

The Lord Is Thy Keeper

by David Wilkerson

The Lord is our keeper, protecting us from the enemy within and without through the power of His divine power and the establishment of a military outpost against the devil.

Duration: 54:28

Scripture: Psalm 121:8, John 17:12, James 1:2

Topics: "Gods Grace", "Overcoming Suffering"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the sinfulness of sin in order to comprehend the loving nature of God and His grace. He uses the example of David, a man after God's own heart, who cried out to be delivered from his deceitful heart. The preacher highlights the distress and pain that comes from recognizing the enemy within, rather than the external battles. He also mentions that trials and suffering are tests of faith and opportunities to glorify God, and that overcoming Christians do experience suffering. The sermon encourages believers to rejoice in the midst of trials and trust in God's plan for the future.

Transcript

I have a word for you. Heavenly Father, we need your love tonight. We need your touch.

Not a guilt trip for anybody, not anything but your mercy and your grace. Lord, I desperately need your touch tonight. I feel that there are so many like me that are hurting tonight, perhaps going through one of the greatest trials in their life, and yet I dare to preach in that hurt tonight because of the sheltering the blood of Jesus Christ and the power of your Holy Spirit.

Lord, there are people that have come tonight in that hurt. They bear that hurt tonight. Father, minister to me, minister through me, minister to all of us tonight.

In Jesus' name I pray, amen. My message tonight, the Lord is thy keeper. The Lord is thy keeper.

There's a thrilling story in the Old Testament that I've always enjoyed, and it best illustrates my message tonight about what it means to be kept by the power of God. It's found in 2 Kings 6. Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, had declared war on Israel, if you remember, and he came against Israel and camped with a mighty army. Don't turn to your Bibles because I'm going to be throwing scripture at you and you won't begin to keep up.

Just take it, take my word, it's in the Bible. The Lord is thy keeper. Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, comes against Israel, camps with a great army, and he calls a war council and he plans a strategy, and everywhere he turns he's thwarted because the prophet Elijah is sending a messenger to the king of Israel saying, don't go there because Ben-Hadad and his army is waiting for you.

He'd send another messenger, don't go there, he's waiting for you, and Ben-Hadad became furious and he called a council. He said to all of his servants, show me who my traitor is. Tell me who's revealing our plans to the king of Israel.

And the servants said, it's not what you think, my lord, O king. There is no traitor in thy camp or in the court. We're all true men, but this man of God, Elijah, telleth the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedchamber.

He was furious and he sends his most prized group, chariots, and an army of men, infantry men, to Dothan and he says, get the man and bring him back to me. And in the middle of the night they surround Dothan and the servant of Elijah goes out in the morning and he looks in the face of a ferocious army standing there, chariots and horsemen and infantrymen, all against one little prophet of God, Elijah, who'd been ratting on the king. In terror, the servant runs back.

Alas, my master, what shall we do? We're surrounded. And with a gentle wink in his eye and a smile on his face, the prophet bows his head and said, fear not, son, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elijah prayed and said, Lord, open his eyes that he may see.

And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elijah. No wonder he was so contented. He knew the Lord was his keeper.

He could say, I will not be afraid for ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about. Though a host encamp around against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war should rise against me in this, I'll be confident.

He keeps me. He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me, for there were many with me. Now that's my prayer tonight, and that's what I hope this message accomplishes, that the Lord would open our eyes, that we could see the mountains around us filled with the horses and chariots of divine fire and the Lord of hosts being with us.

Hallelujah. Now the Old Testament Saints knew the Lord in a way I don't think we New Testament Saints know anything about. They knew him as the Lord of hosts.

I found 200 references in the Old Testament to this phrase, the Lord of hosts. It was said of David, David waxed greater and greater for the Lord of hosts was with him. The Lord of hosts, the scripture said, is with us.

The God of Jacob is our refuge. Oh Lord God of hosts, who is strong, a strong tower like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee. You find these majestic words all through the Old Testament.

Lord God of hosts, hear our prayers. Lord God of hosts, he is the one who is with us. Lord God of hosts, he is the king of glory.

Lord God of hosts, liveth and will save us. 200 times, Lord of hosts, Lord of hosts. And I've read it, read it, read it, and didn't have the slightest idea what it meant.

