

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

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*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.*

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*"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18)*

## SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

### EXPOSITION OF PSALM 121

By Richard Ebler

This brief hymn has been a favorite of the saints down through the ages. It expresses their confidence in a protecting God when faced by real dangers. Some have called it the "Traveller's Hymn," because it speaks of going out and coming in safely. We present this for your meditation.

v. 1 "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

When the Psalmist says "I will" then we can see that he was resolved and determined to do this. Indeed, determination was needed to lift the eyes, because man by nature has the eyes of a pig which are slanted earthward. It takes grace and determination to lift the eyes of faith to the hills of heaven where God is.

The word "hills" probably refers to the mountains that were round about Jerusalem (Psalm 125:2). They reminded the Israelites of God because of their immensity, immovability, majesty, loftiness, and nearness to His people. God wanted man to think of Himself as high and exalted; therefore, He always met man on a mount whenever He wanted to have a special transaction with him. God met Moses on Mt. Sinai and gave him the law. He met Abraham on Mt. Moriah and tested him in the matter of offering up his son, Isaac. He met Elijah on Mt. Carmel and exposed the prevalent false religion of the time. He met Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration and glorified His Son there. He accomplished our redemption on a hill called Calvary. Christ ascended from the Mount of Olives. His most famous sermon was the Sermon on the Mount. All of this teaches us that man must be exalted spiritually for a spiritual manifestation of God, even as these men were exalted physically for a physical manifestation.

"From whence cometh my help," is an expression showing that the writer had already experienced frequent help from the Lord, and now he was using this to bolster his confidence that future help would come. All our help must be sought from the God of the hills.

v. 2 "My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth."

This tells us that it was not merely the hills that he was looking to, but the God of the hills. His name was the LORD (in capital letters) which indicates JEHOVAH or I AM THAT I AM. Roughly translated, it means "The Eternal Self-Existent One." If God is uniquely and eternally self-existent, then He is above the course of nature; He is superior to the kingdom of nature; He is not bound by the laws of nature; In fact, since he "made heaven and earth," it is obvious

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## The Word of Truth

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### JUST HOW IMPORTANT IS THE RESURRECTION?

From time to time we hear religious leaders say, "Even if there proved to be no life after death, I would still live the way I have. The Christian life is by far the most profitable life, and bears many rewards right now — even if there was nothing in the hereafter." This is not, of course, the reasoning of the Apostles. They placed a great deal of emphasis upon the resurrection — that happening which shall place men in eternity — body, soul, and spirit. Paul reasoned on this wise: If the dead are not raised, then Christ is not risen. This would mean that: (a. Preaching is vain. (b. Faith is vain — i.e., there is nothing but the lie to all that is declared in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and to all that is received in the Name of the Lord Jesus. (c. The Apostles are false witnesses — liars; for they have plainly declared that God "raised up Christ." (d. We are yet in our sins (e. Those that have fallen asleep in Christ are perished utterly. (f. We are of all men most miserable. (I Cor. 15:13-19). Certainly, these are weighty considerations — weighty because they thrust us entirely upon the reality of the resurrection — there is no provision for an error, for a mistake — for a better life. If there is no resurrection, everything falls to the ground, and all believers are plainly adjudged to be fools, deceived, and miserable!

If the dead are not raised, then all churches must be closed, the preaching of the Word must cease, and true preachers must forever hold their peace. There is no point to proclaiming any message from God if the dead are not raised; no need for a spokesman for the Creator! Man has no need for a message, and God has no need for a messenger if the dead are not raised. Preaching is then reduced to sounding brass and tinkling cymbal — to swelling words and pointless chatter!

If the dead are not raised then our faith is vain — there is nothing to believe, nothing to which we may cling! Believers are really no believers, but only the deceived, if the dead are not raised. There is, then, no such thing as "faith" which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). There is, in such a case, nothing to hope for, and noth-

ing real that is not seen! If the dead be not raised, we are all the dupes of Satan, given over to an unsteady foundation, a crumbling and decaying pillar, and a toppling wall!

