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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor

On Thursday Evening, September 4, 1975.

by J.W. Spaulding-Tyler  
at The Dickar

Lesson. Luke 2. vv.25-52.

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. Isaiah 25. 9.

This Scripture is a song of thanksgiving, known in the souls of all God's dear people after a period of waiting for the dear Redeemer, and then the Lord satisfying their longing souls. We may view it as something that is fulfilled at times in the journey of life in respect to your immortal souls, and in the exercise the Lord has put by His Spirit in your hearts, and the blessed promises He has spoken to your souls and written in your hearts by His Spirit. For whatever the Lord has given His dear people there will be a period of trial of faith; a waiting, and possibly a long waiting interim. After a season, when the fulness of time is come, the Lord will appear and accomplish His divine will and fulfil His promise. He will accomplish the living exercise of His dear people and visit them with His blessing and pardoning love and grace. So there will be seasons when the language of the Text is exemplified, and as I mentioned to the Lord in prayer, you will not always be in a state of desolation and felt desertion, but in seasons of enjoyment when you can say; "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." You will 'go forth in the dances of them that make merry'.

So we may view this as something that is accomplished at various seasons in the lives of the dear people of God here below. Think of the exaltation of Joseph after the distressing experiences he knew. Think of David's exaltation, and how he reigned over Israel and Judah. Think of the deliverance of Hannah after all the persecution and distress of her soul and life: think of the song she was favoured to sing. One may go through the Book of God: the Lord appears; accomplishes His blessed purposes and

fulfils His promises, and there are seasons of rejoicing to His dear saints. If I pause before I go further, what is your response to this? Some of you are so severely tried, and I believe there are those in the land to night who are saying; "All these things are against me." My friends, did Jacob remain there? did divine faithfulness, love, mercy and the goodness of his Covenant God allow him to remain in that dismal cell? No: it was not long before he could say from his very soul; "Et is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die." "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him."

Let me suggest to your minds one or two of the rudiments of the waiting interim. One thing will never fail; that is faith. However low you sink, however dark your mind is, however tormented you are by the cruel adversary, you can hardly look in any direction but you see what will torment your spirit, and Satan will take hold of it to perplex you,- one thing will never fail, and the devil knows it. This is what the Saviour said to Simon Peter, and the unworthy preacher has proved it. "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: - a violent tossing in a sieve. Do you know it? until you feel demented, and you can say in the language of the Hymn, (a Hymn that is not possible to announce) You know the truth of it; "Delay not, lest I lose my life." (835) The point is, the Lord said to him; "I have prayed for thee." When you get in the path you will know the wonder of the intercession and advocacy of the blessed Redeemer, of your Great High Priest. The pattern of His intercession is the same: He intercedes for you, and one of the blessed points of His intercession is; "that thy faith fail not." Your faith will never fail.

Let me demonstrate to you, first from the Scriptures and then from personal experience. Take the case of Jonah. He said; "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains...out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice...Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight, yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." That is faith. You may be in such an extremity, and you will say; "I will look once more." Jonah was delivered. "And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." That is faith. The Christian is taught to live and walk by faith. How blessed is the activity of holy faith!

A word on the experience of faith. You may say; "How does the Lord sustain the faith of His dear people against all difficulties and impossibilities?" Sometimes by giving this; just a very powerful, sweet word. He may say to you; "Looking unto Jesus," and you will look. He may so transmit to the focus of the eye of faith any one or more of His attributes. I do not wish to be repetitive: you know well years ago the Lord began to raise me out of a trial I never thought I should come through. It commenced and escalated rapidly until I was surrounded. I had no wisdom and I well-nigh despaired of coming out. Is any poor soul in the congregation to night in a similar place? If any could have seen the dilemma and agony of my soul, and said to me; "Have you a hope of being brought through these compound trials?" I should have said it seemed impossible; I had no comfortable expectation of it. Do you understand? After some weeks it came up. I was preaching at Heathfield, and the Text related to temptation and the Lord making a way of escape. "But God is faithful, who will not suffer to be tempted above that ye are able." I believe in the afternoon I began to find my soul by faith was focussed on the divine perfections of my God: His faithfulness, until as you have heard, it seemed as though the word was written over the gallery in letters of gold. I came out of the Chapel with the sweetest hope, well founded on the Foundation, that God would bring me through. I felt I could rest on His faithfulness. You must prove it to understand. I am here to night expressing praise and gratitude to God in a similar way. God is faithful to His Son, to His word, to His dear people. One divine attribute shone in my eyes; God is faithful, and I felt He would bring me through, and to glory. I could rest my soul on Him. So in the interim period of trial the Lord will bring His sweet Name, His infinite Being, character, nature, Essence within the focus of the eye of living faith, and there begins to flow strength, love, comfort to your soul you believe you will be brought to the doxology of the Text. "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." This is the secret: the point to emphasise is, a soul in the trial of faith never takes hold of or rests in anything that is shallow. You must have something from God; nothing flimsy will do for you. It is what God gives you and that alone will strengthen faith to ~~make~~ believe that God will bring you to the blessedness of the Text.

I want to refer to something else in experience that will strengthen you. How many appreciate the truth that has been enunciated concerning God's character?