Host in Hebrew is sabawa. It's a very, very expressive word which means an army ready and poised for battle. Soldiers, horses, and chariots ready to go to war at any appointed time.

An army assembled and mustered in full array waiting for instructions to attack. Can you picture this prophet of God knowing the Lord of Sabawa? And I don't think we know Lord Sabawa in our generation today. We don't know anything about him.

And I want to share this with you because I don't think you can catch a glimpse of the glory of what it means to be kept by the power of God until you understand what the Hebrew and Greek meanings of these precious words are. And I want to share it with you the best I know how. See, to Elisha, the Lord of hosts had become the Lord of Sabawa.

The Lord who comes to his assistance with an army poised for battle. An army of multiplied thousands of soldiers and horses and chariots assembled and just waiting for instructions to protect him and to attack the enemy. King Hezekiah, at another time and place when the Assyrians came, knew the Lord Sabawa.

The Syrians had surrounded Israel and suddenly his eyes were open to this great Lord of hosts, this Lord of armies, in other words. And Hezekiah gathered Israel and all of his soldiers and he said, be strong and courageous and do not be afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria nor for the multitude that's with him. For there be more with us than with him.

With him is the arm of the flesh and with us is the Lord our God to help us and fight our battles. And the people rested on those words. Oh, that we could get those words and rest on them.

The Lord Sabawa, the Lord of hosts, the Lord of an army. David said the chariots of God are twenties, 20,000 and that's multiples of 20,000. 20,000 upon 20,000 upon 20,000.

That's the original meaning. Twenties of thousands. The chariots of God are twenties of thousands and even thousands of angels and the Lord is among them.

The psalmist said the Lord is thy keeper. And then Peter brings it out even clearer. He said we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now I see this as a prophetic word and I believe this is prophetic. That in the last day before Jesus comes, he's going to reveal to his people who are hurting what it means to be protected by the Lord of hosts. And when you listen to the news about the Mideast and you look around you and see how many people are hurting.

If you and I do not get a revelation of who our God is, his might and his power and rest on that, you and I can't make it. If you can't run with a horseman, what are you going to do when the flood comes? Christ prayed to the Father. Oh, I love the 17th chapter of John.

That is one of the greatest chapters in all the scripture. It reveals the heart of Jesus and the loving heart of God. He said while I was with them, he's praying to the Father and Jesus said while I was with them, Father, I kept them in the world.

I kept them in thy name. Those that thou has given to me, I have kept and none of them is lost. You and I have the idea, I think, that the disciples were superhuman saints that were kept by the strength of their own will and just by the close proximity to Jesus and the power of his word that they were kept and they didn't make mistakes and they didn't hurt like you and I hurt and these 12 men were such great men of God.

No, they were not kept by their own power. Peter had in him a heart that would deny. After three years, after three years with him, Peter stands in the court and says, I don't know him and he wasn't lying.

He didn't know him. He'd spent all that time with Christ and never did know his heart. He wasn't lying.

Peter never didn't know the Lord. These men were frail. These men hurt.

These men had, you know, because when Christ was taken, they all forsook him and fled the scripture, said they all left him. No, Jesus kept him. He said, I kept them.

They didn't keep themselves. Father, while I was with them, I kept them. And then looking down through history, thinking of us, Jesus prayed these beautiful words and how they blessed my heart.

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world. He's talking about you and me. I pray not that you take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil, that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

I want to show you tonight, the best I know how, what it means to be kept by the power of God through faith. Kept in English means to retain possession of, to take into one's charge, to provide all the necessities for life, to raise and to feed, to protect and guard, to preserve, to hold in control. But the Greek word used here in 1st Peter, the 5th verse, 1st chapter and 5th verse, this word kept is one of the most expressive Greek words in the New Testament.

It's prorero. And I started studying this word and I couldn't believe it at first, so I kept digging into it. It got better the deeper I got.

And it so blessed me, it's changed my life and it's been such an encouragement to me, what the Lord has permitted me to go through recently. You know what the word kept means in the original Greek used here? We are kept by the power of God through faith. It means to establish a military outpost and to guard that outpost, protect it with a garrison of soldiers, to establish this fortress with a full military line and a full military apparatus, and to set up a sentinel that can see the enemy in all directions and to call forth the army when it's needed.

