

1 Chronicles (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Delves, Stanley (1897-1978)

[0 : 0 0] I will speak again this afternoon with the Lord's help and blessing from the word in the first book of Chronicles the fourth chapter, the tenth verse and Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, O that thou wouldest bless me indeed and enlarge my coast and that thine hand might be with me and that thou wouldest keep me from evil that it may not grieve me and God granted him that which he requested what a great thing it is to have God blessed whatever else we may have in life that's distressing and trying and perplexing and painful but all to have God's blessing to have God's blessing in our hearts in our lives to have God's blessing when we come to the end and heart and flesh pales and mortal life will cease oh to have God's blessing in our last hour and then beyond oh to have God's blessing forever and ever to be filled with it world without end the very thought seems overwhelming doesn't it the greatness of this one consideration to have God's blessing for as one said in the scripture

I can't think who for the moment I watch that those whom thou dost bless are blessed we often speak of being blessed we often pray to be blessed and we sometimes and I feel quite honestly wish one for another that the Lord would grant his blessing may God bless you is a good feeling to express if we feel it and yet when we've done and said all our far God's blessing extends beyond all our apprehensions of it oh to have God's blessing and a thousand that hymn was being sung well if one hymn I think could express my own feelings what I might call my normal state spiritually and I'm not particularly uplifted nor particularly depressed

I think that hymn just about expresses it that hymn and this text now I won't say for certain that James himself may have meant all that now we see in this prayer it's difficult to say because we know nothing else about this good man beyond this one reference just this one prayer but still I feel even if Jabez living in that old dispensation when gospel truths and blessings were not so clearly manifested and perhaps even by the godly not so clearly understood still we can see in it now reading it in a gospel life a very comprehensive and blessed feeling oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed now I thought this morning of one consideration that would constitute a real blessing and that is to have the forgiveness and pardon of sin really applied to our hearts in the power and blessing of it that is to be blessed in sin mind you a child of God even though he may not enjoy that blessing or not to the full or not for a long time still he's in a good place now we must not measure our spiritual state altogether by the degree in which we're spiritually blessed for to have spiritual life as I said this morning is the great matter to be alive to God to be born again of the Holy Spirit to be given repentance to the acknowledging of the truth and faith to believe in Jesus Christ that's a great matter but there is such a thing as being blessed with a pardon of sin but now this afternoon

I want to speak on one or two other matters and follow this line through the text as far as I may be able my friend what a blessing if the Lord would bless us indeed with it is to know and experience more of the love of Jesus Christ that love that surpasses knowledge and yet does not surpass experience it surpasses knowledge in the degree of it but not experience experience that it's such a blessing as having the love of Jesus Christ made known and shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost and that is to be blessed indeed but I'm afraid it's often with us like this I see from far thy beauteous light we get glimpses of the love of Jesus sometimes in the light of the gospel sufficient that we can perceive oh such a blessedness such a holiness such a fullness such a sweetness in the love of Jesus we see it so and a very sight affects it in some measure but oh to have that love brought into our hearts shed abroad by the Holy Spirit filling us with its sweet fullness oh love divine how sweet they are when shall I find my willing heart all taken up by thee

I pain thirst long to prove the greatness of redeeming love the love of Christ to me and now we may sing that verse sometimes and yet enter comparatively little into it so that blessing comes yes that love comes comes really into our hearts nothing hindering that is a blessing now pray for this my friends pray for this and I would say this you may seem to pray for this sometimes with much ardency and yet it doesn't come you'll say I feel sometimes my heart really drawn out to the Lord that he would fill me with his love but it doesn't come well now I'll say you this it may come when you're not praying for it the Lord has a strange way of blessing us sometimes and when that love comes it just comes it just comes so freely oh so sweetly love is a blessing it's a blessing to have any love to Jesus Christ but oh a greater blessing to know his love in our own hearts to know the love of Christ which parted knowledge and to be filled and I think that is to be filled with all the fullness of God oh that thou would bless me indeed is that our heart our feelings oh that thou would fill my heart with thy love that love which is holiness purity life everything what a blessing it is my friends when the Lord is pleased to impart to us a sweet and powerful sense of that peace of God which passes all understanding that it may keep our hearts and minds through

