

Obtaining the Promises

by Edgar F. Parkyns

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and obtaining God's promises through humility, repentance, and faith in His sovereignty.

Duration: 44:46

Scripture: Judges 1:19-27, 2 Samuel 24:10, 1 Chronicles 21:10

Topics: "Godly Guidance", "Pride And Consequences"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the story of David and how he made a mistake by not consulting God before carrying out his plans. The speaker emphasizes that sometimes we may think we are serving the Lord, but in reality, we are serving ourselves. David's mistake led to the judgment of God, and the speaker warns that similar situations can happen in our lives if we do not seek God's guidance. The sermon highlights the consequences of David's pride and folly, as the angel of the Lord brought destruction and death to the land.

Transcript

...greatly to be praised. In the city of our God, in the beautiful situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, the city of the great King. God is known in her palace.

Although the kings were assembled, they passed by together, they saw it, and so they marveled. They were troubled and hasted away. Fear took hold of them, and pain as of a woman in trouble.

Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with them. As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord, of hosts, in the city of our God, God will establish it forever. We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto all the ends of the earth. Thy right hand is full of righteousness. Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.

Walk about Zion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark you well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God forever and ever, and he will be our guide even unto death, or possibly even over death. As Psalm 49, 15 has it, God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave.

David loved Zion, and I think God loved it before David did. A long way back, if we correctly look, we will again be appraised. The other thing was, it wasn't always the way it was.

The possession of an Amorite commanded that that unholy people should be wiped off the face of the earth. I think we have noted together the promises made to Joshua and fulfilled in him, and yet the strange conflict in the book of Judges. For instance, Joshua 23 and verse 14.

And behold, this day, says Joshua, I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you. All are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. And verse 9, the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong, but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you to this day.

And in Joshua chapter 21, verse 44, verse 43, the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about according to all that he swore unto their fathers. And there stood not a man of all their enemies before them, for the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hands.

There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Cain to pass. And then you turn over to Judges, and you find there are clauses to reduce almost everything. And verse 17, the Lord hath whipped up a Jabezite's dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

And verse 27, neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethsheb. And verse 28, they put them unto tribute, but did not utterly drive them out. But in Joshua you get all those, and then you turn over to Judges, and you find that in instance after, not unfamiliar though is it, God has given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world.

And yet often in life after life, situation after situation, there is awareness that the fullness of those promises are very complete and full, and yet there are inconsistencies. Now in the very heart of the territory of Israel was the little Jabezite fortress. And the Jabezites, as Judges tells us, remained there in peace.

The Israelites couldn't drive them out. They had a neat little fortress there that nobody could overcome. There was no engine of war that could attack those walls.

The place was inaccessible to the foe. Only a little fortress it was, about a quarter of a mile long and less than that wide. Surrounded by great hills, but no one could get at the Jabezites, and so the Israelites settled down and got used to a compromised situation, and existed that way for 400 years.

And just think, all that time God had his eye on that heart of nation, and all that time it was in other hands, and God was not on it there. Until David obtained the throne and moved into power, and he said it's time that this sort of situation should cease. Second Samuel, chapter 5, verse 6 to 9. And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jabezites, the inhabitants of the land, which they heard of David saying, except thou take away the blind of the lame, thou shalt not come in hither.

Thinking David can't come in hither. Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, the same as the city of David. And David said on that day, whosoever get it up to the gutter, and slighteth the Jabezites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain.

Wherefore they had said, the blind and the lame shall not come into the house. So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from millow.

And there's also a related passage to that, let me see, in 1 Chronicles chapter 11, verse 4. David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jabez, where the Jabezites were, the inhabitants of the land. And the inhabitants of Jabez said to David, thou shalt not come in hither. Nevertheless, David took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David.

And David said, whosoever slighteth the Jabezites first, shall be chief and captain. So Joab, the son of Zeruiah, went first up, and was chief. And David dwelt in the castle, therefore they called it the city of David.

There is a mention that Joab went up a gutter. And those of you who have been to Jerusalem will know where that gutter is. For the secret of the strength of the Jabezite fortress was its hidden spring.

Beautiful spring of water. That was its strength. And strange to say, its strength was also its weakness.

For David somehow found out that there was a way up through a secret gutter or shaft to the very heart of the fortress. And when Joab moved in, he led a small expedition by night, no doubt, up to the open end of the spring. It was in a cave.

He entered the cave and began to climb up the shaft where the women used to let their buckets down, or their pitchers down, to draw water. And he and his men climbed up that gutter and opened the gates to David's waiting armies. Its greatest strength was also its greatest weakness.

There is a way of victory. No matter how long victory has been delayed in your life and mine at all, the promises are there, sure and impregnable. And the greater than Joshua has secured them.

And God waits for our place of holy impatience. Where we say, this shall not be. God has a way of victory.

And that way in was surprisingly enough, the very source and centre of strength of those Jabezites. We often find this sort of thing in the spiritual warfare. We look all kinds of places to find the way of victory.

