

Bethel

Prayer Meeting Addresses

Number 68 “He is Able”; “I am Persuaded”

Reading: Romans 4. 13-25

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many

nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Address

There are two little pieces here which appear continually in the epistles and especially in the epistles of Paul, and one is this: “He is able.” There is a lot there, beloved friends. “He is able also to save ... to the uttermost.” He “is able to keep you from falling.” He “is able to make all grace abound.” He “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” We have it here: “Being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was *able* also to perform.” So we have the performing God, and “He is able.” This is a blessed

truth as we meet together at our prayer meetings, that we come to a God who is not only merciful and gracious, but almighty, and “He is able.” We can put so many things after that “He is able” – things that suit us personally and things that suit our prayer meeting. He is able to answer our prayers. He is able to make a way for us where there is no way. He is able to deliver us. He is able to uphold us in the trying hour. He is able to supply all our needs. He is able to give us strength according to our day. It is a wonderful truth that the Lord is able, nothing too hard for Him, no impossibilities with Him.

And so of course the case here is that of Abraham, and God had promised him an heir. He tried his own way. He thought it would be Ishmael, but it was not. Not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. And it just seemed impossible, but God had promised it to him. Now we read of the faith of Abraham. He believed that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. Now how could it be performed when Sarah was about ninety years of age? How could she give birth to a son? But he believed God. He had this truth written in his heart, that God is able, and he believed that “what He had promised, He was able also to perform.” And it was not a foolish faith, for he proved whatever men would say, or whatever unbelief would say, that the time came when Isaac was born. Now he proved that his faith was not in vain and he proved that his God was able.

Of course, the point here is really this. There are many cases we have in Scripture that God is able, but it is this: what He has promised, He is able also to perform. So you think of all those wonderful promises in Scripture, yea and amen in Christ, sealed with the blood of Christ, and God is true, and God is faithful in fulfilling those promises. But the point is “He is able,” and really that is what we were singing about in our opening hymn:

“His every word of grace is strong
As that which built the skies;
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises.”

You see it in creation: “He is able.” And then in the great work of redemption you see it: “He is able.” And you see it on the Day of Pentecost: “He is able.” But His blessed ability to fulfil the promises! One of our hymnwriters says, “Through those dear promises I range.” Well, that is a profitable occupation. May we often be able to range through them and rest on them and plead them, especially when we think of our prayer meetings and our

private prayers, and perhaps some special promise the Lord has made over to you, and everything seems against it. Do you believe it – what He has promised He is able also to perform?

Well, that is one thing that you find so often in the epistles, and the other is this point of being persuaded. Paul uses it a lot. Of course, the well-known occasion, the closing of Romans 8: “I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Another one: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” And here with Abraham we have it. He was *fully* persuaded.

Now it is a wonderful thing in our religion to have a sweet persuasion; not to be persuaded by other people. There is a lot of harm done by that, when people try to persuade other people against their will, whatever it is. But if the Lord sweetly persuades you. You are seeking His will. It will not always be a clear word, but that sweet persuasion. Concerning your soul’s standing, again it may not be a signal blessing, but that sweet persuasion. O may we know more and more of it, to be sweetly persuaded concerning the things we believe, and here to be sweetly persuaded that there *is* a God in heaven, and He *is* almighty, and He *is* our God, and He *has* made some precious promises, and He *is* faithful, and He *is* willing, and He *is* able to fulfil them.

Here we have this wonderful example of Abraham. Well, tonight in our prayers and in our exercises as we come and as we go home, may we know something, if only a little, of being sweetly persuaded. Sometimes you come to a point in your life and there is a thing you have been concerned about, and then you are sweetly persuaded. May it be so tonight. The various things that concern you, to be sweetly persuaded of this: the Lord’s gracious ability, and especially His gracious ability to fulfil His promises.

“Being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform.”

This address was given at Bethel Chapel, Luton, by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom, on Monday, 1st October, 2012