[9 : 31] Jesus Christ when the Lord speaking to his disciples that same night in which he was betrayed spoke so much about that peace I've often wondered how much they felt in their own hearts of it at that time my peace he said I leave with you my peace not such peace as the world gives nor anything else that the world gives but I give you peace I've often wondered how far his words at that time conveyed that peace itself for the disciples were very soon in sore troubles and distress but whether it was so that night or not that they enjoyed that peace the time came when they did and the peace of God filled their hearts and minds oh it is a blessed peace an inward calm a positive peace as I've sometimes said it isn't a negative peace it isn't just not having any trouble for you may have it and feel it and enjoy it when there's much trouble it isn't absence of trouble it isn't peace because there's nothing to upset our spirit it's a peace of control hills passes all understanding oh someone may say

I wish he would bless me indeed with that I wish he would speak and impart that heavenly calm to my soul give me really to know that I am at peace with God through Jesus Christ and enjoy that peace that he has made by his precious blood proclaim in his blessed word and conveys and applies by his blessed spirit well I wish we could enjoy this peace more there's so much of distress and trouble and burden and the Lord hasn't promised that our life shall be free of such conditions on the other hand he has plainly indicated that our past will leave through very much of tribulation he has balanced that word in the world he shall have tribulation by another in me he shall have peace oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed with the peace of God in my bosom and then again oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed some might feel well it would be a real blessing to me if the

Holy Spirit would that confirm my hope that it is well that I am really a child of God for I think whether a child of God can reason his assurance out of the scriptures even though he may have scriptures for it I dare if he can reason it out of the scriptures at least I think a much more soul satisfying way is for the Lord to impart the shawlen as a rich blessing to our hearts by the Holy Spirit you may say oh if he would but say in the iron dine that would be a rich blessing to me that he would assure my conscience of her part in the Redeemer's blood if the Holy Spirit would bear witness with my spirit that I am a child of God in such a way as would cause my very heart to say

Abba Father without any labor or fear or difficulty for it is written the spirit itself bearish witness with our spirit that we are the children of God and if children then heirs heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to be able really healingly to say there are my Father God is a rich blessing I know that regard to all who believe in Jesus it is true doubtless there are our Father if you believe in Jesus Christ with a living faith doubtless God is your Father but still to have the sense of it by the Holy Spirit to have a Father's love in the heart that is a rich blessing well one might continue on this point because it would of course include every gospel blessing that there wouldst bless me indeed but I'll only mention one more because I want to come to the other parts of the text oh that there wouldst bless me indeed what with more communion with Jesus more fellowship with the

Son of God a closer offense of being one with the Lord as it is written truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ and perhaps especially your heart might go to one particular of his fellowship with Jesus there are many but here is one the fellowship of his suffering you may say there's something there I feel I haven't yet really been blessed yet well the Lord can bless you indeed now I do feel that to be blessed with fellowship with Jesus Christ and especially in his suffering forest in the garden and on the cross oh that is a blessing indeed that there is such a thing by now

[16:12] I pass on oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed I just pointed out there's something to pray for to desire and that God does indeed impart and then the text goes on and enlarge my coast now here again exactly what David meant by the enlargement of his coast is uncertain because there's no other instruction concerning this good man another translation of the original reads that there wouldst enlarge my lot or enlarge my portion but taking it as I'm doing today in a spiritual and experimental sense we may consider at least a suitable prayer for us that he would enlarge us spiritually now it's often the case that those who fear

