

Probability

by James Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith, prayer, and perseverance in trusting God's power and promises for deliverance and overcoming difficulties.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 14:6, 2 Chronicles 20:17, Psalm 34:17, Psalm 50:15, Isaiah 41:10, Jeremiah 32:17, Mark 9:23, Romans 8:31

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Power Of Prayer"

Description

James Smith preaches on the story of Jonathan and his armor-bearer, highlighting the importance of trusting in God's omnipotence and venturing out in faith, believing that nothing is too hard for the Lord. He encourages believers to seek God's help in all aspects of life, whether in personal struggles, ministry challenges, financial difficulties, or facing enemies, reminding them that God will work for their deliverance and victory. Smith emphasizes the power of prayer, perseverance, and unwavering faith in God's promises, urging individuals to continue seeking God's intervention with the hope that 'Perhaps the Lord will help us!'

Transcript

"Let us go across to the outpost of those pagans," Jonathan said to his armor bearer. "Perhaps the Lord will help us, for nothing can hinder the Lord. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!" 1 Samuel 14:6

Iseael was in distress, for the Philistines were oppressing them. Jonathan was looking to the Lord, and expecting deliverance. He had no positive promise, he could see no way. Yet ne was hoping in God. Alone with his armor-bearer, the thought struck him, "Perhaps the Lord will help us!"

God is Omnipotent, and all things are easy to Omnipotence. Let us trust in God--and venture. He prescribed the signs, they acted in faith; God honored them; deliverance was wrought, and a glorious victory was gained. This history was written for our admonition, it is intended to encourage faith, excite hope, and lead to effort. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. Few things are impossible to a believer. Let us realize a present God, keep the facts recorded in Scripture history in mind, attempt great things in God's name, and expect great things to be wrought for us by God's power! "Perhaps the Lord will help us!"

What Do We Want Him To Do? Each one of us has some special work for God to do. Work which only God can do. Work which we should put into God's hands to be done. Work which it will glorify God to do,

because no one else can; and, therefore, work which we should expect God to do. If we employ the Lord, we shall never repent of it. If we employ Him in faith, we shall have cause to praise Him.

Here is a parent, he has a child, who has withstood all his prayers, tears, and entreaties. The Gospel only seems to harden him. He sins more and more. He has stifled powerful convictions. He has conquered deep impressions. He can speak reproachfully of God's people, and trifle with God's word. Thousands of prayers, accompanied with strong crying and tears, have been offered for him--but all seems in vain. Satan suggests, "It's no use praying; give up." Hope deferred has made the heart sick, and bitter disappointment, oft repeated, has produced languor at the Throne of Grace. The troubled spirit cries out, "I am afraid the case is desperate, that neither prayer or effort will be of any use. I must give up." Give up, friend, did you say? Give up? Never! Persevere; pray more fervently, strive more, earnestly, grasp the promise more firmly, and say with Jonathan, "Perhaps the Lord will help us!"

Yes; the Lord will work in His own time, and in His own way. Prayer can never be lost. It must bring down blessings. The Lord never said, "Do you seek My face in vain?" Go, go, and go again to Jesus, and say, as the poor man in the Gospel did, "Master, I have brought unto You my son." Or, as the poor woman did, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David, for my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil!" Jesus healed the son, and delivered the daughter, and it may be that He will yet deliver yours. However, never give over until death prevents perseverance.

Here is a Christian, or it may be a minister of Christ, and he is connected with a church that is dull, or worldly, or declining; he has prayed and preached, and used all likely means to revive it--but it is nothing bettered--but rather grows worse. What is to be done? Is it to be given up, as if the case was hopeless? Shall the Christian withdraw from its fellowship, or the minister resign his office? Perhaps both would do wrong if they did. Let us ask, has every means been tried? Has God shut up His loving-kindness in displeasure?

First, let us look into our hearts--is all right there? Then let us look into our lives--is all right there? Then let us look into our doctrine, style of preaching, and motives--is all right there? If not, let us get rid of the evil, and obtain grace to set us right. Then let us begin afresh to labors for Christ, to wrestle with God, and set our hearts upon a revival of religion. Let us go to work in good earnest, and say with Jonathan, "Perhaps the Lord will help us!"

