

The believers need for a habitation and refuge (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] And speak with the Lord's help from Psalm 71. Psalm 71 and the third verse. Be thou my strong habitacle, whereunto I may continually resource.

Thou hast given commandment to save me, for thou art my rock and my fortress.

Be thou my strong habitacle, whereunto I may continually resource. Thou hast given commandment to save me, for thou art my rock and my fortress.

Only a child of God can pray such a prayer as this. Only one who really knows the most meaning and desire of his word, can utter them acceptably and sight of prayer.

There is so much in them, as in so many of these petitions of the psalmist.

[1 : 39] The more I look at them, the clearer it becomes that they are spiritual desires. And although they may not be easily or readily understood, they constitute the very bottom of the heart in its desired God's hope.

If you've ever felt this prayer, there's all one like it. And there are many like it, come out of your heart, what good ground you have, to be able to sing the hymn that you've just done.

Do all God come out into the prune one day, as we were saying last time, is serving God acceptably with reverence.

Godly fear is not something that we just do by way of profession, something that has to bear its test in the end.

So that we have a line set out before us of the way of truth. And a very humble line it is too.

[3 : 23] Why should these prayers be used by people who were obviously called by Christ?

Why if what this sect says, Thou hast given commandment to save me?

Why if God has given commandment to save, should there be any need for such a prayer as this?

Or other prayers that are in the same sect? Or others?

God has given commandment to say how do you reconcile this? how can you read your Bible with any degree of intelligence, spiritual intelligence how can you follow through with these prayers with an incandruous mind and heart if he should say to you well if this is so you have nothing to worry about and the answer of course is the eternal focus of God that his people should be in the world and not of it and that it is to his honour and glory to permit and decree that they should walk through it just as other people have to walk they should have no special favour they should not walk on a plane higher than others that they should be in the world that is his his curious purpose imagine for a moment that it wasn't so and the Lord's people met with every success that they wanted every desire that they had what a strange people they would be ostracised they would be indeed by the world you can't tell one from the other now see them in a crowd you can't tell the people of God from the ungodly you never will be able to people can't pick you out if you're a God-fearing person not in the ordinary run of life they might see you say grace in a restaurant they might find a Bible by your locker in the hospital and they might think that you were different the others or wonder why as one of our ministers did years ago he came into this hospital here to see a person he was a customer of his not one of her people but the woman in the next bed had a Bible on her locker he wouldn't spoke to her not only that she had tested him by her bedside on her locker in the hospital and of course that was indeed to him a total stranger remarkable thing not that I'm petting gas to him above others though I believe them to be far above others these things give proof you can see

[8 : 33] by and large in the general run of events you can't tell one from the other so I say why should there be such a thing as this in the word of God such prayers as these which sound as if the person is in grave danger as if the ground is sinking beneath their feet and they are finding they cannot manage why pray like this be thou my strong habitation whereunto I may continually resort if there is no need of a strong habitation or the rock you've just been singing about or why I think a refuge if there is no question of danger or damage if the Lord has said what he has done and the psalmist

David is able to say thou hast given commandment to save me why the question and why the prayer and that is the urge that as the Lord brought his ancient people through a waste-towering wilderness miraculously literally brought them out of her the death of Egypt foresaw that it would be done promised Abraham to do it gave him the date and the time the number of years that they would be in Egypt accomplished it in the very day and then took them round the winding route right into the land of the land of

Kangdian instead of a shorter route why the question why could he not have taken them straight into the land of Kangdian same answer replied as well as the same question with regard with regard to his people they could be born and die as infants do and in our belief our hered sight lead to him without knowing anything of this which is what is what is what is what is what is what is the winding wilderness the waste howling wilderness the commandment is the centre of it

I didn't see this until late last night and I asked given commandment to say here's the hub here's the covenant of grace that's why I read the chapter I did wherein David is seen sitting before the Lord and saying is this the manner of man or the law of man is this how man would act foretelling the future to such an extent thou hast spoken to thy servants for a great while to come it certainly is because he couldn't do it this is the power the whole matter now

