

Obedience to the Lord by faith (Quality: Good)

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Date: 18 February 1990

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[0 : 0 0] . . .

Judges 6 and we'll take the same text again although I feel that verses 37 to 39 they cannot be separated.

I'll read from 37 to 39. Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor and if the dew be on the fleece only and it be dry upon all the earth beside then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand as thou hast said.

And it was so for he rose up early on the morrow and thrust the fleece together and wring the dew out of the fleece a bowl of water.

And Gideon said unto God let not thine anger be hot against me and I will speak but this once. Let me prove I pray thee but this once with the fleece.

[1 : 3 7] Let it now be dry only upon the fleece and upon all the ground let there be dew and in verse 40 and it said and God did so that night for it was dry upon the fleece only and there was dew on all the ground.

sense and reason you know would say that surely if the Lord appeared to him as an angel once and twice I believe it said we read in it surely that would be sufficient and yet and then come to pray for the fleece to be the dew on the fleece and that was so wouldn't that be sufficient and each time you see he said twice here in the 36th voice as thou hast said and again on the 37th in the 37th verse as thou hast said you see he believed that the Lord had said it to him now there's something in here isn't there have you something in your heart maybe even as a church collectively as a people collectively praying to the Lord for his appearing in some matter and then to receive a confirmation from the Lord maybe one or another the Lord may have spoken to them and you believe in your very heart you believe if you're not deceived you may put that in but vitally you know you believe that the

Lord has spoken to you there is such a thing as pleading pleading to the Lord bringing a case before him praying to him for something you know which springs up from yourself and the Lord may say to you I've never spoken to you in this matter there's that side of it now that side of it causes the child of grace to pray to him that he would make it abundantly clear and he can and he does make no mistake about it now have you come in your exercises you know this that it's a great responsibility to belong to a church a church professing

Jesus Christ a church professing to serve the Lord Jesus Christ you know we say so much about the Lord Jesus holding us up and the Lord Jesus we pray for him appearing but what about your responsibilities don't misunderstand me I'm not preaching creature righteousness don't think that in the least degree it is possible for the children of God to back slide and they do back slide and the

Lord brings them back and you know this is why the children of Israel come into this state in this case under the chastening hand of the Lord and you know this that under the chastening hand of the Lord the Lord may put you and he does put these people into captivity in order to create within their hearts that need and it came and you see it came here came to pass when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites that the Lord sent a prophet unto the children of God which said unto them thus saith the Lord

[7 : 21] God of Israel I brought you up from Egypt and brought you forth out of the house of bondage and then he goes on and he told them that not to fear the God of the Amorites but ye have not obeyed my voice now are you as a people I'm speaking collectively I don't know what you're in I don't know but what have you got in your hearts as a people before the Lord you know if you have anything before the

Lord as a people as a church I sincerely hope you have but you see it came to me strongly this morning concerning you as a people if you are content to live as individuals within the church if you are content to come to the house of God and then to go home again live your own separate lives without any concern whatsoever for the prosperity of the church then you are in a poor state you know the

Lord hears the united cries of his people not only does he create a need within a person but he also creates a need within a people I remember hearing one speak concerning a church many years ago now how when the pastor of the church said to me once he said we were alive in those days helped each other in those days and in those days of poverty in those days of distress there was life and also there was the concern to the house of

God now what do we see in the background to this text the need of the children of Israel and the Lord came to deliver the children of Israel but first had to put right his own house his father's household his father had a grove and worshipped Baal and you poor soul you may have to put right your life those idols which you may be worshipping in your life I'm not speaking of wooden idols as you know there's so many things which come into our life an idol is something that you put before the

Lord has healed

[13 : 24] I know I've heard I can quote to you cases where one poor woman the Lord placed in her heart an exercise concerning the house of God.

You see how the Lord places these burdens in the heart. And of course you see now when the Lord places the burden and you come into the conflict, poor soul, you see nothing, you see nothing outside, nothing at all.

You say, well are any of the other members of the church concerned as I am? What is this that I've received? Have I received this from the Lord or am I deceived, said the soul.

And that, that very cry in your heart, that very concern in your heart causes you to go to the Lord. That he would speak again within this very case which you are carrying before him in exercise.