It's all in that one Greek word kept, prorero. And you understand that when the Scripture says, he is our mighty fortress, it's not just that he is the fortress. When you have faith in him, he establishes in you a military outpost against the devil.

We become an armed camp. You don't believe that, do you? We actually become a strong military outpost with armies of soldiers and horses and chariots ready for combat and a sentinel. You know the Bible says we're not ignorant of his devices.

Why? Because we have a sentinel, we're kept. God never did take time to find out the devices of the devil. That's my captain's job.

By the way, since when did the shepherd send the sheep to fight the lion? A lot of your sheep running out, you tell them, you tell them the shepherd, let me at him. I get him. No, you're just a sheep.

You run between the shepherd's leg. He's got the staff in his hands. I don't worry much about the devil because he can't find me.

My life is hid with Christ and God. Now if you're a carnal Christian, you watch out. But if you're sheltered by the blood of Jesus Christ and under the blood, and I'll tell you something, when the blood sheltered the children of Israel, the Lord said, when I see the blood, I will know, I'll pass over you.

And God wouldn't pass the blood line, he's sure not gonna let the devil pass it. Jesus prayed, keep them from the evil. And there's another beautiful Greek word, porero, and it means deliverance from the effect or influence of anything that's bad or evil, grievous, harmful, lewd, malicious, or wicked.

And then finally, the word also means deliverance from the devil himself and everything he represents that's corrupt. Now, let's put it all together and see if you can build some faith on this. We are, you know, the Bible, it looks like we're just kept by the power of God through faith.

That's rather just a simple little phrase, isn't it? But oh, if we could only see the depth of it. We are God's military outpost, protected by a full and equipped spiritual army, including innumerable soldiers and horses and fiery chariots and full battle array, completely informed of every plan and device of the devil, and completely defended in all directions against Satan and all the evil powers of the universe. Now, say amen.

Now you'll know what the Bible says, greater is he that's in us than he that's in the world. What is there in you? An army! The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, and my high tower. You're a shelter for me and a strong tower from the enemy.

We do not keep ourselves from evil. We don't do battle with the devil ourselves. The Lord of hosts must do the keeping.

It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves. We are his people, and he is good. He delighteth in his children.

I don't let preachers put guilt trips on me anymore. I used to hear evangelists thunder against the judgment seat, that I was going to stand there and somehow works were going to burn, and I would crawl down on my knees and cry. Never again will anyone put me under conviction about the judgment seat.

We're all going to appear before the judgment seat. But what does the Bible say? He said he's going to present us faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy, exceeding joy. You mean to tell me we serve him all our lifetime, and he brings joy and glory to our heart, we live our lifetime expecting and then run into his presence and and just be afraid? No, the judgment seat's where he puts his arms around me.

We're all going to have works burned. You know what they are? All our legal works in trying to please God and add something to the blood of Jesus Christ. That's what's going to burn.

Everybody's going to have works that burn. The Lord's not going to let us go into paradise thinking we had anything to do with it, and all our good works he's going to say, here, see what you tried to do to add

something to the blood? You couldn't do it. I'm going to burn it in front of your eyes so when you come into paradise with me, you had nothing to do.

It was my blood, period. None of us going to eternity thinking we had anything to do with it. Glory to God.

He sent from above and he took me, and he drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, for they were too strong for me. You go ahead out and try to fight the devil in your own strength, make God all the promises you want, and God will let you have the biggest despair you ever had in your life.

And so instead of having a dozen or fifty little despairs, have one grand despair and get it all over with and start trusting God. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, unto him, unto him who is able to keep you from falling and present you faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy. Now we're kept from the enemy without and from the enemy within.

The enemy without is suffering caused by manifold temptations. I want to deal with that first because that's the easy part. We're in ye greatly rejoice.

Then I want to show you something tonight. The Lord gave me this last night. We're in ye greatly rejoice.

Would everybody repeat those two words? Greatly rejoice. Again, greatly rejoice. About what? Let me read it to you.

Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found under praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Now the two key words are heaviness and fiery trial. Heaviness in Greek is *lupio*, which means grief, sorrow and trouble.

But the reference here in Greek to fiery is sudden lightning. That's the Greek word. Fiery trial is a lightning trial.

Sudden, coming without expectation. We're in ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye were in grief and sorrow because of what has come upon you, that the trial of your faith be more precious than the gold that perisheth, though it be tried by a sudden bolt of lightning that causes pain. That's what it says.

