

Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. (Quality: very good)

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[0 : 00] the Lord for help I would direct your attention for a few moments to the first chapter of Samuel chapter 7 and reading verse 12 the first book of Samuel chapter 7 and the reading verse 12 then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shem and called the name of it Ebenezer saying hitherto hath the Lord helped us hitherto hath the Lord helped us

Samuel had just witnessed a wonderful event in his life and that was the return of the ark of the Lord we know that it did not come so long to sometime to Jerusalem but it was found in the borders of Israel Samuel being but a child when it was lost it was lost because of reckless reckless sinful ungodly behaviour in the church of God likening it to the days of the capture of the ark of God but nevertheless we have witnessed such solemn changes such alterations such change around but more than that we have witnessed

God's frown upon us we have witnessed indeed not his we have not had his divine approval approval often it is pride is it not for the power of the Holy Spirit and we are bound to say that there is we realise that lack of the Holy Spirit sometimes men proportion blame in various areas for this but friends the truth is this is it not that we have grieved the Holy Spirit in what we have done and what we have been doing now that incorporates all of us it does indeed I say are we living under his frown or are we living under his smile so we find the ark of God is returned and there was this gathering together to misper and the

Philistines saw that observed that gathering together afar off and were enticed to strike again at Israel oh I say oh the Philistines what a purge they were on Israel how they hated Israel oh I say the Philistine has never never changed but our mercy is that God indeed did come and he thundered upon the Philistines and he so frightened them that they fled and in their fear the Israelites were able to pursue after them and slay them and drive them away my friend to great events so close together and we do not find some saying oh that is well done oh now indeed we can live happily now indeed we'll do well but now my friend what did he do he offered up thanksgiving unto the Lord offered up thanksgiving to the Lord there was great need indeed to offer up thanksgiving to the Lord oh should not we then also when the

Lord does appear and does deliver offer thanksgiving to the Lord now the word that particularly upon my mind here is hitherto half the Lord helped us and we need to speak of this then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shem what do we know of Mizpah my friend going back many many years it was the very place where Jacob made an agreement with his father-in-law was it not yes that they should that God should be a witness between them for indeed Jacob was to leave

[6 : 22] Laban and his household oh remembering this that one was an idolater the other was a believer in Jehovah friend they set up a stone at Mizpah it was a place to be remembered and not to be a place to be forgotten my friend and in Samuel's die it was this very place where it was a testimony to the separation between the believers and the unbelievers I say what a mercy if we can say hitherto has the Lord helped us helped us to separate helped us to be reconciled again to God helped indeed to bring forth those recorded mercies of the

Lord helped again to testify to the Lord's goodness friends brought again to be humbled before almighty God that he has not cut us off and has not delivered us over to our true desert hitherto hath the Lord helped us I say have you got a mispost in your life where God had come the changing of events in your life but remember Jacob's life was I would say an unusual life but perhaps the wrong word to use here Jacob like you and I was born in sin and iniquity he indeed was a deceitful creature he had a thirst and a desire for the things of this world before you say oh a covetous man we need indeed remember this and such was some of you yes such was each one of us by nature desiring to have more than our share which

God doth allow but you know when brought to mispost we can say hitherto hath the Lord helped us he does surely give unto his people that which they are in need of the good psalmist said give me neither poverty nor riches but feed me with food convenient for me so there must certainly have been a great change of heart and spirit in the life of Jacob surely the Lord met with him prior to coming to this place for remember that God met him when he was asleep my friend do remember this you never never stop the

Lord meeting you at that appointed time and place oh no hitherto hath the Lord helped us the greatest resistance the greatest enemy that you and I have in our lives is self don't forget that don't forget that oh I say but who then can save us who can help us none but almighty God we read that Jacob dreamed a dream and you know we cannot stop ourselves from dreaming dreams and if it's so appointed of God he can use such dreams to convey things to us which we may not have wished to have made known to us there he saw a ladder coming down from heaven to earth and the

Lord stood above it and his verdict of the whole matter when he awoke was this how awful is in the place God was in it and I knew it not my friend yes he therefore he had a deep and lasting impression upon him and on that occasion after Mishpa we read that Jacob wrestled with God yes I will not let thee go except thou bless me friend hitherto has the Lord helped us has it caused thee all this day this night to wrestle with God yes

[12 : 19] God came to him yea when he put over all his stuff over the brook yes oh I say what wrestling prayer he had have you ever prayed do you know what prayer is for what it's all about is a prayer of great importance to you is prayer a matter that you do not care about at all my friends oh hitherto hath the Lord helped me do you know what it is to come to that place where the man said this poor man cried and the Lord heard him friend what a witness that though all things may be turning against us although all things may seem indeed to be taken away from us many fears with regards to the future oh that between

