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Sermon preached by Pastor J.W.Tyler.

on Thursday Evening

January 24. 1974

Lesson. Judges 6. vv.36-40 & 7. vv. 1-18.

I will go in the strength of the Lord God. Psalm 71. 16.

This blessed word of holy confidence inspired by the Holy Ghost in the soul of the Psalmist has been breathed a little into my spirit, so I must venture on God to expatiate on it. It is certainly relevant to all those who fear God. "I will go." That is to say, "I will move forward in obedience to the divine command. I will go in the strength of the Lord God."

The Psalm belongs to his old age. He says in verse 18, "Now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not." So you may see how appropriate the word is for those in their last days, and when David was saying, "I will go." what was he thinking of? My friends, he was in sight of the river, approaching Jordan, not far from crossing.

"Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours." (1022)

He had lived nearly all his days in the secret of what he now uttered. He is saying as he viewed the last few miles of the journey and the banks of the river, and death itself, and having a glimpse of the happy shore he would land on, and being under an experience of divine blessing in his soul; "I will go forward to the river, to the icy waters. I will go because there is a blessed prospect the Lord has set before me. I will go in the strength of the Lord God."

I wish to take up as assisted the whole principle of truth embodied in this word. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." First, there is no question of the word applying without commandment or without a view that is requisite to a child of God. For instance,- I will immediately be explicit. "I will go." When did you say it? What did you mean by it?

My spiritual understanding immediately concentrated on the time when our Lord Jesus, our blessed Redeemer conveyed to His disciples what they were erstwhile ignorant of. They loved Him because He first loved them. They loved His sermons, they were amazed at His miracles, they delighted in His communion and fellowship, they enjoyed His physical and spiritual presence, but they were ignorant of the basic fact that He was on a journey. "I will go." He was on a journey from Bethlehem to the river Jordan and through the days of His public ministry when He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." (Acts 10.38) He was on His way to Gethsemane. "I will go." He was on His way (as we had last Thursday) to drink the cup of wrath due to us. "I will go." It overwhelms my spirit to contemplate Jesus going. "I will go." No one other than myself is able to go, the Son of God incarnate." He left the heavens and dwelt here incarnate, assuming into indissoluble union with His divine Person a holy humanity so He should go. That is the foundation of it all. "I will go. - Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psa.40. 7-8) What a word!

"Then said I, Lo, I come. I will go." Think of Jesus leaving the bright realms of bliss; think of His infinite stoop. "I will go." You thought of it in application to you personally, but it must have a foundation. "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." (Isa.63,3) "I will go." So He went from the heavens, assumed a holy humanity in the womb of the virgin at the moment in time of the immaculate conception. And "I will go to Calvary to give My life; through all the ignominy, shame, spitting, scourging, buffeting; I will go." He has been and He has returned to glory on high. "I will go." If we were able to concentrate spiritually on this you would soon find Him in your soul. You are not alone. "I will go as a poor man. I will go to pay the debt, stand as Surety, bear the curse of the law, the fiery wrath of God, the vindictive anger due to the sins of My people as imputed to Me. I will go to restore honour to the law by My perfect obedience as My Father's servant. I will go to shed My vital blood. I will go to give My life voluntarily; to lay it down for My sheep; I will go to the grave. I will

go." you need not fear it because Christ has gone before you; He has removed the sting and terror. "I will go." He rose on the third day: He continued with them for forty days and ascended into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God, from whence He will come to be our Judge. "I will go." Is that a good foundation?

Christ has gone in the strength of the Lord God. Part of the unfathomable mystery of the humiliation of the Lord Jesus is that He condescended to know a pure weakness, so it was needful for Him to pray with strong crying and tears to His Father, and He held up the Man Christ Jesus. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." (Isa. 42.) He held Him up. So in His infinite stoop He condescended to know a pure, holy weakness so He should be upheld by His Father. This is where the Lord will bring you to some of the closest fellowship with Himself. There is a beautiful hymn that relates to Christ's agony. (153) It says that He

"Bore all incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."

