

September 2024 – The Preacher’s Wife - Susannah

Last month we looked at Charles Spurgeon. Here is the woman behind him.



Here are the words Charles’s beloved wife Susannah wrote after his death. She too was in poor health, outliving him by 9 years: -

“I am writing in my husband’s study, where he thought, and prayed, and wrote. Every inch of the place is sacred ground. Everything remains precisely as he left it. His books (now my most precious possessions), stand in shining rows upon the shelves, in exactly the

order in which he placed them, and one might almost fancy the room was ready and waiting for its master. But oh! That empty chair! That great portrait over the door! The strange, solemn silence, which pervades the place now that he is no longer on earth! I kneel sometimes by his chair, and laying my head on the cushioned arms, which so long supported his dear form, I pour out my grief before the Lord, and tell Him again that though I am left alone, yet I know that 'He hath done all things well'..."

Another reflection from Susannah: - just before Charles died - they both wrestled with the questions of suffering and loss.

"At the close of a very dark and gloomy day I lay resting on my couch as the deeper night drew on, and though all was bright within my cosy little room, some of the external darkness seemed to have entered into my soul and obscured its spiritual vision. Vainly I tried to see the hand which I knew held mine and guided my fog-enveloped feet along a steep and slippery path of suffering. In sorrow of heart I asked, 'Why does my Lord thus deal with His child? Why does he so often send sharp and bitter pain to visit me? Why does he permit lingering weakness to hinder the sweet service I long to render to His poor servants?' These fretful questions were quickly answered, and though in a strange language, no interpreter was needed save the conscious whisper of my own heart.

For a while silence reigned in the little room, broken only by the crackling of an oak log burning on the hearth. Suddenly I heard a sweet, soft sound, a little clear, musical note, like the tender trill of a robin beneath my window. 'What can it be?' I said to my companion, who was dozing in the firelight; 'surely no bird can be singing out there at this time of year and night!' We listened, and again heard the faint plaintive notes, so sweet, so melodious, yet mysterious enough to provoke for a moment our undistinguished wonder. Presently my friend exclaimed, 'It comes from the log on the fire!' And we soon ascertained that her surprised assertion was correct.

The fire was letting loose the imprisoned music from the old oaks' inmost heart. Perchance he had garnered up this song in the days when all went well with him, when birds twittered merrily on his branches, and the soft sunlight flecked his tender leaves with gold; but he had grown old since then and hardened; ring after ring of knotty growth had sealed up the long-forgotten melody until fierce tongues of the flames came to consume his callousness and the vehement heat of the fire wrung from him at once a song and a sacrifice.

Oh! thought I, when the fire of affliction draws songs of praise from us, then indeed we are purified and our God is glorified! Perhaps some of us are like this old oak log – cold, hard and insensible; we should give forth no melodious sounds were it not for the fire which kindles round us, and releases tender notes of trust in Him, and cheerful compliance with His will. As I mused the fire burned and my soul found sweet comfort in the parable so strangely set forth before me. Singing in the fire! Yes, God helping us if that is the only way to get harmony out of these hard, apathetic hearts, let the furnace be heated seven times hotter than before.”

Such beautiful writing, such metaphor.

What fire is ‘letting loose the imprisoned music from the old oaks’ inmost heart’ for you? What do you hear when you are settling down, resting and seeking God.

Can you hear the music of God in a room full of questions?

Susannah died in 1903.

She had co-written her husband’s autobiography and wrote several books.

She continued, always, to promote her beloved husband’s legacy. What an amazing couple. What a legacy.

You are amazing too – and you have a legacy – we all do as followers of our dear Lord Jesus. We don't have to be famous preachers, we don't need to fill auditoriums with thousands – perhaps we are there to be the strength and courage, the encouragement and support of those who we know God will use one day to do great things.

Whether great or small – there are tasks to be done.

May we all keep on proclaiming, keep on loving and keep on shining a light for others. And like Charles Haddon Spurgeon and his wonderful wife Susannah – speak up when needed, challenge when necessary, and continue to serve the Lord faithfully, through the good times and the challenging times – through their joy and the criticisms – and learn to hear the song in the crackling fire.

For more information on Charles watch:

<https://throughtheeyesofspurgeon.com>



Image © *Life of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* by [William Young Fullerton](#)