Misbah and Shen that word Shen you know means a dark jagged rock or a place unknown yes and how indeed the unknown sometimes brings to us many a fear what will the end be but Samuel he seems to bear the whole matter before the people yes hitherto has the Lord helped us he has ever proved to be an unchanging and an unalterable God that what he has said he will fulfill having loved his own he loved them until the end friends it's a great mercy is it not to be able to say casting all my care upon him and as

Peter said casting all your care upon him will he care for you friends hitherto has the Lord helped us there may be some here this afternoon who are saying this but never before has the Lord helped me but has he helped you at this time never before have I cried unto him my friend and you would not have cried unto him now had not the Lord helped you friend what a great mercy that is to be helped out of that desperate place of unbelief and deathly determination to have our own way against our

God when we have strove and fought against him and determined to have our own will and what has he said to the not yes but no thus far and no further friend his help my friend because it was a slippery pathway it was a falling slope that you were now on but my friend who is able to save one from thus falling oh but the Lord Jesus Christ hitherto hath the Lord helped us the eternal God is thy refuge says Moses and underneath are the everlasting arms friend it doesn't matter how many times we have known this but the truth is this hitherto even if this be the first time you live to prove that you have an unchanging and unorder

God and that although many might assail against you and may indeed collaborate with one another to overthrow you but my friend hitherto hath the Lord helped us you look through scripture and you'll always find the forces of evil are quite happy to unite although they may be diametrically opposed to one another that always unite against almighty God hitherto hath the Lord helped us surely those frightening experiences and have we not thought surely I am wrong everybody else must be right it's presumptuous of my part to think

[18 : 12] I am right and they are wrong friend hitherto has the Lord helped us my friend to be faithful to that holy agreement to be faithful to his word for he I will never leave thee nor forsake thee friend you cannot cast your lot in with the majority and abandon God's tender mercy cast aside his former love and care over you in times past brought to that place where you say one thing I know whereas I was blind now I see one thing I know whereas I once I was dead but now I live you say how do

I know that like the protocol in the parable he was once dead and is alive again the evidence is this that he had returned I say what a mercy if you can say hitherto hath the Lord helped me and caused me to return wherever we speak of repentance we can ever think or speak of it without bearing in mind that word return returning to God oh do we not sometimes sing that hymn return back sliding souls to God yes hitherto hath the Lord helped us read how oft times it seems a lonely and a narrow pathway for the people of

God but not so lonely as we might think because the way in which we were living and pursuing was the way of death but the straight and narrow way friends is the way of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord one way leads us down to destruction it's so easy it's so comfortable and the devil he doesn't mind if you continue in sleep but you see the other straight at narrow way is a way which you are awakened to reality and to the truth Lord I have sinned against thee and against thee have I come short in thy sight hitherto has the

Lord helped me cause us to return cause us to confess our sins unto almighty God when was the last time that you confessed your sins dare you say I am sinless I am innocent I am pure don't talk to me about confessions but what about your behaviour what about your thoughts and conversation what about God's most holy law and the keeping thereof ah I don't want to know all about those things you don't I say hitherto hath the Lord helped his people that he makes them to know and you remember this that where we have this

Ebenezer stone it is not only a place of remembrance for the Lord's people but those that fear not God it is a stone a remembrance to them yea a warning to them a warning to them I say how we need to be continually warned with regards to the pathway in which we live hitherto hitherto hath the Lord helped us oh I say does not the Lord lead his people in that way which often is so narrow that you can only tread in it yourself you cannot tell other people of your state and your condition but you can say this blessed be his name when

[23 : 41] I was sinking he lifted me up when I was dying of hunger and thirst he fed me with that bread of life when indeed I felt condemned because of my sin and shame and everything was stained and ruined ah but hitherto hath the Lord helped me it was there that he said come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give thee rest friend an ebony stone test divine to what the Lord has done I was laid low and the Lord lifted me up I cried unto the

Lord in my trouble and he delivered me do you remember that time that surely now I must be brought into open shame and disgrace and what will other people say if they know and see all my thoughts and all my sin hitherto has the Lord helped me the Lord has so many ways to deliver his people but there's only one way of deliverance from eternal ruin and that is by the precious blood of Jesus Christ friend do you know what it is to feel to be brought unto the law of almighty

God we know indeed that the law cannot save you but I believe this the law will show you what you need to be saved from my friend then we are in a helpless state and what the law demands for it we read that there can be no remission of sin without the shedding of blood or in other ways without being put to death without being put to death hitherto has the Lord helped me why it was God that sent his only begotten son Christ Jesus into this world to save them from their sin yes there was no other way there was no other means of saving us from our sin but through his own dear son

