

UNLOCKING GOD'S TREASURE-HOUSE

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Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation (Ps. 91:14-16).

Seeking for hidden treasure has fascinated men for many centuries. When banks were unknown, people buried their valuables in the earth. The Savior knew this and said: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field: the which when a man hath found, he hideth. and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath. and buyeth that field" (Matt. 13:44). Today, the media often supplies news of explorers who dive to the depths of oceans in the hope of finding ancient ships which sank either in battle or in storms. They hope to discover artifacts, and great sums of money are spent on expeditions which often produce nothing.

It is surprising that the greatest of all possibilities has no attraction for most of earth's residents. God's treasure is fabulous, but men need a special key to acquire it. David made a list of things above the price of rubies, and the secret of his success was described in a single sentence. "Because he hath set his love upon inc." therefore will I do certain things for him.

God appreciates faithful service, and thankfully receives gifts from those involved in the extension of His kingdom. Yet, above all gifts, God loves to be loved. Many people take all and give nothing in return, and that has been evident throughout the ages. The Lord gives to people who forget to return thanks. Jesus saw this affection when a widow placed two mites into the Temple offertory. He said it surpassed all the lavish offerings brought by wealthy Pharisees. When He evaluated the wealthy church in Laodicea, He said: "I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16). Love is not superficial and changeable. It is eternal, born of God. David believed it to be a key capable of opening God's treasure chest. It could bring to its owner incalculable riches. The psalmist mentioned various jewels awaiting discovery.

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The God Who Saves... "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him" (v. 14)

David's life was filled with occasions when his existence was threatened, and any one of these could have proved God delighted to deliver His people. Faith is a great asset, but basically it refers to the intellect. Love fills and thrills the soul: it is the cause for gratitude and the reason for sacrificial service. A sound mind with a cold heart is a polished automobile without an engine, a perfect body without life. The Ephesian church was famous for its theology, but condemned because its initial love had disappeared. The leaders of the assembly could deliver excellent speeches about a theme of which they knew little. David knew that to love God passionately was better than all the sacrifices offered in the tabernacle at Shiloh. If a modern combination lock had been on God's treasure chest, love would have been the first digit in the magic number. It cannot be emphasized too much that God loves to be loved. His great affection can lift man from the deepest depths of degradation and raise him to unprecedented heights of ecstasy and fellowship. The Creator of the world was famous for His power: Our heavenly Father is known for

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the love that made salvation possible. The poet was correct when he wrote:

Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, should'st die for me!

The God Who Selects... "Because he hath set his love upon me, . . . I will set him on high" (V. 14)

David never forgot he had been a shepherd boy. When Samuel first visited the home of Jesse, the lad had been absent and not considered worthy of being interviewed by the prophet. The ancient record says:

And Samuel said unto Jesse, "Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep." And Samuel said unto Jesse, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he" (1 Sam. 16:11-12).

After many years David reminisced and considered how the Almighty had lifted him from obscurity to be the ruler of Israel. With the simplicity of a child David had opened his soul to God, and that love enabled him to defeat the approaching giant. It is unfortunate that many people fail to understand the best way to fame is to bow before the Lord. When God said, "I will set him on high." He meant what He promised.

The God Who Speaks . . . Because he hath set his love upon me, . . . He shall call upon me, and I will answer him" (v. 15)

To love God does not provide immunity from trouble. David had more than his share of problems. Sometimes he contributed to his own sorrow, and strife within his family accentuated his pain. God did not prevent storms from reaching His servant: He preferred to be with David in them. It was better to be in danger with God than to be elsewhere without Him. The disciples of Jesus learned more when their boat was sinking on the Sea of Galilee than they did on the shore. If Daniel had not been cast into the den of lions, he would not have witnessed God's power over ravenous beasts (see Dan. 6:16). It was only when the Hebrew boys were thrown into the furnace that they discovered one "like the Son of God" awaiting their arrival (see Dan. 3:25). Wisdom is always evident in the way the Lord deals with His children. A mother asked her husband why he persisted in taking his small child into a darkened basement. He replied: "I like to feel her clinging to my hand." It should be remembered that God is our heavenly Father, and "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Ps. 84:11).

The God Who Sustains... "Because he hath set his love upon me, . . . I will be with him in trouble" (v. 15)

It is a thrilling experience to listen to the voice of God when one feels abandoned. The disciples of Christ were reassured when they heard their Master rebuking the storm and amazed when the sea became calm. On the other hand, Job was overwhelmed by the worst kind of tempest. It seemed that God had abandoned him when he said: "Oh, that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" (Job 23:3). The Lord was with Job every moment of each day. True faith sees in the dark; it is the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

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Perhaps in some measure Job possessed faith, for, although he appeared to be alone, his love for the Lord never diminished.

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His loyalty was evident even when he failed to understand why affliction overwhelmed his soul. The angels may have smiled when the suffering man exclaimed: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. . . . He also shall be my salvation" (Job 13:15-16).

The God Who Satisfies... "Because he hath set his love upon me, ... with long life will I satisfy him" (v. 16)

Life is a precious jewel. Unless a man suffers excruciating pain or is devastated by shame, he desires to live. Some emotional people make speeches announcing their desire to go to heaven, yet the moment they become ill, they seek a doctor. If their testimony were sincere, they would endeavor to die gracefully! Healthy people who state they are tired of living are unstable, emotional, and unworthy of trust.

There are all kinds of reasons why Christians should continue to live. No souls will be won for Christ after death. That opportunity is for NOW. No crown will be won beyond the grave. That also is for NOW. The longer a man lives, the greater his opportunity of serving Christ. When I first went to South Africa. I was introduced to Daddy Rowlands who met every incoming and outgoing missionary. He could arrange a meeting at any time of the day or night. His service for the Savior was phenomenal. I was so impressed that I said. "He will live a long time, for the Lord would have difficulty finding his replacement." That amazing man lived to be over one hundred years of age, but his glorious example will never die. He was another of whom the Lord said: "With long life will I satisfy him." If you want to reach old age, work hard for Christ!

The God Who Shews... "Because he hath set his love upon me, . . . [I will] shew him my salvation" (v. 16)

Salvation is the most wonderful of all God's treasures. The divine command created planets, stars, and the precious metals for which men have lived and died. Salvation God did not create. He could only plan to make a dream become a reality. Heaven's wealth could not buy it, and time could not contain it. To lift a sinner from the depths of degradation. to cleanse and clothe him with righteousness, to build a mansion in which he would live eternally was something which redemption alone could accomplish. It involved the death of heaven's Prince, the cooperation of the Almighty, and a ministry to replace ruin with resplendence. It was to be God's finest accomplishment, a task that made Creation seem commonplace.

Man in his wildest dreams could never imagine it nor deserve it. Somethine conceived in the mind of God would be given to the most unworthy recipients. When the Lord made the world, He saw it was good: when He planned the redemption of sinners. He saw it was better: when the saints are clothed in white raiment. He will know that this will be His greatest achievement.

God promised to reveal this to people who set their love upon Him. It is now evident He has done so. Christ came to make salvation possible: inspired men wrote what was known about Him: and now through the miracle of grace. millions of people can say:

My Jesus. I love Thee, I know Thou art mine
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign:
My gracious Redeemer. my Savior art Thou:
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

God honored His promise: He kept His word.

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