God feel very much contracted in themselves they're subject to a certain degree of bonding they feel very limited they feel as though all their religion comes so far short of what they would desire to regard to the things of God so here are this perhaps feet it may be feet somewhat of such blessings as I've set before you now and the reaction is oh I wish I could go with them in that I wish that my knowledge and my experience was expanded to that degree but you might say I feel I have so little to say my experience seems so restricted and I don't seem to break out on the right hand or on the left and you may feel perhaps that unbelief still seems to bring such bondage upon your spirit that you say oh could

I but believe then all would easy be in other words you want the Lord to enlarge you that's it isn't it you want the Lord to enlarge you and in different ways for instance you might feel very much do desire that the Lord would enlarge the measure of your spiritual knowledge for kids of him we feel we little know that is compared with what there is to be known there's more knowledge of Jesus Christ to be known than we have yet attained to but we wouldn't speak at all disparagingly of the least degree of gracious and spiritual knowledge of the truth you may feel it to be very little that it is or perhaps it is not so little as you may think it to be whatever that may be it's very precious isn't it the least degree of spiritual knowledge is very precious but still we can hardly be content with the least degree of spiritual knowledge if you read the apostles prayers for the people of

God in his day and I look upon them as being standard prayers for the church of God and all believers you'll find how much he prayed that they might be further instructed enlarged in knowledge and in understanding well now the Lord can enlarge the measure of our spiritual knowledge he can teach us more by his good and holy spirit he can give us clearer views in things that perhaps we see now but very darkly that is much to be desired for what the Lord teaches us that we know if we get beyond that we speculate or we take it from someone else or we conceive it from our own mind we're getting beyond our limits but now what the

Lord teaches us we know he sets our minds down in that with a certain sense of truth we don't get what the spirit teaches us we don't suppose what he gives us to understand no now the Lord enlarged our knowledge our coast in that particular for there's so much more to be known as it was said to the children of Israel when they were brought into the promised land and were somewhat disposed to rest content with that degree of possession I think it was Joshua to stir the people up said there is much land to be possessed there's much land to be possessed you haven't come into all that which is given to you for your inheritance so it is spiritually perhaps some who may have been long in the way may question something about this and say they seem instead of knowing more sometimes to know less be it so be it so it doesn't follow that the Lord has not enlarged your code perhaps you feel sometimes like I do there was a time when we knew more than the Lord taught us and had more confidence that the

[22 : 32] Lord really would justify in us and we've come down from that somewhat we've come down from that and have come to feel more than ever that we only know what the Lord teaches that we only possess what the Lord impart and that we only enjoy what he graciously applies how we need the Lord to enlarge our faith the disciples prayed and it was a good prayer for them and equally good for us Lord enlarge our faith we need our faith enlarged often with regard to its strength and its compass there's more to be believed brethren to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ the saving of the soul is a good chance but there's more to be believed every opening up of spiritual truth as it is in Jesus gives us a further scope a further range for our faith there's no end to what there is to be believed in the gospel

Lord enlarge my faith so with love look at the apostles words and it was an enlargement of heart of a breath my love to all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity all to have love large enough to embrace all the Lord's dear people so that they are really here and to love the Lord more and to love his truth more and to love his ways more oh Lord in life our love but I'm a star from now Christmas only just it has just come into my mind to make this observation and that is let let no one feel that they don't know enough don't believe enough and that their coast is so narrow spiritually for them to walk professively in the ways of

God you might well find that the Lord enlarge your heart in doing so and it may possibly be considered I pray you that you're not enlarged as you might be because there is nothing yet of that free obedience to the Lord's will and the Lord's way you would find that his ways have enlargement in them if you're enabled to walk dependently upon him therein now let me take the next point which rather joins on to that and that thine hand might be with me ah that's everything to have God's hand with us but oh what a solemn consideration it is if his hand is against us oh nothing nothing can prosper if the Lord's hand is against

