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Sermon preached by Mr. J. Delves on Wednesday evening 6.8.75 at

"Ebenezer" Clapham

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Reading Psalm 37

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Sermon Psalm 55.22

GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

According to the language of this Psalm the author must have been passing through very painful circumstances. It is a Psalm of David and we know that he had some severe trials in his life but the Lord preserved and went before him and delivered him from the hands of his enemies, spared his life to a good old age; and we are profiting by the trials and afflictions through which he passed in the record of them, and in a number of exhortations that were evidently connected with them and we may assume that this is one, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord".

We find the Apostle Peter saying, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you". It is a wonderful thing to have any experience of the Lord's interventions and appearing unto us in times of trial and of need. Mercifully for us we are not living in times of persecution as some of our fore-fathers were and we are not liable to imprisonment, or even to death, as many have been, for a profession of the name of Christ, and for uniting ourselves with His people. We need therefore to value our liberties and privileges, as I believe we do, and to have grace to seek the Lord's blessing upon them.

I would refer to the exhortation, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord". The Lord's people have burdens. It is true that the people of the world have their burdens, they have their trials and afflictions in common with all mankind more or less; but the Lord's people have burdens that are peculiar to themselves and that worldly folk who have no care for these things know nothing about. It is a mercy for us if we are carrying a burden. There are several burdens that can be referred to and one of them is the burden that the Lord's people carry inside them. It is a soul burden - the burden of sin

with which the hymnwriter had some acquaintance when he said,

"With my burden I begin;
Lord remove this load of sin"

To how many of us can this be felt to be a burden, a pressing burden, a burden of guilt pressing on the conscience? Many of the Lord's people have providential burdens, and evidently it is designed that this should be so, because the Lord Jesus recorded in His days upon earth that in the world His disciples should have tribulation, that is burdens would press upon them for their defence of the truth and profession of His name. Through the ages of time, and especially in bygone days when many of the Lord's people were steeped in poverty and had a hard struggle to live, they knew what it was to carry heavy providential burdens; but although that may not be the same now there are a variety of things that may press upon the heart and spirit of the Lord's people. It may be so with our younger friends who fear the Lord and have a concern about their lives and circumstances and future prospects. They may carry a heavy burden sometimes. There is no need to try to particularise, but we know that according to Holy Scripture it is recorded that "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy". How sweet this is, as the Lord said to His dear disciples, "Your joy no man taketh from you". I have been reading of the trials and afflictions and persecutions of the godly covenanters and yet what joy they had in the midst of all their afflictions and trials. The presence of the Lord was with them so that they could glory in the cross of Christ. How favoured we are that we have not that bitter persecution of soldiers bursting into the chapel, and taking the preacher off to prison. What mercies we have but even so there are burdens. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time".

Here is an exhortation then, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord". What can be involved in this matter of casting our burden upon the Lord? It is not a command of nature is it; to cast our burden upon the Lord we must first of all have a burden to cast upon Him; we must have in our soul's experience a knowledge of the God to Whom

we go with our burden as that God Who has a care for His people although they are an afflicted and poor people. Sometimes this casting of our burden upon Him is in the exercise of prayer under some feeling liberty of bringing our case before Him in prayer and committing it unto Him. Is not this at times an experience with the Lord's people when they are pressed down with certain things and burdens press upon them? Some of you have had to take them to the Lord and as it were commit them to Him.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee". He shall sustain thee with His supporting strength and help thee and prevent thee from falling into despair. "He shall sustain thee". There are other Scriptures which indicate the Lord's delivering hand. "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me". Many of the Lord's people have proved this in taking their matters to the Lord, they have proved Him to be a delivering God. The Apostle Paul refers to something of this when he speaks of being pressed out of measure and there seeming to be no way of escape; yet he could say, "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us". I am sure some of you can say He hath delivered, those of you that have been a number of years in your spiritual pilgrimage, you can look back to some occasions in your life and say He hath delivered, He has appeared, He has regarded my prayer, He has intervened in my circumstances; so that you have been like Manoah and his wife who have looked on and seen the Lord doing wondrously. It can be sweet to take your matters to the Lord in private prayer, although there may not be many words if any. What a wonderful thing it is. It is a particular privilege the Lord affords His people to take their matters to Him that are too much for them to manage. You may have something that is too much for you to manage, something you may have to walk in probably for a considerable time and yet even so you are sustained in it.

