

True greatness seen in gracious humility (Quality: Good)

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- [0 : 00] By the grace of God, let us continue our meditation in a verse in the lesson, which our dear friend has correctly anticipated in the hymn.
- The second book of the Kings, chapter 4 and verse 26. 2 Kings 4, verse 26.
- Run now, I pray thee to meet her and say unto her, is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband?
- Is it well with the child? And she answered, it is well. A word of explanation.
- You will have noticed that the text was announced in that form. We continue our meditation in this scripture.
- [1 : 13] For I seem to have some remembrance of endeavoring to preach from this sacred subject, Gow Street, on some previous occasion.
- That the well is infinitely deep. And the divine subject flows into our spirits with some degree of inspiration.
- So that it will be right and honoring to our blessed Lord. To seek by his spirit to draw up.
- A little more of that living water. From this infinitely deep well of divine love and grace. For the refreshing and cheering of your spirits.
- Very monumental the scripture is. And unique. We have here a trio.
- [2 : 29] Dear mother. Dear father. And the dear son. Was lying on the bed. Of the man of God.
- Great significance in that. And a very concise. Tremendously important question.
- Was put to her. Far greater significance than. Faring well. Here below.
- No greater question. Can ever be put to. A poor sinner. A mortal of the human race. Question may well be put to us.
- On this Lord's day. For known. Question. And it was a complete. Question. If you like.
- [3 : 38] It was plenary. Because it covered. The family. And it covered.
- Everything. Like a broad spectrum. Everything that related. To this trio. Oh.
- What a great question. Is it. Well. With thee. And. The answer.
- Only the Lord. Can give. His people. Grace. To. Pronouns. From a full heart.
- Under the influence. Of his love. Friends. You are the happiest. Amongst the happiest.
- [4 : 35] Of people. On the face. Of this planet. If. If. By divine. If. Divine. Warrant. And grace.
- You are. Able. To respond. To this. Incisive. Penetrating. Question. In the. Affirmative.
- For. It was. A positive. Response. And so. He said.
- To her. Is it. Well. It would. Take. A volume. Of sermons. Under the. Inspiration. Of the spirit. To endeavor.

- To do justice. To this. Small. Yet. Eternally. Important. Word. Well. And she replied.
- [5 : 33] To their question. Without any. Doubt. There was no hesitation. No cloud of darkness. Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child? She knew the little. Boy. Was dead on the bed. Of the man of God. But. Friends. Think of this. Happiness. Nothing can separate us. From the love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus. Our Lord. Death cannot. Life cannot. Nothing.
- Nothing. They were one. The trio. One. One. One in the covenant of grace.
- [6 : 36] One in the great heart of God. One. Bound up together in the bundle of life. With the Lord our God. God. And she had the complete assurance of this. Wonderful to have the assurance of faith.
- And concerning your families. And concerning your families. Oh the wonder. If you know that it is well. So.
- She responded. In this most blessed way. To the glory of God. God. Not because. She was walking.
- Or they were walking. In an easy path. Not because everything was smooth. Because they had come into.
- [7 : 34] Or. She had especially come into. A great trial. The sorest trial. The little lad. Dead. Now this is a great evidence. And potent and positive proof. Of your relationship with God in Christ. And that he has blessed you with living union. To the Lord Jesus.
- And that you have received the sweet fruits. Of his victory. And his glorious resurrection. Sitting down under his shadow with great delight. And his fruit. Is sweet to your taste. And so.
- [8 : 33] In profound reverence. Deep humility. The fervency of love. The holiness of faith. And of adoration. She thus responded. It is. Well. If I take another step. Let us on this Lord's day. Forenoon. In Gareth Street Memorial Chapel. In the heart of London. Let us.
- Listen. To that question. And in the name of the Lord. Let me put that question. To you. Is it well.
- With me. Is it well. With my husband. Is it well. With the child. What is your response.
- [9 : 33] And why. Do I wish to. Underline. And emphasize this. Because of the. Rapid flight of time.
- I don't know how many years it is now. Possibly 42. Or three years ago. Since I first spoke here. Well.
- You see. We are now in life's evening time. It will soon be eternity for us. Think of all the dear friends.
- The deacons. And the. Dear ones. Who have worshipped here. Who are. With the Lord. Now. Now. Very soon.
- It will be. With us. That we launch. Into eternity. And so. How. Tremendously.
- [10 : 33] Important. This is. Paramount. Nothing can ever. Transcend. The importance. Of it. Is it. Well. With me. I pray. Just now. Or rather. We pray together. That we might have. A happy day. A day.

With a little joy. A day. A day. The joy. Of the Lord. Is your strength. A day. When a beam. From the sun. Of righteousness. Shall penetrate.

All the dark clouds. And bring healing. Into our spirit. Now then. If you'll get that.

You'll be able. To respond. But what is the response. Now. Are you able. To join. With this.

[11 : 27] Dear woman. This great woman. And say. It is well. And could you give. This may be just.

