

# Through Trials to Abundance

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes that through trials, God leads us to a place of abundance, teaching us humility and reliance on Him.*

**Duration:** 25:18

**Scripture:** Ephesians 3:10

**Topics:** "Trials And Faith", "Godly Humility"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes how God's ways are different from ours, showcasing examples of prayers answered in unexpected ways to teach humility, obedience, and reliance on God. It discusses the importance of being witnesses not just to the world but also to Satan, highlighting the need for humility and faithfulness in serving God amidst challenges and trials. The message underscores God's unique ways of refining and molding individuals, even through hardships and burdens, to ultimately bring them to a place of abundance and blessing.

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## Transcript

See, when we pray, God doesn't always answer the way we think. He gives us the best. I want to read something here.

I asked for strength that I might achieve. God made me weak that I might learn humbly to obey. I asked for health that I might do greater things.

I was given weakness that I might do better things. I asked for riches that I might be happy. God gave me poverty that I might be wise.

I asked for power that I might have the praise of men. I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God. I asked for all things that I might enjoy life.

I was given life that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing that I asked for. But everything that I hoped for, and despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.

I am among all the men in the world most richly blessed. Only those who know Jesus Christ can say that. You know, God doesn't keep us on earth just to have a good time.

Of late in our churches, I have been emphasizing we're not just to be witnesses in the world. Ephesians 3 10 says we had to be witnesses to Satan. Many people don't know that.

How many churches have you heard people preach and tell you you've got to be a witness to Satan? They don't know that. They only say we have to do evangelism, be there, be there, witness to people. And those people see a man struggling with a mentally retarded child and say what type of God do you have? They don't know God's ways.

God wanted to mold Brother Paraswatham to be a man of God who could plant churches. He didn't send him to a Bible school. He gave him a Bible school inside his house.

And his professor was his son who taught him things that no professor in a Bible school could ever teach. Because God wanted to make a man of God. God's ways are not our ways.

We would never think of doing that. We think education, degrees and all that we can serve God. It's not his way.

It's a way of brokenness and crying out in need, despised by others. People saying where is your God? It's gone on through the centuries. And God's people are locked up in some prison because they are faithful.

People say where is your God? Couldn't he deliver you from that prison? God puts his greatest ambassadors in prison. He gives handicapped children to some of his greatest servants. And I thought you know every child is a gift of God.

The Bible says that children are a gift of God. A gift is always meant to bless. And I'm sure after 32 years of looking after a mentally retarded child who could do nothing, nothing means nothing for himself.

Today, Brother Parasitam can say that was indeed a gift of God. And probably a greater blessing to him than his other clever children. God's ways are perfect.

And to come out at the end of it without any complaint against God, but also to testify that he never allows us to be tested beyond our ability. 1 Corinthians 10 13. I've quoted it for years.

But when he quotes it, it has more value. Without a doubt. And I believe that that son made Parasitam the man he became.

And the man that has been a blessing to many, many people. And there are many others who must have observed and seen. And only in eternity you will know how many others were blessed, which we don't know about here.

Ephesians 3 10 says, the manifold wisdom of God has now to be made known through the church to the authorities in heavenly places. Those are the evil authorities. The devil is a great accuser.

You see that in the book of Job. Why does Job serve you? Because you've given him health, you're giving him money, you're giving him this. Why does Parasitam serve you? You're giving him this, you're giving him that.

God says, okay, there's one man on earth, I will allow you to test. He can't try that on everybody. Because he knows some people will fail the test and bring disgrace to the name of God.

So he won't allow it on everybody. Don't worry. Some choice servants are chosen to show the devil something which others cannot handle.

It's too much. And it says God does not allow us to be tested beyond our ability. Can you imagine what tremendous spiritual ability this brother had to handle someone like this for 32 years without complaint? And I'll tell you something, I've known him for many, many of these years.

You meet him in a conference. I've seen him in every conference for the last 30 years. You'll never think that this is a brother who's having a handicapped child at home.

Never, never, never. He's always cheerful and people who did not know about his home would never have known it. Looking at his face, he never spoke about it.

He just allowed God to work in him and what others saw was the result. The grinding and powdering and all that went on behind nobody saw. It's like that.

But God could point out Job to Satan and God could point out to Satan. It's different ways. I hope he can point you out to Satan.

There's a man, there's a woman. You don't have to go through the same type of trial. There are many ways your trial may be different.