Do you know what it is? to carry an exercise like this that children might be brought forth in all aspects of the worship of God in the house, in his house, in his sanctuary.

[15 : 13] You see, there's no need and that is totally against all sense and reason.

no need whatsoever to put your hand to it. I touched it this morning and I'll touch it again.

You put your hand to the work of God and you will find that your hand will be burnt. I'm not speaking that out of head knowledge.

I'm speaking out of that. I'm speaking out of practical experience, things that I've walked myself. And it's all in the Bible.

You know how the one touched the ark, died instantaneously. The Lord in his own work, now he has set the bounds.

[16 : 31] What do you mean? If he lays in your heart, if he lays in you a burden concerning one thing in the house of God, now that one thing is what you personally will be burdened with.

But, look, when you come back to your own self, you know what I mean by that.

You see, you may believe by faith, poor soul. faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

the Lord lays the substance in your heart. He gives you a vision, if I may put it that way.

He opens your eyes in a moment, a concern, which you have placed in your heart. faith is the substance. And you may receive it with joy, in expectation.

[18 : 03] and if you speak unadvisedly, you may tell you, you may tell someone.

But, in that telling someone, your faith will be weakened. He's given you that, poor soul, for you to trade between him and yourself.

Now, if you pray, if the Lord has laid something in your heart, you know, and you tell no one against about it, you know, if you don't tell a servant of God about it, and he comes right into your case, you know, you know, it doesn't come from the man.

See what I mean when I say your faith is weakened. You see, we are the ministers of God, our men, and they, they, they, they have the same thoughts as the people in the pew.

There's no difference. We're all sinners. There's not one above another. But here you are, you've got this in your heart, even as Gideon had it in his heart.

[19 : 33] The Lord had given him it, the Lord had appeared, and the Lord had spoken to him. But look, look at it, how can you visualize it, and you may be in the same thing, poor soul?

Look at it outside. Can anything be more impossible than that which you carry before him?

Can you not see that a soul in such impossibility requires a confirmation of that which the Lord has laid in their heart?

Can you not see it? You see, this causes an increase in the desire, an increase in the exercise, an increase in the prayer, and in the labor before the Lord.

Now, you may come here, poor soul, to see, and now, you can trace it in this path, you can trace it in Gideon.

[20 : 53] As he came, you see, the Spirit moved him to destroy that grove, and the image of Baal, the very first step now, you, poor soul, in your exercise before him, in your concern before him, you may see as a chink of light.

You may receive a slight, you see a slight moving in answer to your prayer. Now, in that slight moving, what is that?

There's a moving within the heart, the work of God. This which I've been laboring for, this which I've been seeking him for, a slight moving of it coming to pass, and this increases the intensity of the desire before him.

The Lord will appear. you know, as the Lord, as you feel this assign, what happens?

And we see it here. There's an outcry against him. Let's kill him. Get him off the earth.

[22 : 51] he's destroyed the image of Baal. And you, poor soul, that exercise which you've got in your heart, that travail, which it is, a travail before the Lord.

You see, the uproar is about to be destroyed. What about it now, poor soul?

What about it? To come, you see, to see, as it were, a slight opening. Your expectation comes up, and you see, you start praising the Lord.

You pray to him, you say, Lord, I believe it's going to come to pass because of this, and now come into this death upon it.

But, the Lord, as he leads on, you know, he brings you forth into a little greater expectation, an intimation, that he's heard thy prayer.

[24 : 24] But, you see, it was so important to me, and that's why I made that observation twice. He said, as thou hast said.

And this soul, in moments of belief and faith in their heart, they say to him, as thou hast said, Lord.

You see the conflict. You see how they walk in these paths. You see, you don't know.

This is the thing with a child of grace. He doesn't know, you see. He believes, he believes in his heart, that this would be so, but in the death, which the death's upon it, he feels in his heart, as he goes on in this, how can it be?

faith. And what happens? But you see, watch these points with Gideon.

[25 : 44] He took the first step by faith. He obeyed the Lord. He took that step in destroying the grove and the idol of Baal.

And then he took the next step as he was strengthened in faith. and what, as you know, he came into that path, you see.

