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Sermon preached by Mr. F. L. Gosden, at "Galeed" Chapel,  
Brighton, Sunday morning 3rd July 1966.

".....They shall not be ashamed that wait  
for Me."

Isaiah 49, v.23  
(last clause)

This word brings before us a character and a promise; and if we can find the character, then the promise will have application. "For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". There is a good deal spoken of in the Word of God concerning those that wait for Him, and promises attached to nearly every Scripture refer to those characters. That comes to mind in the 25th chapter: "It shall be said in that day, lo this is our God, we have waited for Him, He will save us, this is the Lord, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

I might say that this text and subject came into my mind concerning our late dear friend, Miss Morris. I can but believe that she was and therefore, is now embraced in this text and that to which we have referred, "It shall be said in that day", and "that day" with her has come, "This is the Lord, we have waited for Him", She waited for Him for years, and there is in that word a very sweet, a heavenly surprise, at least as I view it. "In that day it shall be said", there is the promise, "This is our God", the God we have waited for these many years, "He will save us, this is the Lord, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation".

"For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". Well, we would, as enabled, look at this waiting, this character. Why do they wait? What is the cause of it? David in the 39th Psalm, in considering the frailty of human life and observing how for the most part men live, merely to heap up riches, "He heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them", and after observing the way of men generally, he comes to himself and makes this appeal unto God, "And now Lord, what wait I for?" As much as to say - Thou knowest my heart, we have seen what the men of the world wait for, am I any different? "What wait I for?" and he was able to make that honest confession, "My hope is in Thee", and, therefore, there is the response of faith. "My soul wait thou only upon God for my expectation is from Him". That is the motive for waiting upon Him, the motive of faith, because faith has no expectation from any other source. This is one reason for a waiting soul, there is nothing in this world to wait for. Is it true of us? Whether or not, if we are waiting for anything beneath the sun, we shall soon have to leave it behind, there is no real expectation, none beyond the grave, of anything of a material kind. Can we then make that appeal unto God, and say, "Now Lord, what wait I for, my hope is in Thee", and find that response of faith, "My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him"? It is very beautiful if we have that spiritual motive for waiting upon God, only we do need to examine ourselves. Can we survey this whole world and confess before God, there is nothing here to wait for, there is nothing here to satisfy?

I know these things come very close, and I do think of our young people, but I would not compromise anything, that would be deceiving them; but it is a great prayer that we sing,

"Emptied of earth, I fain would be,  
The world, myself and all but Thee".

Can we really pray this prayer and are willing for the Lord to answer it?

"For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". Those three words, look what it is that faith waits for, and those who wait for

Him have been under divine teaching and know something of their lost and perishing condition without Him. That will be more than a mere statement to those who know it. You will never wait for the Lord until you are brought to see the end of all perfection everywhere else and especially in your own nature. I sometimes feel -and more so as we get older, that the end of things is at hand, and if we are destitute of the life of God in our souls, destitute of faith, then we are of all men most miserable. We might be possessed of wealth and honour and fame, but it is but for a moment, and Moses had this faith when he had respect unto the recompense of the reward, that was an expectation, and he saw what that reward is, and it gave him to declare that he esteemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Therefore, he waited for the Lord. But we shall never wait for Him until we see the emptiness of everything else. It is solemn, yet very wholesome to be taught what we really are, it is then that a sinner, by the same Spirit, is brought to seek after and wait for the Lord.

