

# Waiting upon the Lord's faithfulness in trials (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Wood, Clement (1920-2010)

- [ 0 : 00 ] The End Psalm 105 verses 17, 18 and 19 Psalm 105 verses 17, 18 and 19 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant, whose feet they hurt with fetters. He was laid in iron until the time that his word came. The word of the Lord tried him. The scripture declares, He led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation. God's way, God's direction, God's leading for us aft, brings us what is to us a strange path. Yet our God is too wise to be mistaken, too good to be unkind.
- [ 3 : 07 ] We need much grace to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you. We need much grace to be preserved from a spirit of rebellion in our heart, of murmuring and complaining against our God, when the way is rough, when our faith is trying, when the cup is bitter, when the thorn in the flesh lingers, when there are mountains that seem that they'll never be brought down, when there's a rough place that you'll feel will never be made smooth, a crooked path that you fear will never be made straight. We need grace to wait upon our God. With mercy and with judgment, my web of time he wove, and e'en the deers of sorrow were lusted with his path, I'll bless the hand that guided, O bless the heart that planned, when thrown, what a day it will be, when thrown, in highest glory, in Emmanuel's land. The service tells us even fair, shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. And the dear pilgrims and their way to the heavenly city will have many a strange there in the past.
- [ 5 : 36 ] And we know what it has been to see that God would take us some other way, would relieve us from a certain burden, a disappointment, a heartbreak, especially when it comes at a time not expected, and from a source that you never anticipated. And yet, it's been God's leading, it's been God's way, it's been God's teaching, it's been God's discipline for us, it's been for our profit, it's been that fruit can be brought forth, it's brought us nearer to our God, it's answered our prayers in a way that we never thought. Indeed, we pray for blessing. Indeed, we pray to know more of Jesus. Indeed, we pray to be clothed with humility. Indeed, we pray for more grace. Indeed, we pray to be like Jesus. And this is the answer to our prayers, and it's all to make us sick of self and from the head. So, beloved friend, if you at this evening hour are directed in some strange and mysterious path, I pray God that you, with your unworthy pastor, may be helped to look, to carry, to rest, and to have faith in the first word of our text.

- [ 7 : 26 ] And that first word of the text isn't Joseph. And that first word of the text isn't Joseph's brethren either. And the first word of the text isn't the fetters and the iron and so forth. It is He, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, in love, makes no mistake in his dealings, leadings, of his dear children.
- I speak, I hope, with prophet, I hope the Lord has given me this word. It came to me early this morning, and yet I cannot say I've had much light on it.
- But venturing in faith, I seek, by the help of God, to speak from it, and pray that there might be an appointment in it, not for my sake, never, but for the honour and glory of his great and holy name.
- And we are struck with this first part of our text, He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant.
- [ 9 : 04 ] You would say, and I would say, but it was his brethren. It was those wicked brothers. It was with malice, envy, hatred, jealousy, cruelty, well-nigh murder, that Joseph went down into Egypt.
- And right, we would be with a limitation, that over all, even the wickedness, dreadful wickedness, of these brethren, it is He, Almighty God, overruling, even wickedness, that it should be for the good of His people and the glory of His name.
- We go to that hole for a moment in our meditation, and there we see that which is very sad, and speaks with a loud voice to us, whether, as you think of individual families, or the church of God, the family of God, brethren and sisters in the Lord.
- My friend, what a sad and solemn thing if those of us of the older set up baddings on other those that are younger, and have cause for them to bear, as Joseph did to his father, an evil report.
- Of course, I must not be limited in that which I've said just as much, of course, a younger one being a cause of an evil report, but the older surely have a greater responsibility in the example that is set, and remember, others will follow.
- [ 11 : 04 ] And yet, Joseph brings the evil report, but, in the meantime, loved so dearly by his father, presented with a coat of many colors, knitted above his brethren, he has these dreams.
- God is speaking, an impossibility, and the interpretation of the dreams seems clear, that his brethren will bow down to him, his father and his mother as the sun and moon and the stars and so forth make obeisance to him.
- And for the dreams that God has given, for the word that God has given, for the interpretation that God has given, that he is hated and despised yet the more.
- But still standing over for this, and we are just reminded in passing of Jacob the battle, the latter, the angels of God ascending and descending upon it, but God above the matter, all in his heart.
- And my friend, as Jacob sends his young son Joseph to inquire for the welfare of his brothers, and he goes forth and cannot find them, oh, the mysterious providence as he gets and searches the field and there's not a sign of them.
- [ 12 : 28 ] But in the field is a certain man, but above the certain man is God. Oh, how often we felt it, how often you've thought of it, doubtless, this mysterious to pass providence.
- If we might have said, if that man, that certain man, unknown by name, had never been there, Joseph would have returned to his father, never found his brethren, never been sent down to Egypt, but my friend, it's God.
- It's a link, it's the purpose in his plan, and Joseph is seen afar off by his brethren, and hated, and that hatred turning well nigh to murder.