Now, everything that he received from the Lord, he needed in the path in which he was walking and so will you. you will receive, when you receive strength from him, you, in the chapel, you may, you may have it in the chapel and you may believe under the ministration of the word of God.

Under the ministry, you may believe it in a moment of time. You say, yes, I believe, I believe this which I've got in my heart.

Isn't it wonderful? Isn't it wonderful to carry an exercise before the Lord? You say, yes, but if only you knew.

[27 : 24] If only you knew the days of darkness, if only you knew the days when I feel at times it'll kill me.

Yes, I know it will. But in this, you know, there is a hope and an expectation.

And you know, these souls, you know, when they carry these things, sometimes there's hardly a day go or a night go by, when they are not concerned in it.

And sometimes they feel to be so utterly, absolutely overwhelmed. By it all, it seems as if the floodgates are opened against them, against that belief which they have within their heart.

You may say to me, well, doesn't this apply to my own exercise, my own soul's exercise?

[28 : 46] yes, it does, poor soul, but the Lord adds to that. Are you one that is selfish?

What do you mean, you say? Are you only concerned about your own soul's welfare? Or are you concerned about the soul's welfare of another?

Are you concerned in the exercise of another? Even as much as your exercise concerning your own soul.

And sometimes, you know, it seems that the exercise for another is greater than the exercise for your own soul.

and you feel that you neglect your own soul's salvation because of this burden which the Lord has laid upon you for another.

[30 : 03] And when I speak for another, I speak, it may be an individual and it may be a church, the welfare of the church.

But we came to this spot, you see, where he came and he did something else and his faith was increased.

But now, you see, we've come to the point, and you, poor soul, you'll find this, when the Lord moves, when the Lord moves within the church, and the time gets nearer to the fulfillment of that which you've been seeking the Lord for upon your knees in secret, the conflict will be greatly intensified.

You see, all of these things with Gideon, and you will prove it in your own personal exercise.

You know, it's totally different to have this exercise within your heart, heart, and no one know anything about it. But when it comes closer, closer home, closer to the reality of it upon the earth, you may shrink back within your shell.

[31 : 58] The very fact of that which I've been pleading with him for now looks and appears as if it will appear to be a living reality on the earth.

And now the poor soul comes. You see, the great greatness of the thing before you as a church and as a people as well as for an individual.

You come here, poor soul, that you want to know from the Lord, you desire to know from him his mind and his will in this matter and you seek a sign from him.

What's the sign you're seeking? Well, we know what Gideon said, didn't we, regarding the fleece of war. You see, something which is totally, absolutely beyond all nature, a miracle.

That's what he was looking for. And if this miracle happened, then he would believe that it was of the Lord.

[33 : 43] You know, you want to be very careful because here love is a great danger.

And what is that great danger? You come up to the point, even as the children of Israel take you to a case this very day, is this present age I'm talking about, not the actual day itself.

this is what I fear. The Lord brings you to the very point until they came, they came as you know, to the borders of the land and they sent spies out into the land.

Is it familiar? you see there's grapes, all the fruits of the earth, the abundance, that which they hadn't received or tasted of in those years in the wilderness, they had manna.

They grew tired of it, didn't they? And there were the fruits of the earth but there are giants in the land.

[35 : 30] What did they do? They murmured, unbelief, poor soul, unbelief in your heart. I'm greatly afraid with myself because I know, I know what it is to labor under unbelief.

But you see, here we are, they reached the very point of the promised land and they could not enter in because of unbelief.

instead of praying to you see, they had forgotten God.

They had forgotten that it was the Lord that had led them those 40 years, or it wasn't 40 years in that time, that point of time, but led them from Egypt to the promised land.

Where are you? And this is the danger that I'm trying to bring before you. The exercise right at the very point of it being performed, you may say, what's the point of carrying on with it?

[37 : 12] I prefer to go back into the wilderness.

I prefer, we prefer to remain as we are rather than going on into the promised land, that which the Lord had laid in your heart in exercise.

eyes. You know, the angel of the Lord said to Jacob, didn't he, let me go for the day breaketh.

Now, watch that, watch these things. The children of Israel come to the promised land and sent out the spies. And the report that came back.