I still in commandment to save me but I'm still in trouble I'm still in need there's danger threatened on all sides I still need this in spite of and in fact of the government there is this great truth that it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom so we will start with the Lord's help to look at this commandment commandment now I've asked you the commandment for faith how do we know how are we sure supposing this were only ancient history we had no gospel no fulfilment of the prophecy no acts of the apostles how should we look at it in our twentieth century what concern would it be to we

[14 : 58] Gentiles the commandment and covenant why it's the covenant of his praise that is the commandment and this commandment is all reaching fire reaching it's the commandment of God given in the ancient covenant of grace commandment in the unity of the spirit and the trinity it's the commandment to all the holy answering angels sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation and this is an unauthorial commandment irrevocable it has to be obeyed it will be it is lovingly obeyed but me says David our spirit commandment to save me just one individual out of thousand this is how he knew it in the chapter that we read goes back to the sheep coat he does refer to the time when

God first revealed that covenant to him and I took thee or when the Lord took him from the sheep coast that humble place where he was for so long out of everybody's sight never thought of as a king up there the Lord had his eye on him and took him from that sheep coat to Duke Hall appointed time when Samuel called for the son the anointed he was the last as you know to come have you any more sons said

Samuel yes says Jesse I've got one more these most are likely yes yes it was and this was the one it was this covenant in its early stages this lovely word the unlikely one oh that last Sabbath I spoke of the general assembly didn't I the general assembly of the first born written in heaven the unlikely one and it faces out with the blessed fact that you can never tell who the

Lord's people are until they're called by grace you can look at the worst the most rugged and say describe them as you like that you can never say of any single person upon this earth that they're not a child God until the act falls and they quite obviously like evil men have cut off in their day die in their sins then it's obvious that God had no purpose of mercy to them but until that time there is the continuing possibility and it is proven by the characters

God has called that shall I say it's proven by you do you say and agree with me in your heart well I'm one of those I'm one of those I feel it and if there's one thing that I'm certain of it's this that I won't nothing or two things are more certain in my life than this that I was one of the unexpected ones I do not think anyone in my family or any among my friends ever so forever anticipate the

[21 : 27] Lord should have anything to do with me such with my sinful life this is covenant and it's bedrock and that means everything you don't want something that's going to shake and turn at every movement of the time it's so with the children you pray for your children you can't care have you which one of them if any of them are going to be called by the divine grace and then there's the fields into which they are called the

Bible which I give to read in the scroll ministry they sit under or perhaps don't sit under why God deals with them privately how many of one has been strangely changed in half and not known what's happening to them never been inside a place of work time comes and circumstances combine as they did with David to send for it but he's not only sent for he's not only anointed and that necessary act to accomplish but there arises circumstances where he has to come out and do battle as but a youth the wilderness journey began you see then those peaceful hills of Bethlehem where

David minded the sheep he never went back there again he had to face a goliath then when he had to face a goliath he had to face a rising spirit of bitter jealousy not jealousy did he created by his own folly but because God gave him success Saul hated him when the women in the dances cried that Saul had slain his thousands but David is tens of thousands that strange occasions the more you look at it the more you will see what a strange occasion it was as if a match was put to gunpowder the life of David from that time and forward was the object of jealousy absolute jealousy and we read that

Saul eyed David from that day and onward it wasn't long after that the dagger was thrown at in the Torah was and this is that side of the wilderness journey but there's another side of this wilderness journey a very important side too and that was David James with his heart that was where he learned so much of what he was and that explains which we shall speak of later with the Lord's help why he wanted a strong habitate that he was brought into this covenant engagement and so it is that the

Lord's church is in the wilderness look at her today look at the vast people as much as you can and of course we can only get a lift on the vast upheaval today in the world and the greatest thing men would love to see is a revival if sound proof but the opposite is the case it is a day of small things of solemn judgment not only on our nation but on other nations the truth is hotly pursued and assailed the gospel is hated anti-Christ is now appearing in full view and is yet we believe to appear in fuller view the iniquities that abound in the world today are about the growing of a mushroom that is to spread with alarming rapidity the antichrist is giving his being given his head so we have great calls to consider our ways to their day and not to indulge in these fanciful interpretations which are so prevalent in the earth that the wilderness journey if we go on to compare it came to a horse they got as far as

