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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor  
on Thursday Evening, November 7. 1974.

Lesson. Deuteronomy 8.

Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. Psalm 90. vv.15-17.

Let us make it clear to our dear friends, we well realise it will be impossible to do justice to these three verses, but we have read the whole of the passage so we have a background for spiritual meditation and fervent prayer, and so we may perceive the divine revelation concerning the very nature of that which will compensate the people of God graciously for all the trouble, distress, pain, affliction and evil they pass through in this time state.

I want to say <sup>at</sup> once, the marvellous principle in it does not arise from Sinai: not from the holy law of God as delivered on mount Sinai. It is a most amazing, stupendous, and overwhelming principle of grace that flows from God being propitiated, and God and sinners reconciled: it flows from mount Zion. When you come to contemplate, ~~knix~~ in the oldest Psalm in the Book of Psalms, written as inspired by God, by Moses the man of God, is this impassioned plea and appeal to God. It is an astounding prayer, that sinners called by grace, and blessed with a sacred revelation of the glory of Christ are able, on consideration of all the days in life wherein they have been afflicted with various facets of affliction, and the years wherein they have seen evil, - evil here is adversity, - that they have liberty to go to God and ask Him to compensate them; to put something in the other scale-pan. In this scale-pan they have all affliction; the whole compound; all adversity. I expect you feel often there is enough in the scale-pan to take you to the grave, and it is a miracle of divine grace that you survive. The miracle has been expressed as we prayed together; "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day," or the compound of affliction and evil we have seen would take us to the grave. Am I speaking the truth?

Look at the wonder of it! to be so divinely instructed by God. There is nothing nebulous or hazy about it: it is well-founded in revealed truth, and on the principle of the gospel; to be able to go to the Lord and fervently plead with an impassioned plea; that is, of the deepest feeling; something that is unfathomed; that comes right out of the soul up to God. Think of the wonder of it! to be able to go to God, and on His own promises as laid in His word, in the Covenant of Grace, in all the promises and blessings of the

promises, and you are able to plead with blessed liberty, knowing He cannot refuse or He would deny Himself, and ask Him of His mercy and grace to compensate you. That is a summary of the whole passage. "Lord, look on my affliction and my pain; on all the days wherein Thou hast afflicted me.--I am not murmuring: it has been in mercy and love to my soul, - and the years wherein I have seen evil. Now, dear Lord, compensate me."

I hasten to say immediately, the whole force of wonderful examples of how the Lord led, taught, disciplined and favoured His people whose lives and biographies are found in Scripture will be a wonderful encouragement to you. They are a demonstration of the Lord's will to do this. "Look, here are things in the scale-pan. Lord, now put blessings in the other scale-pan that will make amends for all." What I hasten to suggest to you, and believe to be the truth is, when I use the term; "Make amends for all." you are thinking of the hymn;

"The joy prepared for suffering saints,  
Will make amends for all." (337)

and this is true. But this goes beyond. "Make us glad, - compensate us:" this is taking place, or beginning to, before we leave this world, and we have the wonderful support and example of Biblical saints. I should say here, the glorious revealed truth and holy doctrine of the Saviour Himself is the foundation.

Look, you are going along with me: are there those here who have affliction and adversity, and we well know what this is, - you have deep sorrows, trials, troubles, and you are asking the Lord to compensate you. What are you doing? You cannot base your plea only on Christ Himself, and there you see the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. There you see One who was despised and rejected of men: you see Christ in all His humiliation, the ignominy of His death, all the shame and spitting, all He passed through to the cross. - "Make us glad" Was Christ made glad? When He rose on the third day, triumphant from the tomb, do we see Him a Man of sorrows? No! Is He bowed to the earth beneath His load? No! the load has gone. We see Him in all the holy, perfect serenity, lustre and beauty of a dear Redeemer who sees the travail of His soul and is satisfied. We see Him in all holy joy, and His presence fills His disciples with joy, and He ascended to heaven with joy, and took possession of it. That is your foundation.

