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Sermon preached by Mr. F.L.Gosden at "Galeed" Chapel, Brighton
Sunday morning, 27th March 1966

"Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen
thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord".

Psalm.27 v 14.

There are two outstanding features to be observed in this Psalm, one is the power of David's faith in God, and the other thing is the opposition and the enemies against which faith laboured. Evidently he was in the midst of enemies; he speaks of his enemies and foes. He speaks of a host that should encamp against him, and he also prays "deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies for false witnesses are risen up against me and such as breathe out cruelty". It is a wonderful mercy and it gives evidence of divine inspiration and manifests the wisdom and goodness of God that we have a record in the Scriptures of the work of the Holy Ghost in a troubled sinner's heart, to show how the power of faith gets a victory over unbelief, gets the victory over the world. This is the victory that overcometh the world, and everything that is in it, even our faith.

I have mentioned before more than once and to my mind there is a beauty in it, that the Psalms are addressed to nobody. You take this Psalm, and most of the other Psalms, to whom is David speaking? "The Lord is my light and my salvation", to whom is he speaking when he says - "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart?" Well, he is speaking in one sense to his companions, for in the 119th Psalm he says, "I am a companion of all those that fear Thee". He speaks to all that fear God; and all that fear God have changes. All that fear God will know the mighty influence of opposition that is manifested toward faith, the life of God in the soul, and as it is spoken of the Lord Jesus Himself when He was born, "Enemies sought the young child's life" and so, life, as we read in Jeremiah, the Lord said to Barak, "Thy life have I given thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest". O the multitudes, the evils, the enemies that pursue the life of God! but it can never be killed. AND THE LIGHT OF LIFE CAN NEVER BE EXTINGUISHED.

Well, such was David's enemies that he said, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living". That was the only thing that sustained him. Therefore, he was saved by hope. He was saved from fainting by hope; and the pilgrims in the 107th Psalm - "Hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them", it was soul fainting, not so much bodily fainting, and some of you will know what this fainting is, and yet, peculiarly, this fainting is only known to faith, although faith stands in the power of God. Yet there is a fainting peculiar to a living faith. It will never die. But O, do not some of you know what it is to feel faint? faint for want of some fresh communion to your heart? Faint for lack of living bread and living water? Faint under a sense of what you are, the burden of a body of sin and death? Faint because of the havoc unbelief makes in your heart? and deathly carnality which binds you to the earth, together with united trials, mocking Ishmaels, the reproaches of the wicked? Why without the help of the Lord we have everything in us and about us to cause us to faint, at least I feel it so. But there is nothing causes such fainting as a sight and sense of what we are; "Daily to feel ourselves undone". Fainting because the Lord is silent. In the very next Psalm, "Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord, my Rock, be not silent to me, lest if Thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit", and how many of the Lord's people are there? They cry and shout, but He shutteth out their prayers. They feel to be sinking in deep mire where there is no standing, and they faint in their souls, and they would, they would sink down into the pit except for the grace of God. It is wonderful to detect hope in one who seems to be almost on the border of despair. I have observed it, and "A Christian's hope shall never

fail". Good hope will never give a Christian up, so that a child of God will hold on his way, "The righteous shall hold on his way".

But David said, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living". So he came really to the same spot and experience with Paul, writing to the Corinthians, there was enough to make them faint in affliction, but faith in God enabled them to say, "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory", those very things that threaten to sink them in despair, under the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, wrought in them those very things - wrought in them "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen". And that is just where David was in this Psalm, and the reason why he could see them was because the Lord was his light and his salvation, and he lived by faith and was saved by hope that he believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. No doubt this ultimately refers to heaven, "Where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest". But at the same time there is the land of the living here, and if any of you are walking in darkness and have no light, there is every ground for you to trust in the Lord and stay yourself upon your God. And this land of the living here below is the Gospel. Not the Gospel in the Scriptures, but the Gospel in the heart. When the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Christ, the whole contents and ingredients of the Gospel and brings them into your soul and fills you with that kingdom of his grace, that is the land of the living, and there will be times when the Gospel will so raise your spirit up as your soul itself will be as the land of the living., as a watered garden.