Brethren, watch it. Watch your spirit. We, I trust, ever preserve from an outward awful act and deed of jealousy and envy to lead to murder, but my friend, the very envy and jealousy in our heart is like murder.

The Lord preserve us from it, keep us from it. Oh, may brotherly love continue. May we bear one with another, bear one another's burdens, forbear too.

[ 13 : 46 ] Well, there's no need for me to enlarge the history, it is so well known and much loved, of how that Joseph is put in the pit and stripped of his coat and then sold for a poetry, was it, twenty pieces of silver.

And, a dear age father deceived that the text says, he sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant, sent down as a slave and thought by the brethren never to see him again and to sit down there eating their food with their brother in the pit, selling with a tallis and a hard heart, yes, friend, don't think they're the only ones that can do a thing like that.

I could do it if I'm left to myself. We need to watch against our own spirit, maybe not manifest it outwardly in such a gross act or a deed of unkindness that the Lord searches our heart and knows what is within us.

But it is he who sent a man before even Joseph, who was sold for a servant that was a secret, friend, down in Egypt, strange round, yet there we read God was with him.

Friend, better to be alone, suffer all unkindness and ill-treat and even of brethren and to have the presence of your God and to be back at Canaan with all your flocks deceiving your father thinking oh now we've got rid of him now we shall not have any more trouble my friend who would be the happier?

[ 16 : 16 ] I do not say Joseph's lot was the easier but I do say that the dear man was blessed with the presence of his God and that would outweigh all the poverty suffering at that time.

He sent a man before them even Joseph who was sold for a servant whose deed that they hurt with fetters he was laid in fire.

Yes we would have thought that Joseph dear Joseph had sunk low enough you can't get lower now Joseph you can't be in a darker place now Joseph we know that you're serving the Egyptian we know that God is with you but yet he's to go lower still lower still and more lonely still and yet our text says he sent a man before them you well know the incident prospered as Joseph was said as over all that man heart and that wicked woman seeking to entice youth Joseph who was well favoured in body and appearance it wasn't a temptation of the day it was day by day young people watch against such enticements shun them flee from them turn from them persistent was the woman and there in that moment why oh

God should that woman be left alone with Joseph in the house at that time because he sent a man because Joseph's faith is to be further tested Joseph's fear of his God is to be displayed as never before but here he says and earlier it said how could he do this great wickedness he feared God let me just turn so that I might quote that scripture exactly as it comes in the word of God and how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God patient

Euthanas, he left his coat in the woman's hand, and that was used as a charge, unjust, of accusation, of condemnation against Joseph.

[ 19 : 59 ] And for it, without fair hearing, unjustly accused, condemned and put into prison.

The king's prison. Now remember this, that the prison in those days in Egypt, one could be left there for life, forgotten for Satan, no forgiveness, no serving a sentence, but their case could be hopeless.

What, Joseph? Surely, what are you, what can you say now? A strange land?

A prison? A prison. And here, the psalmist, by the Holy Spirit, leads us more deeply into his sufferings. We do not find it recorded, I think, in Genesis.

Whose feet were they hurt with fetters? He was laid in iron. Joseph, where's your God now?

[ 21 : 08 ] Joseph, you would be better if you yielded to that temptation. Joseph, what about the fulfillment of that word now? He was laid in iron.

The marginal rendering here is his soul came into iron. His literal body, as I would understand this, his feet were literally held with iron fetters, at least for a season.

But not only his body, deeper, more painful, his soul. And iron entering in.

In other words, as I understand this, such the depth of experience, this prison experience, this unjust condemnation and accusation, that the dear man is held, as it were, in fetters, his soul, in fetters of iron, in darkness, that there seems that there can be no loosening of that iron, no lightening of the darkness, no liberty for the bondage.

Now when I say that, I do not mean for a moment that Joseph in the prison was forsaken of his God, for the word of God tells us that there God was with him.

[ 22 : 46 ] But we must get the balance. The scripture here sets one sign of the sufferings of Joseph and the trial of his faith and the time of his testing.

At the same time, he's not without God. Now this is a strange pass. I believe we know a little about it. When faith has been tested, and we've been put to the trial, and brought into a path of affliction, when our soul has ended into iron, and yet, to have a conscious sense of the presence of our God, bearing us up in the path, so that we cannot and do not give up entirely hope.

Well, nice, old lives. You've been ready, perhaps, to give up almost in despair. But there's been a secret help and a blessed support.

He sent a man before them. Even Joseph, who was sold for a servant, whose feet they hurt with fetters, he was laid in iron until.