"I trust His righteous character,  
His counsel, promise, and His power." (1106)

and the nearer you get to eternity the more you will be brought to the bed-rock in your soul. All that is superficial will be consumed in the furnace, and you will be brought down to the rock. I know the effect in my spirit. I could rest my soul and stretch on it. Our blessed Lord is faithful for time and eternity. Whatever you ~~come into~~ pass through you will come into; "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

I will name to you something further. It is when you are in a very deep path the Lord will give you to know the great preciousness of His speech,- His speech in the promise. If you are deep enough in the path you may have a number of blessed promises made precious to you. They will shine in the eyes of faith: they will be filled with God; with His faithfulness, loving-kindness, tender mercy, compassion, His omnipotence, honour and glory, and they will rest in your spirit as balm. They will come to you as a cordial, as a still, small voice, and so strengthen your soul. He will bring you to the blessed joy of the Text. I believe I have known it recently. I am not going back years: it is fresh. You will go on your knees, in the vestry, or wherever you are, and spread them before the Lord and plead them, and the Lord will so help you; you will so see His hand. You will feel,- and this is strong faith.- you will feel the Lord cannot deny you. You on the other side cannot take a denial: it is impossible. If the Lord fails you His Name will be sullied, and that is impossible. How many of you are in deep enough to understand? This is the soul that will enter the Text. You will come where the Lord appeared for you, and to those who are spiritually taught, you will see a whole range of truths in the Text.

I will give you a leading thought. There are three main areas for His dear people. One is what you are passing through in a deeper path of trial. God only knows. You see poor souls in the pew: their words are few; the Lord knows what they are passing through. There may be one or two here;

God only knows the depths you are in. So this not only refers to a single matter: it may be as the Hymn says- "When united trials meet," and you say; "Lord, do not go too far." "If I have more I shall go down." He knows. This soul He will deliver, and before He does you will know He will. This takes me back to Horam yesterday. You come where Job came in the midst of his distress, when he said; "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." and he knew in his soul that God would bring him forth, and you will. You may go to a divine service as black as midnight, and you go out knowing the Lord will bring you through. The word breaks you to pieces, and you know the Lord will bring you out. Do I touch any here? "It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all." You take hold by faith. It is as though the service is for you: it flows straight to your soul. The Lord will bring you through. O those precious words, when He said through Moses; "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." This relates to the sore distress of a child of God. You will come to; "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him." O the rejoicing!

Another area, although they are interlaced, is the area of prayer. "Those oft-repeated, broken prayers." (705) You have groaned, cried, pleaded, wrestled with the Lord for things He has laid in your heart. I do hope the Lord will receive my gratitude and praise to Him for the Throne of Grace. Jesus reigns, and He welcomes us to the Throne of Grace, because, particularly at times, we live at the Throne of Grace. It is wonderful to feel, when you are cut off from human aid and all props are removed; all seems against you and the devil roars, you have the Throne of Grace. Satan suggests;

"The Lord has forsaken thee quite;

Thy God will be gracious no more." (293) and you suffer being tempted, and the Lord gives you a sweet time at the Throne of Grace. You get up from your knees, and you go back scores of times, pleading with Him. This may cover a concentrated season of weeks, months, years. The case is exacerbated during the years. The Lord knows. What shall I say to you? This; "Our Joseph turns aside to weep,

But cannot long refrain." (308)

Presently He will make Himself known to you; He will discover His face in the cloud, and you will say; "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

"What ails those eyes bedewed with tears?  
Those labouring sighs that heave thy breast?  
Those oft-repeated, broken prayers?  
Dost thou not long for Jesus' rest?  
And can the Lord pass heedless by,  
And see a mourning sinner die?"

My friends, He will appear for you. What a time of joy you will know, when the Lord clean delivers you and answers you in a blessed manner and measure that exceeds all you ask or think! This is a word for those who are much in prayer. I cannot express adequately to you the wonder of the hand of the Lord. You are in things most precious to you, and it is as Martha said; "It is beyond. If only the Lord had come when we sent for Him! Lord, by this time he stinketh." as though she would say; "It is impossible for anything to be done." I wonder if one soul in the Chapel knows what this is? This is a word for you. Jesus said; "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" He brought them to a blessed time. "This is our God; we have waited for him." You will never wait in vain. If you could see the blessings the Lord has laid up for you in the Covenant of Grace, which He has wrought for them that trust in Him before the sons of men! what He will bestow on praying souls! When I awoke this morning this word was with me;

"Still pray, for God will all explain,  
Nor shalt thou seek His face in vain." (377)

I thought, I can rise with that word. It is a good word.

"Still pray, for God will all explain,  
Nor shalt thou seek His face in vain."

This soul He will appear for. Look, my friends, at the case of father Israel,- Jacob, as he then was. Esau was coming to meet him. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of

the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh." But he had not obtained the blessing, and that is where you are. You have not obtained the blessing. "Let me go." and to you it is as though the Lord would go, and you have got no deliverance. He said by faith; "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me....And he blessed him there." As he met Esau his countenance was not of enmity, but of amity. "I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me." "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." The Lord appeared for him, and He will for you. What about a tribute of praise to night? He has appeared in things you have been in, in such a manner and measure that exceeded all you could ask or think.

"Let us now our praises give;  
And, by sweet experience taught,  
Call upon Him while we live." (397)

He is a faithful God. Do you know? He is your faithful, unchanging Friend, and the Scripture by the power of the Spirit to you in the depths, takes on a new meaning. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Take the Scripture I mentioned at the grave; "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." So, praying soul, you will be able to say; "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Amen.