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Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer" Clapham on  
16.3.57

Hymns: 61, 1000

Reading: Psalm 65

57/c/PM

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This Psalm is principally one of praise to God for His goodness in providence and His goodness in grace. The Psalmist speaks of the Lord's wonder-working hand. "Which setteth fast the mountains... Which stilleth the noise of the seas... and the tumult of the people". He speaks of how God provides for His creatures by watering the earth and settling the furrows, causing the pastures to be clothed with flocks and the barns filled with corn. He crowns the year with His goodness and His paths drop fatness. This is good to consider, for it is a good thing to feel a softened heart under a sense of divine goodness even relating to the things of this life. It may be His goodness in providence, or His goodness in sustaining under trials and afflictions, or in guiding and leading in those paths which, as we have been singing, He has appointed for us.

But there is something greater than all this, which has a greater and more far-reaching sequel. This is in relation to the choice God has made of His people in grace. Such are termed blessed. "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest and causest to approach unto Thee." How clear the Scriptures are that none will get to heaven but those of whom the Lord has made sovereign choice and has appointed thereunto. Indeed, we may also say that none will fail of eventually reaching that eternal inheritance to which the Lord has appointed them, because provision has been made for them, their sins are put away. Though indeed it is said here "Iniquities prevail against me" and in ourselves they are too much for us; they overwhelm us, they condemn us and would be to our eternal condemnation but for that wonderful Scripture where the Apostle says, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound."

Here then is a choice, and many, many Scriptures there are to confirm this and the blessedness of those who have an interest in it. "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest." Perhaps you say, 'How may I know this? How can I assure myself that I have an interest

here?' The answer seems to be in what follows - "and causest to approach unto Thee." Do you know anything about this? It is not just saying a prayer, but it is being moved of necessity, by divine power, to pray, by the Holy Spirit causing you to approach unto God. It seems to say that if God has made choice of us then sooner or later that choice will reveal itself in the heart being moved to seek Him, to wait upon Him, to approach Him in faith, to believe that He is God and that we are sinners, guilty sinners. But there is something else these blessed people also experience; that is, they have answers to their prayers. "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." This 'all' is not to be taken in a universal sense absolutely, but as meaning the Lord's people of all nations, kindred and tongues - all flesh. The term 'all' is used in the same way in other places, for example we read that the Lord Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

But there is something more than this. I do not question but that some, possibly many of you, can come to these two points; firstly that you have been moved by God's grace to pray and to wait on Him of necessity. He has caused you to do this, and this is something particular in itself. But have there not also been answers? and what is it will move the heart to pray more than this? "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." But thirdly there is also satisfaction assured. His people shall be satisfied with His goodness, that is with the Gospel. Nothing can satisfy us but the Gospel, and that will! "We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, even of Thy holy temple." This is the rich provision which the Lord has made for His people. "I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread." May the Lord help us to go on, out of weakness made strong. Some may feel to have sought long for this and yet still to have the chains upon them. May such be moved still to wait on Him.

"Urge thy case through all unfitness,

Sue it out,

Spurning doubt,

The Holy Ghost thy witness.