This waiting is not inactive. It is an active principle of grace and this waiting is full of hope. You will never wait for anything of which you have no hope to possess, and hope is a very blessed grace, it is a grace of the Spirit, it has its prize in the eternal Jehovah. That is the prize of hope, and that hope wrought by the incarnate Son of God is conveyed to His people, One of His graces; and the other end of that hope is anchored into that which is within the veil. O what a mercy it is then to have a good hope through grace, and that good hope is in this waiting, and I feel it is safe to say this, that if you can detect in your own experience, in your own soul that you are thus waiting alone upon God, if you have no expectation anywhere else, then that God is waiting for you according to the 30th chapter of this Prophecy, "Therefore, will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you, therefore will He be exalted that He may have mercy upon you, for the Lord is a God of judgement, blessed are all they that wait for Him!" There you get a waiting God and a waiting people, and we might well look into our own cases and see whether we are waiting for Him. If we are waiting for Him, we are looking for Him, and expecting Him. The Apostle Peter makes this a great consolation in his second Epistle; not only are all things here to be dissolved, but he says there are those who are looking for and hastening unto the coming of the Lord, the day of God, wherein the heavens by ~~fire~~ fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, this is the point, nevertheless, whatever comes to this world, "Nevertheless, we are according to His promise, looking for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness". O what there is to wait for! for those, who being brought to see the emptiness of all created things, wait for the Lord Jesus, God's eternal Son in Whom there is a fulness of life and grace, and mercy, and forgiveness, and wisdom, and righteousness, and unsearchable riches; to wait for Him. "For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me".

But then look at some of the conditions in which they wait. David waited in the depths. "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord". And it was the depths of guilt and sin, "If Thou shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" Is there one of you that could stand up and say, I would, I should stand? But David says, "There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared". What then? Well, I wait for that Lord, I wait for that forgiveness, I wait for that mercy, I wait for Thy salvation, "My soul doth wait, and in Thy word do I hope". "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". "Hope", Solomon says, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life", and it is a mercy to know this love-sickness as did the Church in Solomon's Song; "If ye see my beloved, tell Him that I am sick of love", and there is a good deal of love sickness in these waiting

souls, and there is knowledge too, you will never wait for Him of Whom you have no knowledge, and there is love, love in it. Referring again to that sweet word in the 25th chapter: "It shall be said in that day", in the fulness of it that will be the day of death, in the sweet surprise of it, it will. Waiting souls, that have waited for years here, when they see Him as He is. It is an exclamation of joy, of surprise, "It shall be said in that day, lo, Why, this is our God, we have waited for Him, He will save us, this is the Lord!" O sweet surprise of those who have laboured long here!

It was the same with the man at Bethesda's Pool, He had waited 38 years, it seemed as though he never had opportunity, when the water was troubled there was no man to put him in and he was helpless, that is why he waited there, he was helpless, he had a case, and nothing could heal that case but those waters. The living waters of the Gospel, as they are troubled by the Holy Ghost, bring virtue into the preaching of the Gospel, and when the Holy Ghost brings a poor, helpless, ruined sinner, into those healing waters then, then that can be repeated, when you have such a visit, such a deliverance, such a manifestation of pardoning mercy, you say, "Why, this is my God, I have waited, longed for Him, long sought Him." So there is not only the fulness of it in heaven, but here below from time to time.

"For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". But waiting needs patience. It is profitable to observe that all the work of grace and the teaching of the Holy Ghost in the matters of salvation, it is all according to a method. I would not express myself wrongly, but in a sense the Lord never works anything in a straightforward way. Now you might say, I feel that is not a proper remark. Well, what I mean is this, the Lord gave to Joseph a promise, a promise of his advancement, of what should be in the future, and immediately upon that promise the Lord brings a death on it, and Joseph finds himself in a pit, and being brought out of a pit finds himself in prison, but that is the method of the Lord, "And the word of the Lord tried him". Why did it try him? Because things went contrary to the word, contrary to the promise, and therefore, there is a waiting. The Lord was waiting to be gracious. Hezekiah, when the Lord sent to him a message, "Set thy house in order for thou shalt die and not live", O how Hezekiah did mourn over his case! as his prayer seemed to him like chattering, and he was ready to give up hope and his eyes failed with looking upward, that is what I mean when I say the Lord fulfils His purposes in a round-about way for our instruction. But, said Hezekiah, when he got the deliverance, he said, "Why, the Lord was ready to save me, I did not know it, I thought He was ready to destroy me, but He was ready to save me". Now have not you found it to be so? and what wisdom there is in it. What we should like is to have no waiting at all, when we pray, to immediately get an answer. If we feel that it is time for us to make a move, we pray to the Lord about that move and expect Him to show us where to go immediately. But cannot you feel and as you look back, cannot you see all the way the Lord thy God has led thee these forty year in the wilderness, that He has waited to be gracious? And you have had to wait, wait upon Him, and what instruction in that waiting. He has worn down your own strength and given you His own. O there is much teaching in this waiting! "For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me".

