

# (Suffering in the Christian Life) 3. the Grace of the Chastener

by Roy Hession

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*God's chastening is a means of restoration, revealing our hidden areas of need and sin, and offering us the opportunity to repent and seek His mercy and grace.*

**Duration:** 49:47

**Scripture:** Exodus 33:18-34, Psalm 103:9-10, Isaiah 57:15-16, Lamentations 3:31-33, Micah 7:18

**Topics:** "Grace"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that although troubles may seem endless, there is always a way out and light at the end of the tunnel. The devil may try to convince us otherwise, but we must remember that God delights in showing mercy. The preacher references Isaiah 57:15-16, which states that God dwells with those who have a contrite and humble spirit and that He does not contend with us forever. The sermon also highlights the importance of grace over judgment, as it encourages repentance and restoration.

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## Transcript

I want you to turn to Exodus, chapter thirty-three, as our background passage this morning. Exodus, chapter thirty-three, verse eighteen. Moses has gone up into the mountain to speak with God on behalf of the people.

He has six weeks alone with God, and at one point he prays this prayer in verse eighteen, and he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And the Lord said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live.

And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass that while my glory passes by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by, and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. Verse five of the next chapter, And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name, which means the character of the Lord. And whenever you have Lord in capitals, it means Jehovah in the Hebrew.

And here is God proclaiming the name, the character of Jehovah, his own personal name. And Jehovah passed by before him and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty. That's a difficult one.

Forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and by no means clearing the guilty. Well, I know one guilty man he's cleared. It's me.

But I notice that the word guilty, in most versions, certainly in the authorised, is in italics, which means that that word is not in the Hebrew. It has to be provided by the translators to complete the sentence. And therefore you're at liberty to look at that word and say, well, have they provided the right word? I'm not too sure they have.

I believe we could equally, just as well, have it translated, and will by no means clear the impenitent. Oh, he can't clear them. But the penitent he certainly does.

And then he goes on to say, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation. And that part of the verse hardly seems consistent with the other part, which emphasises grace so much. But you've got to see, it's really a foreshortened version of a similar verse that was given with the Ten Commandments.

Keeping mercy for thousands. Thousands of what? Generations. His mercy is going to extend to thousands of generations of the sons of Adam.

But iniquity, oh yes, it will affect their descendants up to a point, but only to the third and fourth generation. Sin and the law extends, yes, to the third and fourth generation, but grace goes for thousands. Cause and effect can't altogether be undone, but it's going to be limited.

And grace, mercy, is going to extend to thousands of generations, and we're part of those generations that are on the receiving end of the mercy of God. Well now, our theme these mornings is suffering in the Christian life. The first morning we looked at Romans 5, which gives us the whole panorama of our salvation, and in which we see suffering, or tribulation, is taken in God's stride, and he wants you to take it in yours.

Not only are we to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, of one day going to heaven, but not only so, we can glory in tribulation, because that passage tells us what good things, a spot of trouble and difficulty, even tears, can work in our lives. Tribulation worketh endurance, and endurance worketh testedness, and testedness works out to a new assurance of God and of your salvation. And then, yesterday, we saw the character of certain of our tribulations.

Not always so, but very often, more often than we realise sometimes, that our troubles, our sorrows, our sufferings, however they may come, through brother body, or through the wicked world that's against us, that they are to be regarded as chastenings from the Lord. As I say, not always so. God will have to show you.

He did indeed. This is from me. This is a chastening.

And we saw yesterday that the word chastening is literally child training. And a child needs correction. And the saints, the family of God, they need correction.

The work of restoration of the divine image in them has only just begun. It's not the work of a day or of a year, it's the work of a lifetime. And God has to deal with us, deeply, to reveal hidden areas of need, of wrong, of self, where the divine image is still being marred, and where it needs to be restored.

And that is achieved, as God wills it, according to his purpose, by what is called in scripture, chastening. And we made much yesterday of Hebrews 12, verse 11, that classic passage, Hebrews 12, on the whole matter of chastening, the chastening of the Lord. We made much of verse 11.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto those that are exercised thereby. And I don't know if I made it clear, I tried to put out a real definition of chastening. Chastening is affliction with a purpose, the purpose being your holiness.

And we made much also of something very, very important, that the chastings of the Lord, that he permits to come upon us, are not punitive in their intention. They can never be regarded as a punishment, quid pro quo, for our sins, because they're not severe enough. The only adequate punishment for sin is that which Jesus bore and exhausted in his body on the tree.