He fell to the ground in Gethsemane beneath the insupportable load. We know it, and the Lord brings us to live so. There are things you cannot communicate to your friends: it is better to confide in the Lord. You have strength enough, and ^{none} to spare, and you know you are upheld by the Father. This is where you come into wondrous fellowship with the Lord Jesus. This is not appreciated in spiritual youth and vigour. "He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days." (Psa. 102.23). This is a process of bringing you very low. "I was brought low, and he helped me." (Psa. 116.6) We never know how low the Lord will bring us. It is so we know a greater volume of His pure strength. He brings all nature down.

I must fulfil what I initially promised you. It is this: concerning Christ revealing to His disciples what was hidden from them. I will say this; if you have known a revelation of the glory of Christ (you will have further revelations, but you know that glorious Person) you are not ignorant of Him. "This same Jesus" you recognise. Often revelation infers an uncovering of what has been hidden from you, so something had been hidden from the disciples. They did not seem to know that Christ was going to Jerusalem to suffer and die. Peter said to Him; "This shall not be unto thee, Lord." yet his very salvation was pendant on it. So ignorant

was he, he said to the Lord; "This shall not be unto thee." So the Lord revealed that He was on His way to Jerusalem in His thirty-third year to be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they should crucify Him, and He should rise again on the third day. What point shall I take up of the holy doctrine, and lay hold of in your experience? He turned to them and said; "If any man will come after me, - Are you coming after me? What is your part if you are coming after me? - let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." "I will go." You who have vital experience are able to put your finger on it. You will remember the period in your spiritual life when these things were made clear to you, and the Lord showed you there was a cross to carry through your days. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." This is where the text comes right in for this soul. You are not ignorant of the true meaning of the life of a Christian in following your blessed Redeemer. You knew there was a cross to take up, though you little knew of the dimensions and the full weight of it and what it was compounded with. There are many things go into your cross.

One of the sweetest things you ever know on the face of the earth is; "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." (Psa. 110. 3) There was a time when you were made willing to take up your cross. How will, - how do you carry it? How is it possible for you to carry it? "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." This is the only way to carry your cross. I spoke about the compound and complexity of things; I will name a few. If you know a Saviour's love and have had a taste of heaven in your soul it is a cross to you to live in the body. It was remarkable yesterday at Heathfield on the case of the mad Gadarene (Luke 8.35) He was so wonderfully delivered and blessed. Presently all the people desired Him to depart from the southern shore, and He did. When He was about to leave, the dear man, full of the wonders of redeeming love and the amazing grace of the Lord that saved him, wanted to go with Him. He could not bear the thought of Jesus going, and seeing the boat leave the shore. You see, this is where I can take up the very marrow of your experience. When Christ delivered and blessed you, the time came when it was as if He ~~was about to~~ departed, - not as to your safety and

the indwelling of the Spirit, but as to the enjoyment of having the Bridegroom with you. He got into the ship. I know how I was. It was not a matter of desiring to go; I felt persuaded I was going. It never dawned on me I was not. I felt any moment I should be the other side in glory. Do I touch you in this? Is not this really so every time the Lord draws near and favours you? You have a few things to wait for, but you know a mighty urge in your soul to go with Him. No: He said; "Go home to thy friends and tell them. There is a work for you to do." He made him a great preacher. It was as though He said; "You will come presently: not yet. There is a cross for you to take up, and in taking it up and following Me, in your path you will come into the blessed fellowship of My suffering and know the power of My resurrection, being made conformable to My death. This is something I did not recognise fully at the time. It is as though the Lord says; "Look, My child, wait a little longer. I will come for you and receive you unto Myself." and He will for all who wait for Him. What a thought! "Waiting for our Lord's returning." (1063) "It is a rough path for you to tread, but you will know My strength." This is it. So I believe I may say in analysing the matter, there are those who are in the interim period. You have known the time when you ~~were~~ were nearly there, but there was a path for you to tread and a cross for you to take up. You are waiting for Him to come again. I know this because your countenances sometimes portray it. There is an ethereal happiness brought into your spirit in anticipation. This is the secret. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." I believe this to be the marrow of the subject.