"He shall sustain thee". Sometimes the Lord sustains His people by applying a word to them from the Holy Scripture or in

reading the Holy Scripture when some word is made particularly helpful, sweet or precious in the heart in the reading thereof. This has sometimes been in times of difficulty where one may have had direction or support when one has felt it hard to continue, and in various other ways. "He shall sustain thee". It is a sweet promise is it not? He will not leave you to fall a prey to the enemy or even to your own fears, "He shall sustain thee". In this sustaining there can be a particular quietness whereas before your mind may have been disturbed and distressed and tempest-tossed and not comforted, yet the Lord comes and brings quietness. He sustains you, He is your support, your strength, your stay. The trial remains, the difficulties continue and things are just as they were but the Lord comes into them and He sustains you. How sweet this is. It is that help the Spirit of the Lord gives to His people in their times of need. He sustains them. What has He said? He has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee", neither will He. The Psalmist could say, "Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation".

How good it is sometimes at our prayer meetings to hear one and another acknowledge the hand of the Lord in their matters and to be seeking unto Him to be their God and their guide through their earthly pilgrimage. You cannot go to a better friend. Is anything too hard for the Lord, any circumstance too difficult, any providence beyond His control? God forbid! He shall sustain thee. Sometimes He sustains His people by the power of a promise that seems to live in the heart, that enables you to go on day by day being assured that the Lord will be a delivering God to you. He is, is He not? "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee". Have not some of you proved this? It enables you to commit your matters to Him. Sometimes the Lord has supported and strengthened His people by the appointments of His house, by the means of the ministry or prayer meetings, or in reading His holy Word. "He shall sustain thee".

"He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved". In many Scriptures the Lord's people are defined as righteous in contrast

to the wicked, there being two parties - the wicked and the righteous. It is said of the righteous here, "He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved". This does not mean that they have no trial, no afflictions, no burdens, no cares - they have many - but they shall not be moved. It does not mean they are not moved in their feelings, for they often are, sometimes very cast down, at other times lifted up; sometimes weary and disposed to give everything up, at other times strengthened; but they shall not be moved. They shall not be moved from the covenant in which they stand in the divine purpose of God, for the Lord has made a covenant with every one of His children that He will be their Father and they shall be His sons; "their sins and iniquities I will remember no more". That is a blessed ingredient in the everlasting covenant of grace that God has made concerning His people, and may seem to incorporate everything else with it. For if you are concerned about eternity and feel a sense of the pardon of sin in your heart that will enable you to cast your burden upon Him and confirm and strengthen you in the Word upon which He has caused you to hope. "He shall sustain thee ; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." That is they can never be moved from their standing in the covenant of grace or their hope that the Lord is their God. They shall never be moved out of His everlasting love. How can they be? If they are loved with an everlasting love how can they be moved from it? It is everlasting love, "Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love". They shall never be moved from their standing, their interest in His purpose of love to them.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord". Have any of you come with a burden of some particular kind even this evening? Have you come with something pressing upon your spirit as a burden that weighs you down and under which you may feel it difficult to carry on? Cast it upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee. This indicates that timely help then that the Lord affords His people in their times of distress. Sometimes it comes in remarkable ways,

sometimes from unlooked-for sources; yet a divine providence is seen to go before His people and provide for their needs. What a timely word - have you a burden? May this not be an afflicted body or some affliction that may be a matter of concern and exercise? "Cast thy burden upon the Lord". Is your soul troubled? Do you feel to be walking in darkness and have no light? What is said concerning such? "Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God". It does not say wait until you come forth into the light and then put your trust in Him, but put your trust in Him in the darkness. What a wonderful thing it is, the Lord has a perfect knowledge of His people's need, He understands every difficult, trying, complicated matter better than we can ourselves. Cast it on Him, He shall sustain thee, that is, will help thee. "Fear not" - He has said - "I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness". Here is a timely word and if it should be suitable to any who may have any particular matter pressing upon them, if it should be so (I do not know that it is) but if so, here can be a timely word indeed with the Apostle Peter's exhortation "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you".

"He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

"Once in him, in him for ever;

Thus the eternal covenant stands".

Here I leave it, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord" - whether it is a soul burden or a providential burden or a burden looming in the future, or something that may tend to distress your spirit and a roaring lion attempts to drive you to despair.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

Amen

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