Well, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living", and upon this ground, and upon the strength of his hope, he encourages those who are walking in the same pathway. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart, wait I say, on the Lord". In order to this waiting we need faith, and we need that first act of faith, "to believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him". To believe that He has a fulness of every kind, the completeness of the fulness of Christ. A very blessed consideration to faith. In all His works there is not only perfection, but a completeness. If you look at creation it is complete, there is nothing lacking. There is nothing lacking to supply the need of man and beast, and there is no imperfection. It has been a strength to faith to view the majesty, the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator, His faithfulness is round about Him and round about us if we have eyes to see it.

"Wait on the Lord". He has also the fulness of salvation. Everything that can save a sinner. He has the fulness of providence. His divine sovereignty orders the whole of providence, and

"Our life's minutest circumstance is subject to His eye".

And with respect to His people providence is connected and interlaced with the work of Grace, and therefore, in a very special way His people live in Him, move in Him and have their being in Him; and if we believe that it will give us to wait on the Lord with respect to our body, our circumstances, our souls for time and for eternity. There is everything in Him to wait upon Him for. But we need faith, that faith which knows Him. "Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope, for the Lord is good, a stronghold in the time of trouble, and He knows - He knoweth them that trust in Him". He knows everybody, but there is something very sweet about that, "He knoweth them that trust in Him". And how does He know it? The same way if we might use an illustration that your Bank knows that you trust in the Bank. You take everything and trust it to the Bank, and so you take everything to the Lord Jesus and trust it to Him. There is nothing too small to bring to Him and nothing too great, and so this text sets before us the glorious Lord in all His sufficiency, in all His omnipotent power. There cannot possibly be two omnipresences, can only be one and that makes Him, as we were trying to speak on Friday,

"The Most High" and therefore, in a real sense you can disregard your enemies and wait upon the Most High God; and when you have access to Him and He makes His strength perfect in your weakness, then you can face your enemies, "Rejoice not against me O mine enemy, when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me". You will have an answer. "Wait on the Lord".

So that it is a mercy to really know Him. After all my preaching I have had some great conflicts, there are many conflicts within, such as, Do you really know the things that you preach? Do you really know Him of Whom you preach? Very piercing questions they are. Only the Lord really can answer them. And it may be some here are very troubled as to their knowledge of things and of their religion. Well, it is a good exercise, but I would say this to you as I have said it to myself, Can you do without Him? Look at the thing in the face, the text is "Wait on the Lord", Can you do without Him? Have you a need of what He is? Of the fulness, of the blessed riches, the unsearchable riches that are in Christ, Of the treasures that are revealed in the Scriptures? Are they set before you so as that they are an attraction to your soul? Well, if this is the case, you must know Him, and if you do you will be brought into places and conditions where you must wait on Him. "Wait only upon God". You will be taught this, that there is none other that can supply your needs. None other that can forgive your sins, bless your soul. No other wisdom but His can make you wise unto salvation, or give you wisdom to direct your way. Because the life of God in the soul is a particular pathway. He, by His Spirit, leads His people through the wilderness in a right way to heaven, and it is such a way as redounds to His honour and His glory. But as we pass along O what need there will be to "Wait on the Lord"

To wait on Him is to pray to Him. To come to Him for what you need, to wait on Him for deliverance. I think we mentioned this point lately. It has been much with me in a sense of need. There is nothing really can take the place of deliverance. Helps are merciful, to have a word from the Lord is indeed a great favour, but some of you may be just here, you want a complete deliverance, "Wait on the Lord". O the deliverances that are promised in the Word of God! "Many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivereth him out of them all". Not all except one, but ALL. "Wait on the Lord".

"Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul", by faith, to the Lord, as much as to say, 'Lord, here is my never dying soul, if Thou wilt receive my soul and deliver me from all mine iniquities, from all my enemies, I lift up my soul, if Thou wilt bless me with Thy grace, invincible grace, if Thou wilt sanctify me, if Thou wilt redeem me by Thy precious blood and clothe me in Thy righteousness, then things must be right with my body; I can leave my body with Thee, my person, my family, my pathway. I lift up my soul, if Thou wilt deal with my soul everything else will be right'.

