

God's faithfulness to His promises in trials

(Quality: Average)

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Date: 22 March 1981

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- [0 : 00] By the grace of God, let us seek to continue our meditation in the second book of the Kings, chapter 4 and verse 26.
- The second book of the Kings, chapter 4 and 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. Let us, by his grace, seek now to complete the table and call it over with you concerning this descriptive term applied infallibly by the dear Lord concerning this Shunammite.
- If she is called this great woman. And just to be explicit, for the benefit of those who are not with us this morning, we regard this as something more than her temperament, her, shall I say, caliber amongst women, her personality, we regard it as a greatness in grace and humility and love and in the nature and spirit of Christ.
- But I do not intend to reiterate what was enunciated this morning but to come now to this terminal part where the adjective great is exemplified and I see seven things in connection with this little lad and all that pertain to the promise and the performance.
- [2 : 49] So firstly they received, she received in particular a great promise from God.
- All promises from God are great. They are exceeding great and very precious. His promises.
- His promises. And they constitute a part of the very treasure of your souls. And give birth to a living, vital, spiritual exercise in your soul possibly over many years.
- So what a great promise she received that according to the time of life she would embrace a son.
- I shall pause. a love of you. Have you launched by the Holy Ghost treasured in your spirit some of these exceeding great and very precious promises.
- [4 : 09] have you one promise unfulfilled a promise that has been through the fire and the flood and you are waiting to see the blessed consummation of it the fulfilling of it God performing his promises.
- promises. For instance coming to the close of an era like a year have you been able sometimes to thank God amongst other things for promises fulfilled and performed in that year promise brought to pass.
- Be certain my friends that if the Lord has spoken to you with divine almighty efficacious power he will perform his promise.
- So she received a great promise the preacher has a special reason for naming that even today.
- Now what is the next thing? A great performance of that promise. promise. How great is the performance of the Lord's promise because to accomplish his promises and they pass through the heavy trial of faith and everything looks dark and impossible as far removed from the performance of that promise as possible.

[6 : 13] but the promise remains. Let me just say this to you. It is possible in a dark tempted season for you to bury the promises that the Lord has given you but the amazing thing is this.

A promise may be buried but it never dies. Never dies. And the divine process takes effect.

There is resurrection power, resurgence. That promise to you is made very, very sweet. Think of the interim period between receiving the promise and the performance of it in the case of Abraham Sarah.

Twenty-five years that the Lord fulfilled it. So, I must hasten, but I want to speak in the name of my God and to speak for him to you concerning his, and we can use the language in the hymnal, tell of his wondrous faithfulness.

God is faithful. If he has spoken, he will perform it. And then the great performance of it.

[8 : 00] And the performance is a miracle. He performed this, and so often as you will see in the scriptures, the Lord performed promises when the whole matter in relation to flesh and blood had become a sheer impossibility.

So that it was not according to the ordinary course of nature. The performance of the promise is great indeed.

God does it, and it takes the same God who created the universe to perform a promise.

Nothing can frustrate it. Nothing can overturn it. Nothing can make it negative what the Lord has decreed, what his holy, sacred, sovereign will is, what his promise is, which is a revelation of his will and decree and purpose, he performs.

Oh, the greatness of this performance, the miracle of it. Now, she saw that. I wonder what your personal commentary is on this.

[9 : 37] It may well be that it is secretive, that it is as yet between your soul and God. Have any in this congregation come to the place where the Lord has performed all his promises to you?

That not one thing has failed of all those good things which the Lord your God hath promised, all are come to pass.

Are you there? As it is this day, I would believe that there are a few precious souls in Gale Street Memorial Chapel tonight who would say to the Lord, Lord, thou knowest.

There are those sweet words that I treasure. They're not yet performed. If the Lord has spoken, he will accomplish them.

And now, the greatness of the performance. You will say, what is the response to that performance?

[10 : 57] I can tell you instantly because it flows from a divine operative principle concerning the humiliation, the suffering shortness of our blessed Lord God and his glorious exaltation.

What is the word? This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes. Is that a great performance?

This is how the Lord works. What a lovely word that is, isn't it? God's love to be able to look on and experience it and perhaps experience it unitedly and to say, look, this is the Lord's doing.

This is not flesh and blood. This is not man. This is the Lord's doing. Look how powerfully he has operated.

It is wondrous in our eyes. Number two, greatness of the promise, greatness of the performance.

[12 : 19] You're waiting for the performance. What is number three? I touched this in the discourse in the forenoon, in the beginning of this day, and you will not only remember it, but you have the experience of it, some of you.