An interesting. And profitable. Appendix. If. We will say. You met.

A genuine. Inquiry. Inquiry. Or. Possibly. One of your. Children. And they said.

To you. Mother. Father. Or they may say. That to you. In the Sunday school. What do you mean. By. It is well.

What would your. Response be. would you be able to define from a gracious living experience the meaning of this?

[12 : 28] It is well undoubtedly it is a very sacred heavenly blissful experience of the spirit in the soul that you would find almost impossible to do justice to it in defining it no doubt you would say I humbly trust the Lord loves me with an everlasting love and so it is well and I'm in the enjoyment of that love now and it is a river to swim in you might well say of the Lord's prescience and wonderful mercy and love and compassion he has looked upon this poor guilty wretched sinner and extended his clemency in Jesus Christ and I taste the streams the sweet streams and more deep

I shall drink above you might well say it is this as a perishing guilty wretched sinner the Lord Jesus was revealed in all his glory and beauty and preciousness to my soul and by faith the Holy Ghost made me a believer and I believed to the saving of my soul and I cast my anchor within the vial in him in that anchor ground and I have a living hope and by precious faith I have built my hope upon that sure foundation I feel the support and the bliss of it you might say

I taste his love he makes the bitter waters of Nara sweet he hears my prayer and sees my tears and I have the hope of heaven it is well now how many of your dear hearts can echo that gracious language in any degree I know his saving name he is precious to my soul and I know what it is to enjoy communion with him and he has taken this poor foul sinner and plunged me in the fountain open for sin and all uncleanness washed my sins away it is well now I wonder whether you're able really to find an acquiescence to any of those sentences so that in your very soul there is a well established knowledge that it is well with you let it be said immediately because we do not want to leave out any of the Lord's dear people and so it must be said that there are times when we are in some degree of darkness and sorely tempted and very fearful and there are times when doubts rise in the night and if anyone said to you is it well with thee you would find it very difficult to answer in the affirmative you would possibly say this is what I long for to know that it is well if only the dear

Lord would assure me if only he would come and drive all these doubts and fears away and enter in my breast and with me sup and stay now I shall find you so you may not be able to say this morning it is well you long to you may have said this you have said this with a feeling heart but now you may be in a path of great trial and darkness and much temptation and you're asking the Lord to renew his former loving kindnesses and visit you again fulfill that postscript of his I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you well is there a greater question in the whole world than this happy souls and you'll be happy songsters presently when you're brought to know that it is well it is well and you will see how the whole scope of this question related to not just the great woman but with that little man the quiet man didn't say anything much at all

I always think of him as a little man as it were naturally almost overshadowed by the tremendous personality of his wife but in sweet happy union oneness and she well knew that it was well with him and we have some of those characters in the house of God those little men little people they don't say very much they're very humble they're very quiet but they're blessed characters they're not in the forefront you don't see very much of them that is in a way of prominence but most gracious characters is it well with thy husband is it well with the child oh he he is dead it's well with him what a wonderful thing it is just think of it well with them while life endures and well when called to die say the Lord speaks to the prophet say to the righteous it shall be well with him it cannot be otherwise because the

[20 : 45] Lord loves you and has made you his sons and daughters say it to them in an evil day give them this joy and in their trials and their calamities and their distresses this is a word for them to solace them and cheer them and revive them and refresh them and heal them say to the righteous it shall be well with him for they shall eat the fruit of their doings that is the fruit of Christ's doings as their substitute I read it that way and also a recognition of the work of the spirit in them concerning their prayers and their fidelity and say that the

Lord has given them but chiefly they shall eat the fruit of their doings everything the Lord did for them they shall eat the fruit of it but say it to them so shall I come have I come to London now this morning to say to the righteous here it shall be well with him you may say things look very complicated and trying and dark and perplexing and bewildering I know well what that is but say to the righteous it shall be well with him the issue is well it is well intrinsically because the Lord loves you and because we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are called according to his purpose so say it to them it shall be well it's a lovely word isn't it the people that are in affliction and trial and calamity and distress and pain and yet they love and fear

God now he said say it to them tell them from me bring this tonic into their spirits say to the righteous it shall be well with him you'll prove it the issue will be blessed when I have spent just a little while on putting to the congregation this all important question and how wonderful if we have the affirmative answer and response by grace it is well she said and my friends there you have the blessed exercise of all the graces of the spirit upon the being of God upon his character and his perfections and especially the

Lord Jesus the incarnate son of God and his priestly work of atonement and his priestly activity in the heaven is now and the work of the Holy Ghost in your soul and a little of the enjoyment of his love and presence it's not something that's cold and formal it's full of life and energy and beauty and love she answered it is well now I want to take a further step this morning God willing and perhaps it will be shall we say a character sketch because there is a significance in every word of scripture and so this dear woman is described by the