God does not put us in one class and give us all the same subjects. I always say the Holy Spirit gives us personal tuition, private tuition. You know, in the olden days, the sons of kings were not allowed to go to school.

The teacher will come and teach the son. Ordinary children go to school, but the princes, the tuition teacher will come to this house, the palace, and teach them personally. That's how the Holy Spirit gives each one of his children personal private tuition.

The subjects are all different, but it's according to our need. The way the Holy Spirit gives me tuition is not the way the Holy Spirit gave tuition to this brother, not the way the Holy Spirit gives it to you. But to me, it's been a tremendous encouragement to know that I'm subject to private tuition because I'm the son of a king.

Parasiddham was the son of a king, and so God gave him private tuition. He's not put in a general class just to hear all the subjects. And you also.

Yes, different. Your subjects may be a little different from his, but the goal is the same. The Holy Spirit wanted to make him like Jesus, wants to make me like Jesus, wants to make you like Jesus, but he knows exactly how to do it.

He's got a particular ministry for him and a particular ministry for you. And imagine if Brother Parasiddham had reacted in a bad way to this and questioned God like others would have done. A lot of people in Tamil Nadu would have missed that blessing.

A lot of churches would not exist today. One day when the sorrows of this earth are over and we stand in eternity with Jesus, we will say, He has done all things well. He did it in the very best way.

As we look at the result, today we only see the training process, but when we see the result finally, when Christ comes back, we'll say, Thank you, Lord. Your way was perfect. And you made my way perfect.

And God wanted to send, every child is a gift of God, and God wanted to send a child who's not spiritually retarded, but who had a mental handicap. And God looks around the earth, whom can I entrust this child to, who won't get upset with it, who will love, care. God searches and finds Parasiddham and his wife.

His wife is such a meek, humble lady. I'm sorry, she's not here. God says, Okay, I will send this child to that home, because I can trust that home.

Maybe he could not trust that child to some other home, because they would have complained and grumbled and brought the atmosphere of hell into that home. But God could entrust that child to this home and know that that child would make that home more heavenly by the attitude of the parents. I thank God that in CFC, we are not preaching unrealistic things.

We don't go around preaching that God's going to heal everybody. He's healed the sick, and you're all going to be. It's an unrealistic message.

It's not the truth. To me, this is a great miracle, a greater miracle. God, I'm not saying God doesn't do miracles, but he decides that.

Where he wants to do a miracle and where he feels a greater miracle will come if there is no healing. Think of the Apostle Paul, the greatest servant of God in the first century as I see it. And he's so honest.

When he says in 2 Corinthians 12, I was in danger of becoming proud. I said, Paul, you were looking at Jesus all the time, you were in danger of becoming proud? He would say, yes, I was in danger of becoming proud because God was using me. And so God looked at Paul and said, such a fine man, there's nobody like him on the earth.

I never want to oppose him. But I will have to oppose him if he becomes proud. Because that's God's nature.

Such a fine man, I don't want to oppose him. And that's what God says about Parasitam also, he's such a fine man, I don't want to oppose him. But he'll get puffed up when he's used by me.

So I have to do something to humble him. In Parasitam's case, it was one thing. In Paul's case, it was a thorn in his flesh.

God does it in different ways. But the ultimate aim was to keep a man humble so that God does not have to oppose him. I praise God for that.

God has dealt with me in different ways, not in the same way as with him. But I know his ultimate goal always, always, always is to keep us humble so that he never has to oppose us. So that he can keep on giving us grace.

He can't change his nature. God never changes nature. He is opposed to the proud.

And it doesn't matter who it is proud. If it is Paul gets proud, God will oppose him. And the devil will be delighted.

And the devil knows I don't have to fight with people, I just make a person proud, God will fight with him. You know that? The devil is so clever. He doesn't have to trouble you, just puff you up a little bit.

God will do the rest. God will oppose you. And that's the end of your spiritual life.

So the devil knows that even if you don't, the most difficult thing for God to do is not create the universe. He did it in a moment. It's not difficult for God to bless a man.

It's very easy. But to keep a man humble, after he has blessed him, extremely difficult for Almighty God. And you see all around us, the sad stories of mighty men of God who have fallen, because God withdrew his grace.

And that preacher falls into adultery. The other guy doesn't fall into adultery, he falls into the love of money, just as bad. The anointing is gone.

I've seen myself in my younger days, I think of one or two people I saw mighty anointing. I see the same person 10 years later, 15 years later, not the same. More used, more proud, anointing gone.