If the dead are not raised, then the Apostles, upon whom the church is built (Eph. 2:20) are liars, deceivers, and the grandest perpetrators of fables that have ever trod the face of the earth. They are witnesses that are really no witnesses, who have no real message, no hope of salvation, of change, or of newness. They have only exploited men — and that to no personal profit at all! It means that they have forfeited their lives, suffered persecution and death for nothing. Their names are in no history books, they have achieved no fame with the world — only those few of every age that have turned to the Lord's Christ have received the testimony of these Apostles: and yet, all of this has been to no avail if the dead are not raised. They have only sold us a lie in the name of truth if the dead are not raised.

If the dead are not raised, then Christ was not raised! We have no Savior, then, from sin; no Mediator in the heavens pleading for us; no Captain of our salvation to bring us to God; no returning Lord to take us unto Himself. We have no mansions in the Father's house, no hope, no basis for confirmation to the image of God's Son. There is, then, no Holy Spirit, no spiritual life! Christ Jesus, if the dead are not raised, was only another man offering solutions with no power, antidotes with no means of partakement, commandments with no implementation! If this is the case — that is, if the dead are really not raised, then we are yet in our sins!! God is still angry with us every day; our sins still have the dominion over us; we are still cursed and destined for the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. We are not, then, reconciled to God, have no deliverance from the power of the enemy, and are at the mercy of the merciless Devil! If the dead are not raised, then we do not have peace with God, we really have not that joy unspeakable and full of glory, and possess no imputed righteousness at all! There are no evidences of Divine Life within us, there is no fruit of the spirit or "things that pertain to life and godliness!" We are under the dominion of our own sinful proclivities, Satan, and the world order — unable to "clean" escape it or be transformed by the renewing of our mind!

If the dead are not raised, then those soldiers of that faith which have passed on have utterly perished. There is no hope of a reward for them, no hope of a fulfillment of their hearts desire. They lived and died, then, in spiritual frustration — not being able to do the things they would, finding a law in their lives that inhibited and prohibited the fulfillment of the perfect will of God. They hoped for something that is not, strove to reach a goal that did not exist, laid down their lives joyfully only to become a total non-entity! If the dead are not raised, then there really are no spiritual heroes; none in the past to whom we may look for encouragement; none that behold us now struggling in the fight of faith, and none that are "under the altar." There is no paradise, no Abraham's bosom, and no com-

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## WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW" — Romans 3:28

Justification is necessary to acceptance with the Lord; the knowledge of justification is necessary to the utilization of that acceptance by the sons of men! To be justified involves more than mere acquittal — although that is integral to justification. There is also the matter of complete and thorough absolution — **the removal of guilt**. When "a man" is justified, the **totality** of his guilt is removed, and he stands **completely** innocent before the God he has offended. He is "accepted" (Eph. 1:6), and God beholds no sin in him; "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel", as it is written (Num. 23:21). **God sees it not because it is not!** It has been removed from the believer; taken away by the Lord Jesus Christ who "bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24). Not merely the responsibility for our sins was laid upon Him, but the "iniquity of us all" was laid upon Him (Isa. 53:6); He was "made to be sin for us who knew no sin" (II Cor. 5:21) — that is the length to which our Heavenly Father went to make us clean in His own sight! Christ Jesus, the "only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" was ostracized, cut off, banished, and forsaken of His own Father in order that we might be accepted, brought back, and approved of Him that is altogether righteous! The work was thorough, complete, satisfactory; the Father "saw the travail of His (Christ's) soul, and was satisfied" (Isa. 53:11). Practically speaking, justification involves sinners becoming Just-as-if they had never sinned! A remarkable display of the grace, power, and initiative of the Lord God, as well as the willingness, zeal, and steadfastness of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Now, the crucial issue in religion is this: how can a man be accepted with God? Is it through means of his own efforts, his own accomplishments; or is it through the accomplishments of another? Can I remove my own guilt, or offset my transgression with righteousness? Is it possible for the sinner to so completely obey the righteous law of God that he negates the fact of his guilt; that obedience can undo disobedience; that a change of mind can initiate a change of fact; that renunciation can of itself produce a clean slate? Is it possible for me to address myself to the fulfillment of the Law and, in so doing, produce a dramatic reversal of former transgressions; to so fill the scale of God's approval with good achievement as to empty the scale of His disapproval because of my iniquities? Or, must God Himself empty the scale of offense, remove my transgression, make an end of sin — undertake to obliterate my guilt for me? Is my acceptance with God based upon my achievement or upon Christ's achievement; upon my accomplishments or upon Christ's accomplishments? Is the Lord Jesus the one in Whom the Father is "well pleased", or is it I? Does Christ bring me to God, or do I thrust myself into His presence? Is the Lord Jesus the "Captain of my salvation", or do I pilot the vessel of acceptability in my own

strength? Is it Christ's death that saves me or my death? Is the Gospel the proclamation of my work of Jesus the Lord and Savior? Who really is "working salvation in the midst of the earth" — man or God?