No, these are not punitive, they're restorative. To restore you, he restoreth my soul. And the writer of Psalm 119 says, Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy law.

Thank God, he says, that I was afflicted. It was good for me, he said, that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. And we thought of the afterward.

I read the testimony of a dear friend of mine in America, and someone said it so impressed them, the way in which that dear brother was able to summarize his experience. And thank God, that all the way the Savior led him, he had naught to ask beside. And he justified God in all his dealings with him.

Some of them were hard, the death of a wife, a disastrous second marriage, and all sorts of other things. To deal with a man who, like me, like you, was set on all sorts of ego trips, which weren't of God, but now says, I'm learning his statutes. And I didn't go on with the letter to tell you that the last years of his life, now in retirement, as a minister who fills in for churches where there's an interregnum, he's had the experiences of a lifetime.

Never has he seen quite the blessing of God upon the people. Churches melted under his ministry. And they, who didn't expect much from an interim minister, blessed the day God sent that man and his wife, who came to them absolutely ostensibly with a sinner's testimony, and his ministry to them came out of that.

A ministry of the grace of God for sinners like him, and of course, like them. And all the afterward. So there we are.

Praise the Lord. So fearful saints, fresh courage take, nevertheless afterwards. And I don't know whether you're learning things in anticipation in these days, because maybe you've had a pretty easy time, but it won't always be so, I don't think.

And you'll be glad that this God is your God. And I want us to look very much at this God, who subjects us to this chastening. I want to see the character of the God, who does thus with us his dear children.

Moses prayed that God would show him his glory, and God put him in a cleft of the rock, and put his hand over him while he passed by, and then took it away, and he saw but God's back parts. They were glorious enough. If what Moses saw were God's back parts, what must his face have been? But he wasn't permitted to see that.

Maybe none of us will until we get to glory. But how glorious were the back parts of God. The revelation of himself that God did give to Moses.

And the Lord descended in the cloud, chapter 34, Exodus, and stood within there and proclaimed the name of Jehovah, Jehovah, Jehovah, our God, merciful and gracious. Now this is God's first name, his personal name. It was so sacred to the Jews that they never pronounced it.

And they used to use another name for God, Adonai, not Jehovah, because they thought it too sacred. And this old tradition has been carried over into most of our versions. And we do not put Jehovah when the Hebrew says Jehovah, because that old tradition of the sacredness of this name still persists.

But remember that. When you see Lord, or God, all in capitals, it's always Jehovah. It makes a lot of extra sense to many verses when you see that.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. Well, that means blessed is the nation whose God is God. Unless you realise the Lord's in caps.

Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah. And the business of the Bible, as you progressively go through it, is to reveal the character of Jehovah, the great I Am. And we realise that Jehovah means I Am.

Whatever my people need, it's the great name of grace. And it says here, I Am Jehovah, a God, listen, merciful and gracious. Here is God telling you what his real character is.

And written in his heart is mercy and grace. The devil does his best to malign him to you, and make you think of him otherwise, but it isn't true. And I believe this Exodus 34 passage is one of the most important scriptures in the whole Bible.

From this passage much else is built, and there are all sorts of illusions right the way through the old, and it's flowered in the new, to this passage where God declares himself a God, merciful and gracious. Mercy is for misery. And where there's misery, there's a God full of mercy, reaching down to relieve and help those in misery.

And if you can somehow locate yourself as being in misery, you're a candidate. For this God is a God, merciful. He specializes in souls in misery.

But he's not only merciful, he's gracious. Not only full of mercy, but full of grace. If mercy is for misery, grace is for guilt.

And some of our miseries are our own fault. Well, of course, that finishes me. I can't expect much from God.

When I brought this upon myself, there you're wrong. He's not only merciful, he's gracious. And grace is God doing things for people who don't deserve it.

Merciful and gracious. Not even your failures can alienate you from these great things in the Godhead. Merciful.

And also, thank God, gracious, for giving iniquity, transgression and sin, and doing things for sinners that they don't deserve. And really, it covers all our need. This is why he ever sent Jesus.

We have things on some of our cards. Thank God for Jesus. Yes, you thank God for Jesus.

Had God not been merciful and gracious, Jesus would never have come. He saw our world in misery. Oh, the misery of men.

And those miseries, so many of them, have been produced by man's sin. But not even that fact. Man's culpability diminishes the flow of mercy.

He's merciful and gracious, and because of that. He did not spare his only son, but gave to him for a world undone. And freely with that blessed one, he gave everything.