"Make us glad according to " If I spend a few moments on this it is to say a child of God in prayer, under divine teaching and revelation must have ground for what he pleads. God gives to them spiritual intelligence, and as they see Christ and His victory the solid Rock is under their feet. They have a glorious Exemplar, and they are able to go to Him, not in a hazy way; to go to Him on solid ground. Christ is risen: His load has gone. He drunk the curde; expiated sin. From this principle derives every deliverance, in

the completeness and finality of it. I quote from the wonderful revelation and inspiration given to our own apostle as he delivered the truth in Hebrews 12. He tells us with all Christ passed through, - all He passed through, and reverently I suggest, obviously from all eternity there was a joy set before Him. As He assumed a holy humanity there was a joy set before the Man Christ Jesus. He had a sea of suffering to pass through, but beyond, the other side of the cross and the skies there was a joy set before Him. That is the solid basis of this plea. "Make us glad according to," "Lord, put these blessings into the other scale-pan, so they may more than compensate us on the basis of grace for all the misery and sorrow we have passed through." Does this plea help you?

Again I emphasise the point that this is taking place and there is a beginning of it here below, and the full flower of it will be within the veil. I am sure some of you, who are in deep trouble and in the understanding of it, this will make your soul leap in you, that you might in the last few days of your life see that and enjoy what will more than compensate you for all you have been through. You will know from your experience and from spiritual observation and communion with the saints, many of the Lord's dear people who have seen such a fulfilment in their last days have expressed this concept and feeling; "Now the dear Lord has done this I feel I can depart." It is with you to think in the words of father Israel when he said; "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive." He proved the beauty and fulness and force of the three words placed together; "It is enough." Have you ever been able to say it? If you have Christ you will be able to. You have these blessings so interwoven with your own exercise and all you have passed through

So could Israel have died shrouded in the mystery of the loss of Joseph, as he believed? No: he is alive. "It is enough." I hasten to say to you, there are two things in this. I can never believe he said; "It is enough" just on the basis of Joseph being alive: there was more in it. He must have had Christ. He had come out of the clouds of darkness, fear and despondency and distress, and he had the bright and clear shining of the Sun of righteousness in his soul, and Joseph was bound up with it. So I say to you, dear friends, it is clear to me, according to judgment and understanding from the Scriptures, that the dear saints of God have the beginning of it here. I am sure this will cause your heart in you to plead fervently with the Lord in your last few days, - the residuum of days, (and I am in it myself) that He will make you glad according to "

I do not propose to bring myself before you, but in here I know what would make me glad, and so do you. If I give you a general guiding line, what will make you glad? What has the Lord taught you to pray for over many years? What is the burden of your groans and cries every day and night of your life? That is where the secret lies. What is this the Lord sees in your heart?

"Make us glad"

So this is a most beautiful, wonderful, stabilising, and comforting, and cheering, and revitalising truth to the people of God. It will revitalise you, it will stabilise you; keep you steady in trial, so you have a measure of serenity in the storm, Why? Because whatever the Lord sees fit according to His decrees and to the promises He has written on the fleshy tables of your heart, He has set a joy before you.

Let us try to look at two terms used by Moses; "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us," We might speak on the word '~~afflix~~ affliction' until midnight. It is a comprehensive term. Affliction is that which is distressing, painful, trying to you: and you see all the facets of affliction; your body, your poor soul; afflictions in the family, in your mind and spirit; relatively, Churchly; - it is a tremendous field. It means the things that give you pain, incapacitate you, make you bow to the earth beneath your load; "The troubles which I meet." "The days wherein thou hast afflicted us." You find the choice people of God in this path. Afflictions are peculiar and singular to you: you walk much alone. You find, and I say this with the greatest propriety and decorum; you might be a member of a large family, but the afflictions you walk in you cannot speak to any one. There is not a soul on the face of the earth you can really open your heart to. You tread in your soul the darkest paths alone. It is affliction, and it comes. It is the hand of the Lord.

