

Bethel

Prayer Meeting Addresses

Number 83 Divine Help Received

Reading: Psalm 121

1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.
2 My help cometh from the Lord,
which made heaven and earth.
3 He will not suffer thy foot to be
moved: he that keepeth thee will not
slumber.
4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall
neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is
thy shade upon thy right hand.
6 The sun shall not smite thee by day,
nor the moon by night.
7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all
evil: he shall preserve thy soul.
8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out
and thy coming in from this time forth, and
even for evermore.

Address

This is a beautiful Psalm. It is one that we very much love. We often read it before setting out on a journey. When we have our Sunday school outing, we always start by reading this. It seems to me that it is so suitable for our anniversary, or for any anniversary, really in three ways: looking back, and up, and forward – past, present and to come.

We think of *the year that is past* and all the Lord's mercies, but perhaps some of us as we get older are really tried and tempted on this: how little we have really learned in the past year, how little headway we have made, how little real communion with the Lord, and we feel sad about this, we feel ashamed.

But then there is one thing in this Psalm holds us fast and it is this: "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." We cannot deny the help that we have received, in providence and in grace, during the past year. And that is really what an anniversary is. It is an Ebenezer time. It is setting up the stone between Mizpeh and Shen. It is saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Or as Paul took it up later, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." It is a wonderful thing in humility and a sense of

unworthiness and gratitude to look back over the days and weeks and months and years, and to record this, and to feel it, and to return thanks for it: that help received – in the church of God, in our lives, in our homes and families, in our circumstances. And in one place the word puts it like this: “Holpen with a little help.” Now we must never despise these things.

And then we think of *the present* – our anniversary, things in the church, things with us, some in sorrow, some with difficulties. But it is this: it is the continuation of this help. It has not ceased. This word *cometh* – I do not know what the grammarians would call it, but it is a sort of continuous present. “My help cometh.” It keeps on coming. It is really like an overflowing spring that can never run dry. “My help cometh.” It is still coming, like a fountain, like an overflowing river, in streams of mercy, in streams of blood. It is this word *cometh*. It keeps coming on. It does not end. It is still there. It is still with us. So perhaps tonight we can address the Lord and say, “Lord, Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.”

And then there is *the unknown way* – the services here in chapel, the preaching, the prayer meeting, your hearing, and then going home and the things you have before you. Paul says, “Not knowing the things that shall befall me.” Well, that is true of each one of us, yet we know there are some things that will befall us – our faults and failures and sin, sad days as well as bright days. But here is the faithfulness of God, and here is His promise, and here is divine certainty, and here is something that will never change, that never can change: “My help cometh from the Lord.” And we are reminded it is divine, almighty help. He “made heaven and earth.”

This address was given at the Anniversary Special Prayer Meeting at Bethel Chapel, Luton, by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom, on Monday, 15th June, 2015

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How did my heart rejoice to hear
My friends devoutly say,
“In Zion let us all appear,
And keep the solemn day”!

I love her gates; I love the road;
The church, adorned with grace,

Stands like a palace built for God
To show His milder face.

Up to her courts, with joys unknown,
The holy tribes repair;
The Son of David holds His throne,
And sits in judgment there.

He hears our praises and complaints,
And, while His awful voice
Divides the sinners from the saints,
We tremble and rejoice.

Peace be within this sacred place,
And joy a constant guest;
With holy gifts and heavenly grace,
Be her attendants blest.

My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell;
There God my Saviour reigns.

I. Watts