And what did Jacob say? He didn't say go, did he? He didn't say let go of the exercise.

[38 : 36] He said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me.

At the very breaking of the day, now bear that in mind, the breaking of the day, when the Lord is about to bring it to pass and you go back into unbelief.

You say, I've never heard such things. You walk it and see. You will find this, how the heart within you, in that unbelief within you, how it rises up.

But you see, Gideon, he didn't come there, did he? What did he say? He said, I want another token, Lord. That's better. Now we're getting closer, aren't we?

You see the wrestling of Jacob with the angel. I want another token, Lord. If thou wilt bless me indeed, as thou has said, not going back, not drawing back, but going forward, poor soul, in that which you have in your heart before him.

[40 : 20] And I'm not speaking to one individual either, I'm speaking to you as a church poor soul. Are you content?

Are you in a sleepy state before him? have you come to the point and gone back?

These things are realities, poor soul. But you see, Gideon, with all that he got in front of him, he said, didn't it say somewhere that there were so many in number?

I believe it said so, that they came, and they, I can't turn on it now, but I think it says somewhere in here that they were a great multitude against them, you see.

And the point is, at this point of the breaking of the day, the opposition, that which is so immense against you, causes a shrinking within yourself.

[41 : 58] Now, you cannot go forward except you have the Lord with you. Now, what did Moses say? Carry us not up hence, if thy presence go not with us.

And this is what you've got in your heart, you see, you want to know from the Lord if it's from him, and him alone, and this confirmation, this great thing which he lays in your heart, you see, this great thing you want to know, you want the fleece wet, and you want the fleece dry.

And the Lord is pleased, you see, the greater the exercise, the greater the case before him, so will greater be the prayer before him, the earnestness of the prayer before him, that he would grant you an answer in some way which will assure you that you have not made a mistake.

See the many hidden dangers, dangers, the many hidden dangers in the way, poor soul, and see, it is only by the very power of God working within your hearts, bringing it to fruition.

Do you desire such an exercise before him? Do you desire, you may say, as has been said to me, or concerning me on more than one occasion, isn't it sweet?

[44 : 11] I tell you this, the sweetness is when Jesus appears in the trial, but the trial is bitter.

now that's the whole substance of what I've been trying to touch this afternoon, or touch the whole day, you see, with Christ in the vessel, we smile at the storm.

Didn't we sing it today sometime, I believe, are, or may be mistaken, you see, but this is what you want. You want to know that the Lord is in it, that the Lord Jesus is with you in the trial in which you're working, and that's what you want.

Now that will make the bittersweet. It will. I can assure you of that, however, how great the bitterness of the trial through which you are passing, and when he appears, you put everything straight.

You know, he may say to you this, you're so overwhelmed with the trial, so overwhelmed with all that is in your path, in obedience to him, and you keep bringing it together, bringing it to him.

[46 : 04] but you know, the time will come when the Lord may say to you, what is that to thee?

Follow thou me. now, all of that, which you've got, which is as a mountain, to use another language, to use a mountain, another description, the mountain will become a plain.

Now, the mountain, you may say to me, I'm surrounded by mountains, but I'll tell you where they are, they're in your own heart.

Yes, but you say this and you say that and all of these things, if only you knew this, what I mean, and you knew that the mountains with which I'm surrounded look at Gideon.

And don't we go on, when you read on, how the Lord reduced him further and further and further and what was it, 300 men, I've forgotten now, but it's in here, he brought them down, yes, by the 300 men, not a thousand, your own strength, poor soul, will be as that 300 men, you may have had great strength, you may have leaned upon great strength of others and all of these things and the Lord has reduced them to nothing, so that it will be seen, will be acknowledged by yourself that it is of the Lord.

[48 : 18] You know, in some of these things the Lord brings you, as it were, to stand on one side and see the salvation of the Lord and that standing still is just not standing motionless, I can assure you of that.

far different from that, but you see by the very exercise which you have in your heart, you have to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, then there is the walking, speak to the children of Israel, the sea was still there, that they go forward.

Here we are with Gideon, you see, if he proves to you the fleece wet and the fleece dry and you hold back, I just do not know what will happen but the time's gone on us leaving.

Amen. list put in the■