We read all sorts of books and work out all kinds of theories. But basically, the heart of the matter is the secret of the matter. And when we get right to the heart of things, then God can begin to move and give us the promises.

They moved in and obtained the victory. So if there is someone feeling that the promises are there but they are not quite working, well that is the sort of situation that David was in. And he won through.

Praise the Lord. So can you. There is a way through.

And it is a simple way. It is a way which deals with the heart. It is a way which deals with the very core of the problem.

And there, everything can be reversed when they are simple enough. So the fortress became the city of David, the stronghold, very precious to God and very precious to David. And that is why there are so many songs about it.

Zion, city of our God. It is related to the signs of the Lord. Well, the little fortress of Zion was way down in the valleys.

And later on, David obtained that beauty. And probably that is the idea on the signs of the Lord. Possibly too, just beyond Moriah, we have seen the beauty of the days of David onwards.

David got strong. Built his palace down in his little fortress city. All the tribes submitted to him.

He became ruler of the whole country. His armies were increased. And he was so very, very pleased with himself that something like spiritual pride rose up in him.

And he saw that he was become so great that he could take confidence upon it. And in, let me see, 1 Chronicles chapter 21, we are told how David's pride rose up. 1 Chronicles 21.

And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel. Behind his pride was Satan. 2 Samuel 24, verse 1. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and he moved David against them to say, go, number Israel and Judah.

One of those apparent contradictions. There are lots in these two accounts. And I can't explain.

They are beyond me. There are differences in the figures and differences in the sources. I just can't explain them.

And there is something very interesting here. The one writer says that it was Satan at the back of the tribe. Someone said that Satan is God's watchdog.

God's hound. God's sheepdog. To do some of his jobs for him.

Some of the less pleasant jobs. I don't know if that ties all together. For instance, we know that Satan entered into Judas to betray his Lord.

But when Peter is preaching after Pentecost, he says that we know that you did it through ignorance, but you did it to fulfill that which the Lord had ordained before should be done. Isn't that odd? Satan with all his cunning and corruption and wickedness was in the end only fulfilling God's sovereign and inscrutable will. Now if you're a pessimist, you can say it's all Satan.

If you're an optimist, you can say God allows it and he's got to cause it for all to work together for good. These are two aspects of nearly always behind every crisis you will find that Satan and God are operating. There are tremendous spiritual bosses dealing in your life and mine.

When David was persuaded of Satan, David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan. Joab was a bloodthirsty man. He wasn't a bit spiritual.

Wasn't it a bit annoying for David, the sweet singer of Israel, to question his spiritual principles? The principles of the trespass are very, very upsetting. Well deserved. So do it.

When they'll take us to the son of the tomb of Israel, then shall they give every man. David was saying, Oh, I'm very popular. Tax on the people.

Retain my popularity and help you do it. To remind them that they're not yours, King David, they're God's. The tax is a redemption tax.

To remind them that God purchased them out of Egypt and they are his and his alone. David said don't you worry. And Joab got busy and went up and returned the whole list to David.

David was so pleased to be right. Isn't it nice to feel cherky about it? And David was like that until, poor fellow, papers were returned and all the facts and figures were in. And then, look at it, verse 10.

And David's heart spoke to him. Details in his heart spoke to him. These things are written for us.

You and I go dancing in heaven. And just when you're succeeding and the whole thing is done. When David was up in the morning, the word of the Lord came to David.

Thus said the Lord, I offer thee three things. Choose your judgment account. And it wasn't until he had done the whole thing.

I read these things with, and go ahead carrying out wonderful schemes. And then just when you're finished. So I thought I did.

I thought it was a good idea. Anyway, I consulted lots of people and everybody said it was okay. And were you thinking of your, of mine? And here was the alternative.

Verse 10 of 1 Chronicles 21. Go and tell David, saying, Thus said the Lord, I offer thee three things. Choose thee one of them, and I may do it unto thee.

So Gad came to David and said to him, Thus said the Lord, Choose thee either three years famine, or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee. For else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the Lord, destroying through all the coast of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall give.

And David was then a great strait. What should he do now? And he thought the matter over. I don't want to fall into the hands of the enemies, the haters of God.

Let God judge me. And he sent a saint to put himself right into the hands of God. And he said, Alright Lord, let the judgment come directly from you.

Now it could have been a long drawn out thing, over three years of famine. But he, the Lord didn't give him that one. He had already refused being destroyed by that driving enemies of Israel over three months.

And the alternative left was three days of pestilence. It was awful, it was terrible, it was sudden. The angel of the Lord, invisible in the heavens, began to unsheathe his mighty sword and sweep through the land with pestilence until thousands upon thousands died.

And not only was David's numbers numbering all upset, but innocent men and women and children were dying because of his pride and famine. He, the shepherd of Israel, he the man who was appointed to be God's under shepherd, was now the cause of the nation dying all the way down from Dan to Beersheba. The pestilence was moving in terror of destruction.