"The deeds of the Law" is a description of the accomplishment of obedience; of the fulfilling of the ten commandments? It speaks of men DOING (not trying to do) what God has directed in His "spiritual" and "holy" law (Rom. 7:14). It speaks more of aspiration than of accomplishment, for who but a fool would say that he had wrought all of the "deeds" of the law? Which one of us has not readily admitted at all junctures of our life that we have "come short of the glory of God"? **But "the deeds of the Law" make no provision for partial fulfillment, for energetic but faulty efforts, or for any form of incompleteness.** "The deeds of the law" postulate an individual that has kept the law of God **perfectly, thoroughly, completely**; one that has really achieved what God has demanded! Not, of course, that there is such an individual, or that there ever has been, apart from our wonderful Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! But the Word of God speaks as though this is a possibility simply because men, in their vanity and foolishness, insist upon proceeding upon this faulty principle. Do not the Scriptures say of our father Abraham; "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; **BUT NOT BEFORE GOD**" (Rom. 4:2); i.e., even though Abraham would have lived a faultless, flawless life (in relation to what the Lord commanded him), he still could not boast before the Lord—that is, lay a claim to merited justification! He could not lay ahold of untainted acceptance before God. Why? Because, as the Lord Jesus said, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done **ALL THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE COMMANDED YOU**, say, **WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS: WE HAVE DONE THAT WHICH WAS OUR DUTY TO DO**" (Luke 17:10); and fulfilling duty is not an adequate basis for acceptance with God!

The fact that it was our "duty" indicates that our natures were at variance with His basically and fundamentally, else we would not have to be **COMMANDED** to do these things! **Sin and transgression flows from a defective nature, a fallen and depraved disposition, a blinded and ignorant heart.** Even if that sort of individual (and we all are in that class by nature—Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:19ff) could be brought to perfectly obey the commandments of God (which he cannot), there would still be **no merit, no worthiness — only unprofitableness.** While men are impressed by rigorous, disciplined fulfillment of hard sayings, God looks for those who find no satisfaction or rest in being released from service to Himself; for those who find the commandments "not grievous". You see, a **fallen nature can be disciplined, but it cannot be made righteous: it may be brought to obey, but not to delight in obeying; to do its duty, but not to go beyond its duty.** While regimentation and discipline is a necessary part of this life, the saints of the most High God are being schooled for an unregimented life, where their entire and total natures will be so refined as to be perfectly compatible with God Himself. **Commandments are but a means of bringing men into harmony with**

**the mind and will of God** — all of which points out that they are really not in harmony with Him at all — else they would not need the commandments. For instance, can you imagine the Holy Spirit being regimented by the Ten Commandments? There is no need for this, for the Nature of the Spirit is Holy in every sense of the term! However, man's nature is **not** holy — it is unholy, unlike God, at variance with his Maker, riveted to the "course of this world." His nature is what prohibits his glorying before God; that is what infects all that he does, what marks him as a sinner — HIS NATURE! His heart is "desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9); his body is "vile" (Phil. 3:21), his mind is "alienated" (Eph. 4:18; Col. 1:21). He is, in fact, "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). Now it will do no good to speak of what such an one as this has DONE — even if our imaginations could convince us that he had done well; even if we were deluded into believing that he had performed the requirements of the law!

It is not that thinking men do not acknowledge their past guilt, it is that they think to appease the indignation of God by **aspiring** to flawless obedience. But flawless obedience (which thing is beyond the capability of men) cannot **remove** one single transgression; it cannot make one spot clean, or take away the guilt for a single sinful thought! Acceptance with God necessitates the total removal of ALL sin, ALL guilt, ALL transgression, ALL unrighteousness! Now, I ask you, can this be accomplished by the "deeds of the Law"?

