

Hebrews

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[0 : 0 0] In the name of God and seeking the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit, let us direct you to the epistle to the Hebrews, chapter the 13th.

And we read from verse the 5th to the Hebrews, chapter the 13th, from verse the 5th.

For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

We may say immediately that this word that has been somewhat impressed upon our spirit since arriving in Uffington is the quintessence of all the promises.

And is a word that is greatly needed by all God's living family, that part that journeys through this vast wilderness.

[1 : 3 5] For those who are in eternal glory have the full enjoyment of heavenly bliss.

No clouds to obstruct the sun. No doubts, no craven or servile fear.

No enemies, no sin. No accuser of the brethren. Then they are safely landed on that happy shore and know the bliss of being forever in his embrace.

The other part of the Church of God that we may consider are those that are as yet in the womb of the covenant.

But we have the heel of Christ, his sacred humanity, and also a setting forth of that part of the Church of God that treads this weary, waste, howling wilderness.

[2 : 5 9] That is to say, all the span of those days of their journey through the wilderness, this amazing, plenary, glorious, wondrous promise is greatly needed by all God's ministers and people.

So that I hope that it will be proved that this is the Lord's message to us tonight, to penetrate the clouds and dispel our fears and infuse holy strength and gracious confidence into our spirits.

Just a brief word on the promise and all these promises. I believe on the last visit here, my text was a promise.

Let us look at this facet of the promises. For there are three fullnesses that we become aware of.

There is the fullness in God as creator. And from that fullness, as we have thanked him this evening in our petition, from the wells of creation, he opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing.

[5 : 1 5] Now there is in the Lord Jesus two fullnesses. For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

That is all the divine perfections. Omnipotence, immutability, eternity, and veracity, and so on.

Now, that fullness is not communicable. The second fullness in the Lord Jesus Christ, blessed be God, is communicable.

It is a fullness of grace and truth, love, wisdom, strength, promises, blessings, everything to make us holy and happy.

Everything to supply all our need as we travel through the wilderness to the land of promise.

[6 : 33] And the promises are in this wondrous fullness that abides in him. So, I want to make just this point, that it is to the glory of God.

He magnifies his great name. He extols his name by manifesting in the souls and lives of his dear people, his divine faithfulness and immutable love.

His glory is very much in the beauty and strength and as he exercises his faithfulness and love to his church in the earth.

So, this word he has placed us face. And I want, first of all, to look at the background.

It seems to me that there are several things in the background here. And I want to just name them to you because this will bring the blessedness of the promise into precious and bold relief.

[8 : 18] Well, one thing in the background is this. You take the terminology, For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Now, what occurs immediately to your mind as the result of the teaching of the Spirit in your path?

Well, this. The Lord is pleased to strip us of everything in ourselves and everything in this world so that we have only one to look to.

You take, for instance, You take, for instance, the process as seen in the case of Job. He was stripped measurably and almost completely of his prosperity.

He lost his substance. He lost, for the time being, his earthly treasure.

[9 : 42] He was gone. He lost his health. He lost his family. His wife was no comfort to him.

And his friends falsely accused him. They saw, as they viewed him, what appeared to be an enigma.

This man, in deep distress and adversity, what was the cause? They endeavored to assign a cause.

And so, they presumed to accuse him of sin.

So, you see him stripped, really, of everything. But, his God did not forsake him. For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

[11 : 00] What a painful, agonizing path that is, to be left alone, to be stripped. And then it is that you know the wonder of this word.

For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. For in the context of all that distress and agony that he was passing through, he could exclaim with adoring faith, faith.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And although after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and not another, though my reins be consumed within thee.

Now, the Lord never deserted him or abandoned him, although he was brought so very low.

I want just to refer, in his case, to that marvelous, revealing light that shone into his soul in the darkest hour and revealed to him the divine method and the purpose of God in all that he was passing through.

[12 : 48] I believe that for a long time he could not understand in any way the dealings of God with him.

But one day it was as clear as noon day to him. And it was at this time when he said, oh, that I knew where I might find him.

If only I could find God. He didn't say, oh, that I knew where I might find the cattle. or even the children.

But oh, that I knew where I might find God. And then suddenly this sweet revelation and concept of divine truth relating to the nature and character of God shone into his soul.

It was as though he could say this. Although I cannot find him or see him, he can see me.

