

# So shall my words be (Quality: Good)

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Date: 26 May 2008

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[ 0 : 00 ] depends upon the Lord, I ask your prayerful attention to the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 55, and I'll read verses 10 and 11. Isaiah 55 verses 10 and 11.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so, just like those parables, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth.

It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent him.

That uneducated and yet gracious Lady Suki Harley had a word which you will not find in a dictionary, but is very explicit when she spoke of being intoxicated.

And I have been much intoxicated concerning what to bring before you this evening. Before I retired, I would sometimes walk to the city centre of Cambridge, past a General Baptist, and I would stop and look at the notice board and see what the text or subject was for the next month that would be put on the notice board.

[ 2 : 13 ] Well, that is not the way I have to walk, and I doubt if that's the way our servants present walk. I can remember on one rare occasion being given a text a year in advance.

When a deacon phoned me to ask if I would preach at that centenary service the following year, and while he was still speaking, that word dropped into my mind.

Shall a child be born to him that is a hundred years old? And I had to speak from it a year later. But my thoughts seemed to settle upon these verses and the following connection.

Our friend, Mr. Mercer quoted part of the eleventh verse in his prayer. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void.

I touched upon the encouragement for service. And your pastor spoke of the word of God, and it was also mentioned in the last hymn.

[ 3 : 25 ] But just to touch upon the preceding verses, this chapter commences with a beautiful gospel invitation.

But there is no free will in it. It is directed to living souls. Did a dead person ever thirst?

Or hunger? No. No. Only the living. And for that matter, only the healthy have a hunger.

And such are invited. To partake of this wine and milk without money and without price. Then speaks prophetically concerning Christ.

Then, for that solemn word, see ye the Lord, while he may be there. As in the parable of the ten virgins, there will come a time when the door is shut.

[ 4 : 32 ] When it is too late. No purgatory, as the Roman Catholics teach, whereby the soul may be released on payments to the church, or saying so many prayers.

Away with such error. When our life closes, it will be too late. How stands the case?

My soul with thee. For heaven are thy credentials clear. Is Jesus' blood thine only plea? Is he thy grateful runneth?

But then, especially in the context of our text, God says his thoughts are not our thoughts. Neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

My memory is right. I heard our friend Mr. Mercer over thirty years ago preach from that word of Nahum. And behold, I, he thought.

[ 5 : 45 ] Ah, how we need to beware of that. He planned it all out how he was going to be healed. Surely the prophet will come out to me.

Put his hand on the place where he covers the leper. Ah, not a barn when far the rivers of Damascus. Better than all the waters of Israel. Behold, I, he thought.

But he was heath. And now, coming to this tenth and eleventh verses. And as we consider them as the Lord enables, remember, the two verses are connected.

As the rain cometh now, so shall my word be. And the snow from heaven, so shall my word be. Returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, so shall my word be.

Who give seed to the sower, so shall my word be. And bread to thee. Now, this is a Sunday school anniversary.

[ 6 : 55 ] I always love a simple gospel. And we would desire to bring some of these things before you as parables of what the Lord sets before us in that eleventh verse concerning his word.

So, our nature, or mine at least, would like sunshine all day, every day.

Remember in scripture, for the most part, clouds set forth trials and tribulations. If there were no clouds, there would be no rain.

There would be no snow. The earth would be a desert. The seed might be sown, but it would never grow or bring forth rain.

Do we not often have to say with the poet, trials give new life to prayer. Lay us low and keep us there.

[ 8 : 14 ] In the chapter in Job, the thirty-seventh chapter, we read there of these crowns. And there are so many questions asked in the scriptures, and especially in the book of Job.

Questions in scripture are not like a politician's rhetorical questions, when he doesn't want to expect an answer.

These require answers. Dost thou know the balancing of the clans? We read much in Proverbs condemning false balances, an abomination to the Lord.

You can be sure his balances are accurate. Our sorrows in the scales he weighs, and measures out our pains.