Jesus Christ there was no other good enough to take away our sin that is a good line of doctrine and teaching that we must never forget because there is no other substitute or additive that can be found to deliver us from sin we cannot deliver ourselves from our sin and neither can we deliver others but my friend our mercy is the precious blood of Jesus Christ that was shed upon Calvary will never never lose its power oh I say to seek and to know more and more of that wondrous power that peace and pardon may be sealed in our own hearts and consciences hitherto has the

Lord helped us was there not a time when we really hoped that now I should go more easily more softly did not Hezekiah speak in a similar strain as this I should go softly all the days of my life by these things men live and in these things is the life of my spirit the things that he had passed through friend we wouldn't belittle what the Lord has delivered us from and praise him in hearing and answering prayer but remember this we'll ever need him hitherto has the Lord helped us he is a witness to us that he has helped he will help and he can help in every situation hitherto you know there is a pathway which none of us here have walked as yet

[29 : 23] I don't mean to be funny or facetious in this and that is we haven't come down to die as yet have we I say how we shall need him then oh I say what a mercy to look up and say hitherto has the Lord helped us there to behold Calvary there to behold his glorious teaching does not Jesus himself come to remind us of this and to revive these things within us for he says let not your heart be troubled ye believe in God believe also in me for in my father's house are many mansions if it were not so I would have told you if I go and prepare a place for you he's gone my friend he's gone to prepare a place for his people and he said and I will come again and receive you unto myself hitherto has the

Lord helped us friends we can make no preparation can we after our life is finished in this world but my friend the Lord can and he has and neither can we fit and prepare ourselves for the day of our death many might look upon the records of those who have died and have witnessed a faithful witness and have shown such wonderful grace on a dying bed friend remember this he doesn't give he doesn't give dying grace until dying grace is needed hitherto hitherto hath the Lord helped us do you believe this then that of that time and of that situation is entirely in his hands but until that time does come between now and then we need the Lord

Jesus Christ to be with us in all the unchanging scenes in all the changing scenes in life's journey and we do not know at all what lies before us have we not come across those recent days who have come into such dark and solemn dispositions and it brought us to that place to be completely amazed and this is the reaction it's had upon me Lord if such things should come upon them then what must come upon me so unworthy as I am but hitherto hath the Lord helped us his all sufficient grace is adequate day by day oh I say does the

Lord bring you off to a misper the place of witness the place indeed of recorded mercies the place indeed of the faithful commitment of his dear people hitherto hath the Lord helped me we cannot do it in and of ourselves but as one said I can do all things through him which strengthens me that's a wonderful truth isn't it all things and do not say in our heart oh but he was much stronger than I am he's much more capable more competent than I am not a bit of it he's just a greater sinner and prone to sin as you are and his testimony was this

I am what I am by the grace of God then tell me any of you who can testify differently to that tell me those who can say yes I can say that I am what I am by the grace of God not of righteous works of my own but of his mercy and of his loving kindness hitherto has the Lord helped me we read of those disciples who were taken to the Mount of Transfiguration and entering into the cloud my friends they were brought into fear yes indeed oh is there a cloud pursuing coming upon you you say yes things are getting darker and darker and will the

[35 : 17] Lord leave me to myself the thing that I dreaded most seems about to burst upon my hair my friends hitherto hitherto hath the Lord helped me you know the good William Cowper when he wrote that beautiful hymn God moves in a mysterious way he didn't write it just because he had great poetical ability and thought it would sound nice but no my friend hitherto hath the Lord helped him that dear man needed so much help he didn't just think he was going out of his mind the poor man did go out of his mind and it seemed that sad affliction it robbed him of what would have been of great advantage to him of being a barrister yes already unqualified but what now is God good and kind to such a man as this my friend he said judge not the Lord by feeble sense or scan his work in vain

God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain oh friend what a gracious man in his deep affliction he proved to be yes hitherto hath the Lord helped us yes have you seen something growing lately in your life is it a bud with a bitter taste yes these things I cannot accept it hurts my soul it casts me down yes it seems so different for other people yes but he says the bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower the unfolding purposes of almighty

God display his honour and his glory that belong exclusively unto him yes hitherto hath the Lord helped us is not this the testimony of the children of God has not this been the testimony of those who had a real desire to put on Christ yes hitherto hath the Lord helped us my friend their testimony can't go beyond that which they have already lived but my friend their testimony is of the future hitherto has the Lord helped me I say will it not be so is he not able to help you and so to you assist you are faithful a covenant mercy a covenant mercy and grace friends he'll never break that covenant no he'll bring you to misbe why the

Lord brought me out and has never called me to go back again never intended to go back again the Lord has never indeed intended that I should declare a continual war on the ungodly that is his prerogative alone but who can tell hitherto has the Lord helped us he'll bring out as many as the Lord our God shall call and they shall be brought to know oh that the Lord is their God and their helper now and forever more oh may the Lord bless his word and such feeble ramblings pardon and forgive what we spoke and amiss amen amen