And let me stress, my beloved hearers tonight, this first word of our text, he, until, and this time, until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him, that that time is in God's hand, and the word that he's given you, the promise sealed in your soul, that the Lord in his time will perform, though faith will be tried, though all will come against it, though it may be a long waiting season, the thing was true, the time appointed, was long, and I believe we read that in the book of Daniel.

[ 24 : 55 ] Now, there's seen the way out, at least of the prison, when the baker and the butler dreamed their dreams, and Joseph gave the interpretations thereof, and look, even there, there's the acknowledgement of God, do not, we read, if Joseph at one time, was it there in the prison, or before Pharaoh, do not interpretations belong to God, he remembers his God, he lives close to his God, he gives glory to his God, now, the interpretation concerning the baker, is he's to be hung, and so it was, regarding the butler, he was to be restored now, says Joseph, it's going to be well with you, remember me, speak to the king about me, say of my unjust imprisonment, surely this is God's way, surely the Lord is going to bring me out now, surely this is the link in God's purpose, that he will relieve my captivity, that he will loosen my bonds, that he's going to bring me out, but now, perhaps, without fancy, we might think of the dear man, expecting any moment, as you might say, that the summons would come, and loose him, and let him go,

I know we take that out of the gospel, but the expression, be used rightly, let him free, and we've referred at times, to a word in Genesis, after two full years, friend, if you're in pain, if you're in sorrow, if you're parted from those you love, if you're in trouble, doesn't time seem long, we know, that, every hour, can be no longer than an hour, or shorter than an hour, it's still the 60 minutes, and 60 seconds to the minute, but friend, I warrant this, it's a long, hour, and I believe those two years, and I've often looked at it, full years, I think it means, just more than just complete years,

I think it speaks to us, of a dear man, you know, waiting, cried, the word of that takes, until the time, that his word, came, the word of the Lord, tried him, but you know, that night, God's time, God's way, and the hearts of all, are held in his hand, even the king, in the palace, asleep on his bed, and he dreams, and there's none, in the land, that can give an interpretation, and friend, there's the awakening, of the remembrance, of the mother, of the man, that is in prison, and this is the time, this is the breaking through, of light in the darkness, this is the Lord working, he sent a man, oh I see such a beauty, in this word tonight, such comfort, for my soul, God's working, God's plan,

God's purpose, and there, and we have, thought on it much, that they went, and brought Joseph, out with heights, his purposes, his purposes, will ripen fast, unfolding, every hour, the bad, may have a bitter taste, but sweet, will be the flower, he made them run, he made him run, I think the margin, tells us something, to that effect, that they, put him in, and the time, comes when, they made him, run out of the prison, oh, the loosening, of the bonds, well, Joseph interprets, the dream, set next, to the king, what a transformation, now here again, we're reminded, and for our younger friends, them that honor me,

I will honor, God is no man's debtor, my pastor used to say that, and I believe that to be true, you honor God, you put God first, and God will bless you, I don't say your way, is going to be easy, oh no, but I'll say your way, you're going to be helped, and God is going to bless you, and bring you through, and help you, and favor you, but as yet, still, Joseph, you're next to the king, you're not in prison, but what about those dreams now, never can they be fulfilled now, as it would be, as it would appear, but again, you see, the Lord moves, works his purpose, in his time, and in his way, until the time, that his word came, the word of the Lord, tried, and yet, and there, in Yon Canyon, the patriarchs,

[ 30 : 44 ] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, how often we read, of prosperity, Isaac sowing, and a hundredfold harvest, prosperity of cattle, but now, Jacob, what has happened, famine, starving, perishing, labor, but nothing, a famine, extending through the land, and poor Jacob, it seems, that God, is against you, where's all your form of prosperity, but, he sent, God's purpose, us, now, the brethren, they journey down to Egypt, and there, is the fulfillment, of the first part, and then, as we've read tonight, the second part, of that dream, as they came, the second time, who, until the time, that his word came, the word, of the Lord, tried, is anything, to heart, for the Lord, the point, now, that I wish, just to observe, with you, is this, those brethren, were terrified, when Joseph, made himself, known to them, but what, did Joseph, say, it was not, you, that sent me, but God, not, by, that, that, Joseph, exonerated, the brethren, for their sin, or passed it over, as though it wasn't sin, I don't think, that at all, but what, Joseph, could see, to quieten, his spirit, to fill him, with a forgiving, spirit, such a forgiving, spirit, that could, embrace, each, of those brethren, you could, understand, him, clinging, to Benjamin, you could, understand, the kisses, of his, falling upon, dear Benjamin, but my friend, we read, and let me just, remind you, of the closing, portion, of our second, reading, tonight, moreover, he kissed, all his brethren, and wept, upon them, even, Simeon, and all those, in their cruelty, yes, here, he could, see, the hand, of God,