The wildest storm his word obeys his voice, which rise with strides. These trials are dealt by white and measure.

[ 9 : 30 ] Dost thou know them? We only really know a subject when we pass through that experience. The most experienced male gynecologist does not really understand what it's like to give birth to a baby, as the mother does.

Though he may know far more of the theory, we have to pass through an experience to really know it. And then we read, Men see not the bright light which is in the clouds, but the wind passeth and cleanseth them.

The first occasion I flew from Heathrow to Holland many years ago, it was a July day, but such a thick cloud covered the sky, it was almost dusk at midnight.

The plane took off, climbed for thousands of feet, I would think of these 20,000 feet, and then it broke through into gorgeous sunlight.

And that thick, gloomy cloud through which we had passed, looking back upon it, with the light shining, how beautiful it looked.

[ 11 : 06 ] The towering, cloudy castles in the air. But for us to see beauty in that cloud through which we had passed, we had to be alive, we had to be awake, we had to have our eyes open, and we had to have light.

And we had to have light. Four things essential to see the beauty of the cloud through which we had passed. God's sovereignty, where the rain and the snow shall fall.

especially, of course, we noticed this in the time of thunderstorms. You may have passed through a torrential downpour, and then suddenly the road is quite dry, and the next village has had no rain at all.

In Amos we read, Also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest, when it was so needful for the swelling of the grain.

And I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city.

[ 12 : 42 ] One piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not wither.

God's sovereignty in the rain. And then we read of the small rain, and the great rain of history.

Think of that great rain, as it were, that beat down Saul of Tarsus to the earth. Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?

The Lord was in heaven, but he didn't say, Why persecutest thou my disciples? Why persecutest thou me?

Lord, Who art thou, Lord? What wilt thou have me to do? The great rain of history. Then we read concerning Timothy, Who it would appear from a child, That the work of grace begun in his heart, The gentle light of the Lord.

[ 14 : 03 ] But both as he fed, Both as fulfilling his purpose, So shall my word be.

And the snow from heaven. The snow from heaven. The first thing we usually associate with snow Is its beautiful purity And whiteness, When freshly fallen.

And do we not read in That early chapter in Isaiah? Though your sins be as scarlet, They shall be as white as snow.

So shall my word be. Though they be red like crimson, They shall be as white.

Is there one here longing For such a word as that? Then, If we consider individual snowflakes, And their beauty, And it is said, No two snowflakes are identical.

[ 15 : 31 ] That we must leave. But certainly you can see The multiples of three In the crystals, The six, Twelve, Twenty-four branches, And so on.

The trinity, So shall my word be. In every word of God. Then the beauty Be with the snowdrifts.

When They are driven with the wind. What beauty With the snow collectively. Then what power With the snow.

Now I'm sure younger friends Will also have heard Of the liner Titanic. Over forty thousand tons, The largest vessel Of its time At the beginning Of the Twentieth century.

And men said It was unsinkable. Seven watertight Compartments. I think Three or four Could be flooded And he said It wouldn't sink. But it is an iceberg Which was only After all Frozen snow.

[ 16 : 46 ] More than That number of Compartments Were flooded And down it went. So shall my word Be God's word Far more powerful Than any word Of man.

And then consider The iceberg Itself. And in that Connection I remind you Of what we read In Ephesians Where the apostle Writes to know The length And breadth And height And depth To know The love of God.

If we were Describing The dimensions Of this chapel We would say So many feet Or meters wide So many high So many long But if you were Describing A iceberg That snow You'd have to Use four Dimensions For the volume Below the water Line out of sight Is about Six times As much As that Which you can see How true Is the word Of God.

It would be False modesty If we did not Acknowledge We do know More of it Than we knew When the Lord First called us By his grace.

But we feel Our ignorance More now. The person Who says They know All about Such and such A subject You can be Pretty sure They're quite Ignorant.