If you can't comprehend it, get your strong concordance and see it's all there, lightning. Are you here tonight in a season of grief because somehow you failed God? You gave in to a temptation and you know that you grieved the Lord and it's a manifold temptation. I don't understand that in the original Greek that this word temptation actually has to do with sensuality.

It has to do with the flesh and I don't understand how you can greatly rejoice when you're being tested and tried in the flesh. I don't understand that at all. You know, I have all young people say, you know, preacher, you preach it's not a sin to fall into temptation.

Man, I passed that point long ago. I gave in. I want to show you something here tonight.

You see, there's some of you here also that are sorrowing because of this sudden lightning trial. But if you don't see it as a test of faith, you're missing something. But it's a test of faith that you come out to face what is coming in the future with a spiritual backbone because if you think this is trial, you've seen nothing

to what is about to happen to this world.

If I told you what I think I know in the Spirit prophetically about the next few years, you would say, God test my faith and bring out gold. Can you rejoice in spite of it? Just like the scripture says here, can you rejoice? And can you rise above it by faith and glorify the Lord through it? And is this whole thing going to end in praise and honor and glory to his name? That's what the scripture says. Now those who believe that overcoming Christians don't suffer, don't know their Bible, and they don't know God.

One of my favorite writers is T. Austin Sparks. He's been dead for about 30 years. Great English writer, great man of God.

And he made a statement once that shook me at first, but then I realized that's what was happening in my life. He said, God will allow a crisis to be created in your life so that you can't get by with information anymore, but you have to have revelation. You can't just have sermons preached at you anymore, you've got to know him.

And God will let that crisis come back and roll it in and roll it in until death comes to the flesh, until there's nothing left but Jesus. There's nothing left but him and the cross. We don't have the preaching of the cross from our pulpits anymore.

We're preaching everything but the cross of Jesus Christ. I'm asking him to bring me back to that place. Jesus Christ was sinless, yet the scripture said he suffered, and he suffered as an example.

Now I tell you in love, I've had people walk out on me. Three months ago I had a whole contingent of people walk out because I was talking about Christian suffering. Indignantly, prance out, and I felt so sorry for them, because when it comes and rolls in on them, they're not going to be prepared.

For even here unto ye are called. Now why don't we see that? Here's what you are called to, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. That's not David Wilkerson's version of the Bible.

That's King James. Here's what you're called to, because even as Christ suffered for us, he's left us an example that we should also follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was any deceit found in his mouth. He had no sin, there was no deceit in him, yet he suffered.

There are many preachers who do not preach this message. You hear preachers and evangelists today standing in the pulpit saying, here's what you are called to, saints of God. Here's what you're to follow in the way of example of Jesus Christ through suffering, and it's not usually a result of sin.

So I've suffered most when I've been closest to him. It's not the enemy without that is the battle, it's the enemy within that causes most distress. David said, in my distress I cried.

I could stop right there and preach a sermon. I wonder how many of you could stand up and preach a five-minute sermon right now. In my distress I cried.

In my distress I cried. But you see what David was crying about. Here's a holy, godly, holy man, a man after God's own heart, and he looks inside of himself and he cries out to be delivered from himself.

Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue. And if out of the, if the mouth speaks from the heart, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, then David is saying, deliver me from

my deceitful heart. He looks inside and he sees deceit.

He has a heart that burns for God, but in his flesh he sees his weakness, and he cries out, O God, deliver me, deliver me. And then he looks inside and he says, what shall be done unto thee, or what do you deserve, O deceitful heart? What is God going to have to do to you, David, thou false tongue, sharp arrows of the mighty and coals of Jupiter? Woe is me, David cried. He sees the sinfulness in his heart, and in those days arrows were synonymous with judgment, and the coals of Jupiter represented the wrath of God.

And he said, I'm supposed to be a child of God, but he said, I see something in me that frightens me. I look at my flesh and I'm afraid. And he says, I deserve, from what I see in me, I deserve nothing but these arrows of God being shot at me.

And he started looking around to see where the first arrow would hit him. It's what you and I do, don't we, when we sin. Where is God going to strike us down? Is it going to be a child that gets sick? Is it going to be my husband, my wife? Am I going to get cancer? We look for the arrows and the coals of Jupiter.