And it's because Jehovah is merciful and gracious, that he didn't withhold, Heaven's darling, from all that was involved in his coming, to be the saviour of the world. As I say, this passage where Jehovah is declared to be merciful and gracious, is one of the foundational passages of the Old Testament. And again and again, there are allusions in the Old Testament.

We'll look at quite a few of them in a moment. And Israel had this unique privilege of knowing this about their God. That which distinguished Israel from any other nation, many things did distinguish things, but this above all, that they had this unique revelation, they knew that their God was merciful and gracious.

And so it was when they were in trouble. They often threw their own fault, and their enemies were allowed to overrun them. Whenever they were under the chastening of God, which they were so often, for they'd gotten away, and this was God's means to bring them back, and it was severe.

When the godly in Israel prayed, they nearly always referred back to this passage, but thou hast thyself said, thou art merciful and gracious. Three great prayers of Old Testament repentance, Ezra 9, Nehemiah 9, Daniel 9, all of them are built on an approach to God. They confess that what's happened is right and proper and due to them, but thou art a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and ready to pardon.

And this became all their hope and peace, especially in the hour of chastening. The very God who appeared to be dealing with them severely, and what a severity it was, when the city was destroyed and the nation taken away captive, that very God was nonetheless merciful and gracious, and all that mercy and grace was available to them, even in the experience of chastening. And it guaranteed that this chastening wasn't going to be forever, that they would be restored.

This is the God who sometimes puts his hand heavy upon us. Day and night, said David, thy hand was heavy upon me. My moisture was turned to the drought of summer.

I felt terrible. I was under conviction of sin. But the one who was bringing him into that position was nonetheless merciful and gracious.

And he knew it. That was the point. If Israel had not known it, if David had not known it, it would have been despair indeed.

But there was always this knowledge, that one who was chastening them was merciful and gracious to a degree they hardly realised. Sir Nick, there's a unique thing in the book of Isaiah. You may know that there's a distinct division in that great book.

Up to chapter 40, it's all speaking of judgement, all that is coming upon them, because they departed from the Lord and turned to idols. And it's not very sweet reading. But suddenly, at chapter 40, it changes.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, speak ye comfortably unto them, and tell them that their warfare is accomplished. And from chapter 40, the note changes. It's all comfort and invitation.

This is extraordinary. The Prophet foresees that those prophecies he's already given have actually taken place. He sees them taken into captivity before they ever were.

And he begins to prophesy their restoration by mercy and grace from a captivity into which they have not yet gone. So grace is greater than judgement always is. And the reason for that is to encourage them to repent.

The fact you know grace is waiting for you, the fact you know there's a quick way back from the dark paths of sin, is the best incentive in the world for you to take that way back. I want to tell you grace achieves what the Lord doesn't. You may think by giving comfort to sinners you're giving them encouragement to come back and to repent, and thus it was with Israel.

And so it is. Israel found that even while they were under the chastening of God, they were loved. They were the objects of mercy.

And they could do more. They could make their appeal to mercy and grace, which is what the God in Israel did. And they held God to his word.

The very situation in which they were, their own fault, yes, but all of it, if it was duly acknowledged, made them fit and proper candidates for mercy and grace. And that's the way in which they prayed in Ezra 9, in Nehemiah 9, in Daniel 9. Man, if you want to learn how to repent, and you need to learn it, it's a sacred art, learning how to repent, go through quietly those three chapters. Oh, happy the man who knows how to repent.

Happy the man who knows what to do when he's suffering in any degree at all under the chastening of God, when he's in any need, when he's done the wrong thing, when there's no one to be blamed but himself, he knows what to do. It's not the end of the story. Someone has said failure with God is never final.

Happy the man who knows how to go back to that God and take a sinner's place and be a candidate for that mercy and grace, which God himself has declared he is full of. Oh yes, let's look at one or two of these many scattered passages. Nehemiah 9, as we talked about Nehemiah.

Verse 17. And here are the Levites speaking to the people, urging them to turn back, and giving them their history in verse 17. They refuse to obey our fathers, and neither were mindful of thy wonders, they're talking to God, that thou didst among them but still harden their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage.

But, but, Lord, thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not. And then there's that famous psalm. Oh, there's so many of these beautiful things.

Psalms 103, verse 8. Here it is again. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of plentiful mercy. When they want to praise him, that's what they want to praise him for.

They've been on the receiving end of that. And then again you've got in Joel. Everyone, psalmists and prophets.

