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Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer" Clapham
on 11th December, 1950

Reading: Psalm 27

The Psalmist was in a very gracious frame of mind when he penned these words. They expressed his confidence in God, in the first six verses, in language so definite and confident the Psalmist is lifted above all apprehensions; and though he was not without enemies, and not without enemies about him, yet he was without fear of them, being graciously confident in the power of God to sustain him and in the knowledge of his own interest in the Salvation of God, which was such a joy to his soul, that in the enjoyment of it he felt to be lifted entirely above other distressing elements.

And then in later verses from 7-12 is the language of prayer, which shows that although one may feel and enjoy a gracious confidence in God and interest in His Salvation, it does not remove the need of prayer or the spirit of it either. It will be noticed that the chief point in the Psalmist's prayer in these verses is for communion with God, that God would not hide His face from him. The presence of, and communion with God, being his great delight and joy, he does frequently and earnestly beseech God that He would not be silent or hide His face from him. It was his continual plea that the Lord would lift up the light of His countenance upon him and, by the Psalms, it is evident that he did frequently enjoy that sacred communion. "One thing have I desired of the Lord" - he desired one thing above all others, namely that he might dwell in the Lord's house all his days. But what constituted such a desire to dwell in the house of his God? It was not just to observe some ceremony but "to behold the beauty of the Lord", and this is worship, such worship as will bring a holy contrition in the soul and will make God, in His Trinity of Persons, attractive to faith and the centre of spiritual affection.

He reminds God of past tokens, "Thou hast been my help", O Lord I still have need of Thee. I shall have need during my sojourn here because there are those that rise up against me and such as breathe out cruelty. Outward conditions and inward need will bring forth from the heart this cry "Leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my Salvation".

The third point is a seasonable exhortation to godly people, on the ground of his own personal experience, which is very expressive. "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living", - that is to say had it not been for the power of God sustaining faith. To see the goodness of the Lord, that is the goodness of the Lord not only in delivering providences, but more particularly the goodness of the Lord in the Gospel, in this life, in the land of the living. Upon this ground he would graciously exhort all godly people to wait on the Lord, being assured that it will not be fruitless, although much discouragement may attend it and sometimes this exercise of waiting may almost seem to fall to the ground. The Lord's time will surely come, wait on the Lord therefore, he would say, be of good courage; keep a single eye; press through the crowd; look to the Lord by faith and put your trust and confidence in Him. "He shall strengthen thine heart, wait, I say, on the Lord". May we be helped to do this in this meeting.

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