

Bethel

Prayer Meeting Addresses

Number 107 Our Time of Need

Reading: Psalm 50. 1-15

1 The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

6 And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.

7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I

am God, even thy God.

8 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.

9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.

10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Address

This is not a time for a lot of speaking; it is a time for prayer. And verse 1 says it all: “The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken.” Now that is just what is happening in the world at present and in our country. Verse 1 makes it clear that it is throughout the whole earth: “From the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof”; “the mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken.”

He has spoken powerfully; He has spoken clearly in this epidemic that has spread abroad in the world. It is a mercy if we hear His voice. The multitude do not. This is the voice of God. His call to His people is that it is the Lord who

is speaking. As we have it in the Book of the Exodus, the plagues upon the land of Egypt, they said, “This is the finger of God.” If it is a voice, then it is a call to pray, and a call to repent, and a call to heed our ways. “Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.”

“The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.”

Verse 3 – surely this is a description of what the virus is like: “Our God shall come” – He has come – “and shall not keep silence” – He has not; He has spoken. “A fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him.” Now that is England at present: “A fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him.” It is a fire that we cannot put out.

And then verse 4 – surely this is a call to repentance. “He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth.” May we pray that the Lord will sanctify this occasion in the earth and especially amid our congregations.

Now some of you may know this, but the year 1940 when France fell, and it was felt that the German army would invade us the next day, and people would be killed everywhere, there was that kind of feeling and concern that we have at present. Now there was a lady called Mrs. Grace Dockrill. She had left chapel. She married a man, and they had become exceedingly prosperous. When she heard the news that France had fallen, it was like a dagger in her heart. What if there was an invading army the next day and she should be killed, and where should she spend eternity? She realised that evening it was the prayer meeting at Bethel, so she came along to her aged mother’s house. Her mother said, “Grace, you know I am always delighted to see you, but surely you should not come on prayer meeting night.” She said, “Mother, I have come that I might go to the prayer meeting with you.” You older ones remember Mrs. Dockrill. I do not think over the years we have ever had a more godly, gracious woman than she was. So the Lord sanctified that occasion. May He sanctify this.

And then verse 5. This is the point that we are concerned about: our personal safety. It is right to be concerned about it. Our friends, our families, our congregation, the Lord’s little remnant in the earth – may this word be very blessedly fulfilled, and we find our hiding place here. This is the Lord almighty who speaks: “Gather My saints together unto Me.” Where does He gather them? Beneath the shadow of His wings, to that hiding place in the cleft of the rock, to

gather them with the hollow of His hand. “Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice” – those who have an interest in the Saviour’s finished work, His sin-atonement death and resurrection.

And then verse 15 crowns it all for us here tonight. What should our posture be? What is the way we should go? What should we be doing? “Call upon Me” – this mighty God, even the Lord – “Call upon Me in the day of trouble.” Well, it is a day of trouble. This is the Lord’s loving command to His people. “Call upon Me in the day of trouble.” And what a promise! May we be helped to plead it: “I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”

I cannot help thinking all the time about Numbers 16, that terrible plague. There was that plague, and one after another there falling, but there was a high priest in Israel. His name was Aaron, and he ran and filled his censer with the burning coals from off the altar where the sacrifice had been offered, where the blood had been shed. “And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.” It could not go one inch further, one inch beyond that high priest.

That is my final thought this evening, that we have a great and glorious High Priest. O that He might stay the plague, and O that He may forbid it to come into our dwellings.

This address was given at Bethel Chapel, Luton, by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom, on Thursday, 19th March, 2020

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O may the power which melts the rock
Be felt by all assembled here!
Or else our service will but mock
The God whom we profess to fear!

Lord, while Thy judgments shake the land,
Thy people’s eyes are fixed on Thee;
We own Thy just uplifted hand,
Which thousands cannot, will not, see.

How long hast Thou bestowed Thy care
On this indulged, ungrateful spot!

While other nations, far and near,
Have envied and admired our lot.

Here peace and liberty have dwelt;
The glorious gospel brightly shone;
And oft our enemies have felt
That God has made our cause His own.

But ah! both heaven and earth have heard
Our vile requital of His love;
We, whom like children He has reared,
Rebels against His goodness prove.

His grace despised, His power defied,
And legions of the blackest crimes,
Profaneness, riot, lust, and pride
Are signs that mark the present times.

The Lord, displeased, has raised His rod;
Ah! where are now the faithful few
Who tremble for the Ark of God,
And know what Israel ought to do?

Lord, hear Thy people everywhere,
Who meet to mourn, confess, and pray;
The nation and Thy churches spare,
And let Thy wrath be turned away.

J. Newton