

For Such a Time as This

A Daily Devotional

Tuesday, December 6, 2022



From Isaiah 54:

For the mountains may depart
and the hills be removed,
but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,
and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,
says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

God's love and care for us is not conditional but is permanent and persistent. This is a statement that can only be understood as a profession of faith fueled by the Word of God delivered to us in scripture.

The passage from the prophecy of Isaiah speaks of such an assurance of God's permanence amongst us. The word, 'steadfast', implies a consistency that is beyond human equivalence. We cannot equal this consistency, but God excels at it.

The people of Israel, to whom these words were originally addressed, were a people who had held great promise yet failed to fulfill it. They defected from the way of God and preferred their own ways to the ways of the Lord. And yet ... God still promises that his love is 'steadfast.' In short, his love and providential care for the people of Israel is never retracted or reduced regardless of the faithfulness or faithlessness of the people. God is constant whether we are or not.

Karl Barth put it this way in a sermon he preached on the final week of 1959: **Yes indeed, there are such times when men lose faith in God and obedience towards him. And then everything else is lost as well. Israel was lost, together with true faith and obedience; the might and brilliance of the kingdom of David and the city of Jerusalem were lost, together with the House of God built by Solomon; the homeland, the land of their fathers was lost; their freedom was lost. Just one thing was still left to them: the Lord who had mercy on them. He remained, and in spite of their unbelief and disobedience did not stop bring merciful to them – or living, acting and speaking in their midst, exactly as he has done through this prophet too.**

The assurance is that even when we are faithless – even when we lose hope and the vision of faith – God remains constant and remains for us in Jesus Christ. God's providential care and love for us is not conditional to our faithfulness – God is faithful still: always!

Prayer for the Day: (From a prayer by Karl Barth)

Dear Father in heaven! Preserve us from all stupidity, depression and thoughtlessness which might be temptations for us in the new year as they were in the old! Amen.

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