There are several other things to refer to in general terms. I said at the outset, this question of going is obedience. It is the sweet filial obedience of a child. Very wonderful!. There is a summary in the hymnal:

"Let terrors fright the unwilling slave,
The child with joy appears;
Cheerful he does his Father's will,
And loves as much as fears." (252)

This is it. So "I will go" is sweet filial obedience to the Lord. Whatever He calls on you to do for Him, in His Name, in His blessed service, or to suffer, or take up a load of responsibility, or trial or affliction

there is the sweet willingness of a child.

"I will go in the strength of the Lord God." I should try to lift up before you some of the principles of the text. For instance, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." Why? Why is this the divine will of God that His dear children should only go in His strength? Why? You may say to me; "Look, as far as I know I am absolutely fit. I am strong in heart and limb. Why not go then?" You ought to know what we read as our Lesson. Did He let Gideon go? Not until he was brought right down. There was a divine purpose in it, so He should have all the glory. That is the answer my friends. What about Moses, that great prince? Why not let him go when he was forty years old? He was too strong. He went at eighty, and he did not want to go; not because of any lack of desire to obey and love and fear Him, but the Lord brought him so low. "Who am I?" This is the divine process, and so I say the divine reason why you must go in the strength of the Lord God is so He shall have all the glory, or you would take a portion of it yourself. "The people that are with thee are too many for me. They will vaunt themselves." He brought them down to three hundred men. The Lord will see to it that He has the glory. That is why it must be in the strength of the Lord God. So there is a process in the teaching and work of the Spirit in bringing us low. We are stripped, emptied, brought into affliction, trials, and many things as the Lord uses them to bring us into a low place. It is all for our good. It is wonderful to be brought low and to know the Lord helps you.

Take the ministry of the gospel. External appearances can be deceptive, but if a man runs from the vestry, and runs up the stairs into the pulpit what would you think? "This is a dry breast. The poor man cannot come where I am. I am under the seat in my feelings." The Lord brings us so low, and we have to live low, and presently we come under the Table where you are. I bless God for this. It is painful and agonising to pass through, but it is so wonderful. "Tis He supports this fainting frame." You feel those blessed, everlasting arms under you and you are resting in them. They will carry you through, and you will not fail to sing His lasting praise on high. So this is the great purpose of God in bringing us low, so we shall be emptied of what is impure, and filled with that

which is holy and pure.

"I will go in the strength of the Lord God." When The Lord said to Moses; "I will send thee." Moses said; "Who am I?" Look what he received! The Lord said to him; "Certainly I will be with thee...I AM." This is one of the greatest words in the Bible. "I AM. Jehovah hath sent thee." and in that strength of Jehovah's he went. I could say to you dear people who love and fear God, there is no fear concerning your being brought through. You will prove that He will never leave you nor forsake you. He will bring you through trials and sorrows and help you to bear every load and presently you will be on the happy shore. The Lord favour you to feel the confidence of faith.

"I will go in the strength of the Lord God." I will say something that is personal. I am reminded of the time when I was led to follow the Lord in holy baptism. When I found myself, as in a dream, waiting to be called to speak to the Church and having a while to wait because there were two others before me, I had only one prayer which was inspired. All I could say was; "Lord, empty me of myself." and presently I was called. As I was called the Lord answered that prayer, and He said from heaven with such a degree of divine power that overwhelmed me; "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." I felt I had nothing to do but to stand before His Church and open my mouth and He filled it, and I knew it was the Holy Ghost. I knew I was not the author of one word: it was spoken through me. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." That is the secret. I know it is painful, but do not be afraid of being emptied, of the Lord bringing you low, and of the deep waters we know of. It is three years ago to day I went through some of the deep waters in Westminster. You see, the whole thing is, and you will prove it, before I stepped into those waters the Lord came. That is the secret. So when they came to get me ready I knew I would go in the strength of the Lord God, whether it meant to live or to pass into eternity. You are ready. You will know it in your path and life. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." O the willingness to go! "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." You see, it is when you are brought to the lowest places you find and feel that underneath are the everlasting arms, and you will feel them and rest in them.

You rest all your weight and your soul and body and all dear to you and the Church of God in those blessed arms. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God. Amen.