The greatness of the trial that came on it. How great was that trial? Things are commensurate, really.

If you have a great blessing, you have a great trial. Great trial comes on it. You cast your mind back, perhaps over the last five years or something like that.

You've had perhaps great blessings, and it has been the day of prosperity, and you have been joyful, and possibly you had not the slightest inkling that a great trial would come on it.

Perhaps it never entered your mind. Now you're in it. A great trial. This is the path of God's people.

[13 : 47] Friends, I am not beating the air. The preacher knows well what these things are, and the most precious things in all our life, and those things that we are bound up with.

This is where we experience our great trials, the sorest, the deepest, the greatest.

Now is there some commentary in your spirit on that? A great trial. Really, so frequently, tried souls are the best hearers.

You have a case for Christ. You have a great need of the Lord to appear for you.

You're good hearers. You've got a case. And more than a case, you have a cause. It's his cause in your life.

[15 : 04] So, a great trial. I want to speak of all these things precisely and in a balanced way.

Now, there's the great trial, number three. What is next? If you look into your souls, you who are deeply taught of God, you will be able to give the answer.

God always does one thing amongst others for his dear people when they are in great straits, great trials, great sorrows and difficulties.

And so, what is number Thor? Great faith. That's it. You think of it.

Thor, the Lord had given her great wisdom to place the dear dead son on the bed of the man of God God.

[16 : 23] But look at the great faith. What did she say in all this? She said, it shall be well.

Now, is not that the language of supreme invincible faith? Is not that the victory of faith?

She said, it shall be well. Now, if you're walking in a heavy trial, only living faith in lively and robust exercise can ever enable you to even express it, to feel it so strongly in your soul, and to express it in gratitude to the Lord, it shall be well.

that's great faith. Now, how wonderful this is, great faith. There comes a time in the trial of faith when the Lord gives you this great faith to believe that the issue will be good and profitable and blessed and that he will make all his goodness pass before you.

So, she was favored with great faith. Beloved, do you not find yourself in hearty agreement with this concept, which is indeed a principle of biblical teaching concerning the Lord's people, that the only way that a true Christian can live and walk is by faith.

[18 : 25] For we walk by faith, not by sight. There, of course, the word sight means heaven, but you see, it's by faith, isn't it?

It is not by natural sagacity, but it's living faith. And although this calamity, this great calamity, had befallen them, the Lord gave her the luster and the beauty and the vigor and the vision of faith to say it shall be well.

Oh, the great grace that he gave her. It shall be well. That is to say, you watch to see the end of the thing, to see the fruition, to see how the Lord produces the issue that is congruous with faith.

She said, it shall be well. I feel as I preach here today that this word is relevant. May the Lord cause that divine power shall fix it in your breast so that when you go to your bed and rest your weary head upon the pillow, you may have a sweet sense of the presence of the Lord and be able to feel it shall be well.

it shall be well. I cannot see my way. It is impossible with men but possible with God but faith enables me to say it shall be well.

[20 : 16] Now how remarkable to see the greatness of faith. She was strong in faith you see and then the great deliverance.

You follow all those points through step by step for you know the issue the man of God coming and finding this little lad on his bed and that very beautiful detail account of what he did and he sneezed seven times oh what a deliverance and he presented him to his mother now see now see the wonder of it it was all great wasn't it the promise was great the performance was great the trial was great the wisdom was great that he gave her and the faith that he gave her was great and the deliverance was great

I will tell you a word that has been very helpful to me for some few years especially at seasons and I have pleaded this I suppose scores of times that is chiefly in secret it is this thou art my king oh god now then command that is congruous with the king isn't it command deliverances see in the plural for Jacob I have pleaded that before the Lord that he is king and would he command for nothing can stand before his command command deliverances for

Jacob and there are several scriptures that I will name to you for tried souls that the Lord is able to make very blessed to you and very relevant and very efficacious to you and a great comfort to you another scripture is and he said I will make all my goodness pass before thee and another and he said my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest and another be of good cheer it is I be not afraid and another why are ye so fearful how is it that ye have no faith and

I want to just include the beautiful language in the hymn may assist you you may have felt to be almost a determinus in some ways it is this he who has helped me hitherto will help me all my journey through and give me daily I do like that daily and give me daily course to raise new Ebenezer to his grace let us quote now another scripture this is for tried souls where the trial is great the word the Lord gave to

[25 : 07] Moses for the children of Israel at the Red Sea fear ye not stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which he will show to you today for the Egyptians whom you have seen today ye shall see them again no more forever the Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace peace well we take now a further step but you will see the greatness here in the subject and I hope that you may be able to retain some of these points meditate upon them and find their sweetness as from the honeycomb for your soul and then look on that's another good word concerning the angel and