And I don't believe you can understand grace until you understand the deceitfulness of your heart. You've got to understand that if you had, if you got from God, if you and I got what we truly deserve, it would be nothing but the sharp arrows and the coals of Jupiter. You and I deserve the wrath of God because of what we are.

You tell me you're not under law. All right, go into the New Testament. There are 250 laws in the New Testament.

You can't keep one of them. If you love your neighbors yourself, if you love God with all your heart, your mind, soul, strength, then you broke the law. And if you break the law, you're deserving of hell.

You're good for the coals of Jupiter and the arrows of God. And we all tremble at the thought of it. And if you looked at it long enough and that, if that's where you stopped, you'd have a nervous breakdown.

You could never understand who God was. You could never understand grace. You cannot understand or comprehend the loving Father.

You can't comprehend grace until first, as Paul said, you see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. And this is what God was doing with David, showing him his heart, showing him the lying tongue in him, showing him the deceitfulness. And you tell me anything more painful for a man of God or a woman of God than to preach or to sing or to witness and to say I'm a man or woman of God and then go home and cry at what you see in your heart.

And you tell me that isn't the most painful thing for a Christian. Please turn the tape over for the remaining part of this message. Galatians mentions 17 sins of the flesh, not one of them having anything to do with demon activity.

It includes adulterate witchcraft and it doesn't even mention a demon. So I do believe that carnal Christians can be harassed by demons. But I'm going to tell you something, you're not going to cast those 17 sins out by having somebody pray with you.

You're going to deal with that flesh through the power of the Holy Spirit. There's flesh involved. There's flesh involved.

Woe is me. Finally he comes down, oh God is your mercy and grace gone forever? And all he wanted is to feel the mercy and grace of God. And finally he came to the end of himself.

He came to a place of resignation. Up to this time his eyes had been cast down. He'd been introspective and looking into his own heart.

And I'll tell you the only time he got the victory, the only way you and I can get the victory is to do what David did. These eyes that were looking inward, these eyes that were looking at the flesh began to look up outside of himself. And he said then, I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.

Now what does he see in the hills? What did I tell you? He was in the hills. The Lord of Hosts. Zabala was there with his army.

No wonder he'd look in there. He should have been looking there a long time ago. If you'd get your eyes off your pain and yourself and your hurt and start seeing who he is.

I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. I'm looking to the hills from whence cometh my armies, what he's saying. My help cometh from the Lord.

He will not allow my foot to slip. He that keepeth me will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is my keeper. You can't keep yourself. Oh God, open our eyes that by faith alone from the hills come our salvation.

To him alone who can keep us from falling. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. He shall preserve my soul.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all, what? You listening to me? From all evil? And here you would have been fighting that evil thing all by yourself. He will keep me from all evil. A better translation is he will hedge me about with thorns to keep the enemy out.

David's faith in God's forgiveness, oh David suddenly just felt the glory of God's keeping power and David finally said this isn't my battle anymore. This is not my battle. I resign.

I'm not going out there with my tin sword anymore. It's really, if you really look at it, David talked about having just a toothpick in his hand and he put away his toothpick and that's about some of you. Are you going out pricking the devil with your little toothpick? And that's about all you're doing when you've got an army in the hills surrounding you.

If you just lift up your eyes and by faith appropriate it. Now I want to show you something. I found something here that if you'll catch this now can be one of the greatest words of encouragement you've ever heard because it has been for me.

Never seen it before. I was laying in bed the other night and oh it just flooded in on me. David in the next verse said the Lord shall preserve my going out and my coming in from this time and forevermore.

Now you get anything out of that? The Lord is going to preserve my going out and my coming in. Now going out here is synonymous with failure and giving in to temptation and sorrow. Now the prodigal son had a going out and didn't the father keep him in love while he had a going out and he also had a coming in and he was preserved in too.

We're always going out. We're going out of his love. We're going out of his holiness.

We're going out of his presence. We're going out into our own will. But he says I'm going to keep you even in your goings out.

You say oh brother David I'm already out. I've gone out. He didn't keep me.

Oh yes he did. You look back at that time that you gave in and you indulged. You did that thing that you hated and you didn't seem to have the power and dominion over sin and you indulged and you say the Lord didn't protect me.

