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Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at Clapham on Saturday evening 21.4.72

Hymns 7 and 120

72K/PM

Reading: Psalm 31 Isaiah 45.1-7

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In the Psalm are several noticeable things, but three in particular. One is that the author David appears to have been enveloped in trouble, grief and distress; everyone in a sense appears to be against him, casting reproach upon him, he hears the slander of many, feels "forgotten as a dead man out of mind: like a broken vessel". This may not be our experience exactly, but even so many have found a companion in the experiences of the Psalmist when they have been in trouble which has been a help and consolation to them.

Another point is that he prayed in his troubles and affliction, he brought his case before his God, for indeed he had no one else to bring his case to. He appeals to the Lord to bow down His ear and deliver him, "Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me" and so indeed many, many times in the Psalms we find the author in the depths of trouble praying and crying unto the Lord.

Another point is that they received answers from the Lord in their trouble, and deliverances too, for the author here affirms this and encourages others to put their trust in Him. "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities". "For thou art my rock and my fortress". "Into thine hand I commit my spirit".

This brings me to just a sentence in verse 15, "My times are in thy hand". It is only the Lord's people who realise this, and although all creatures are in His hand, under His power, it is only His people who feel to their comfort and consolation that their times are in His hand and not their own hand. This indicates that there is a divine providence over us which incorporates all that we pass through in this life. Things do not come by chance, they are in the hand of our God, and this

is a comfort to feel, for they are in the best hands possible, they are in able and competent hands. The Lord knows how to control them, and not only so but, every step in the path is appointed unto us and is in His hands; all our circumstances, although sometimes this may seem difficult to understand when passing through heavy trials, but it is so, "My times are in thy hand". This does not design they shall all be happy times, for it is to be a mingled cup, there can be times of trouble and distress, times of joy and rejoicing, but here is our resting place, they are in His hands. There is a destiny awaiting us all, and this is in His hands. What a mercy it is when we can humbly feel that divine appointments are favourable toward us in regard to our salvation, when we can feel a hope in our hearts that the Lord will bring us through, and not leave us, when we can in humble faith and hope feel that we shall overcome at last, and shall be more than conquerors through Him, and will one day be for ever with Him. Amen.