So, "the days wherein thou hast afflicted us." What days they are! Times when there are two or three troubles converging in the same period. It is an amazing thing: you might consider in the days when you are at ease, if such trouble developed you would say; "O Lord, by these things men die." When you come into them you begin by the grace of God to realise as the Lord sanctifies them, your soul lives. There is life in your prayers, more than for a long time. There is real appetite for the gospel, and Jesus Himself draws near, and there is a sweet sense that underneath are the everlasting arms. You are drawing close to Christ. "Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near. This is opposite to human sagacity. The Lord brings to your soul cordials to revive you. He brings peace.

"When thou canst no deliverance see,  
Yet still this Man thy Peace shall be." (925)

You find He sends messages to you from the pulpit. Your Bible is a new Book. How wonderful it is! These are the days, and if any said to you from an outside point of view; "We are sorry for you. We should not wish to be in your lot." you could look on a duchess or a millionaire and you would not envy them.

"Yes, affliction is their lot;  
Earth is a polluted spot." (616)

but in that tribulation you have the presence of Christ.

So already the principle of compensation you begin to understand. Take the principle as named by our own apostle in 2 Corinthians 1. He says; "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." I tell you one thing, the flesh does not like to face this. You want the blessing without the trouble. The Lord has always put the two together. You might say; "Lord, give me a special blessing." and your flesh says; "Lord, I do not want trouble." All the promises of the Lord's presence and blessing relate to a form of trouble. I could say to you to night, Happy soul! Why? "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." + because you have Christ and He will compensate you. The days of affliction will be many and varying.

"Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." Clearly Moses had reference to passing through the wilderness, as we read, "that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought." What a passage that was through the wilderness! This fertile Isle,- is it a wilderness? Not God's creation. Sin has done it, and the devil,- the curse of God for sin. You see, the years wherein we have seen evil. The wilderness passage was in contrast with the Land of Promise,- a beautiful land. I have never been to the Holy Land, but it is one of the most,- perhaps the most beautiful of the whole earth."A land flowing with milk and honey,- fruit and grapes, oil olive; and all in contrast to the wilderness. It is heaven, if we use the metaphor. It is not a perfect type, but it is a type of heaven. "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." -adversity.

"Make us glad according to," As you know, it means 'commensurate with'. There is another facet. "According to; in harmony with,- what? The Nature and Essence of God; love. God is love. In harmony with the tender, loving heart of Jesus Christ; with the victory of Christ; with the Covenant of Grace, and all the promises and blessings thereof; with the promises God has given you; with the gospel of redemption, preached every Sabbath Day.

"Make us glad." For instance, if the Lord never makes you glad, you exercised souls passing through days of affliction and years of evil; if the Lord never makes you glad you will lay it on my bed, and say; "The whole tenor of your ministry was that God would make us glad, and we missed it, so what of your ministry?"

"Make us glad according to " accordingly happy; full of joy. What will do it? Christ. A peculiar joy, and deliverance, and answers to your prayers you so long for. I will give you a few demonstrations. I have named Israel. In his last few years the Lord made him glad. Joseph was alive.

What about Job? Mark you, my friends, no child of God escapes. There are these days wherein God afflicts us, and the years wherein we have seen evil

If you are a child of God you will come into it. There is such a thing as being at ease in Zion, and a child of God comes into this, and days of fleshly ease pass. Job came into this. His house and possessions, and all that might have appeared as a citadel.-Adversity swept over the plain, and it all crumbled, but the root of the matter was there. What do we read? "Make us glad according to " "The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." What a wonderful latter end! He had twice as much as before.

Think of Joseph, with all his distresses and trials. Did the Lord make him glad? Did He accomplish the revelations He gave him?

Think of dear old Naomi, so sorrowful she did not want to speak. She felt her name was changed completely. "Call me Marah.". Even in her case the day came when the Lord made her glad. She took the babe to her bosom, and it was more than Obed: it was Christ, her Saviour. "He shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age."

And this will waft you to glory within the veil. Think of the glorified saints now: think of their entrance into bliss. "With what raptures He 'll embrace us! Will this make you glad? will it compensate you? And think of the glorious resurrection! To me, although the devil pursued me till I began to speak, this has been sweet. "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." Blessed be God. Amen.