Noah and his wife looked on they both looked on whilst the angel did wondrously now the angel is able to do wondrously for you and see the happy unity and oneness Manoah and his wife they both looked on just looked and the angel did wondrously the Lord favour you that those glorious and eternal truths may permeate your spirit and lodge in your breast so that you may find comfort and peace and strength and hope and expectation from those words they're very wonderful words well let us now as I said just take a further step the key word then obviously is the response is it well with thee is it well with thy husband is it well with the child and she answered it is well want to assess with you the magnitude and the dimensions of this glorious truth whereby poor sinners of a mortal race who deserve hell should ever be brought into the rich enjoyment of discerning personally that it is well with my soul and if I may reverently name it so a very sacred bonus to be able to discern that it is well with your husband and well with the child really when you come to assess this it's a cup that's flowing oar isn't it if you should be able to say well look here I am here's my husband and the child and we're all going to heaven we are loved with an everlasting love no greater blessing can ever be conferred upon you than this surely but I want to deal with this basic word expressing this fundamental and glorious truth it is well what does it mean it means that the lord loves you that he has looked in mercy upon you and quickened you into divine life it means that he has shown you your sinfulness and brought you to the cross of Christ it means that he has blessed you and forgiven you and united you by a holy faith to himself it means that you're on the rock of ages founded that you're in the clefts of the rock it means that all is well with your soul between god and your soul it means this that instead of a poor diseased person the lord has healed

you and restored you and cleansed you and blessed you and sanctified you and that heaven is your home that your citizenship is in heaven that your treasure is there that he is your savior father friend holy bridegroom mediator and advocate it is well can you say it now just think of the magnitude of this and as I said the dimensions of it what does it rest on there's no doubt in the history of this sanctuary many have gone out of this chapel with a rich enjoyment of knowing that it is well with their soul 49 years ago coming up to 50 years ago

I went out of this chapel with heaven in my soul did I know that it was well indeed I did I could have gone to heaven straight away have you ever gone out of this chapel with that blessing and gone home feeling persuaded and assured that you would go to ever lasting bliss and that your sins were forgiven what a divine heavenly glorious experience spiritually it is it's a foretaste of heaven well what is involved the trinity love love the boundless everlasting ineffable immutable sovereign love of God his being his character his perfections yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee the whole of the priestly work of atonement of our dear redeemer when he assumed into indissoluble union with his divine person a holy humanity became our shorty substitute when he magnified the law and restored honor to it when by the perfection of his obedience he wrought for us a holy righteousness when he atoned for our sins and drank the curse when he opened the fountain for sin and all uncleanness and prior to that when he gave his life sacrificially think of the sacrificial death of our dear redeemer it was voluntary it was vicarious it was expiatory oh the wonder of his death no this is the foundation to it is well he condescended to be buried rose triumphantly on the third day oh the glory of his exaltation because

I live ye shall live also and then the whole of his priestly work of mediation and intercession and advocacy and the whole of the work of the spirit all his sacred operations from the holy initial of regeneration down to sealing his indwelling his internal intercession now think of it all this is the foundation of it is well and so you can see the foundation that you rest upon and when you say it is well you'll know why it is well you'll know that it is because the Lord has loved the chief of sinners not his sin but his person you'll know that it is because of the electing love of

[35 : 33] God and the redeeming grace of God you'll know that it is on the foot of his mercy grace love clemency and compassion it is well how wonderful you will know that it is because he loves you with an everlasting love because he atoned for your sin you will know it is because you're in the cabinet of his grace bound up with the Lord your God you will know that it is because he has united you to himself made you a member of his mystical body you will know that it is all of grace a sinner saved by grace a blood washed soul sanctified by his pure body made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light now this is the foundation and the

Lord brings his dear people into the richness of it and into the enjoyment of it not always will you be in the enjoyment of it but I would like to make this specific point if your sins are forgiven if you know what it is to have built your hope your expectation your all upon the eternal rock you will hereafter from that day have some profound recognition of the safety and security of your soul even when you're not blessed with any ecstasy of joy you'll feel that you're resting there and you're safe but there will be days of indulgence days when your soul will swim in that river of love days when he anoints your head with oil and your cup runs over days when you have the sweet smile of

Christ in your soul when he visits you and when you sit down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit is sweet to your days and there what will be your response it is well blessed be God forgive me when a eighth is hard to help■ let a good plays■ to a as a vocal