[ 18 : 25 ] When I was In the infant School And could add And subtract And multiply And divide I thought I knew All there was To know About mathematics. But when I Studied it For another Twenty years I realised How little I knew To what There was To know.

I did know More But I felt My ignorance More. But I digress. And the snow From heaven.

I think of David's words In his Psalm of Repentance. Though I Wash me With snow Wood. Sorry, David's words Were Wash me And I Shall be Whiter than Snow.

Compare his Words with Job While Job Was still Self-righteous. Though I Wash me Myself With snow Water And make Myself Never So Clean.

Thou Shall Plunge Me In the Ditch Till Mine Own Clothes Are Poor Me. Job Spoke Of Washing Himself. David Washed Washed Me.

[ 19 : 47 ] Those Of us Who've Had to Do With Small Children You Can Send Them To The Bathroom To Wash And They'll Still Come Back Grubby Behind The Ears And Around The Neck You Have To Take Them And Wash Them Yourself.

May Your Prayer And Mine Be Like David's Wash Me Wash Me And The Snow From Heaven And Returneth Not Thither As Solomon Wisely Remarks All Rivers Run Into The Sea Yet The Sea Is Not Full Whether The Waters Go Thither They Return Again That Is Returneth Not Thither Until After It Has Performed That For Which God Sent Him So Shall My Word Be But Watereth The Earth And Make It Bring Forth And By William

Cooper's Hymn 320 speaks of this There Ye Fearful Signs Fresh Courage Take The Cloud Ye So Much Dread Are Big With Mercy And Shall Break In Blessings On Your Head The Bud May Have A Bitter Taste But Sweet will be the flower maketh it bring forth and bud firstly that it may give seed to the sun I'm sure there are many who dwell in cities who without thinking assume that all the corn that is reaped in the field is ground into flower for bread if that were the case there would never be another harvest a tithe of it has to be retained to be sown again for another harvest the Lord's servants who have been so much used over the years were once children themselves no doubt often in Sundays come and no doubt often the seed that was sown by servants in the past sown in their heart was then raised up again for them in their generation to sow it again and as I said this afternoon what encouragement there is for sowers in the morning sow thy seed in the evening withhold not thine hand thou knowest not whether shall prosper this or that or whether both alike shall be made good no mention whatever that neither will be made good but there is also instruction there for the Lord's servants and for those exercised about the matter as we read in an earlier verse he that observeth the wind shall not sow in those days of broadcasting seed by hand from a basket or bag slung around the neck the sower desired to direct the seed into good ground but if it was a windy day some would go where he had not intended it if we who menaced and waited for a time when we felt sufficient we would never sow we would never sow we have to go forth in our weakness and felt insufficiency to sow beside all waters and with that verse before us it continues he that regardeth the cloud shall not reap these days with combine harvest to sow cornfield can be reaped very quickly not so when I was young still less in the days of scripture and it was naturally desired

to reap before the rain came but they had to go forth though there were clouds having to reap even when clouds covered the sky so it is with those that sow and reap we have to go forth in our weakness and felt insufficiency indeed if any are exercised about the ministry here and I hope it is so I pray it is so if you feel self-sufficient you are not at least yet sent into the ministry when Moses came forth at the age of 40 years from Pharaoh's daughter's household as Stephen makes clear Moses was quite ready in his own strength to bring the children of Israel out but when he was eighty years of age who am I that I should go into Pharaoh send I pray thee by him whom thou wilt send

I am not eloquent neither here to fall nor since thou hast spoken unto thyself we have to go forth in our weakness and felt insufficiency and independence upon the Lord that it might give seed to the sow in the second epistle to the Corinthians we have a very solemn word he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully and don't confine sowers to ministers parents Sunday school teachers grandparents brothers sisters neighbours what do we sow do we sow good seed good seed by their fruits ye shall know them do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles give seed to the sow in the 126th psalm after our friend esteemed friend

