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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor
on Thursday, April 23, 1981.

Lesson. Genesis 48.

With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation. Psalm 91.16

Though perhaps diffident we are assured that this is a congruous word for the sacred occasion, when His dear aged servant returns thanks to Almighty God for sparing him to the age of 94. The years have been filled with manifestations of the effusion of all the divine perfections, the everlasting, boundless love of God, His heavenly wisdom, divine faithfulness, unailing goodness and infinite compassion. So let us think of all the worthies of the Church of God and this Church who have gone to their rest, and are remembered as pillars in the Church of God, of glory, value and blessedness in serving their own generation by the will of God, falling on sleep and being gathered to their people. We have had such blessed experiences of burying a number of deacons, and so mysteriously, of younger ministers so one's heart has been almost broken. Let us therefore thank God for His aged servant; his life, ministry, office, influence and testimony over many years. Let God receive all the praise, glory and honour due to His glorious, everlasting Name. All are summed up in a word you know, for it is a principle of the New Song which all the glorified saints sing in eternal bliss for ever. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." You have come for the bread and water of life for your precious, immortal souls; you have come for a word from the Lord that will be a shining light in your spirit. So let us apply ourselves to the sacred language that is before us in the beautiful Psalm. What we have read are two of the clusters of blessing; namely, the provision of the everlasting Covenant for the saints of the Most High God, the Covenant of Grace which is the Marriage Covenant: therefore the Covenant of Grace is filled with blessings and promises.

So we have two of many of the blessings of the Marriage Covenant. See how the sentence is framed by the Holy Ghost: "With long life will I satisfy him." We have life there, and life is qualified: "With long

life," also the appendix: there will be satisfaction in this. "With long life will I satisfy him." I hope the prayers of the spiritual will accompany me as I attempt the dissertation. Take the beauty of the word, "With long life," It is a blessing from God for these are gracious people. "With long life will I satisfy him," This will set your spiritual minds working and activate your inquiries of the Lord. And the second,- "and show him my salvation." So he is going to be satisfied with long life, and he is going to be shown something that is divinely revealed: the Lord will reveal to him His salvation. My salvation. I ask you, (and this cannot be applied to all in the congregation) do you feel you are divinely interested in these two blessings? A few of our dearly loved friends are in the first part, "With long life," As to whether you can complete the sentence, or whether God has completed it I do not know,- "will I satisfy him." All those who have reached the allotted span or beyond know if they look back, if a special ministry of grace is afforded by the Holy Ghost, what it is to remember all the way you have been led and all Jesus has said to you. You have a remarkable vista. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way." and the whole of God's plan unfolded in life and it has been goodness and mercy attending you all the days of your life. But there are black areas you wish you could forget; areas of sin, folly, backsliding. Although you say you wish you could forget it is a mixed exercise in your spirit. You want to feel pain, guilt, shame and blush on account of sins but they are drowned in the depths of the sea by God, but you will never forgive yourself.

The thing is, beloved, with long life how much there is for you to remember by the Spirit, and for a specific reason. It is because there are things to be remembered of eternal reality and worth: that is why they are remembered. If it is something fleshly it would become vapour. You remember these things of eternal blessedness, glory and worth. It is God's hand, God's work, wisdom, goodness. So is this one of the exercises of your soul? We are very faint-hearted folk. I suppose if we looked at the faces of some we should think they were almost like iron; they had no fear whatever, they could face any eventuality. The face is a facade: it is what is underneath and we are timid creatures. The Lord has been helping you all these years, and this applies to the dear younger friends-

right up to this Thursday evening He has been a wonderful God to you. Why be so fearful, timorous concerning the future? Do you think the Lord acts according to different standards? Never. It is always according to the standard of His love, faithfulness, unfailing goodness, lovingkindness. There is relationship; He is your Father, you His unworthy sons and daughters. He has only one standard of behaviour: the Lord will deal with you as a Father. If you have marriage to the Lamb think of the method of God with you as His bride! Would He change His disposition towards you? Never. O that Love divine, so sweet, so great! Do you want it to fill your soul? Poor fearful heart, timid, anxious, He is your God, Guide even to death, your everlasting Friend, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. He will never leave you or forsake you, so away those fears. Let us seek grace to trust Him as the spouse in the Canticles leaning on her Beloved. Lean all your weight on Him: the more you lean the better it is for you, and it is glorifying to the Lord.

So "Why those fears? behold, tis Jesus
 Holds the helm, and guides the ship."

The Lord therefore give you a sweet feeling of confidence in Him. "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us." Oh this trusting in the Lord is so honouring to Him.

