

Provision for Rough Roads

by George Kulp

We are living in the best days the world ever saw, and God has provided for every trial that may come through His promise of 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass'.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 7:10

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Gods Provision"

Description

George Kulp preaches about the blessings of living in the present age, emphasizing that each generation builds upon the experiences and lessons of the past, standing on higher ground with boundless possibilities. He encourages believers to look forward and seek new victories for God, reminding them that provision has been made for every trial that may come. Kulp urges the congregation to trust in God's promises for their needs, as He provides just in time, like iron and brass shoes for rough roads, sweetening bitter waters, and sending manna in the wilderness.

Transcript

"Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be."

Deut. 33:25

The wise man tells us in Ecclesiastes, "Say not thou what is the cause that the former days were better than these, for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this."

We are living in the best days the world ever saw, -- "in an age on ages telling; to be living is sublime." Pisgah's mountain top was a good place for observation, but pile Hermon on Tabor, and these on our Rockies, and above all these, pile on the Alps, surmount them all with Pisgah, then let the vision be enlarged by divine power, and man will see much further than Pisgah only. God has been piling up the ages for our benefit, and every age, enriched by experience, comes to us with its lessons, day unto day uttering speech, and night unto night shewing knowledge. We stand on higher ground today than any preceding generation. I respect Dr. Arnold of Rugby, who, when he entered his classrooms, always took off his hat to the boys, recognizing the fact that among those boys were the men of the future, who would lift the world nearer to God, and bring out of their manhood such possibilities as the world had never seen, because they were the product not of a generation, but of 6,000 years.

This is the best age of all the world. We have in us the sum of all the lives and consciousness of all who preceded us, and our own besides. We are trees which through the roots drink in the virtue of all the soil around us, soil that has been enriched by the buried generation of trees and leaves and flowers, and because of the richness of all the past, which in the goodness of the King of Ages has come to us, because of the grace of God, never so manifest as today, we should glorify Him more than all the generations gone by.

Some Methodists says, "Oh, for days like the days of Wesley and Asbury! We will never see the like again." Some Presbyterians say, "Oh, for men like Calvin and Knox and Witherspoon. We will never see such men again." They remind me of the enfeebled, enervated aristocrats of the old world, and their shoddy imitations in this one, who are always pointing to the ruins of old castles, old walls built by the Romans, and saying, "They have no ruins in America." We have a living present, we have boundless possibilities, we have all the follies of the past to warn us, and make us wiser. We have all the wisdom of the past to teach us, and make us more efficient for God. We have all the examples of good men in the past to spur us onward, and inspire greater faith in His Word. We have the Church Triumphant -- never so glorious as today, beckoning us onward, and we know more of God, and more of His truth than ever before.

When Kosciusko was going into action for the rights of the oppressed, he cried, "Forwards, brothers, forwards," and so today instead of living in the past, and looking at past victories won for God, let us forward, brothers, forward for God and win new victories.

During a battle in the Southwest in the late Rebellion, a German officer rode up to Grant and, saluting, said, "General, we captured a battery of the enemy," and Grant said, "All right," and then he was silent. But the officer expected some commendation, and again said, "General, we have captured a rebel battery. What shall we do?" And Grant quietly turned to him and said, "Take another." Victory for God, and another victory, and still another. This is the age when victory is in the very air, and every child of God must go forward.

It is said by some that the Church is stronger today, never greater numbers within it, never more aggressive, never in better spirits, or more courageous, -- but there is so much opposition. The pen Of the writer, the power of the press, and the platform are much used to disseminate evil. That is so, but the same powers) multiplied a thousand times, are used by the Church of the living God for spreading the truth. The enemy of souls is busy today, and rampant, I think, because he knows his time is short. The faithful souls that live for God find opposition today, and many of the children of God, because of the greed and selfishness, find themselves oppressed. They look out over the future and they see rough roads ahead, and they know not what awaits them. If they could only always be in the prayer-meeting, or in the class-meeting, or in the Church with the brethren, then they believe they could get along, but, brethren, sisters, if that tried, discouraged one is here, I want to say to you, this age and these surroundings today ought to lift you up nearer to God. All the experiences of God's children in the past encourages you today. The Word of God has been tried for nearly 6,000 years, and proven to be true, and the child of God knows today that provision has been made for every trial that may come, and he will not have a single experience in the line of duty but that experience will bring with it a blessing. William Cowper drew not on his imagination, but on the history of God's dealings with His children in the past, when he wrote:

His purposes will ripen fast,

Unfolding every hour.

The bud may have a bitter taste,

But sweet will be the flower.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,

The clouds ye so much dread,

Are big with mercy and will break,

In blessings on your head.

The promise today to every believer is, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass." Shall be, brother. When you get to the rough road, when your tender feet would be lacerated and would bleed, when the thorns would hinder your progress, and prevent your moving, then, just when you need them, "thy shoes shall be iron and brass," and rough roads shall be surmounted, and thorns will be trodden under foot, and your progress shall not be stopped. Iron shoes for rough roads, and brass shoes for rough roads, provision [or every trial that may come, and when it comes.

Three martyrs were awaiting the time of execution during the reign of bloody Mary. To increase their agony they were told they were to be burnt on certain days, one on each. The first day came and one was taken to the stake. The second day came and another one was taken. The remaining one was fearful, and as he looked forward to the coming day he exclaimed, "I can't burn, I can't burn," but when they came to lead him out to the stake he shouted exultantly, "I can burn, I can burn," and went to Heaven in a chariot of fire. Provision for needs, for every need, when the need comes.

Did you ever consider the wonderful adaptation there is in nature? Mere is a tree growing on the mountain side. Its strong roots dive deep down into the earth, penetrating the crevices of the soil, and grasping the rocks, and there it stands, defying all the blasts of winter. Here is the oak standing alone in the field, its roots strike deep into mother earth, and it is a match for the tempest. But now go into the pine forest, you will find the roots of the pine are spread out near the surface because it is less exposed, and it is shielded by the social life of the forest. Many tropical trees in South American forests are held in place by climbing plants which bind trees together like the rigging of a ship, and there the deep root is not needed. So there is adaptation in God's spiritual Kingdom. There is provision made for temptations and trials, for everything and anything that may come, -- cloudy days, rough roads, dark nights, temptations, trials, sickness, sorrow, death, but, brother, there is no promise of provision for needs while the needs are in the future. God does not give you all your inheritance at once, but He gives you a checkbook, and He says to you "draw on me, draw whenever you need, draw in temptation, times of trial, need, -- draw on the fulness of the riches of grace in Christ Jesus."

Some people, aye, some believers, are forever fretting and they are good people, but they do not trust their Father, they forget the promise. they wonder if they could endure bereavement. They wonder if they would have grace enough to love God if they lost all their property. They ask themselves. "Could I meet death calmly?" You do not want grace for bereavement, or for poverty, or for death, until it comes. I know 2 man, who, while he had a large farm in the state of New Jersey, became insane brooding for fear he would one day be poor, and he went to the insane asylum.

If he had only trusted God's Word, and left the future to God, he need not have brooded one single instant, or had any trouble. I know a lady who has been in bed for years, and one time she wanted a housekeeper and she fretted and worried, and wrote letters, and remembering her husband had been a Mason while living, she even wrote to the Masons asking them to get her a housekeeper, just such an one as she needed. She was very particular. And they all failed to get one for her.

One evening while she was fretting, there came to her the thought, "There, I never asked my Father to get me a housekeeper, how thoughtless I am," and then she wept to think she had been so foolish, and she prayed with tears of penitence in her eyes, and asked God to forgive her for being so thoughtless, and then she said, "Father, pick out a housekeeper for me, just the one I ought to have, and if I don't think she is the right one, Father, make me take her anyhow; I leave it all with thee."