[ 27 : 56 ] Mr. Wood had preached at our harvest thanksgiving service in 1970 I felt I had to make my exercises known concerning the ministry his text was he that goeth forth weeping bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him to give seed to the sow and bread to the eater I would like just to dwell here in John chapter 6 the Lord speaks of himself I am the bread which cometh down from him and accept ye eat my flesh that is spiritually though it is set forth in the ordinance of the Lord's service except ye eat my flesh which is bread indeed and drink my blood ye have no life in you we cannot eat grain as it comes from the harvest field if it were pure it would do our bodies no good and might indeed do us harm that grain has to be crushed in the mill and the resulting flour has to be heated in the fire

Christ came into this world and set a pure and perfect example of how we ought to live but that never saved one soul his holy soul and we emphasize his soul his body suffering to a great the greater the pangs of his mind his holy soul had to be crushed under the law that his people's sins had broken and he did in the fire that those sins deserve throughout eternity we often fear how short we come in speaking of the sufferings of Christ but one sinful thought deserves eternal fire and punishment what must the Lord have suffered when he bore the punishment for all his people's sins and those sins that deserve punishment for eternity but the punishment was compressed to a few hours in the garden and especially upon the cross mathematically it could not be done but faith believes it was done of his suffering so intense angels have no perfect sense if there is any expression of the world used as an expletive which causes me grief when I hear it and I hope it does you is when the world uses we tremble almost to say those words my God when they were the cry of Christ and the cross my God my God why hast thou forsaken me and what is the answer for the question his people you and

I if we are numbered among them deserve to be separated from God forsaken forever and ever and he had to bear that punishment in our room and place in the garden he still felt union with his father father if it be possible let this cup pass from me initially upon the cross father forgive them for they know not what they do but now not my father my father my God my God why hast thou forsaken me but he did not die in that forsaken condition it is finished father loving union restored father into thy hands

I commend my spirit bread to the eater so shall my word be and then another figure from the parables of nature we have our children's heights at six month intervals from the time they could stand to the time they were fully grown we can now compare grandchildren with their father or mother how much is your soul grown since the last Sunday school anniversary what it does it well against the doormats Peter gives us that exhortation grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ but as we consider children or grandchildren where does their extra flesh and bone and sinew come from it didn't come out of the air it came from the food that they digested it became part of them we cannot say their legs grew from their breakfast and their arms from their lunch but the whole body grew from the food they digested and it is only as you and I feed upon

Christ my faith that we shall grow in grace and in the knowledge of him though in our experience of it we are shorter than we were the year before the more thy glory strikes my eye the humbler I shall lie so shall my word be but just another few thoughts concerning grave one of the first texts I ever spoke from at Oakington there is a lad here with five barley loaves and a few small fishes that's how we felt then we feel a smaller lad now nearly forty years later but you see the powers in the Lord's hands he took that little that the lad had he blessed it he broke it he gave it to the disciples to give to the multitude he could have fed the multitude himself he fed the two of him may have directly himself but for the most part uses his servants and I've often been encouraged

[ 36 : 28 ] I cannot think those disciples went hungry when they distributed the bread to those that were sat down surely they fed themselves as well and they the multitude was set down in ranks of fifties and hundreds no disorderly clambering or snatching one from another but there must have been the last one four thousand nine hundred and ninety nine have been fed and the last one was still hungry have you sometimes felt to be that one when others have spoken of the feast their souls have had and you are still hungry if you are one of his people you too will be fed for they did all eat and were filled I think of that dear woman who despite so much discouragement when the

Lord said it is not me to take the children's bread and cast it unto dogs truth Lord yet dogs may eat of the crumbs that fall from anybody's table you look it up their master's table and it's when you're close to his feet that you will receive the crumbs I know we often feel like we three score and ten kings in the first chapter of judges they had their thumbs cut off and their great toes cut off you can't grasp very well without a thumb you can't walk very well without a great toe but they did not starve they gathered their food under the king's table David said as for