It ought to be noted here that we are speaking of the **efforts** of men to gain God's approval **without** the "one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5); it involves the conscientious effort to gain God's approval by **fulfilling God's Law** — we are not speaking of philanthropic or gracious acts of men performed apart from an integral interest in the Law of God. Further, we are not speaking of heartfelt obedience to the Lord's Christ. Let no one classify baptism, the Lord's Supper, confession of Christ, repentance, fellowship, prayer, etc., as "the deeds of the Law" — for they are not! The Law said nothing about any of them. No commandment in the Law for men to pray, no commandment for men to keep the Lord's Supper, or for them to repent and be baptized, or for them to fellowship and build one another up in the most holy faith. These are by no means "works of the law" or "deeds of the law"! It is not that we are holding these things forth as substitutes for faith — God forbid; or that they are to be revered above the "believing unto the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39) that characterizes the children of God. But these things are NEVER disparaged in the Scriptures; never questioned as to their validity. No believer is ever told not to trust in these things or to consider them separate from faith. In fact, for instance, men are taught to regard their baptism as the pivotal point of their life — the place where their unity with Christ, their death to sin, and their resurrection to walk in newness of life was accomplished; (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; I Pet. 3:21). After we are taught concerning partakement of the Lord's Supper, too, we are told that keeping the Gospel in memory (which thing is accom-

plished, in part, at the table of the Lord) will save us (I Cor. 11:22-26; 15:1-3). For that matter, believing is a **WORK** in the strictest sense of the word, as also our Lord proclaimed (Jno. 6:29) — and yet what sophist is there that would dare to assert that faith does not save? I suppose that the point that must be firmly established here is that "**the deeds of the Law**" **do not take into consideration a Redeemer; no Savior, no redemption, no reconciliation, no Mediator, no Captain of our salvation, no Son upon Whose shoulders the very government of God rests!** Even as Law was given **BEFORE** the Redeemer, and worked without the presence of a Redeemer, so those that operate under the principle of the "deeds of the Law" in order to procure justification are climbing up some other way (Jno. 10:1-10), attempting to gain God's approval **without Christ, without remission of sins, without a new birth, without the Spirit of God, without reconciliation and peace with God!** God is too righteous to be impressed by such vain activity; too holy to be brought to respect the diligent efforts of mortal man — man that has been blighted and blasted by sin!

Little wonder that Paul wrote; "Knowing that a man is **not** justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and **not** by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall **no** flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). This is a plain declaration that men are not saved by doing, but by **receiving**; not by their own accomplishments, but by the acceptance of **Christ's** accomplishment! Because our actions are not pure enough, we must receive the worth and merit of another's works — and that is precisely what faith does; it **receives Christ's redemption as the only thing that thoroughly satisfied and appeased God!** You see "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 10:4); i.e., no longer do men become holy by doing what God has commanded them! **They become holy by believing what God has declared**, and that wondrous "delivered" faith (Jude 3) thrusts them into a life of acceptable actions, willing obedience, fruitful lives unto the Living God!

The "strength of sin is the law" (I Cor. 15:56); i.e., the **Law of God apart from the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, actually fortifies sin**; it causes the resurrection of sin and rebellion within unregenerate man. Do you not recall that Paul declared he was once "alive without the law; but **when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died**" (Rom. 7:9-10). Without that blessed "washing of regeneration" (Tit. 3:5) man is so contrary to the nature of God that God's commandments only stir his unregenerate nature to resist the Living God! How, then, could justification ever be accomplished by the "deeds" or "works of the law". The purpose of law was to **condemn, to stop every mouth, that every man might become guilty before God** (Rom. 3:19). It brought out the defectiveness of man and revealed that he stood in dire need of a Savior; that he did not have the wherewithal to please the Lord, and that he was, in fact, alienated from the life of God! Woe be

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## THE MODERN CHARISMATIC REVIVAL

There is, in our day, a certain religious phenomenon taking place which purports to be a "Charismatic Revival", or the fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29, where the Lord promised to "pour out" His "Spirit on all flesh." This movement is reported to be accompanied by signs, wonders, miracles, and divers gifts of the Holy Ghost. Evidence indicates that this experience-centered presentiment transcends the schisms and factions which men have erected, melting professed believers together in a glorious oneness (which report, I must confess is refreshing to the ear!). Also, there is a common experience reported of speaking in unknown tongues — said to be a "heavenly language" which is given to confirm the reception of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. A great deal of emphasis is placed upon this particular "gift" — in fact, in many circles those that are within the confines of the movement of which we speak are known as "the tongues people." Now, as believers, we have a solemn obligation to "try the spirits, whether they be of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I Jno. 4:1). **Because a movement purports to be from God does not necessarily mean that it is; and because we may suspicion it not to be from God does not necessarily mean that it is not!**

