

IX. THE UNFATHOMABLE GRACE OF GOD

~Other Speakers S-Z: John Sung:

(11 King Ch. 7)

Samaria, Capital City of Israel was surrounded by the armies of the Syrians. The people were in grave anxiety, for many had nothing to eat. So much so they were obliged "to eat pigeon dung."

Vs. 1. But Elisha said, "By this time tomorrow two gallons of flour or four gallons of barley grain will be sold in the markets of Samaria for a dollar. . . ." Beloved brothers and sisters, the grace of God is beyond our imagination. Many of God's people are waiting for His saving grace to come quickly, not knowing that it has already come. Now is the accepted time!

Vs. 2. Here we have a high officer, assistant to the King, who said to Elisha, "Impossible! A dollar to buy two gallons of flour? Unless the door of heaven would open up!" Elisha said, "Whether you believe or not, this thing shall come to pass." O the unfathomable grace of God! The grace of God is beyond our wish and imagination. The grace of God is still with us. Before I came here, I never could have dreamed of such a crowd tonight.

When I went to Huchow, I hoped to see only 200 born again. So, I asked for this number in prayer. On the first day, however, out of 400 who came to the meeting, 300 were saved! On the second day, over 1,000 came and we had to meet outside on the grounds. Almost 1,000 were saved, including a pastor's son. This pastor's son said to me, "Mr. Sung, I never knew God's grace until now Beloved brothers and sisters, whether you believe or not, the grace of God must come to you. How great and wonderful is His grace!

Vs. 3. Praise the Lord! Here are four lepers who refuse to die, sitting up. They want to get out of death. Pitiful, there are so many who would prefer death, never desiring a way out. There are many more struggling in their daily sorrows. These also have never thought of getting out!

Vs. 4. Wonder of wonders, these four lepers thought of a way out. They said, "If we sit here we are sure to starve to death. If we go into the city, we will also die. Why not get out of here and surrender to the Syrian Army?" Now, I'm not in favour of their surrendering. I am in favour of their determination to find a way out.

A sister in Shanghai wrote me of her mother's plight. Only over 30, she has succoured ten children. But every one of her children has died, except herself. She says, "My mother is a devout Buddhist. Buddha said to her that her ancestors in hell had need of money. So they had taken her children to hell to sell them for money. Now her only way out was to worship the devils with money. When my mother asked how much money she needed to pay up, the answer was \$200. She really spent that \$200, but when she went to inquire of Buddha again, Buddha replied "Your ancestors are still penniless." So on the 8th day of the ninth moon, they will also take your only surviving daughter to hell and sell her. My mother was scared to death. She went to the Church and asked the pastor to pray for her. This brought us peace and nothing happened to me, her daughter. After this, she got hold of a hammer and had her Buddha idol smashed to pieces.

Beloved brothers and sisters, Satan had utterly oppressed this woman. Could she do anything else but struggle her way out? How jubilant! Today how many are under the throes of the Devil's grip? There's the tobacco devil, the gambling devil, the alcohol devil. Why won't you seek a way out?

Vs. 5, 6. The four lepers found their way to the Syrian camp. But when they got there they saw not even a shadow of the Syrian troops. "Ha, Ha!" they chuckled, "Such a lot to eat! How lucky we are, and there is none to fight against us . . ." Beloved brothers and sisters, wonderful is the work of the Holy Spirit. If a person is willing to be led by the Holy Spirit to seek a way out, he will find the way ahead marvellous, and more marvellous yet. Once, after a sermon, a new convert said to me, "Mr. Sung, I was in great trouble when I decided one day to come to your meetings. At first I found your preaching entirely tasteless, but I decided to sit through the sermons. As I concentrated on the sermon, my heart began to beat and throb. When you said, "Any one who is a sinner, let him raise his hand." At first I had no courage, but afterwards I raised my hand, I went forward, and as I went, all the sins I had previously committed flooded before my eyes. I felt miserable. But the moment I put my trust in Jesus, a ton-load of sin fell from me. I received such a joy as I had never known." Beloved brothers and sisters, if a man wants to be saved, he will find salvation wonderful, yet more wonderful.

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Vs. 7, 8. The four lepers were thrilled by the wealth they now possessed. For, the Syrians being overwhelmed by a sound of horses and chariots they had heard the night before had fled to the last man. God's grace is given to us freely without any charge. Without arms, without lifting a finger to fight, the lepers had plenty to eat, more to spare, and a whole lot they couldn't carry away. O, the inexhaustible grace of God.

One night I had a dream. I saw a man who had lost a lot of money. I began to pick the money up, and I picked and picked every one of the coins. When I awoke, I couldn't find a cent. Such is the nature of dreaming. But God's grace is not such vanity, not such a dream. God's grace is real. It defies our counting. God's grace did not merely satisfy the leper's hungry stomachs. This would not be enough.