The next morning when the son of her washerwoman brought the washing, she said to him, "Tell your mother I want to see her," and that evening the boy's mother came around and she told her of some things she had she would like to give her, but the dear woman said, "I do not need them. I get along nicely, my boy and I give them to some one that needs them." And they went to talking about something else, and to talking about housekeepers, and all at once the woman said, "Why, -- why couldn't I take care of you?"

You see the Father was already after a housekeeper for her, and had sent her one, but she did not see the Father's answer, and said, "But you have a boy," and then she also found out that the boy had a dog, and she did not want a dog, but she had prayed, "Father, if I don't think she is the right one, make me take her," and the Lord was answering, and the woman talked to her, and said she knew she could take care of her, and finally they left it for over night, the decision to be made in the morning, and the good sister did not dare to touch it.

She had left it with God, and she said, "If this is the Father's housekeeper, it must be all right," and the next morning, the Father's housekeeper, the washerwoman, came, and said, "I can come," and she moved in, and the boy moved in, and the dog came, and that woman proved indeed to be the "Father's housekeeper," and served up the nicest meals, so clean and so dainty, and the boy is a little gentleman, and even the dog is a treasure, don't bark once too often, only just when he ought to, and one day, when writing to a lady friend, our sister said, "Our dog is just a treasure."

The Masons failed, and the ministers failed, and friends all failed to get her a housekeeper, but when she trusted the Father, He sent her not only a housekeeper, but He gave more than she asked, a good boy and a dog that was a treasure.

Brass shoes just in time.

Brother, when Israel came to march, there were bitter waters there, and oh, how Israel murmured, but right beside those bitter waters there was a tree growing. but Israel did not know it, -- a tree that would sweeten those bitter waters, and God told Moses about it, and he cut down the tree, put it in the waters and sweetened them, -- that tree was at the right place, and God shewed them in the right time. Israel marched through the wilderness, there were no harvests in the wilderness, no cattle in the wilderness, and Israel began to murmur and cried out against God, and wanted to know "if God had brought them into the wilderness to die; were there no graves in Egypt?" And just then, when all else had failed, God forgiving them their lack of faith, sent them manna, bread from Heaven, sent it for forty years, always enough, never too much, provision for their needs, at just the right time.

Yonder is the God-Man in the Garden. The sins of the world are pressing Him down, the cup of bitterness is being pressed to His lips, and He cries out, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not as I will, but Thy will be done." And He sweats great drops of blood, so intense is His agony, but now in His hour of sorrow the angels come trooping down, even to Gethsemane, and minister unto Him. Help in the very hour of need. And you shall have it too "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass." You do not know what you will do when the dark hours come? Well, God knows what to do. Trust His Word.

Passengers on ocean vessels sometimes see the ocean as on fire, and the light is caused by millions of little animals that are phosphorescent. One time there was a shipwreck, and the life boat was crowded. It required great skill on the part of the seaman to keep the boat just so it would surmount the great waves as they came, and the passengers all wondered and worried about what they would do when the darkness came, but lo, when night came, and they were yet quite a distance from shore, the waters all around them were bright and the waves phosphorescent light to guide them in the hours of night, provision for all their need.

There is light for you. God says so. At even time it shall be light. An old painter in water colors was dying, aged ninety-one. He said to them around him, "Bring me my masterpiece, I want to see it," and they brought it. It was a shipwreck. He looked at it a good while and then said, "Bring me my pencils, and lift me up. I must brighten that black cloud. It used to seem right, but I must brighten it up before I go." And when it was done, he died. Today death looks dark to you, but when you get there, as the waves of Jordan parted and the children of Israel went over dryshod, so the waves will part, and you will go over triumphantly. "At even time it shall be light." Light that will dispel all the gloom, the last shadow will flee away before the dawning of the eternal day break, and you will be at home forever.

Forever with the Lord,

Amen, so let it be

Life from the dead is in the word,

'Tis immortality.

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