[14 : 12] He loves me. He has not left me or forsaken me. he remembers me.

And immediately the whole of this dispensation was unfolded to him. He could say that the Lord was dealing with him in love as a refiner, that he was gold gold.

And the Lord was refining that gold. And immediately he saw the issue to that path of adversity when he has tried me.

I leave it to God. I fall into his blessed hand when he has tried me. I shall come forth as gold.

Now he knew that the Lord had never left him nor forsaken him even in his darkest hour.

[15 : 35] Take this word that expresses it. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

So see the demonstration dear friends of the faithfulness and goodness of God and see this aspect of it.

In that dialogue which is a unique revelation in the book of God that there should be a dialogue between the Lord and Satan and the subject of that dialogue was Job.

Satan made an accusation and that was that Job's integrity was bound up with his earthly prosperity and in this accusation he forecast what would take place that if this was removed that Job would curse God to his faith.

He never did. Why? He was blessed with faith. So you can see that all through that long path of adversity the Lord never left him never forsook him.

[17 : 18] There was this faith to cling to his God and this is how the Lord demonstrates to his dear people that he never leaves them nor forsakes them.

It is in the issue that wonderful principle of the new covenant and of the kingdom of grace deliverance derived from the immutable love of God and the victory of Christ.

He is not in the grave. He is not here. He is risen. fear not she said the angel to those women for I know that she seek Jesus which was crucified.

He is not here. He is risen. Now the amazing power of the resurrection of Christ this is the very foundation for deliverance.

You take the poor Israelites in their captivity in Babylon. They were so buried in that captivity that it seemed as though they would never come out.

[18 : 55] but he said I will open your graves O my people and bring you up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel and he did.

The day came when they knew that the Lord had never forsaken them and never left them. They were back in their own land building the temple building the wall for the Lord had manifested his divine faithfulness and I want therefore to just focus your mind on the issue the deliverance the Lord will bring you forth as gold you'll know that he has never left you nor forsaken you because it is quite obvious if the Lord forsook us completely left us we should just sing it would be the end but he never forsakes never leaves never abandons never deserts and you think of this dear friend that however low you sink in your mind underneath are the everlasting arms and I prove that

I prove that many times but I prove that when under the law and losing my last night and losing that sinking fathoms but I fell into his blessed arms so he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee not in your darkest hours now let us look then at a few points in the background one is that we have a body of sin and death and in this we groan being burdened and in this we know the sore conflict and often clouds obstruct the sun because of the defilement of our souls by sin and there's something else and that is we have a cruel adversary a foe who is tireless who in every possible way distresses wounds and bruises the people of God now your need in this path the strength and comfort of this blessed promise for he hath said

I will never leave thee nor forsake thee I do not wish to mention really myself but it has dropped upon my spirit at this juncture and I feel disposed to name it to you in 1932 that's a long long time ago now 42 years ago and I was in the city of London doing my training in physiotherapy and when I went to London I went with the weight and exercise of the ministry although the whole of it was a mystery to me I had a chapter and a word and

I knew it was the ministry but I did not understand the interpretation of the word and so it was with the Lord to unfold that which he did and make it very plain but the point that I wish to make was this when I reached my own city where I was born for a season there's no mistake the Lord gave me to prove the truth of the text for he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee in this way I never went to the house of God without having a taste of his love for months every service oh if only it could be like that all through life every single time that I went into the sanctuary the

[24 : 39] Lord touched my heart somewhere he was with me in fact it came to that that I really longed to be with him I was so certain of heavenly bliss he was with me I wonder whether any of you can say the same what happy days as I look back on them now I regard them as perhaps the days of his thousands some of the sweetest periods in the life of a child of God you think of it the minister who preached in that chapel as well as others but the pastor there I believe it was a holy joy to him he knew that he was letting down the handfuls of purpose for me so

I knew that the Lord had never left me nor forsaken me he's with me and you know in a moment don't you when your blessed saviour comes but this was the point suddenly there was an alternation quite suddenly and it seemed as though the angry pairs of hell were just let loose on me and it seemed as though as I viewed this I became aware if I may so say that the devil knew that God would send me to proclaim his everlasting gospel and riches and the devil knew and he did his utmost to destroy me trials developed until it was like a prairie fire all round there was no way out everything was adversity and it came to a crisis on a