This is the one where the prophet bids the people to turn to the Lord with fasting, weeping, verse 12, and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments, let it be the real thing. Turn unto the Lord, because here's the great incentive for you to turn back to him and repent, for he is gracious and merciful, and slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

I can't think of a greater incentive for me to repent, to put myself in the wrong, if I know that the one to whom I make my confession is gracious and merciful, slow to anger. He's not quick-tempered, that's what it means. Some people feel they've got a quick-tempered God, you've not got one.

He's slow to anger. The fact that you're alive to this day and in good health shows how slow to anger he's been. Has he been enough to make an earthly king react? Not so him.

And so there you have again this great revelation taken up. And then, of course, Jonah. These are just a few of the many references to this great passage in Exodus 34.

Jonah complains that God didn't do what he said he was going to do, destroy Nineveh. And whoever heard of a revivalist complaining that God sent the revival for which he was preaching? But he didn't really want it. They were Israel's enemies, he liked to think they were destroyed.

And the reason why he didn't want to go in the first place was he knew God was like that. And he knew God was soft, he knew God would turn, and he didn't want him to. But the people repented, blessed their darling house.

What a revival that was. Beginning with the king right down to the meanest in the nation. And it says in chapter 4, verse 2, And he prayed unto the Lord and said, I pray thee, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fed before the untouchables, for I knew.

Oh Jonah, don't complain. This is all your hope and peace. Why shouldn't they share in it? For I knew that art of gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.

And so we could go on. And so we see these other passages add to that initial revelation. Not only merciful and gracious, but slow to anger.

But another thing that is added by these further passages, not only is he slow to anger, but he retains not his anger forever. And the prophets love to put that bit in. Take Micah, towards the end of the Old Testament.

Micah, and the last chapter of the book of Micah. Yes, I have problems with the minor prophets too. Anyway, if you can't find it, just listen, I'll read it.

Micah 7, verse 18. Oh, dear Micah, what a lovely song of praise this. Who is a god like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever.

Because he delights in mercy. Give God a chance of showing mercy. Please turn the cassette over now.

Do not fast wind it in either direction. Because he delights in mercy. Give God a chance of showing mercy.

He rubs his hands in glee. He delights in it. This is what he really likes.

Oh man, you little know, he wants you to give him an opportunity to show mercy. But notice, he retaineth not his anger forever. And in Isaiah 57, he's easier to find perhaps.

57, verses 15 and 16, the famous verse, Thus saith the High and Lofty One, That inhabited eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the High and Holy Place with Him also. That is of a contrite and humble spirit. To revive the spirit of the humble.

To revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend forever. Oh thank God, thank you Lord.

Neither will I be always rose. Neither will I always be chastening. Neither will my hand be always heavy upon you.

For the spirit should fail before me and the souls that I have made. And in place after place, it is said, He retaineth not his anger forever. Indeed, he tells us that his anger, and by the way, you've got to come to terms with this word anger in the Old Testament.

I know the word anger is not a nice word because we always think of human anger, which is personal reaction and sin. Not so with God. His anger is love inspired.

Love inspired. And he tells us that his anger is only for a moment. Turn back in Isaiah 54 to the page, to chapter 54.

Verse 7. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. Maybe God is chastening you. You see, it almost looks as if he's forsaken you.

He's not doing things for you and your family, whatever it is, or in your job. For a small moment. Listen.

It's only for a small moment. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In overflowing wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment.

I do not retain my anger forever. For a moment. I had things to teach you.

But it was only for a moment. But with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee. And there's another wonderful verse along the same line.

Psalms 30. Psalm 30. You know, I'm looking for a sort of word processor or a computer that can give me the text on the screen, just at the touch of a button.

Psalms 30, verse 5. His anger. This discipline of his. I mean, parents can be rightly and properly angry.

It needn't be personal reaction. It needn't be loss of temper at all. There's that which needs correction.

But listen. His anger, this love-inspired anger, is but for a moment. His favour for a lifetime.

The normal thing is favour, grace. It's always grace actually. And if there are moments when God has to put his hand upon us, appear to turn away his face.

His anger endureth but for a moment. His favour for a lifetime. At the time when you're in the middle of your trouble, whatever it is, it seems endless.

As if it's going to go on forever. You can't see any way out. That's what the devil says.

But there is a way out. There is light at the end of that tunnel and when you come out you'll say, you know, it was only for a moment. Only for a moment.

But it's what happens in that moment that matters. How you act, how you react. Amy Carmichael, missionary in India, now in heaven, was a poetess.