[29 : 03] Kedish far near there they would have been in the promised land within a few hours had they not listened to the adverse reports of the ten spies and only two out of twelve reported the truth we can well overcome these enemies said Kainé to Joshua but no said the rest they're far too strong for us we can't we never share so that with regard to this covenant there's a question of being loved perishing

God's work being undone the enemy triumphant there are times there were times previous to the plan and the whole world lying with it the dark days of Sodom and Gomorrah there will be many dark days in their own nation for example on the very verge of destruction within their own lifetime there is the underlying bedrock covenant of grace and that is that whilst those unbelieving

Israelites would go back into the wilderness met and die there as many as were over twenty years of age and at last were brought safely through this was God's purpose literally and this constitutes the basis of our gospel thoughts we haven't got the old testament history what could we do with the new we have in the new testament revealed not a literal wilderness of sand and scorpions and blazing sun and a guiding pillar but we have the counterpart and those things which are as strong and opposing as ever so that by these things we make comparisons and they're not odious either they're comparisons of a very real and accurate nature thou hast given command commandment to save now look at the glory of this commandment as it's now in the gospel what words of

Jesus can we think of which will reveal to us so clearly that I shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my father's hand what sweeter chapter than the tenth of John where he speaks of being a good shepherd and gives eliz patience both of the good and the bad hear not my sheep he says because he believe not my word as I said unto you my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and no man shall pluck them out of my father's hand this covenant of grace shines full in all its glory it does in that hymn you shall that's the only hymn in our book you know by

Brewer and generally reckoned to be one of the sweetest and most acceptable then he led me on says the good man with classic hope to Jesus that's my hiding clothes how beautiful it is isn't but it's true and making the way crooked rough through unexpected trials and scenes dangerous in all this therefore we have under our feet sacred command they are the redeemed of the

[35 : 44] Lord they're not partially redeemed and have to finish that redemption themselves they're not redeemed in a way that is contingent from something of a natural nature they are as the 35th of Isaiah says they are on a highway a way shall be there and it shall be called the way of holiness the wayfaring man though a fool shall not err there is that is the highway that God has promised and is fulfilling that is your life seems to be a way of thaw and anxiety and cares you'll find that it's far more comparable with the word of God than some religious theory that says all you've got to do is to believe and if you believe everything will work out well will it?

to this end God has appointed trial of tests every man's work shall be tried at what sort it is Peter speaks of precious faith as being something worth having which it is therefore God has given command command has given commandment to the Lord Jesus given commandment to the Holy Spirit commandment of the appointed time not to propose but call thy grace is given commandment to the host of angels to rejoice over one sinner that repented these things are either a terrific and cunningly devised tale or else they're the absolute essence of truth one or the other and it is by these things the Lord sets his people upon the latter part of this deck for thou art my rock and my fortress you would expect

David to use such figures as these they sound strange to us we don't know a great deal about rocks and fortresses do we but to him who was hunted in the wilderness a rock was a very real thing a portrait was even mortar a place of hiding and security with all the craft and cunning was needed under such circumstances I don't mean those two words wrongly but skillfully maybe it was a very warlike man and he needed and had this knowledge which God had given him of an everlasting coming now he said of it elsewhere though my house be not so with God yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure now this is very common so here is so you must go away with the thought that it's glass and silver and gold now this covenant has in it that tremendous word sovereign which means he takes some not all it means that you are to stand before the bar of his sovereign purpose it means this that

David's house as individuals such as Absalom and the like were not included in that covenant so this covenant sings a hymn writer oh believer stands thy rising fears to quench thy doubt that there is a division between Jacob and Esau and this is what will take us to the Lord's help this evening to the first part of the text be thou my strong habitation where unto I may continually resort we must leave it here by the

Lord and his bless Amen