

Notes of Sermons Preached by Pastor Henry Haddow at Brockham Green
on Lord's day afternoon October 9th 1910

When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. (Psalm 63: 6,7)

What a mercy to have to do with a God that will never, no never forsake, as you have been singing in your hymn of praise! The Lord is ever the same; He changes not.

*Whom once He loves He never leaves,
But loves them to the end. (Joseph Hart)*

*Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine. (William Hammond)*

Friends may forsake us, and disown us, and turn against us, but the Lord is of one mind, and none can turn Him. David's friends turned against him, and persecuted him, and when he penned this psalm he was in the wilderness of Judah. He had fled from Saul, as we have it in *1 Samuel 22:5: And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah.* This psalm is titled: *A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.* Wherever David was, there was something in David that wanted God. I trust I can say that. I hope I can. There is that in every partaker of grace that wants God – wherever that man is. David found there was this in him, when he was in the wilderness of Judah – he wanted God.

This is a blessed psalm. I do not know if any of you have ever felt it to be a blessed psalm. It is a blessed psalm. David began: *O God, thou art my God.* Faith claims his God, and David addressed his God in the words we have just read. O what an unspeakable mercy, friends, if you and I have ever been able to say in the language of the psalmist: *O God, Thou art my God.* Perhaps there are some in this house of prayer who would give all the world calls good or great to be able to say: *O may I call Thee mine.*

God claimed David, and David's faith claimed his God in the wilderness of Judah, where no water was in the way. While even in the parched wilderness, David's faith claimed his God. *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee.* I want you to particularly note this word *early.* *Early will I seek thee.* God was everything to David. I believe it with all my heart. God was everything to the psalmist, therefore he says: *Early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee.* He did not say: *My flesh longeth for the destruction of my enemies in a dry and thirsty land.* He did not thirst after the blood of Saul, or after the blood of his enemies. But: *My soul thirsteth after thee (my God), my flesh longeth after thee (my God) in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.* Though he could no longer attend these services, he would see God's power and glory as he had seen Him in the sanctuary. That is the sanctuary – where God is seen. The Lord Jesus Christ is the sanctuary of His people, and if David saw the Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness, He would be his sanctuary.

Because thy lovingkindness is better than life. His life was the lovingkindness of God. I know what every gracious soul will say: It is death. This may appear strange to those who have never known the lovingkindness of God. But those of you who have known the lovingkindness of God, you will enter into it, that God's lovingkindness is better than life. I would rather have it than life, if I may put it so before you. In His favour is life.

My lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness. My people shall be satisfied with My goodness. Jesus Christ is marrow and fatness. Jesus Christ is everything the soul needs. Ah, when the soul

enjoys Jesus Christ at times, it seems impossible, so far as it is in the experience of some in this room this afternoon, it is impossible to put it into words. *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart. (Jeremiah 15:16)*

When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. I do not know what kind of bed the psalmist had at this time in the wilderness, where they hunted for his life. *When I remember thee upon my bed in the night watches, I will meditate on thee.* He speaks of remembering God upon his bed, and meditating upon God in the night watches. You read of the watches in the gospel. The Jews had three night watches, the Romans four. David may refer here to the night watches in the temple. He may have taken part in these services. Some reference may be made here to that. Now, it is a mercy, friends, to be favoured to remember God upon our bed, and to meditate on Him in the night watches. There are particular times when a child of God is favoured after this manner – to remember God upon his bed, and to meditate on Him in the night watches.

The psalmist said: *I remembered God, and was troubled. (Psalm 77:3)* But here he remembers God, and meditates on God in the night watches, and his soul is helped. Blessed meditation was that, as he remembered God upon his bed. Let me ask you, my dear hearers: Do you know anything of this remembrance of God upon your bed? Some may say: I have indeed remembered God upon my bed, and been troubled. Ah, you could never tell all you have experienced upon your bed, and your meditation in the night watches. I have had solemn hours upon my bed, and times of solemn meditation. And I have had blessed moments of meditation on my bed in the night watches. Sometimes, perhaps, on your bed you go back to the fall of Adam, and his sin in the garden of Eden, and you go forward to the day of judgement. And your meditation upon your bed is of Adam's sin, and of your being ruined in Adam, and it has indeed been solemn as you have remembered God upon your bed. Again, you have had blessed times, perhaps it may be some particular times come to your remembrance. And some of you in this house of prayer, you have remembered His mercy, His love, compassion and faithfulness, and meditated upon Him in the night watches, and it has been sweet. You have been glad in the Lord, and you have not wanted to go to sleep. A friend of mine told me of my pastor making this remark – when the Lord favoured him in his meditation upon his bed in the night watches, and he did not want to go to sleep.

O friends, have you ever known anything of it? As you have remembered Him, His goodness to you, and meditated upon the person of the Son of God, who gave Himself for you – and your meditation has been sweet, so blessed! We are not altogether strangers to some of these things. I have known what it has been to be on my bed, and the very moments have seemed hours, and hours days. And what solemn reflections sometimes upon one's bed – solemn, sad, gloomy, troubled moments. And on the other hands, what blessed, hallowed moments when the Lord has brought, by His blessed Spirit, to remembrance what He has done for us. The psalmist says in *Psalm 42: Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. (v.8)* O my friends, have you ever found His song with you in the night? Let my soul live. Ah, your soul had lived in the enjoyment of God, and you have had meat to eat the world knows nothing of, and praised Him with joyful lays upon your bed, though perhaps in the deepest trials. Perhaps *deep unto deep* has been calling *at the noise of thy waterspouts. (Psalm 42:7)* Ah friends, it is so. Paul and Silas found the Lord's presence in the night seasons, and so God was with them.