She has a lovely poem about Jesus rising from the back part of the boat to still the waters when the disciples went to awaken him. And she has this phrase, that age-long moment when thou art silent and the winds are high. It was only a moment between them going and waking him up and him standing up and saying, peace be still.

But for them it was an age. The wind was still howling. The waves were still high.

It was an age-long moment when thou art silent and the winds are high. But man, it's only a moment. But it's an important moment.

How do you react in it? Are you plunged into self-pity and full of doubt and fear? It's your opportunity to score runs, so to speak. I'm thinking of cricket match. I would like to stand up to some of the fast bowlers of today and I'd want that bowler to be changed and come off.

But when he is taken off and when the stumps are drawn, maybe you're not subjected to the fast bowler, but gone are your chances of scoring runs. Man, can you still believe? Mercy, mercy is for you. Can you still believe he hasn't changed his attitude towards you? Can you still believe he's got everything under control? Can you still believe that all things are going to work together for good to them that love God? Or you're going to start doubting and having self-pity.

I tell you, it's our chance to score runs in that sense, only for a moment. And I had to tell myself that when I was having my time. We're not all together through now.

Still got a way to go and some aches and pains and disabilities. But I want to know, I know, only for a moment. I will see that.

And I'll praise him for that moment. And what I learnt in that age-long moment. And I had to do a lot of repenting in that age-long moment of my doubts and self-pity.

And so will you. But I want to tell you, even when you're suffering wonder, whatever chastening it is, you are the object of divine love, of mercy and grace. And it's only for a moment that you might learn some precious new thing about yourself and your wicked heart and about the Lord.

Now, as I've said, you will have your doubts. And so did David. I'm amazed to read the Psalm to find that David went through so much of what I've been going through and you've been going through.

And he had the same doubts in those situations that you have. The only thing was this, he did express them to God. I'm looking at Psalm 77, verse 7. I tell you, have you ever talked like this to God? Psalm 77, verse 7. Will the Lord cast off forever? Will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Does his promise fail forevermore? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? What terrible questions to ask.

But the great thing is he said it to God. He said it to God. And I've put in the margin of my Bible six questions of doubt that lead to faith.

He couldn't say that without knowing it was impossible. And faith was restored. What a thing to say.

Have God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Is his mercy clean gone forevermore? His promise is failing? And oh dear ones, I believe you, you'll overcome God. You will. He won't be able to resist you.

When lying on your bed or wherever it is, you dare to say it and say it to him. And in the expression of those terrible doubts you will be led back to faith. You'll be more sure of mercy and grace than ever before.

Amen. And now, for the last few minutes, I want to speak a little more about our response in these situations to a God, this wonderful God that gave Jesus for us, who is nonetheless allowing us to have that experience of chasing. There are many promises.

I can't find you one verse more than another, so many, which are given to those that fear the Lord and hope in his mercy. You know that's familiar to you. Those that fear the Lord and hope in his mercy.

Very often in the Psalms, two things. First of all, fear the Lord. It's a willingness to justify God in all that he allows.

Say, oh God, you're right. I'm wrong. And once again, Nehemiah has a tremendous verse here.

And I want to suggest you need to use this verse perhaps in some of your crisis moments. This one is chapter 9, verse 33. And this is how they prayed.

Bless their hearts. How be it? They're talking about all the trouble they're in. How the kings of Syria have overrun them.

And now they're in captivity. How be it? They say, Thou art just in all that's brought upon us, for thou hast done right, and we have done wickedly. And when God shows you something he's trying to reach and reveal to you.

I can't begin to suggest what it may be. It may be so subtle that you can hardly verbalize it. It may be an attitude that's crept in.

All sorts of things. And we are to justify him, how be it? Thou art just in all that thou hast brought upon us, for thou hast done right, and we have done wickedly. Oh, that's the basis.

Willingness to justify God and to put ourselves in the wrong. And I think that's a very essential ingredient in fearing the Lord. It's a loving fear.

He's our Heavenly Father. But it does mean that. And there's such rest in it.

What have I done to deserve it? Maybe you haven't done anything to deserve it. You don't deserve it. But you need it.

Surely. Must everything go your way? Must your will never be subdued? Can you never accept something contrary to your wishes which God allows? Don't we need opportunity to give up our own wishes to embrace what he gives? And we have good reason to say I haven't been doing that, Lord. But I'm meaning to do it now.

Are thou just in all that thou hast brought upon us? And then hope in his mercy. I want to tell you he's merciful and gracious. The words follow it.