And he could hear the wailing and the mourning of those who had lost their loved ones as the angel of death moved through the land. The bigger our calling, the higher our responsibility for more damage. It was because of David's high calling that his little bit of pride and folly destroyed thousands upon thousands.

So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel and then 70,000 men. And God sent angels for Jerusalem to destroy. And as he was destroyed, the Lord beheld and he repented him of the evil and said to the angel that destroyed, it is enough, stay now thine hand.

And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing floor of Onem the Jebusite, the great hill to the north of David's little fortress. And David's eyes were opened and he saw now visibly the angel of the Lord above the city with his sword extended to destroy. He now saw clearly, oh he had seen a little more clearly at the beginning, but now he saw in the hour of God's tremendous judgment the terror of the Lord.

And David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven having a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel who were clothed in sackcloth fell on their faces. And David said to God, is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? Even I it is that have sinned and done this evil indeed.

But as for these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, oh Lord my God, be on me and on my father's house, but not on my people that they should be. And then came mercy. When David recognized deeply, realized his pride and sin and repented, then the angel of the Lord commanded that David should go up and sit.

He didn't flee from the suspended sword of judgment. He moved and there he met the owner of the land. Paul answered to David with his face to the ground.

Can you imagine these two men aware, visibly aware by supernatural sight of the angel of judgment over their heads, the sword of the pestilence suspended above them and they move under the awesomeness of God's disfavor, move toward each other and strike the bargain which will bring the salvation of the people. David said, grant me the place of this threshing floor, that I might build an altar there to the Lord. Therefore grant it to me for the full price that the plague may be stayed from the people.

And the owner said, you take it my Lord for the meat offering, I'll give it all. No, he said, David, I can't do that, I'll buy it for the full price. So he paid the price for the whole hill of Moriah, which had long sinned.

And there he built an altar to the Lord. There he offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, the books and the wood of the threshing floor for fuel. There he called upon the Lord and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.

Fire came flashing down where that sword had been and consumed the whole burnt offering. And there was no need for David to apply a torch, no ministry of any member of the Aaronic family. God sent the fire from heaven and consumed the offering.

And the plague was stayed. And the Lord commanded the angel, many, many years after that very same hill, suspended over the whole. And another sacrifice was made and the judgment of God for him here beautifully recorded.

There upon Calcutta's hill, our Savior was hung between those trees. O Christ, what burdens thou thy head, our loaves laid on thee. Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead, despair all ill for me.

A victim laid, thy blood was shed. Now there's no load. Death and the curse were in our cup.

O Christ, it was full for thee. But thou hast drained the last dark drop. It is empty now for me.

That bitter cup, love drank it up. Now blessings drowned for me. There's another verse that is not in this book.

I'll just put it here somewhere. Jehovah bade his sword awake. O Christ, it woke against thee.

Thy precious blood, its thirst must slake. Thy heart, its sheath must be. All for my sake, my peace to me.

Now there's no sword. It was on above Moriah, above Golgotha, that David saw the sword suspended. The sword of death and judgment.

And there he knew, dear, the power of peace with God. The tempest's awful voice was heard. O Christ, it broke on thee.

Thy open bosom was my ward. It braved the storm for me. Thy foremost scar, thy visit marred.

Now cloudless peace for me. For me, Lord Jesus, thou hast died. And I have died in thee.

Thou art risen. My bands are all untied. And now thou livest in me.

When purified, made white and tried, thy glory then for me. There upon Moriah, David enacted, and saw divinely enacted, the judgment of Calvary on our behalf. Now there's a strange sequel to that.

1 Corinthians, 1 Chronicles, chapter 20. At that time, when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing floor of all Ammon and Abizite, then he sacrificed them for the tabernacle of the Lord which Moses made in the wilderness. And the altar of burnt offering were at that season in the high place at Gibeon.

But David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord. That's the ultimate contradiction. Gibeon was the place where the tabernacle was.

Gibeon where the altar and the sacrifice and the priesthood were functioning. And David said, I'm not going down there. I might meet with the sword of the Lord down there.

The only place that I'm going to meet with God in the future is this place where I saw the Lord, the sword of the Lord, magnificent immersion in David's thinking. He realized now the only place of safety for him was not in all the outward ritual of the tabernacle. Remember before, almost unconsciously, we get taken up with our work, where peace was made through the blood of his cross.

One of the greatest marks of a Christian who is going on with God is his awareness of where peace has been made once for all. Where righteousness has been established. It wasn't in you, it wasn't in me.

And the truly sanctified heart is the heart that has learned to look away in the area of service or success, that place called Calvary, and see in Christ peace and sanctification. That's why the Lord calls us back. He says, do it in remembrance.

Because he knows that as we go on, our very successes, as with David, may lead us away. And he brings us back, back to the place where peace was made. And when all this story was over, and the matter had been settled, then God had brought his ultimate purpose for Jerusalem into view.

And the threshing floor of Orlando's Jezuzite became the site of the temple. And there was God's designed place for his work. Now I can't go through all this again.

It's much too...

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