But we have something more than a "perhaps," here, for the Lord will work. If not in the way we wish, or mark out--He will work. He may try our faith, prove our sincerity, exercise our patience, and make us wait. But He will work. Satan will try, by all means, to hinder, or discourage us. Our own hearts may misgive, and yield for a time to unbelief. But if our hearts are set upon obtaining the blessing--if, like Jacob, we cannot, will not go without it--we shall have it. God will open the windows of heaven, and pour it out. He will pour water upon His thirsty ones, and floods upon the dry ground; He will pour His Spirit upon our seed, and His blessing upon our offspring. He will comfort all our waste places, and He will make our wilderness like Eden, and our desert like the Garden of the Lord. Instead of the thorn--will come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier--will come up the myrtle tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name--for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off.

Discouraged Christian, tried servant of God, toil on, hope on, pray on, and let this be the burden of your prayer, "Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in you. And let this encourage your hope, "Perhaps the Lord will help us!"

Here is a believer in financial difficulties, brought on, not by rash speculations, or extravagance, or idleness; but he is in difficulty, and knows not which way to turn. What is he to do? Do! Look to the Lord, for the silver and gold are the Lord's, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. He can make a way for your escape. He can supply all your needs. He has made many precious promises to the poor, and to those who are in temporal difficulties. Pray earnestly, act honestly, labor diligently, and believe heartily, so shall you be delivered. Earnest prayer, honest action, persevering labor, and steady faith--will bring a man through any difficulty, and make him more than a conqueror. It is no use to sit down and sigh, or wander about, and tell your troubles to men. Down upon your knees and pray! Take up your Bible and read!! Let your conduct be transparent. Diligently engage in any employment that offers. So doing, God will clear your path; God will chase away the clouds, and your efforts shall be crowned with success. Lay firm hold of that precious promise, "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay your vows unto the Most High; and call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me!"

A church may be in financial difficulties, a heavy debt on the house of prayer, and the depression of trade, or other causes may throw a people into perplexity. What is to be done? Done! Let all unite in prayer, and pray as earnestly for money as they would for grace--let all combine to do their utmost to meet the case, and they must conquer. Our motto may encourage them. What were Jonathan and his armor bearer against the army of the Philistines? But Jonathan said, "Let us go across to the outpost of those pagans. Perhaps the Lord will help us, for nothing can hinder the Lord. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!" And the Lord did work for them, and the Philistines were subdued under them.

Just so now--whatever difficulty is thrown in our way--whether temporal or spiritual--whether personal or relative--let us face it in God's strength, and let us expect God to work for our deliverance. He has delivered, He does deliver, and in Him we should trust for our present deliverance. Difficulties we may meet with--impossibilities never.

Here is a Christian, surrounded by foes, they may be human or infernal, visible or invisible, outward or inward. His weakness is great, his fears are strong, his doubts are many. His heart sinks within him, and something whispers, that he will surely perish by the hand of Saul. But the Saul has never been created yet--who can crush the Christian who has faith in God's Word, who pleads at God's throne, and stands in God's strength. He may look upon all that oppose him, and though the case may appear improbable to nature, as it was that Jonathan and his armor-bearer should vanquish the army of the Philistines--yet as it was in their case, so it shall be in his.

Christian, put on your sword-proof helmet, gird on your spear-proof breastplate, take your shot-proof shield, and grasp your two-edged sword; now go forth against your foes, saying to your fellows, "Come on, Perhaps the Lord will help us!" Yes, He will work for you, and there will soon be a great shaking among the army of your enemies, for a trembling will seize them, and they will flee before you! "One of you shall chase a thousand; and two shall put ten thousand to flight!"

Believer, let nothing discourage you, for the Lord Almighty is with you, and the God of Jacob is your refuge! The Lord will work for you, and He will work in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Yes, He will fulfill in you all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power. Whatever difficulty you meet with--whatever trouble comes upon you--whatever duty devolves on you--go forward as Jonathan did, saying to your fellows, "Come on, Perhaps the Lord will help us!"

Sinner, see the privilege of the believer, and contrast your own sad state with his. You have no God to work for you--no promise to comfort thee--no good hope to animate you. You are in a pitiable state, and you are going on from bad to worse. You have enough to bear up under now; but what will you do on a bed of sickness, on a dying pillow, and at the judgment seat of Christ? What will comfort you--when heart and flesh are failing? Who will speak for you at the dread tribunal at the last day? Ah, you will be speechless then! You will be hopeless then! Stripped of every false covering, your naked soul must meet the heart-searching gaze of a sin-hating God! And with all your secret sins placed in the light of God's countenance, you will be required to give an account of the deeds done in the body. Then you must say why you sinned--why you refused to repent of sin--why you refused to be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ--why you preferred being God's enemy, when He besought you to be reconciled. What account will you be able to give? How will you stand the scrutiny? How will you escape an eternal hell? Repent of sin. Believe in Jesus, and God will work for you--yes, for you.

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