And as in my hour of need I humble myself in the way I suggest it, I'm also to hope in his mercy. Say, Lord, you yourself have declared yourself to be a God full of mercy. And, Lord, I want to tell you I'm asking for something in my experience that answers to that word mercy.

I want to have as much a testimony to thy mercy as David had. I love the Lord because he's heard my cry, he's been merciful to me in my need. And you know, he answered me and this I want to close very much at that time.

And I was reading in Isaiah 54, I don't know if it was in Daily Light or where I happened to be reading it, but it was God's word to me. Isaiah 62. And here we're in that part of Isaiah where Isaiah is pouring out comfort, promises, grace to a people he sees as being in captivity and can't get out.

They had a hard time believing that they would ever go into captivity. And when at last they did get there and found themselves stuck in there for 70 years, they just couldn't believe they'd ever come out. They had as hard a time believing in their restoration as they ever found in believing there could be chastening for them.

And thus they needed all the encouragement God could give them. And Isaiah 62, he speaks of this people. Verse 3, Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, a royal diadem in the hand of God.

Thou shalt be no more termed forsaken, neither shall thy land be called any more desolate, but thou shalt be called Chesiba, and thy land Beulah, for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. Chesiba is just the Hebrew, the Lord delighteth in thee. Now they'd gotten for themselves the name of being the land which the Lord had forsaken.

It was a nickname almost among the surrounding nations. Look what's happened to them, one thing after another. It was their reputation, but the Lord says, it's not going to be like that any more.

You're going to be called by another name. Oh, you little know, nevertheless afterward what's coming. You little know what good things I have for you.

And you're going to be called by another name, not that old nickname of forsaken. You're going to be called Hetzel, my delight is in her. I felt that.

I felt I'd almost got the reputation of the man who has car accidents. It really hurt me, threw me when people said, we were so upset to hear you'd had another accident. I'd lost my first wife in an accident.

Mercifully in my worst moments I couldn't blame myself for that. But I was and had to plead guilty to the mistake I made on this one. But nonetheless I felt I've got that sort of reputation.

The Lord said, you're not going to be termed any more, forsaken. You're going to have another name and another experience and it's going to be the Lord delights in you. And then I saw that if the Lord delight in me He will give us a land.

But to balance it all I also heard David saying, take the ark back to Jerusalem. He was fleeing from Absalom. If the Lord delight in us I will see both it and its habitation.

But if He say, I have no delight in thee it is the Lord let Him do as seemeth Him good. You've got to be very brave for both. But David knew God did delight in him.

Even as he said those words he knew that God did and was going to bring him back. And I believe you can say, Lord, I want an experience that meshes up to all you've said of your mercy to solve the misery. I believe, Lord, you want me to have a testimony to mercy.

I want you to believe, Lord, you want me to have a testimony to this new name. And so it is for each one of us. None can estimate the grace.

It's marvelous, you know, when you stand on the seashore at night and the moon shines, its rays come right across the waters to you. You say, it's shining for me. But the other fellow up there, it's shining right across the waters to him.

It's shining for him. And this mercy, this grace, that each one receives for himself in his hour of need, it's shining for you. And in your hour of need you can do those two things.

You can become a man who fears the Lord, who says, I don't quarrel. I need this experience. You're right, I've been wrong.

But at the same time, Lord, mercy and grace takes account of all those things. And I'm expecting from thee something that really deserves the name thou hast given to thyself. And so we have this lovely thing.

Now, I don't know what your problem is, perhaps you think it's going on forever. Oh, no. His anger only for a moment, his favour for a lifetime.

But how have you been going on in that moment, that age-long moment? Oh, let's park our doubts. Let's repent of our self-pity. If we have doubt, let's tell God them and they'll vanish.

And you'll find He's not forgotten to be gracious. He's going to bring you out. Let us pray.

We'll sing together, Mercy there was great and grace was free. Pardon there was multiplied to me. There my burdened soul found liberty, at Calvary.

Mercy there was great and grace was free. Pardon there was multiplied to me. There my burdened soul found liberty, at Calvary.

Mercy there was great and grace was free. Pardon there was multiplied to me. There my burdened soul found liberty, at Calvary.

Our Father, we thank you for being the God thou art. We want to thank Thee that all Thy ways with us have been right. We don't quarrel with Thee.

We thank Thee behind every frowning providence there is Thy smiling face. The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet, sweet, beautifully sweet, shall be the flower. And we don't even regard the termination of our earthly days as anything inconsistent, for beyond that is the greatest sweetness of all waiting for us.

Let us say the grace. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.

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