



Great Is Thy Faithfulness



"Great is Thy faithfulness, O God, my Father!
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not:
as Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

"Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
join with all nature in manifold witness
to Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

"Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide.
Strength for today, and bright hope for tomorrow -
blessings all mine with ten thousand beside!

"Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed Thy hand hath provided.
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!"

"It is because of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, for His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness.

"The Lord is my portion, says my soul, therefore I have hope in Him. The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the Lord." - Lamentations 3:22-26

"Great is Thy Faithfulness' ranks as one of my favorite hymns because it reflects the faithfulness and compassion of our loving Father throughout a lifetime of joys and sorrows. It was written by Thomas O. Chisholm, who also wrote "O To Be Like Thee" and "Living For Jesus." This precious hymn did not arise from some dramatic circumstances, but rather his "morning by morning" realization of God's personal presence in his daily life.

Shortly before his death in 1960, Thomas wrote, "My income has never been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. But I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant keeping God, and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care which have filled me with astonishing gratefulness."

Thomas Chisholm was born in a crude log cabin in Franklin, Kentucky. Without the benefit of high school or advanced education, he became a school teacher at the age of 16, and was eventually ordained as a Methodist minister. He is a good example for us of a man who used his God-given abilities to serve His Savior, and we are blessed to sing the hymns he wrote with a renewed sense of devotion to the Lord.

Jeremiah has been called "the weeping prophet," not just for the ways in which he suffered in sharing God's message, but as he carried the weight of impending judgment on the people of Judah. They did not seek and wait for God, but rejected Him and rebelled against His holy law, then looked to others to rescue them. But as bleak as the storm clouds of judgment were, God's covenant lovingkindness was always shining.

The constant sorrow that Jeremiah felt drove him to consider the grace, mercy and compassion of God, which changed the tone of his thinking dramatically. In verse 21 he says, "This I recall to mind, therefore I have hope."

Jeremiah was doing what we must learn to do - recite the attributes of God in order to remember His nature and His character, which never change. That enables us to keep the right perspective when the trials of life confront us. When the bottom falls out of life, and our usual "poles" are moved, we do well to trust in what we know to be true about our gracious and loving God. The bedrock of Jeremiah's faith was the reality that God keeps all His promises according to His truthful and faithful character. That is also the solid ground we can stand upon.

Lamentations 3:32 says, "For if He causes grief, then He will have compassion according to His abundant lovingkindness." God may allow trials to enter our lives, but He has a purpose that gives value to our suffering. May that truth encourage us as we thank the Lord who gives, "strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine and 10,000 beside!"