Vs. 9. Most precious is this verse. The four men, having eaten, thought of the hungry plight of their countrymen. They agreed, "Let us tell the good news at once! If we do not make the report when dawn comes, the King would surely punish us." Beloved brothers and sisters, how many of you are having your talent buried. You have never told forth the good news i.e. the Gospel! Paul says, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." Now the people of Amoy have nothing to eat, while you are being fully fed. Mongolia, Kweichow, Yunnan are teeming with countless starving souls. They have never tasted the grace of God. Beloved brothers and sisters, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."

Let us see what these four have reported. They have preached the gospel. They have given a vigorous testimony, for woe would come on them if they preached not the good news. Beloved brothers and sisters, let us remember: it is a greatest sin not to preach the Gospel.

Vs. 10, 11. They are now on their way. They tell it to the gate-keeper. The gate-keeper believed because he saw them all well-fed. People believed them because they were well-fed.

Once there was a man selling hair-restorer. He bragged about his hair-restorer as he hawked: "If you buy my hair-restorer and rub it on your bald head, it will make your hair grow." A little child came and pulled off the hat he was wearing, "You just said, 'If you rub the hair-restorer on your head, hair would grow.' But, look, you are a bald yourself. Why don't you do what you say?" What a big joke! A bald-head selling hair-restorer! This is like a man never born again preaching a sermon on "salvation through the new birth." Laughable! Why is the Church so slowmoving today? Because in it are many bald heads trying to sell hair-restorer. Who would buy it? These four lepers are fed and round-bellied. They are convincing to the gatekeeper. May you also say, "We have been to the revival meetings. We have eaten a lot." Before you were gambling fiends. Now you can praise the Lord and convince others.

Vs. 12. The gate-keeper said, "Let me go and tell the king." Now the king, when he got up in the middle of the night, was prejudiced. He said, "Perhaps the Syrians have gone away in disguise. If we go after them, may we not fall into their ambush?" In such a case, can God open the door of grace?

Vs. 13, 14. Someone told the king, "Don't be prejudiced. Let us send five men to find out." When those five returned, they said with one voice, "The enemy has retreated! The ground is strewn all over with goods." When I was preaching in Shanghai, the Church in Hangchow sent four delegates to hear me, because they were not sure of inviting me. When these four were favourably impressed, they invited me. When I got to Hangchow, a super-pastor there was fiercely opposed to me. He had a son, a habitual gambler, who never read his Bible. Wonder of wonders! While others remained unsaved, he got saved, he repented. He was changed. He organised many Gospel teams. He told his father, "You are against revival meetings, but I have been converted. I won't gamble now. I love to read the Bible." Beloved brothers and sisters, when men resist you, don't be discouraged. If God be for us, all problems will be solved.

Once when I went to Swatow, I got no invitation to preach the first day. I was invited by only one place. After the first meeting, over 200 were born again. The second meeting saw over 1,000 in attendance. After this, every church invited me to preach. Brothers and sisters, if you preach the truth, you needn't worry even when you are being resisted.

Vs. 16, 17. O, the open door of God's grace! All went! There was no need to invite, or to coerce. They rushed for all their worth. All were dying of hunger, and all fought for the food. If what you preach is the Gospel, people will come and hear. If what we preach is truth, we needn't worry if men oppose us. When I was preaching in Canton, detectives and policemen were sent to arrest me. When they were on the point of doing so, a band of students protested. This truly was God's help.

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On another occasion when I went to another Church, there was a notice put up, "Meetings Prohibited." But this could not stop a multitude coming. Who can resist when the Holy Spirit is working? God said, "A dollar will buy two gallons of flour." True? Yes? Unfathomable is God's grace.

Vs. 18. Was God's Word fulfilled? Most certainly Whoever disbelieving is a stumbling block. But such is trampled to death! If we preach it good, Satan is surely defeated. Now you're born again. You're blessed. If you preach not the Gospel, woe will come!

God called me on Feb. 10, 1926. The Lord wanted me to preach. Many a time I didn't want to, for preaching is a difficult job. If I became a teacher, no one would bother me. When I started to preach, I found many adversaries. If you preach you must carry the cross. Your whole life must be hung on it. Thousands upon thousands are still in Satan's grip. "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."

Beloved, we are well-fed. Woe is unto us, if we preach not the Gospel."

THEME SONG

How marvellous His love.

How marvellous His love.

For me He died on Calv'ry's tree.

How marvellous His love.

How bountiful His grace.

How bountiful His grace.

From deepest sin He ransomed me

How bountiful His grace.