It scared me. I tell you, it really scared me. And I saw this and I keep my eyes open.

I said, Lord, please save me from this calamity. Do whatever you like, but save me from this calamity. For me, calamity is that God opposes you, not financial.

Those things are nothing, sickness, nothing. But if God opposes you, what hope is there? But he is opposed to the proud. And the measure in which he opposes you depends on the measure of your pride.

More proud, he opposes you more. If you're a believer, if you're an unbeliever, look at all these proud politicians who say all types of bombastic things. God doesn't bother about them.

Even those who call themselves Christians, they're not Christians. Why does God ignore them? Because they're not my children. God does not discipline.

Do you punish other people's children? No. God doesn't punish other people's children. He leaves the devil's children alone.

But when his own children are in danger, he does something. And Hebrews chapter 12 says that if God does not discipline you, you're not his child. Every good father disciplines his One way is by giving us trials.

In Psalm 66, it says, Psalm 66, verse 8. Bless our God, O people, sound his praises abroad. Because he keeps us in life. He does not allow us to sink into death.

He does not allow our feet to slip. But how is that he does it? Verse 10. Thou hast tried us, O God, he refines us.

Here's the answer of how God preserves us in life. Verse 9. He preserves us in life and does not allow us to slip. How? By refining us, putting us in the fire and refining.

This silver has got some alloys mixed in it. We got to burn out the alloys. And I'm sure a lot of things got burnt out of brother Parasitha when he was put in the fire.

And he brought us into the net. As he said, he couldn't go where he wanted. He would want to go here, want to go there.

But no, there's a net there. He has to stay at home because of needs at home, which his wife couldn't handle on herself. There's a net.

Some of you think you're more free. You can go here, you can go there. God put some of his greatest saints into a net.

And as if that is not enough, he lays a heavy burden upon them, an oppressive burden. Is this God? It is God. An oppressive burden upon him.

And he allows men to ride over our heads. That means men will come to us and say, what is this? You're serving God? Why do you have a child like this? Men riding over our heads and trampling us down. Okay.

Then he takes us through fire. Takes us out of the fire and puts us in the icy cold water. Takes us from the icy cold water, puts us back into the fire.

But at the end of it all, he brought us to a place of abundance. You want to get to the place of abundance? This is the root. I was looking at a concordance.

I don't know Hebrew, but I was looking at a concordance which showed the Hebrew words, and I saw something. This place of abundance is a Hebrew word called Revaya. It comes in the Bible in only two places.

Very interesting. Here it tells us how you come to this place of abundance. But this word Revaya is also translated in a very well-known Psalm 23, where there it is translated as Psalm 23 and verse 5. My cup overflows.

My cup runs over with blessing to thousands of other people. You anoint my head with oil and my cup overflows. But between those two sentences, anoint my head with oil and my cup overflows, comes Psalm 66 verses 10 to 12.

That should be inserted there. Revaya. My cup, Revaya.

There, Lord, you brought me to this place of Revaya. See God's ways. You understand now that, do you think if you were given the opportunity to plan Parasitam's life and to make him a great blessing, would you have ever thought of such a way? No, no, no.

You would have made him a life comfortable and give him a good bank account. God's ways are so different. So one day, there's a song which I love to sing very often called, you know, when we stand up in glory, I will bless the hand that guided.

I will bless the heart, God's heart that planned my life when thrown where glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land. I will bless the hand that guided my life. I'll bless the heart that planned my life.

When I stand, I stand with Jesus and look back over life and say, Lord, you did all things well. There's a song we sing which says, and for the Lord, the Lord has done for us, we will praise him through eternity. It's very simple, it's just one line.

What the Lord has done for us, we'll praise him through eternity. And for what the Lord will do for us, we will praise him through eternity and above all the rest in eternity, this note shall swell. My Jesus has done all things well.

Let's sing it. And for what the Lord has done for us, has done for us, has done for us, and for what the Lord has done for us, we'll praise him through eternity. And for what the Lord will do for us, will do for us, will do for us, and for what the Lord will do for us, we'll praise him through eternity.

And above the rest, this note shall swell, this note shall swell, this note shall swell, and above the rest, this note shall swell. My Jesus has done all things well. Hallelujah.

Let's pray. Thank you, Father, for speaking to us so clearly. Help us never to forget what you spoke to us in this session.

Thank you for our dear brother and his wife, his family, that you honored us in CFC by making him a part of us. He could have joined many other churches, but you honored us by making him a part of our family. Thank you.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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