Take a look. Go back and see how miserable you were. Because the Holy Ghost wouldn't let you enjoy it because he was protecting and preserving you.

And you felt his love and you felt his presence and you felt his arms around you and the kiss on your neck and he brought you back. Don't tell me he didn't preserve you. Oh there are host and host of Christians all over America and around the world that have gone out on the Lord.

David thought he'd gone so far. He said and that's what he said I've gone so far Lord that I'm lost. I'm a lost sheep.

Seek me. Find me. I've gone so far out I'm lost.

I've always believed that the most important move you ever make is the move you make right after you go out and fail. It's when the devil comes in and says you're dirty, you're filthy, you're no good and you lie and cheat because his desire is to hide you from the love and the grace and mercy of the Lord and his forgiving love. And he wants you just to stay down and say I can't get back and like David I've gone so far I'm lost and you just sit there hurting.

You come to the house of God like you are tonight and you say all deep in my heart I love him I still feel his presence but I've just slipped and I because I don't have power over sin I can't go on because I don't want to be a hypocrite. I don't want to live a lie. I don't want to be a phony.

And yet sitting here you know, you sense his love, you sense that he still is reaching to you and above and beyond it all if you just come back. You know when the prodigal son came back his father was waiting without a question, not a question, didn't blame him for spending his substance and wasting his life. He'd been there yearning after this child that had had a going out and he preserved that love for that boy just like God has preserved his love for you no matter what you've done.

And that prodigal son is drawn by that love. I don't think it's just because he came to the end of himself. I think it's because he felt the drawing power of his father's love.

And the moment his father sees him he runs out after him, throws his arm around him and falls on him and kisses him on the neck. No questions asked. Perfect undeserved grace.

And he says take the rags off his back, put the robe on him, put shoes on him, put a ring on his finger and he takes him to the door of the house because you see the father doesn't want to just kiss you, wants to take you into the banqueting table and feast with you. You can interpret the whole Bible that way that you and I have a tendency to be the prodigal, to go away from his mercy and grace and God's desire is to bring us into a heavenly place seated with Christ Jesus at a feast of good things and the Lord always has a problem how he's going to get us into the house and not just in the house but at the table feeding on the lamb. See you and I are so used to looking at the blood.

I was telling our brethren about this a little while ago. You picture two Israelites in Egypt the night of the Passover and the blood's been applied to the door and the Lord says I'm going to keep to the night when I see the blood I'll pass over you.

And here's a house they've sprinkled the blood on the doorpost and the lentil and this particular house dad is so nervous and mother is nervous and they look at their firstborn and the father takes him his hands and says family please pray we may have failed God and all night long they live in doubt and fear and misery they may have hurt God and grieved him and the next door they're sitting there in peace and joy and happy sheltered by the blood and the firstborn looks at the father and says are we safe am I going to die tonight father they said oh no son you're safe the blood's on the door but not only the blood we've got the father's word which of those two houses was safest that night which one where they were doubting and afraid or where there was faith and joy which house was safest

they were both safe because they were both under the blood she didn't matter what in fact they were packed they were packing idols in their satchels that night 40 days later they're gonna be dancing around an idol a golden calf in fact Isaiah said when God found you you were heartless you were prostitutes but God had a favor to you that's great they were there was nothing in those people that deserved deliverance that's why some of us need just as much keeping power when we're coming in he'll preserve you're going out and you're coming in hallelujah it was in one of my going out recently that last week I I don't like to talk about my personal battles but how you know how in the world can I relate what I'm talking about unless I get into it a bit I've just come through probably the worst

two months in my life unbelievable I'm on the fifth month of the year sabbatical to seek God if you'd have told me what it would cost me I would have never done it I'd have preferred to go on just take the plaudits of men and take the offerings and preach the crowds and go on those painful unbelievable experiences two months ago everybody in my family got sick I have a beloved son 25 years old who pastors an all-black in the ghettos of Detroit had to bring him home his white count was dangerously low very sick his little child my grandson Ashley just a baby started bleeding in the bowel the two daughters got sick another grandson desperately sick and then on top of all in an effort to cut back our ministry offered a house for sale and a man comes in said he was a multimillionaire accepted