"Wait on the Lord". Lift up your soul in prayer. Some of you might feel just that point, exercised you might be about your pathway and to know the way wherein you should walk, yet to feel this, if the Lord would bless your soul then things providential must be right. And that is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. "Wait on the Lord". The point of this is, the Lord is set before this poor, dependent, needy sinner, not to wait upon any other. It is a beautiful commencement to the 5th Job as I view it. Job there says, "Call now, if there be any that will answer to thee, and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?". Well, to none of them if we are wise. It is good to have a companion in those that fear God, but the Lord will see to this that you wait only upon God. Who else can supply your needs? Who else can guide you? - in all your perplexities and your difficulties? Who else can pardon your sins? Who can bring peace? "Wait thou only upon God". My expectation is from Him. And what can you expect from Him? All that the Gospel contains, all the Gospel promises, all the sure mercies of David, all those spiritual blessings that are in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. O what an expectation faith has as this glorious Lord is set before it! Wait on Him, whatever it is; and it is for that purpose that we have those inspired narratives in the Gospel. There are cases that no human hand could touch, no human

skill could deliver, no earthly physician could cure, and so we shall find it spiritually. There are two instances in the New Testament that come to mind, "Wait on the Lord". There was the man who brought his afflicted son to the disciples and they could do nothing with him. Job says, "To which of the saints wilt thou turn?" and the father came to the Lord, and said, the disciples could not cure him, Jesus said, "Bring him to Me". And that blessed word applies to everything concerning us in every way, in every detail of your life, "Bring him unto Me". And then, when the Lord was about to try their faith and there was a multitude and only a few loaves and fishes, the Lord said, "Bring them to Me", I am omnipotent. The disciples said, send the multitude away, the Lord said, they need not depart, no need for them to go away., the Creator is here, Omnipotence is here, infinite wisdom is here, they need not depart. "Wait on the Lord", everything is in Him, and if it was not for this David would have fainted, and so should I, would lie down in despair.

Well, it is a very great trial of faith, especially when you wait on the Lord and He appears to take no notice. We sing sometimes,

"What if prayer meet no regard,
Still repeat it often".

"Pray without ceasing. A very beautiful exhortation and very difficult to walk in, but my friends, some of you have proved this, that the deeper you sink, the more impossible your case appears, the more formidable your enemies, yet faith is strengthened under the Holy Spirit so that His kingdom suffereth violence. "Wait on the Lord" with unceasing prayer.

Then this takes in providence. It is very important, our movements in life are exceedingly important, because where there is the fear of God our movements will reflect the condition of our soul, and we have instances in the Scripture to guide us in these matters. I have always been of the opinion that Lot was called by grace when he was in Sodom, because when he and Abraham departed company, Lot lifted up his eyes to the well watered plains, he saw prosperity, he saw a sufficiency of the things of this life, but if we wait on the Lord with respect to providence, we shall commit our way unto the Lord. Some people they profess to commit their way unto the Lord and then take their own way, but it does not stop there, "Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass" and it does not matter what IT it is, every one. Wait on the Lord with respect to your movements in providence.

"Wait on the Lord", too with respect to your responsibilities, families, business. O what a good thing it is to be able to bring to the Lord those things that make up this life, it is a relief. If we walk according to our own devices and according to our own inclinations, we shall bring ourselves into a desert and into desolation, but if we wait in the Lord with respect to all our concerns, the Lord will see us through. O how some who have feared God have seen His mighty hand to guide, to deliver, to supply, how they have seen Him overturn the enemy, bring their councils to foolishness. In that respect I think we referred to it on Friday, the Lord says concerning His people, "I gave Egypt for thee, Ethiopia and Sheba for thee", I can give everything for thee, I can remove men out of the way if they are in the way.