Firstly, we must not be overly influenced by the presence of supernatural phenomenon! Some individuals have been involved in a lifeless, dead, insipid religion for so long, they are swept off of their feet by the testimony or witness of signs and wonders. But the children of the King must not be so, for this makes them vulnerable to the Devil. In fact, while it might not be accepted by some, **supernatural phenomenon is one of the chief means employed by our "Adversary" to wrest our hearts from the Savior.** "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24:24); "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect" (Mark 13:22); "Then shall that wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: even him whose working is after Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (II Thess. 2:8-10); "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth . . . and he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do. . ." (Rev. 13:11-14); "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils (demons), working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world. . ." (Rev. 16:13-14); "And the beast was

taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast. . ." (Rev. 19:20). We also have examples in the Scriptures of supernatural works being wrought by false men. For instance, the wise men and sorcerers of Pharaoh "cast down their rods, and they became serpents" (Ex. 7:11-12); the magicians of Egypt also turned water into blood (Ex. 7:20-22) and brought frogs out of the waters upon the land of Egypt (Ex. 8:5-7). Moses spoke of those that "useth divination, or an observer of times (astrologer), or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consultor with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer . . ." (Deut. 18:10-11) — which things certainly were transcendent to the natural order. **We are not, therefore, shut up to the favorable working of the Lord God when we speak of the supernatural.** In fact, one of the very chief means employed by Satan to deceive and overcome men is that of the supernatural! Whether or not things reported to be miraculous really happened is not even the issue; that is irrelevant! Often false and lying wonders are brought to pass in order to prove or test us, "whether" we "love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul" (Deut. 13:1-3). In view of these few observations, we question any emphasis upon the miraculous; it is certainly not in keeping with "the Apostle's doctrine" (Acts 2:42), and does open the door for the worse type of delusion.

Secondly, **our religion is not to be experience-centered!** We are not the center of the Gospel; the Lord Jesus Christ is! Our benefit is not the ultimate objective of our Father; it is His glory! It is quite possible to be possessed of faith, approved of God, and of great worth in the Kingdom of God, and at the same time be "stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword; wander about in sheepskins, and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented"; to "wander in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth" (Heb. 11:37-38). The center-point of these believers (now the "spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23) was certainly not themselves. In fact, **their faith brought upon them discomforts, trials, and oppressions of the greatest magnitude.** I realize that these are not necessarily the example for us all, but they do evidence that **the faith has a higher aim than mere personal and earthly benefit.** The settling of my family problems, employment problems, etc., is not to be set forth as the supreme purpose of God. **In fact, an acceptance of the Redeemer many times produces more family and employment problems than one has ever had before.** Jesus did say that He did not come to bring "peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law" (Matt. 10:34, 35). There are times when the Lord dramatically subdues members of the family to His own glory; but there are equally times when the Lord dramatically divides families for His own glory. **Our religion must permit us to receive both!**

After hearing numerous speakers associated

with the charismatic revival, I continue to be impressed with the frequency of their references to **themselves** and to works associated with **their** endeavors. Proportionately speaking, they generally have far more to say about themselves and their "ministry" than about the Word of God. In fact, they are not generally known for their exposition of the Scriptures, or for their proclamation of the Apostle's doctrine. Quite frankly, I find this to be objectionable. Such promises as "God can heal you", "God can bring financial blessing to you", "You can receive power", etc. are declared to the audience. It sounds good, it sounds tantalizing; hardly a thinking soul would not be attracted by these words — **but they are not Gospel!** That is not the Apostle's doctrine; it is not the "preaching of the cross", however attractive it may seem. No Apostle preached like that; the Lord Jesus Himself didn't preach like that; and early evangelists in the book of Acts did not preach in such a fashion. In short, theirs was **not** an experienced-centered message.