I believe this. David saw much of God in the wilderness. And some of us have seen God in the wilderness – in sorrow, and trouble, and affliction we have seen God. O blessed wilderness, then! Some persons have been wicked enough (if I may so put it) to say, "I am glad you have had such trouble – glad John had to go to Patmos, and David into the wilderness. God has caused the scriptures to be written for our learning." But I am rambling.

As David was upon his bed, and meditated in the night watches, his meditation was indeed sweet. He meditated upon what God had done for him in days past. And so he breaks out into such language as this: *Because thou hast been my help. Thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee. (Deuteronomy 8:2)* I would not like to say that David did not meditate upon God in the night watches as far back as being a shepherd boy, and God helping him and delivering him out of the paw of the lion. And he appealed to the Lord after this manner: *Because thou hast helped me.* We were reading in *Psalm 37: But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him. (v.39,40)* David knew, then, what it was to receive help in times past. He needs help now, and his soul is encouraged as he brings to remembrance former help.

I believe there comes a time in the experience of every vessel of mercy, that that vessel of mercy needs help, and is brought to cry to the Lord for help. *Lord, help me.* That is a good prayer. It has been helpful to my soul many times – the prayer of the poor woman, when she cried, *Lord, help me. (Matthew 15:25)* Many a soul has had that prayer squeezed out of their heart. Have you? Lord, come to my help. Now, I believe this, that that soul will live to prove that God the father has charged help upon Christ for such an one. Let me, for a moment, speak to you after this manner. There may be some here who are crying to the Lord to help them. You know that there is none but God can help you. Father, mother, brother, sister, minister, friends cannot help you. You are left alone. There is none can help you but One. You fall before Him, and cry: *Lord, help me.* Help is not far off. It is a mercy to be brought to feel our need of real help. Delays are not denials. Lift up your soul as best you can. One says:

*I can no denial take,
When I plead for Jesus' sake. (John Newton)*

And that soul that pleads for help for Jesus' sake will have help from God.

Because thou hast been my help. You see, it is personal. It is David that is speaking. Religion is a personal thing. We must have help from the Lord. When the psalmist was thus meditating on what the Lord had been to him, he says: *Because thou **hast** been my help, thou **wilt** be my help. Then will I rejoice.* David felt that he was safe here. He that had helped him would still help him. David needed help. Enemies were round about him. And the child of God needs His help. And all through the wilderness you will need help. As God leads you, there will be particular times and moments when you need further help from the sanctuary. *I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with my right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)*

Because thou hast been my help. Sometimes hope springs up – good hope, as you have been singing about. But now I most need help – O, still help me! O friends, we might rehearse the righteous acts of God, how He has helped us in days and months and years that are past. They are brought to remembrance, and that is the blessedness of it. When the Holy Ghost brings these things to remembrance, and we meditate upon what God has been to us, the soul says: He has been my strength. Therefore, seeing *thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.*

In Thy presence, where Thou art. Reference may be made here to the cherubims, which stretch forth their wings on high, and cover the mercy seat. There was God's presence. *The cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high. (Exodus 25:20)* There was God's presence. *Therefore in the shadow of thy wings, under thy protection, in thy presence, will I rejoice.*

*In Thy presence I am happy;
In Thy presence I'm secure;
In Thy presence all afflictions
I can easily endure. (William Williams)*

O to go under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty, to make our refuge there, till these calamities be overpast! Where does the soul fly in times of danger? To the person that has helped him, to the wings of the Almighty. Where does the chicken fly when the hen calls? Do they not fly under the wings of the hen? *O Jerusalem, ...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. (Matthew 23:37,38)* *Under the shadow of thy wings* – that is, under the protecting care of that God who has been our help. O friends that is it. He who has helped us in times of need, in times of danger.

I will rejoice. The soul may rejoice here, look all enemies in the face, and say: *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy. (Micah 7:8)* What enemy can reach the soul that has hid her trouble here? I am safe here. There is safety under the wings of the Almighty, who has been my help. *Under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice* – the mercy of God, the blood of Christ, the righteousness of Christ. O my friends, David knew something of the covenant. And he could say, when he was under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty: *Although my house be not so with God: yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. (2 Samuel 23:5)* And here David could rejoice in God. Our God is the God of our salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death. And David rejoices under the wings of the Almighty, and realises this, that the issues from death belong to God.

When you get there it is a safe haven, a blessed place. Come life, come health, come sickness, come death – it is well. Here the soul is safe. And here the soul triumphs under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty. Who can harm you? None can touch you here. All is well. *Under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice* – in Thy faithfulness, in Thy promises, in Thy glorious person, in Thy salvation. God is the refuge of His saints. He is the deliverer from the stormy blast, and their eternal home.

May God add His blessing.