Mephibosheth blame on both his feet he shall eat up my table so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth we only know God's revealed will not his secret will it was his revealed will to Adam and Eve that they should not eat of that tree of the knowledge and good and evil it was his secret will that they should be permitted to fall that the purposes of grace should follow it is for us to obey his revealed will to us the word that goeth forth out of my mouth it shall not return unto me void in the parable of the sower we are told in

Mark the seed is the word of God the seed that fell by the wayside on stony ground and among the thorns was just as good as the seed that fell upon good ground you may say then how does that accord with this word not return unto me void but accomplish that which I please the seed was good but because no fruit was brought forth it then was a word of condemnation and proof that the ground was not good ground I trust we all read the scriptures at least night and morning but

I often feel very solemnly concerning that seed that fell by the wayside which the birds came and caught away we read the scripture and I think this applies especially to the morning when the post comes the newspaper arrives we telephone rings and we have to take up the duties of the day and an hour later we can't remember what we read there was no fault with the seed the seed was the word of God the birds of the air have come and called it away and it has brought forth no fear perhaps less so in the evening when we may wake in the night and meditate again upon that which we read before retiring to bed it shall accomplish that which

[ 41 : 56 ] I please and it shall prosper in the thing where to I send just very briefly especially for younger friends in Psalm 119 longer than any other Psalm or any other chapter divided into 22 sections of 8 verses each section with a Hebrew letter at the beginning and I understand in the original each verse began with that letter but more important almost every verse I think there are about three exceptions speaks of the word of God sometimes using commandments testimonies statutes and so on mind you one or two remember the word unto thy servant that promise the

Lord has given you whether concerning your own soul the souls of others this cause remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast caused me to hurt this this this is my comfort in my affliction for thy word has quickened me it has often seemed significant to me that the first words in scripture that Satan is recorded as having spoken were when he tried to cast doubt upon whether God had spoken Satan's first words yea hath God said and if God has given you a word a promise commandment whatever it may be don't be surprised if Satan will say yea hath God said are you sure you didn't dream it was it not wishful thinking we're not ignorant of his devices again thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path to show us the snares that lie before our feet to show us the way wherein we should walk and then especially for younger friends here where with all shall a young man cleanse his way by taking heed thereto according to thy word as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven and return it not thither but water with the earth that it may bring forth seed bud and to give seed to the sow and bread to the eater so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth it shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which

I please his thoughts are higher than our thoughts that which I please and prosper in the thing whereto I send we leave it there may the lord forgive anything amiss after the service that is for the young ones for chocolate and fruit in the bestry after the benediction we will sing the doxology let us now sing together hymn 14 the 14th hymn to the tune Bishop Saul 104 begin my tongue some heavenly stream and speak some boundless thing the mighty works or mightier name of our eternal king hymn 14 hymn

Love the mighty Girls, O my ■■■00h day, For I am Your hands, But I am your appears.

POWERITE Thank you.

[ 48 : 25 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 50 : 21 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. He's been a Christian.

Oh, my king, God. Oh, my Lord, to make you this.

And word arms Always And I Pray I Guste The Holy Sacroses of the ■■■■■ taking loath  
and the holy stables Thank thee, Lord, that thou didst instruct my parables.

Without a parable spake ye not unto them, and afterwards expound it to his disciples. So  
though the multitudes see these parables of nature, may we have them expounded  
spiritually to our souls.

[ 52 : 22 ] Forgive anything amiss in our speaking or hearing. Be with us as we go our various ways.  
And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, the communion of  
the Spirit, be with us. Amen.

Amen. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him, all creatures here below.

Praise him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Praise God  
from whom all blessings flow.

Praise him, O praise him, dear God. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God from whom allühley. Let's pray with us.

[ 54 : 19 ] Praise fold. Praise God from Holy Ghost. Praise God from whom all bearing with us.  
dersom acting with you, may the name should live far from nothing.