Lord in a specific way a great woman and this greatness goes right through every strata of her spiritual character no doubt she was a great personality now you know in the church over many years you have those that are blessed with a great personality outstanding personality whenever you think of Gow Street you'll think of certain outstanding characters whatever cause of truth you may think of you immediately think of some outstanding personality that the Lord raised up and so without any doubt she was a great woman in this sense a great personality when it comes to gracious ladies

[26 : 36] I think of my own church in years past especially and think of a dear matron and nearly everyone called her grand she was grand very venerable and the reason why they called her grand there were several facets to it she was one of the old fashioned midwives but really it was this she was a mother in Israel and she traveled for souls and brought them forth and for instance after we will say the morning service you would see her sons and daughters gathered round her they be with grand and she would be instructing them and inquiring into their cases and their spiritual condition and she was a great personality now it's a wonderful thing this is although we have had many worthy sisters and matrons since there's never been anyone of quite the same caliber as grand there she was she sat as a mother in

Israel so undoubtedly this Shunammite was a great personality but I want to look a little at the greatness from the spiritual aspect first of all what is the greatness what is greatness in the church of God you antecede me what is it greatness is in grace or if I use these terms in the degree the holy measure of the spirit and nature of Christ that we receive that makes greatness grace makes greatness the more you see it's an amazing thing the more grace the

Lord gives one the greater they are in humility they are great in grace and they are great in humility so the Lord gave her not only a great personality and that not only do I view this in a natural way but also a spiritual way a great personality but he made her great by his grace and in humility now I want to just trace out this morning with you her greatness in several particulars you will know that Elisha the prophet passed to Shunem where was this great woman and she constrained him to eat bread bread and so it was that as often as he passed by he turned in thither to eat bread now she had great love she was a

Roman great in love she had great affection for the man of God she esteemed him very highly in love for his works sake so she was great in reverence and she was great in love in the love of God and so great was her love and her dear husband joined in this that she had the honour she was indulged and she had the plan conceived by love in her spirit to make for him a little chamber on the wall great reverence great love great affection great esteem she was great in love and how important that is how wonderful to be great in the love of

Christ for the Lord to make you great in the love of God to fill you with his love so she was great in love and then she was very great also in discernment she said to her husband I perceive what that this is a holy man of God great indisernment that passes by us continually great indisernment and if you look into the body of the text great indisernment there to discern her own condition the condition of her husband and the little boy great indisernment now let us go a little further what a memorial to that great love and affection and esteem was that little chamber there it was specially for the prophet all for him completely furnished furnished by love now then as

[33 : 26] Elijah knew the comfort and the liberty and the joy of that little chamber on the wall must have been a lovely place a bethel to him that little chamber ministers sometimes when they are entertained find a bethel an absolute bethel immediately they enter the door under the roof they find an absolute bethel sweet liberty the Lord is there so as he enjoyed the liberty and the peace and the communion and the smile of God in that little chamber you will know that he thought that there should be some tangible reward manifested to this dear woman and there is a word here that is one of the sweetest words in the annals of the church he said call her thou hast been careful for us with all this care now what shall be done for thee a pinnacle of time in the land wouldest thou be spoken for to the king or even speak to the king if she desired it do you want to be spoken for to the king yes you'll say king Jesus or to the captain of the house now she gives this lovely reply she was great in contentment what did she answer i dwell among mine own people i'm satisfied i want no greater honor i dwell among mine own people think of that as it relates to the Lord and his church that family on earth whose father fills the throne and think of it in the local churches if the Lord has well set down your feet in a church there's no doubt you have this feeling night road and treat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee where thou goest i will go where thou lodgest i will lodge thy people shall be my people and thy God my God where thou diest will i die and there will i be buried great in contentment i dwell among mine own people now these are the valuable souls in a church those who have thy divine grace such a fixation in their spirit these are my people by the sovereign grace of God i wish to live with them and die with them great in contentment not just a sort of a fair weather member all the time there's prosperity and the sun shines it's all right but if adversity comes well that's another matter you

see what i mean i dwell among mine own people Lord let me stand in my lot stand in that place stand in fidelity according to my profession i dwell among mine own people great in contentment it's a wonderful thing that are you in it you say i don't seek any honor i don't seek anything more than this i dwell among mine own people because this is an eternal thing and then what is the next reference we shall make to greatness you may be astonished they received a great blessing that is this dear son and then they came into a great trial and these things go together my friends where there are great blessings there are great trials and it could not have been really a greater trial for this little lad when he was grown i don't know exactly how old he was but you can see him as a lad and he comes to his father he says my head my head must have been dreadful pain the distress in his head and pain is terrible to bear he says my head my poor oh my poor head as it were and his mother took him on her knees until noon and he died so you see there was a great blessing and then a great trial poor soul and you entered into a great trial you see these things go together you have these great blessings and then a great trial this is where perhaps

I may have surprised you a great trial now then there's one other thing that is the Lord blessed her with great wisdom I might name a number of other facets of this greatness but he blessed her with great wisdom what did she do she took him up and laid him on the bed of the man of God as it were laid him on the faithfulness of God amen