Well, there are other waiting places and that is the sweetness of it. It is not all bitter, life is a mixed cup, but have you not known what it is to wait for the Lord at the throne of grace? Habakkuk, he did, in the midst of the desolations in the land threatened by the Chaldeans, "I will get upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and I will wait to see what the Lord will answer me when I am reproved of Him". And we shall always feel that, whatever we go to the Lord for we must go as sinners. We may be very mistaken

in our desires and according to our reasoning and reckoning go to the Lord to confirm some devices of our own hearts, but he said, "I will wait to see what He will answer me, and what I shall answer Him when I am reproved of Him".

"For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". And there will be definite things that you will wait for and they are all in "Me", that is the mercy of it. If you wait for the Lord, you wait for everything and there is nothing that you can wait for that is not in Him, not in heaven or in earth. O He will grow, according to that word in John, "He must increase but I must decrease", and O how He does increase in His manifestations! How He does increase as He teaches you more of what He is and what He has, and what He has prepared for them that wait for Him. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which the Lord hath prepared for them that waiteth for Him". O what there is to wait for! It will make this world look a poor place. It is good when this world looks really what it is, what the Lord sees it to be - and you will never see it unless you get a sight by faith of the contrast of what there is in Him. Heaven would not be what it is but for the glorious Trinity.

"They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". So that there will be some distinct things that you are waiting for. Some of you may be waiting for pardon. If we never receive the pardon of sins, we shall never be in heaven. Does that make you sink? Does it make some of you that long have been waiting for pardon to sink? Would I be right to set the standard any lower? You may not receive the full assurance of the forgiveness of your sins, but you will have it. If you die with the publican's prayer in your heart, not on your lips, if you die with the publican's prayer in your heart you will go to heaven. No sinner has ever prayed that prayer by the Holy Spirit but those who are forgiven. Yet you may not get beyond the publican's prayer in your dying hour; if your last expiring breath should be 'God be merciful to me a sinner' you will die a pardoned sinner, though you may not have had the full assurance of it, but it is very blessed to have a full assurance of it. Perhaps it is comparatively few that could sing the 96th hymn,

"Now I have found the ground whereon  
My anchor hope shall firm abide."

They shall not be ashamed that wait for divine pardon. You may be waiting for deliverance from some captivity, you may be captivated by some sin. We are captives to sin, it is in our nature. But some of you may be conscious of sin or sins that seem to have enveloped your life and marred your life and left a scar upon your heart that nothing can heal. You cannot forgive yourself, and you long for the Lord to do for you what is declared in Hosea, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely", you wait for that manifestation of His grace, sovereign grace over your sin abounding. Some of you might be waiting for a manifestation of Him to your soul that will assure you of your interest in Christ and in the covenant of grace, that you may know that your names are written in heaven, you are waiting for that. O it is a great thing to be a waiting soul! You will wait for the Gospel and all that the Gospel contains, and you will see and feel, and sometimes taste the richness, the sweetness of it; and when you see that the Lord Jesus is made unto poor people, weak people, despised people, base people, people that are nothing, that He is made of God unto such wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, you take that word to the throne of grace and wait upon the Lord that you might know that experience. "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". I say again - and I believe some of you feel it, the blessedness of those three words, "Wait for Me". Why to wait, if we could possess it, to possess the world would not be worth waiting for. I remember

when I went away from home, I was very small, 14 years old, and my employer said to my father, he is not very big. My father said, he has the whole world to grow in; I said this, and I remember it, (I am thinking about our dear young friends, now) I said in my thoughts, I have the world to grow in and I will see the world - and I intended to, and if I had been left to myself I should have been in New Zealand today, perhaps a rich man; but here I am, and O the painful, the painful waiting positions, but "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". Can you see more in this "Me" than in all the whole universe? I believe at the moment I can, and O how you do feel a righteous indignation against yourself when you are turned aside and it seems as though the world and its things are nearer to you than these blessed things of God and His Gospel and His grace; "For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me".