Saturday night the devil said I'll have you in the Thames this will be your grave and God only knows the torment and misery and distress of my poor soul now my friends I can speak to his glory for he has said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee it's so far thus far no further the Lord lifts up a standard against him when he comes in like a flood the spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him I shall never forget the effect that had on my body I felt almost as weak as a babe well the next day the Lord's day when

I opened my eyes I thought I shall never get to the house of God I haven't strength but eventually I just struggled it seemed like a supernatural struggle and I reached the house of God and there was a prayer meeting before the service in the forenoon and I sat down in my seat and presently they asked me to pray now I knew then I want to speak to his glory I knew then for he has said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee I put my hands on the pew in front and just sort of levered myself up and commenced it seemed as if the devil was right over me but immediately the

Lord spoke and this is what he said rejoice not against me oh mine enemy for when I fall I shall arise when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me and that was a sword and the hand of faith took that sword and I thrust that sword at the devil and he was gone do I know the truth of the text indeed I do when you have your worst conflicts with Satan you'll prove that your blessed Jesus is there he rebukes him no I was free and

[30 : 27] I got this treasure in my heart this ministry it had come through you see whatever is of God comes through the furnace and it comes through the fiery trials and the floods and the flames you'll know that it's real and true because it has been proved come through and that Sunday morning being absolutely free talk about the enjoyment of the Lord's presence I will never leave the north of the saint and I thought I should be in the temps and I don't know to this day I very much doubt whether it was a literal fact but it seemed as if the heavens were filled with the birds of song my soul was singing why because he had appeared but you see it's against this background how many people do you find to die that a devil hunted devil pursued rose by satan know the sore conflict very few there's so many they seem to just glide along or over the surface not these children of

God in the wilderness the devil it is just as it was with Joseph there's the target and so with all these fiery arrows as it were and these bitter words and this venom and this malice and this enmity oh the target Joseph is a fruitful bough even a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall the archers sorely grieved him you know it my friend are you in it the arches and shot at him and hated him but his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty

God of Jacob from thence is the shepherd the stone of Israel so you see you prove don't you that he never leaves you north of the states you never you look for just a brief moment what I have reiterated there I was thousands are left aren't they and their bodies might have been in the temples but it couldn't be so would they no an unseen hand a secret prop a little faith pressing persevering and this is the point see how the Lord delivers and how he gives you to prove that he will never leave you nor forsake you speaking you know when he speaks to your soul the sword and

Satan vanquished and this is it there there was David with the champion of the Philistines he disdained him he was but a youth and he would give his flesh to the fowls of the air and David went with justice sling he went my friends relying on the God of Israel he'd prove God he'd prove the Lord he'd prove that he hadn't left him hadn't forsaken him he'd proved it he'd prove this with his flock when they put on the armor he put it off he said I've not proved this but he proved something he'd proved God to be his friend he'd proved this that when he leaned hard upon

God the Lord never left him never forsook him and this is the secret it's a matter of putting out everything that you can possibly rely on in yourself and casting yourself unreservedly upon him and you'll prove the blessedness of it for he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee and he took these pebbles oh the trust that he had in God and presently the champion was dead well there's a sweetness in this to me tonight because we proved it and the whole point is this as we have proved the Lord to be our friend our saviour and our

[36 : 31] God and our Lord and our king and our prince as we have proved this how we are encouraged to trust him trust in him at all times you people pour out your heart before him God is a refuge for us so you'll prove this with this background of temptation and then as I have mentioned knowing what it is to be stripped now let us make just a further reference to this take Jacob he was left alone Job was alone David was alone left alone but not alone why for I will never leave thee nor forsake thee not alone no

Saul pursued him to bereave him of his life he was never allowed to God never left no he covered him with his feathers and under his wings he trusted he couldn't touch him the Lord's shield was spread over him couldn't reach him no and so the day comes when he proves the Lord hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee he was anointed and he's on the throne he's come through the first and we shall prove it we shall prove it in every trial in every sorrow and we shall prove it in death for he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee this this is a sweet word what does it really mean man it means this it is his delight that you should just trust in him with implicit trust and it is his pleasure to show you his lovely face to reveal to you his glory to sustain you in the wilderness to bring you honorably and safely through to the praise of his holy name now