"Wait on the Lord", but especially with respect to salvation. Wait on the Lord, seek Him, seek His face. Seek to possess what the Gospel reveals that is the thing. It will be attractive to you. You look at the Gospel, the doctrines, not merely as doctrines, but the rich truth that it contains and then see whether in your soul you have a condition, wrought by the Spirit which is connected with the riches of Christ in the Gospel, and you will wait upon the Lord for it.

There may be some of you who are waiting upon the Lord for divine pardon. Well, we shall never go to heaven unless we are pardoned, and

it is true what we sing -

"If sin be pardoned, I'm secure,
Death hath no sting beside".

And what a mercy it is if that sting is removed in our experience. There are some who have been able to say that through an application of the precious blood of Christ, the sting of death has been removed, and the fear of death. But "Wait on the Lord". Divine pardon contains in its bosom every blessing of the Gospel without exception. Pardon contains in it all the virtue and benefits of the Person and work of God's Incarnate Son. Pardon of sin contains in it the whole of salvation.

"Forgiveness, 'tis a joyful sound
To malefactors doomed to die".

O guilty sinner, wait on the Lord. Press through the crowd in thy foul condition. "Be of good courage". A good courage must have a good foundation. Good courage is a good hope. Paul speaks of it to the Hebrews; "God, being willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things...they may have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before them". Therefore, the ground of a good courage is the immutable God, the covenant of grace. The grounds of a good courage are the shalls and wills of Jehovah. We will never have good courage in ourselves, it will be a bad courage, but in this good courage there is a strong consolation and the strength of the consolation is in God Himself. It is a consolation because He is greater than all your enemies, strong consolation because the precious blood of Christ is sufficient and alone to blot sin out as a thick cloud, and to make poor black sinners whiter than the snow. Strong consolation is in God.

"Be of good courage". Be of good courage even when you have impossibilities before you, and what an impossible thing self is. But O, Christ and His grace, is greater than we are, greater than our hearts. We do need a good foundation for our hope. What a solemn thing it is to begin religion ourselves, to hope in just that which we have acquired, by human intelligence of the truth, because all that will evaporate and fade away when our mortal powers fail, but a good hope through grace will hold our souls when we can hold nothing, that will be the thing. I visited a friend on Thursday, a man that has feared God all his life, eminent in grace, but he has become senile, can hardly speak or think, he could hold nothing, but O the blessedness of a true religion and a good hope through grace in his heart. I mentioned those things and the things that are unseen and eternal, and his countenance brightens up. A mercy to have a good hope that will hold us. If we have a natural religion we must hold it, and when we come to sink and all our mortal powers fail, then that hope will be rotten.

"Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, He shall strengthen thine heart". Not necessarily that heart that beats in our bosom, although I do believe that when the Lord blesses the soul He does strengthen us physically sometimes, but here is the soul, and as a natural heart is the fountain of life which sends the blood, the life, throughout our being, so the soul possessed of the life of God sends the influence and benefits and virtues of Christ in the Gospel throughout our bodies. It is the strength of faith and of hope and of love, and therefore, if we wait on the Lord and have this good courage, He will strengthen the work of the Holy Ghost in our hearts, He will revive our drooping faith.

"Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart", and he repeats it, "Wait, I say, on the Lord". What necessity is there to repeat it? Well, we have another repetition, "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoice". Why repeat it? Why, because we have this treasure in earthen vessels, and we sink again to our own place often and not only so, "Wait on the Lord"

because there is nobody else to wait on. "My soul, wait thou only upon God". And it is repeated for this too, that we shall continually need to wait on Him in the future. Day by day we have needs, we are daily sinners, we need daily mercy, we daily need the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, and we know not what a day may bring forth in our pathway, what surprises may come to us, what astonishments, what calamities, therefore it is to be repeated day by day, "Wait, I say, on the Lord". It just means this, "Pray without ceasing". Pray under every condition, pray if you can only groan, pray if it is only the upward glancing of an eye.

Well, may the Lord help us and those of you that feel faint, help you to wait on the Lord and to feel that good courage in your heart that you may be strengthened with might in the inner man.

Amen.

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