all events are at my command. Do you believe it friend? Think a thing like that happens. You say. Wasn't it wonderful?

Do you attribute it to the Lord? I did. I was broken. I was. I tried to bless the dear Lord for his mercy. That had brought me home. I put the car in the garage and left it till the next morning.

[37:33] And then I had it attended to. Oh my friend. It's settled in heaven. It's settled in heaven. I said it many times.

And I would say it again. To his praise and glory. Beginning of the last war. When I was itinerating a little. I was having some terrible journeys.

As I went out that first Lord's day. I can remember it so well. He dropped that word into my soul with power. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in.

From this time forth even forevermore. And he fulfilled it. Every Lord's day. And weeknights too. And even now.

When I set out on a journey. In the Lord's service. I said Lord. Thou has said. Thou has said. And I have been preserved throughout the war.

[38:33] I'm looking to stop. I'm not here to talk about myself. But the journeys that I had. I could write a book. Good. Getting home at two and three o'clock in the morning.

How I got home doesn't need mention. The preserving hand of the Lord. Ah. Settled in heaven.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in. He said to me. And he's fulfilled it. And he's still fulfilling it. And he did last Sunday morning.

And I was here. No. He said. That's all right. It's all in my hands. All events are at my command. He said. You go on driving. I'll wait till you get almost home.

And then I'll stop it. Yes. The promises of God. The promises of God. And what else? Oh there must be something more.

[39:35] What more than I've already said or hinted. Yes my dear friend. It's blessed to know that he has an unalterable purpose. It's blessed to know that his promise is settled in heaven.

But what else? But what else? I have made many determinations in my poor heart. And they've come to know that they've come to naught.

Why? Why? Because I've left the power. Forever oh Lord thy power. Power belonging and to God.

Almighty power. Oh friend have you begun to conceive the power of God. The mighty power that created the universe.

And every twig upon every tree is in his control. And every dew drop that falls from the heavens is in his control. And every seed that you sow on your farm is in his control.

[40:46] And it'll bring forth what he appoints. Power. Are you limiting the power of God my dear friend? I'm wondering whether that power is sufficient to save your soul.

I live in power. The only thing God is settled in heaven. We've read about Egypt and Israel. The mighty, mighty power of Pharaoh.

And don't underestimate it. Six hundred horses and chariots. And Pharaoh was renowned in his day for the power of his army. It's in my hands.

Even for this cause of I raised him up. He didn't raise himself up. I raised him up. Even for this cause. From the mighty power.

The mighty power. Israel went over on dry land. Not mud up to the knees. On dry land. And I believe what it says.

[41:52] Because I can't reconcile it with modern tendencies. It doesn't make that. It doesn't order it a whit. Israel went over on dry land. The enemy is saying to do.

The controlling power. Was watching. Watching Israel. Watching Egypt. Keeping them apart. Because the Lord said.

I'm going to deluge that gap in between them. And Israel shall go on on dry land. And the whole of the Egyptian people shall be drowned.

Everyone. There was not one man. He was not dead. The power. Belongeth unto God. And I come back again.

The word I've already quoted this evening. This God is our God. Forever and ever. He puts a question to you and I.

[42:51] My dear friend. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Now answer. Is anything too hard for the Lord?

Though you be the vilest sinner out of hell. Steeped in corruption and sin and defilement. From the crown of your head to the sole of your feet. He can save to the utterance.

All that come unto God by him. Power. Belongeth unto God. And he can do it. In every realm if need be.

He can free this beloved nation of ours if he need be. From the enemy. And from all his power. And he can drown them all if he wish.

He's got to teach us. As has been. Many lessons and things before that. Power. Power belongs to God. Forever. Forever.

[43:53] He'll never change his mind tomorrow my dear friend. He'll never have to change his mind. Because circumstances have changed. Today you and I are in health and strength.

Tomorrow we may be laid aside on a bed of affliction. He will change his purpose. He said I knew it. I knew it. In all their afflictions I'm afflicted.

And he can heal the sick. As he can comfort the sad. He can lift up the drooping heart. Power. Belongeth unto God.

Open thy mouth wide. He has said. And I will fill it. What with. And I'm not going to enlarge. Let me give you one.

He'll fill it with amazement. He'll fill it with amazement. And you'll have to stand in amazement there my dear friend. And sing.

[44:55] With Moses and Aaron and Israel this song. You will. Thanks be unto God. For his unspeakable gift.

The glory of the power of the blood to cleanse. The glory of his omnipotent hand to support and sustain. And the glory of the eternal purpose at last to gather at home.

It's all in his hands. Forever. Forever. Oh Lord. Thy word is settled.

In heaven. May he bless his word. Apply it to our poor hearts. Deliver us in times of distress.

And comfort us. When molested. Within and without. Giving us grace to rest. In the Lord. To wait patiently.

[45:56] For you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.