I want in the last section of this subject this evening just to make a comment on several portions of scripture you see how infinitely kind and tender and compassionate our Lord is to say this to us because we are poor fearful needy creatures and guilty sinners he's so kind comes and whispers in our ear I will never leave thee nor forsake thee and so you will notice one thing I refer now to the Old Testament take Moses and Joshua to succeed him now

Joshua has become the commander in chief and like the prime minister as he led them through into the promised land now this tremendous white would descend upon him this white that he was unequal to bear apart from the presence and blessing of the Lord and so the Lord inspired Moses to speak to him a most beautiful word he said the Lord said to him Moses had spoken before he died now after the death of Moses the Lord spake Moses had spoken but the Lord spake he said

Moses my servant is dead now he said as I was with Moses so I will be with thee I will not fail thee nor forsake thee just as I was with Moses you are condescent with that so I be with thee I will not fail thee nor forsake thee what a beautiful loving tender compassionate word was it not and so I believe this is the purpose of God that matured saints and old pastors and old deacons should be led of the Lord to give a kind word to those who join them and succeed them from the

[42 : 27] Lord to be inspired to give them such a word very beautiful and how this is applicable to a godly father and his children what a timely word is sometimes spoken I had an old assigned at the dicker and his son one of his sons had to go to London to the hospital to lie on his back for 12 months because of a spinal disease and he was lying on his back all that time and he was a comparatively young man with a family and a little farm and when the ambulance arrived his dear father was there and when he was safely in the ambulance his father said this to him cheer up desponding soul on

Jesus aid rely he sees you when you see not him and always hears your cry now that never left him they took him right through and he's in heaven now and you see how kind he is to speak to you that was from the Lord a father to his son inspired to speak and all through his days never lost it whatever he came into it was this verse of truth for he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee and you will notice too in the case of David and Solomon that he had a word to say to him he said this be strong and of a good courage and do it fear not nor be dismayed for the

Lord God even my God will be with thee my God will be with thee Solomon my God I think there is a unique sweetness about that my God will be with thee he will not fail thee nor forsake thee until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord say and this word is with Solomon in his kingship and in building the temple he will not fail thee nor forsake thee I want to say it to you who fear God he will not fail thee you are full of fear you may have areas of fear you may fear about your soul you may be so dark but he shines now he will soon shine through the clouds but unto you therefore that fear my name shall the son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings recently for a week or two we slept in a bedroom when we were away from home and the the sun shone in at the window every morning and it inspired me

I was fighting the east and immediately we were awake presently this beautiful sun rose above the horizon and I thought yes this is just how our precious Lord does so think of that word he has said I will never leave thee nor forsake me the darkest cloud hope pierces through and waits upon the Lord and this wonderful sun of righteousness shines and penetrates through all the clouds of fear and temptation and trouble and distress in your mind and irradiates your soul there's a word watchman what of the night the day cometh also the night you may be passing through a dark night what of the night the day cometh you'll have a morning presently you'll have a sweet time the sun rising above the horizon and presently shining in its glory into your soul the Lord will bless you he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee and then take this word in Isaiah 49 the people of God felt forsaken it's an amazing thing and

I feel that we should just refer to this but Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me you ever feel like it forsaken it seems perhaps as though you have nothing wonder if you have any religion anything that's real Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me but this is the remarkable thing and it proves that even in the darkness the Lord had not forsaken her she continued the Lord hath forsaken me and my Lord hath forgotten me why is that remarkable because she claims him as hers my

[49 : 32] Lord even in the darkest season she says my Lord and that shows the nature of faith faith never lets go faith clings to Christ my Lord my Lord hath forgotten me but he answered her I will never leave thee nor forsake thee I cannot why can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb yea they may forget yet will I not forget thee behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands and thy walls are continually before me you think of his sufferings his travail the bringing forth of his children think of his passion he cannot forget you graven on his hands divinely fear he can never forget you when he looks on his wounds he remembers those wounds are it was a long time before

I could really attempt to fathom that in any way until one day I saw it in this light that that glorious scars a warrior thinks much of his scars they think as they view their scars of the campaigns that they have been in and the victories they have won and those scars are honourable and the scars of Christ are glorious now when he views those scars he remembers you you think of it you're in his heart he can never forget you you're united to him he'll never leave you you're one with him you're a member of his mystical body so that he cannot forget you or neglect you or leave you how beautiful well

I want to just leave that word with you it has been a poor sermon but I believe we have felt a little of the presence of the Lord for he hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee amen to things happen Thank you.