the price gave us a check for \$50,000 down and said I was a former CIA agent and I was in narcotics division and my family's in danger I'd like to move into the house immediately to safe house them he used all the terms a CIA agent would use so I let him move in he immediately bought \$90,000 of the furniture and some friends of ours who are tiered decorators he wrote out checks for it all well the \$50,000 check to me bounced the \$90,000 bounced these were friends of ours and they were in panic found out the man was one of the biggest con artists in America and was dangerous and for a whole week I had to hide my family in a motel our men had to carry guns and we had to go in with trucks and take that furniture back to the mark to save the credit of those young ladies I watched as people

came in ready to kill that man he'd taken homes from people was trying to it was trying to cheat on ministry and God protected us from that because we are his little turtle doves and a turtle dove has helped us we just have to depend on his keeping power as soon as that was settled my wife was rushed to the hospital she's had six operations for cancer and now they diagnosed her having lupus excruciating pain and she got out I think day before yesterday and I was at a hotel right near the hospital a few nights ago laying there just looking out the window like so many people who live you you live in a state of being stunned you're just stunned you love the Lord but you're stunned you overwhelmed and you have no answers and I'm I'm sitting there and I take my Bible in my hand and would you

know it falls to Jeremiah and all I can see is this man coming with robes dripped in blood and wrath against sin and judgment and then I turned Isaiah and finally I threw my Bible down on the on the bed and said Lord I'm sorry no wrath tonight no judgment I'm hurting I can't take it I don't understand I love you I don't have any doubts that the Holy Spirit touched me and I laid back and I said well I'm just gonna let here I'm gonna sit here lay here for an hour I'm just gonna let you love me and he loved me and loved me I started crying and enjoying his love for an hour he just loved all the hurt out of me all their hurt was gone you see the Lord is not standing here he's not wanting to hurt you he's not trying to judge you we serve a loving father who delights in his children who

understands what we're going through but so many times we won't stop and let him love us hallelujah now I want to give you a word of caution here please for all who suffer and I'm glad the Lord showed this to me because I needed it I don't know if some of you going to understand this or not I'm going to give you a scripture and show you something I don't think you've seen that it's vital it says of Christ when he was reviled he reviled not again and when he suffered he threatened not now what a tremendous statement when he suffered he threatened not when it talked to you about threatening God as a result of suffering and if you're suffering in any way you've got to hear me now before conclude this message you see not once did he defend himself when people were talking about him he never

mistreated anybody he never punished anybody he never retaliated but how unlike us today we threaten when we suffer and when the suffering gets unbearable we really threaten we try to defend ourselves we're constantly protecting our rights and our reputation we withdraw from those who hurt us and mistreat us and we hope secretly the Lord will get even with them on our behalf now we won't pray it but we sure hope it but worst of all and here it is it's a very subtle thing that happens and I don't know if you've ever seen it and we're really not aware of it at times but I want to make you aware of it because I've been doing it and the Lord made me aware of what I've been doing and I'll never do it again God helping me when our prayers seem to go unanswered and the deliverance doesn't seem

to come when we need it I've known people say brother Dave I've prayed for five years when all I want is some evidence that God is answering prayer just anything I'd like to see some evidence and when the deliverance doesn't seem to come or when you you say Lord keep me holy and pure and in spite of all that you fall into temptation and trouble and disaster and it seems like the Lord's let us down and we become very lonely and very empty and there's a sadness in us then we start pulling back on God we slack up on our prayer in our Bible reading or we still love the Lord with all of our hearts but we let go of the zeal and it's a subtle way of saying Lord I did my best but you let me down and when you stop seeking God with intensity when you suffer that's threatening God when he suffered

he threatened not and I know Christians who have prayed about something in their life they've had to be setting sin and they prayed and prayed for deliverance and didn't come and finally they went and indulged

it as if to say well I have every right to do it because I prayed God didn't take it away it's a threat it's a threat I've got a right to do this because God let me down are you catching that I'm not here to scream and yell at you put a guilt trip on you or wave my hands and try to be active and a powerful preacher tonight I want to get some word into you that'll give you strength some truth that'll help you at the troubling hour he suffered not he when he suffered he threatened not and I know there are times that when I've suffered I've been so overwhelmed and so stunned I would

