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GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

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Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer", Clapham
on Saturday evening 30.6.51

Reading: Psalm 107

The language of this Psalm is very familiar to us but I venture to say that not only is the language familiar but, in measure, the experience will be familiar to every child of God in their journey through this wilderness. Different people are described in it, labouring men, mariners, sick men and so on, and in the Psalm a particular people are defined as "the redeemed of the LORD". "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so", let them give thanks unto the Lord for His goodness and for His mercy, "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy". There appears to be reference here to the providence of God in gathering His people out of the lands, east, west, north and south. They are, therefore, a distinct people who are gathered out from the masses of mankind and are a redeemed people. It evidently refers to those who are ransomed from the curse and purchased by the blood of Christ, who are redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Not only are the people defined in this way but also all their leadings; these leadings in the providence and grace of God in the experiences of all His people, in every case. Each one will have their own leadings so that while all are taught of the Lord there will be a leading that will be peculiar to each one. Neither will there be two exactly the same. In the providences of our lives each one is led in that path God ordains for them, doubtless to a point here there is the fact that they are led forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation. Although they have some faintings, sinkings, fallings, are in great trouble at times, do business in deep waters, come under the chastening hand of God, yet still He leads them forth by the right way. This may seem hard to believe at times when His providence may appear so confounding to us, when the way is attended with so many difficulties that the trial of faith puts us to a sharp and bitter test, when the spirit of rebellion and fretfulness gets hold of us, but still the fact remains that the eye of God's providence guides His people and they are only in the right way as He leads them; that is all to lead them forth by the right way, hence we find a very tender spirit with regard to this. Take for instance the case of Jacob, it is said of him representatively "He found him in a waste howling wilderness, He led him about and instructed and kept him as the apple of His eye". Moreover Asaph prayed for divine guidance saying, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory". (Ps. 73.24) It is remarkable that the providence of God

guides His people, they are brought forth as blind people by a way they knew not.

Not only does the Psalm refer to these leadings but also to the distresses that befall them. We read of them here that they came into deep waters, they did business there, they could not always sail in calm seas but they encountered storms and yet it must be noticed that "He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof", and the same controlling Power quieted them. In those distresses they cry unto the Lord. This is a sure mark of God's grace although natural men may cry to God in their trouble for natural things, but it is the people of God only that do business in deep waters with God. They fell down and did not find a companion running to lift them up but fell down where there is none to help, to feel their helplessness and dependence and have to cry unto God in their distress. Is there one here in this company in any measure instructed in the things of God who has not walked in this Psalm, who has not been hungry and thirsty and fainting, who has not wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, who has not sat in darkness or been bound in affliction and iron, who has been brought into these distresses and yet been ultimately witnesses of a delivering God? It is a wonderfully confirming feature of the Psalm that each time they cried He delivered them, not just once or twice but each time He delivered them out of their distresses. Have not some of you had to walk even in these things; and what a mercy if it is so, for though these people fell down and there is none to help they did not fall down where there was no God to help. What wisdom we need to observe these things. That is such an important feature in the Psalm, "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD". May it be given us to walk in that last verse, to have wisdom to observe these things, the ways of God with us, the paths, the fallings down, the distresses, the cries, the deliverances, the sin, the folly, the mercy, the grace, the forgiveness. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD." Amen

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