God with him, the purpose, of God, in taking him, down into Egypt, and the fulfillment, of God's word, spoken to him, by dream, so many, years before, until, at the time, that his, word, came, the word, of the Lord, tried him, and what, a time, of waiting, what, mysterious, events, throughout, that period, of waiting, but God, in his time, anyway, fulfilled the word, and that, was confirmed, again, in the, last portion, when Jacob died, and those brethren, thought, now, Joseph will get his, revenge, but again, he says, it's but God, oh, hear the testimony, of this, dear, Joseph, as he speaks, to his, brethren, fear not, am I, in the place, of God, but as, for you, you see, he makes, doesn't cover, over this, as, for you, ye, fought, evil, against, me, but,

God, meant it, unto God, that's it, he, sent, a man, before them, but God, meant it, meant it, unto, God, and this, again, can be, traced, through the word, in experience, of God's, dear children, Jacob, himself, must have, entered, in some measure, into this, when, at one moment, he said, all these things, are against, that, ere long, the wagons, come up, from Egypt, ere long, the man's, sorrow, is turned, into joy, he, cannot believe, at first, he, fainted, within himself, when the tidings, reaches his ears, that, Joseph, is alive, but when he, saw the wagons, and, you know, it's remarkable, observing the word, there, that when we, read of Jacob, fainting, and can hardly, believe, that it is true, but when he, saw the wagons, it's,

Israel said, Israel, the man of faith, the man, that prevailed, with God, the man, that now, is triumphing, over all, by God's grace, Israel said, it is enough, I will go, and see Joseph, before I die, I see, the time, is nearly gone, until the time, that his word, came, the word, of the Lord, tried him, I leave, just a few, brief, sea thoughts, with you, for perhaps, further meditation, this, we trace, through the experience, of the godly, Abram, as he's called out, of the land, of the Ur, a land of the, of Ur, and so forth, and, and, and, and, and, and, and, and, yet, as the word, in Acts says, he hadn't a foot's breath, to call his own, he hadn't a child, of his own, yet, he promised, God promised, and, so, we may say, that Abram, how that this was true, until the time, that his word, came, the word, of the Lord, tried him, and, yes, you're to wait,

[ 37 : 07 ] Abraham, till you're a hundred years old, Sarah, you know, physical possibility, of bringing forth a child, but, that's when God works, friend, when your faith is tried, when all is hopeless, that you may see, the hand of your God, and then, maybe even that will be tried, with a Jehovah Jireh experience, in the mount of the Lord, it shall be seen, then I thought, of dear, the Israelites, in, oh, they're in bondage, God had said, yes, Joseph himself said, you're going to take my bones, up out of Egypt, you're not to leave my bones here, by faith, he gave command, concerning his bones, though, Genesis ends, with a coffin in Egypt, but there's hope, because Joseph, by faith, says, no, I should not remain here, my bones, shall not remain here, you're going to carry them up, hence, hundreds of years later, and all is fulfilled, the time comes,

God's time, when Israel should go forth, but it's under cries, and bondage, and the lash of the taskmaster, and the impossibility, of liberation, but that's the time, when God works, and I read recently, I think in our family, how, as Israel groaned, and at the end of Exodus, chapter 2, chapter 3 begins, about Moses, and the bush that burned, there yonder, is God working, there God is sending, his Moses, to bring his people out, according to his time, and his way, so take courage, friend, until the time, that his word came, the word of the Lord, tried him, your faith is going, to be tried, but my friend, God will be faithful, to you, God will not leave you, fail you, or forsake you, and so we might continue, we might look, at dear Gideon, God has said, and that he will be with him, and look how he's tried, and look how God works, take David, anointed to be king, and the victory over Goliath, and then, he looks as though, he's going to be the grave, instead of the throne, only a step, between me and death, but you see,

God had spoken, there was the anointing, and I think there, my friends, spiritually, of the sealing, of the spirit of promise, that holy anointing, spiritual blessing, in your soul, you fear you're going to sing, you fear in the dark, you fear sorely tempted, and tried, but God will bring you through, God will maintain his word, and so right through, you take dear Paul, come to the New Testament, just for a moment, Paul you must witness, for me in Rome, and yet look at the tempest, it looks as if you're going to be, down the bottom of the sea, instead of witnessing at Rome, but God has spoken, but now I must leave the word, they've just a few scattered thoughts, I pray that our faith, may be strengthened, any this night, that may be, waiting upon God, your faith sorely tried, seek grace to look up, trust in him at all times, and be assured of this, that what God hath promised, he is able also to perform,

Amen. Hymn number 320, 320, Tune Albano, 847.

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

[ 41 : 53 ] He plants his footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm. Hymn number 320, Tune 847.