I will endeavour to speak to the particular word of great blessing, - "With long life will I satisfy him." and I hope we shall work it out together. I will make a few observations on life, mortal, natural life. Life is very precious because it is God-given; it comes from our Creator and there is something sacred concerning life. We are to treat it as sacred and not abuse it, not to ~~realize~~ fail to recognise how solemn and sacred it is. God is the sovereign Lord of life and death: it is in His hand, and it is only a span, a vapour. It is wonderful to know you are favoured with your faculties, you are not maimed. It is the plan of God that you use your faculties for all pure enjoyment: it is right to, and to work honourably. God has called us to work, but we are to remember that at the end we must stand before our Maker and give an account of how we have used our mortal life. Was it to His honour? or unprofitably, vainly? Is our life dissipated? have we wasted our time and energy? Of course, being creatures of God, God requires that we show due respect to all His creatures: it is right and proper in His sight. In these

modern times, when there are so many erosions in medicine and other fields it is right to remind people of the sacredness and solemnity of life, and we do in His Name.

What is life here? "With long life will I satisfy him." For God's creatures who are normal and healthy it is a right ambition that is inbuilt, to hope that God will favour you with reasonably long life. This is a perfectly legitimate hope on the part of His creatures. You hope to mature; you hope your rough edges will be smoothed, that you will go from one stage to another, from learning to practice. You hope if it is the Lord's will that He will find you a helpmeet and you will be happily married and see your children and grandchildren and other generations. You hope to see the days when they grow up, to follow and pray for them, and to see them comfortably settled in life. That is a normal, healthy, intelligent thing,- it is in the hand of God. What mother would not wish to see her babe grow up? or the father to see his sons grow up? and to see the Lord make a way for them in life? Let us go to the higher plane, and I will seek to point out a number of blessings. What is primarily the meaning of, "With long life will I satisfy him."? If you lived to be 100 would that satisfy you? Could it satisfy you to be living on this planet? no salvation, no precious blood to atone for sin, no prospect of Heaven. I remember at "The Grove" I had an old wool~~len~~ merchant: he walked in from the car and said, "I am one hundred, and I have had enough." I could see how solemn things are without Christ. So you see my objective; what is this long life? It is not just to live a long time on earth. It is the spiritual life of grace in the soul, eternal life. That will satisfy you, to know you have immortal life within. It is eternal life to know Jesus Christ and to have the blessed Author of life in your soul by His Spirit. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "I give unto my sheep eternal life." and that means everything,- oneness, union with Him, forgiveness of sin, a new creature, justified, sanctified by the pure body of Christ. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.- they may have wandered into the wilderness, played with hell fire, but they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." It is eternal life, and it begins here when He breathes breath divine into your soul from Heaven: it is divine life. If you can

look forward and call eternal joys your own, if Christ visits and blesses you, you know you have eternal life; your home, people, your God, your precious Saviour are there. All the glorified saints are there. Think of your prospect; your citizenship is in Heaven. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." It is wonderful to belong to Heaven and not to the earth; to be a child born from Heaven. Your city, your treasure, your Beloved, your Husband, Father, Friend, your all is above. The fountain source is above, the streams supply you here. "With long life will I satisfy him." You will be satisfied. Listen, are you satisfied with your Beloved, with Christ? You know, child of God, you are. If only you could know more of His blessed visits, or that they lasted longer! You are satisfied with the atonement, the foundation, the river of God. You will be satisfied when you awake, with His likeness,- no longer a body of sin and death. At the resurrection of the just your body will be raised incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, undefiled, reunited with your glorified soul on the resurrection morning. So "With long life will I satisfy him."- everlasting life.

The Text also has reference to gracious longevity. One thing is growth in grace. You will want by the Spirit for the Lord to favour you to grow up from a babe in grace, to a child, a young man, to the measure of the stature of Christ; to grow to spiritual maturity. You will desire to be so weaned from the world and the flesh so Heaven and the things of the spirit have the ascendancy. You will want to be a man in Christ. The Holy Ghost is ~~perfecting~~ performing the work of divine grace in your soul and He will finish it, and when it is completed,- it is not a matter of illness or disease,- when the Lord has finished the work of grace He will take you Home to be with Him in Glory. So "With long life will I satisfy him." You will trust to be spared to see your prayers answered, if it please a good and gracious God. You will trust to be spared to see your exercises brought to fruition; and also to be spared to see a complete deliverance commanded for you. All these things have reference to long life. Jacob, poor dear man suffered and sinned. He was a gracious man who came into heart-rending sorrow. The Lord did not take him then. He felt he would go to the grave to Joseph mourning. What did

the Lord do? "With long life will I satisfy him." One day he came to the land of Egypt: and when he was 130 years old he said, "It is enough." The Lord had appeared for him. He had seventeen years,- think of it! they were happy years in the main. He was not ~~happy~~ at home but they must have been halcyon years for him. "With long life will I satisfy him." When he was 147 he was sick and going to die, but he was joyful and triumphant: there was no bondage or terror. There were certain things to attend to, and we have the exquisite word, "I had not thought to see thy face,- with long life will I satisfy him.- and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed. And there is the other outstanding case of Simeon. It was revealed to him that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. The Lord showed him His salvation. He was in the temple when the parents brought in the child Jesus. "Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. " Blessed be God.