Lord's hand is with us in it no wisdom no resolution of mind no perseverance would ever bring that to pass that the Lord does not bring to pass oh it's such a great thing to have his hand with us we might apply it very briefly this way suppose then there is some way set before you or there some matter weighing much upon your mind you feel well will the Lord's hand be with me will his hand be with me you might quite rightly say Lord I don't feel I could step into this matter unless I could be sure thy hand was with me but if thy hand is with me then I feel I could go through anything and so you could for the

Lord's hand to be with you means these considerations first his hand will be with you to strengthen and sustain oh what strength there is in his everlasting arm his hand means his power his faithfulness Lord let thine hand be with me to strengthen me weak dependent poor fearful hesitant as I feel to be but oh if thy hand is with me Lord I feel I could venture on anything well now you may quite feel this that the Lord's hand will be with you and his hand will be with me in whatever is according to his holy mind and will that's sure to be still it's a good prayer let thine hand be with me to guide me to preserve me to hold me back or to lead me on according as it is right in thy sight

[28 : 13] Lord if there's a tendency in me to go too far then let thine hand be with me to hold me back if there's a tendency in me to hold back then let thy hand be with me to guide me on that thine hand may be with me oh how my mind goes that forty forty forty four years nearly to a time when I was called to undertake responsibility of this church and the heavy exercise of my spirit concerning it all it is so taint her in this consideration Lord will thine hand be with me will thine hand be with me let thine hand that thine hand might be with me well one can look back now for forty odd years and feel encouraged by this story the

Lord's hand has been with me and so without is a church and people surely the Lord's hand has been with us now as we look forward the prayer is oh so suitable for the years increase and a sense of dependence gets more and more heavy upon one spirit and the need for the Lord's hand to be with us seems more than heaven have we enemies possibly David had enemies possibly he was engaged in some national conflict well if the Lord's hand was with him he would be victorious over all his foes for if he was called to some labour for the Lord well if the Lord's hand was with him he would be strengthened to fulfil it that thine hand may be with me to strengthen to guide to uphold me to bring me through and then that there would it keep me from evil that it may not grieve me evidently the good man had a tender conscience he had such a sense of evil the grieving nature of it that he had no idea that the

Lord's hand was with him did nothing to fear with regard to evil oh keep me from evil friends we do need keeping from evil oh we do there evil around there's evil within us we're in danger of evil on all hands and what is more under all forms and sometimes under such deceitful guises that unless the Lord keeps us from evil surely we have not wisdom enough to discern the snare as one has said I ever into ruin run our hearts are so weak there's so much in us that it's so ready to fall into evil in some way or other keep me from evil how does the

Lord keep from evil well he doesn't keep from evil by keeping many contact with it we're always in contact with evil somewhere or another and he doesn't keep us from evil by expelling it from our own heart the plague is there but he keeps us from evil by his holy and his blessed fear it is by the fear of the Lord men are kept from evil if the Lord suffers his holy fear to decline in our consciences oh what a dangerous place we are in what a dangerous place David was in when God suffered his holy fear to not to be in active control of his mind keep me from evil and there is a very gracious reason to this keep me from evil that it may not grieve me well evil grieves the child of

God it grieves his conscience it grieves his spirit it is trekked his mind surely you and I must understand that that evil grieves us at least it does if our conscience is tender that we should ever sin against him who has done so much for us that we should sin against his love sin against his blood his precious blood sin against his holy and blessed spirit oh that grieves it grieves us to think that we should sin against him and it not only grieves us but it grieves us to feel that it grieves him that it grieves the holy and gracious spirit and that it grieves the lord dear people surely you couldn't grieve a child of god and that not grieved you to feel you as grieved him and god granted him that which he requested what a beautiful thing much in little god granted him that which he requested he requested much and the lord granted him all open thy mouth why be saved and i will fill it ask and ye shall receive and again ye have not because ye ask not it is very certain that jesus asked according to the will of god because we know that whatsoever we ask according to his will we receive that we ask of him and the lord granted him that which he requested the lord you submit us with his blessing to his house today and the lord grant that he will grant to us all that we request of him for his name he quis him he was