pull back on God and then the Lord showed me something you see it's one thing when you're suffering and you're in this boat that storm tossed and suddenly Christ appears see it's one thing to be in a boat that's tossed in a storm and it looks terrible but you're laying there are you going through life and suddenly you feel his presence and then you begin to relax and sit back now it's one thing to just rest in him but you have to be careful that it's not just passiveness and fatalism or you say well he's there you just sit back because that can lead to terrible doubt and fear but it's another thing in the storm to make a move toward him and get out of the boat and say I'm in a storm and I'm going to use this storm to get to know him in a new way Peter wasn't showing off his faith when he

got out of the boat he wasn't trying to belittle those other disciples but he had something in his heart that was reaching out to his master he wanted to touch him and see him in a new way he wasn't satisfied to say well the Lord is near thank God the Lord's near let's all just rest and go how God's been showing this to me David when you're down when you're hurting and I saw this this past week use this as an opportunity to get out of that boat and walk on the water take a step of faith go toward him make a move toward him right now love him like you've never loved him reach out to him and even though Peter got his eyes on the storm the truth is he did walk on the water he was above his problem for a while and that the faith that kept him above the water for six steps could have kept him

all the way you know when Stephen was being stoned he looked up and he saw an open heaven and he saw him we sat on the throne and from that moment on he was above it all nothing could hurt him the stones couldn't hurt him he was already seated his with Christ in heavenly places he was already gone because he had an open heaven I don't want anything anymore in my life but him I want him to feel everything and I wanted I want to know him as my keeper the Lord is my keeper I gave up the struggle a long time ago when I found out how much he loved me in spite of who I am and what I am and what I've done I feel sorry for people every time a preacher says he's going through a problem or has had sin his life everybody thinks of adultery that's not my problem in case you want to know we're all

just mud balls that's all well our feet of clay hmm I guess I'm finished but there's some of you who have threatened the Lord and you you've lost the sense of his love for you I I could tell you that though this had been the worst two months of my life in the physical realm it's been the most glorious two months in the spiritual realm because I've had a vision of grace a glimpse of his mercy that endures forever and I don't find him spanking me anymore I don't I don't feel his wrath anymore I feel his love I feel him kissing me you know here's the product when there's something the prodigal the Lord's already the father's kissed him put a robe on his back shoes on his feet he says come in the house and this poor stupid kid and I'm not being facetious but that poor little child doesn't

understand his father's love at all because he's he's sitting there said I'm not worried that he go in there you know what he's saying I need three more months of discipleship I guess I don't feel grief for my sin like I think I should I need a little more time to prove to your father that I'm still not in the pigpen and I got this all out of my heart no no no no no he said come on in you know you can walk right in and God's will for you

is to come to the table tonight be seated at the lamb and partake and be full I'm full tonight because I feel his tender lips on my neck and I've got his robe on my back and I'm sitting at a table he said we're seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus and I believe I'm everything he said I am you know some of you people make better Jews and Christians

because you're living under such legalism I'll come on in the house got nothing out of anybody here tonight have you failed him all right you see how there's no priest has to tell you how bad you feel I don't want to make you cry I want to make you rejoice but you know as well as I do you can feel it right now there are people here that are hurting and you're hurting because somewhere you got it in your mind that you grieve the Lord so bad you don't have a right to his love and I think that hurts him more than it hurts you I had my daughter-in-law and with this I close beautiful little Kelly sitting the chair and she sat in the floor put her hand on my knee and she said hey do you know how much I love you you're so tender so nice I said yeah Kelly there's one way you can love me except my

love for you let me love you and then I'll know you love me and we always say oh how I love Jesus but that we won't let him love us I've been letting him love me all through my preaching God doesn't want you go through life focused on your sins but on him and his mercy and his grace is there anybody that needs some mercy and love and grace that you say brother Dave I felt so empty I felt so in love I'm you'll hear let me help love you there brother I felt so cold I just need his love tonight I want him to love some hurt out of me oh can't you feel his love come on college kids dad mom bring it to him lay it down here right now he just wants to love you you've got to accept it Lord your love is so incredible that you could look down in an audience tonight and see us in all of our

foolishness and our hurt and say I delight in you hallelujah are you hurt in your home your marriage are you hurt in your home in your marriage let me minister to you for just a moment I'd like to just take you by the hand and ask God to let you have a moment of the hurt just draining out of you so you can leave here tonight knowing the Lord Sabawa

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