Those that wait for Him are those that seek Him, there is seeking in this waiting. Those that wait for Him look for Him. I wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning, I say more than they that watch for the morning". I wish there was more of this in my experience. We do need diligence to wait, and sometimes you will find yourself waiting for the Lord as you read His word, in the means of grace, under the preaching of the Gospel. Well, if you don't wait for Him what do you wait for? In another place this waiting is spoken of as looking. "It is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgement and to them that look for Him", to them that wait for Him, "shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation". And if you wait in the means of grace there is an expectation. I do wish that the blessed Spirit would impress upon your hearts, those of you who are waiting for the Lord. the sweetness, the fulness, the richness of these three words. I have not felt it to the same degree as I have since I have been in the pulpit this morning, that "Wait for Me". This is a voice. He speaks in His word, "ME". "Blessed is the man that heareth Me", Me. It is the same Me throughout the scriptures. "Watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors", for whoso findeth Me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord". What do you think of that ME?

O He says in another place, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" and there will be times when you are waiting for Him, looking for Him, that He will suddenly fill you, and fill your heaven and earth. Sometimes He will come and fill your troubles and your infirmities, fill your life and become the very centre of your soul, the end of your faith and your expectation for eternity.

"They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". They shall not be ashamed at last, no. In the 6th Revelation we have a solemn word concerning the end: "The great day of the Lord shall come and who shall be able to stand?" Will you? Will I? "But they that wait for Me shall not be ashamed" in that day. Why not? They will have One that will open His mouth for the dumb, they will. They will have an Advocate, they will have a Substitute, they will have an almighty friend, they will have an Intercessor. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord" and those that die in the Lord are those that have waited for Him, received Him, believed in Him, that came unto Him that they might have life. O the end must come, whether we are young or whether we are old! I have taken notice lately as we read of the terrible disasters in the air and in other ways, how many young peoples lives have been unexpectedly and suddenly cut off. I expect if we could have seen some of those young people before those disasters, they would have thought to themselves, well, it is all very well for you to talk about this waiting for the Lord and expecting everything from Him, and nothing, nothing from this world, but I have got my life to get through. I

know you have. I have got through mine, the most part, but I can tell you this my dear young friends, that if by the grace of God you are brought to see that all blessedness and true happiness and true riches and honour are in Him, it will not make you any the worse through life, it will not cut off a proper ambition, it will sweeten care, it will be an unctuous light in your understanding and that will moderate and put natural intelligence in its right place.

Well, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me". You will not be ashamed of your waiting, no, and you will not be ashamed of the Lord Jesus. You will not be ashamed or offended by the way that you have had to come. O the apostle, he knew this and made a very blessed declaration when he came to the end. He said to his son Timothy, after he had explained to him the many shipwrecks and the many dangers, the many sorrows, the deaths oft that he had to pass through, he said, but Timothy, "I am not ashamed...for I know Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day". They shall not be ashamed because they will receive what they wait for, and that is heaven itself. They shall not be ashamed because the promise will be fulfilled. They will have an abundant entrance into His eternal kingdom, and we do feel with respect to our late dear friend, Miss Morris, she was never able to come to any satisfaction in her own soul's feelings, but I believe all that knew her, even from her early days she was a seeker, she was a longing soul, and all promises to longing souls, seeking souls, looking souls, humble souls, are now fulfilled in her.

Amen

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for publication.