**Thirdly, sickness is considered to be a critical matter in the charismatic revival; therefore THERE IS A great emphasis upon healing;** countless testimonies of healing are used to bolster the meetings, and people that bear infirmities in their bodies are told that healing was a part of the atonement. Many of us, including this author, can bear witness to the hand of the Lord in the matter of our health — where illogical, wonderful, and startling things have happened contrary to the expectation of the physicians. But that these things have wondrously happened is not an adequate foundation for an **emphasis** upon healing! God does **not** always heal, and has made no committal to always heal every infirmity. In fact, we know of some very notable instances where He did **not**. Even after beseeching the Lord to remove a "thorn" that was given to him, Paul was told "My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Cor. 12:9). Rather than viewing illness or infirmity as a crisis, Paul took "**pleasure** in infirmities" knowing that when he was weak, then was he strong (II Cor. 12:10). So far from an infirmity inhibiting the beloved Apostle, it was the means through which the Galatians heard the glorious Gospel (Gal. 4:13, 14). Thus did Paul "glory in the things that **concerned his infirmities**" (II Cor. 11:30). Let us not forget that Timothy was told to "take a little wine for your stomach's sake and your **OFT** infirmities" (I Tim. 5:23). There was no rebuke for a lack of faith because he often was ill! No guarantee of healing held out to him! In fact, he was told to take medicine! **Such an attitude is equally as rare among the charismatic people as their attitude is rare in the Scripture!** Paul even "left Trophimus at Miletum sick" (II Tim. 4:2), indicating, once again, that illness was **not** considered as a crisis by the Apostles; they did not place an emphasis upon healing simply because they did not view illness as some supposed spiritual people do today! Let no one charge us with being heartless in this matter, or with rejecting the truth that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick" (Jn. 5:15)! What we are saying is simply this; healing was **not** in the atonement, it is **not** guaranteed in the Gospel, and sickness is **not** a sign of small faith

or a lack of faith! The greatest apostle of them all was plagued with it, his son in the faith Timothy was plagued even with frequent infirmities — and yet neither are held forth as weak in faith! As to that great text of Scripture that states that "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. 8:17), it is given in direct reference to His **earthly** ministry (Matt. 8:16-17) and **NOT** in reference to His death! Christ is never said to have laid down His life for our sickness; or to have died that we might have perpetual health; or that He arose from the dead in order that our bodies might not be subject to illnesses in this life. His death is always associated with sins and maladies of the heart and soul! He made His soul an "offering for sin", not for sickness; He "died for **our** sins according to the Scriptures", not for our bodily infirmities. Faith in the blood brings the forgiveness of sins, not the cure of our ailments! If we confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, and believe in our hearts that God has raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved — not from infirmities of the body "in this world", but from sin and the consequences of sin. We only have a guarantee of perfect health, honorable and powerful bodies in **the resurrection** — else we simply would never die! The body is "sown in weakness" (I Cor. 15:42-44), and it shall not be "raised in power" until the morning of the resurrection. Any promise to the contrary is folly, and sets before the saints a very choice delusion that is harmful to their faith!

**Fourthly, there is an observable tendency to oversimplify the truth.** Much of the theology that has been embraced by the constituents of this movement calls for an understanding that is childish. While we are to be "children in malice", we are to be "**men**" in understanding (I Cor. 14:20). Terms like "child-like faith" may speak beautifully to some hearts, but not to those that have truly set at the feet of Jesus! "**Strong**" faith is a term denoting spiritual **manhood**, not spiritual childishness! Our likeness to children is to be seen in our refusal to be possessed by malice, and in the way in which we **openly** come to the Lord Jesus and receive the Kingdom of God. But in our discernment of things as they are, we are not to grope about like babies, wondering where we should go and what we should do. Our senses are to be **exercised** to know good and evil (Heb. 5:14); we are to be able to "gather" (or conclude) by spiritual perception and understanding when things are right or wrong (Acts 16:10). Let us strive earnestly to "know what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17), and to be "filled with all spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9). Those without understanding are classed with the Devil's children, thus indicating what manner of zeal ought to be expended in avoiding that state (Rom. 1:31; Eph. 4:18; I Tim. 1:7). There certainly is a simplicity in Christ that is precious, and which is to be earnestly grasped (II Cor. 11:3; 1:12). However, that simplicity does not lie in the area of understanding, but in the open and uncorrupted manner of our acceptance of the Truth. Simplicity — not in a naive sort of way, but in the manner in which we do not question the Word of the Lord; simplicity in the way in which we are willing to abandon ourselves to a total reliance upon the judgment of the Lord when reasons fail. The word

“simple” means “undesigned, straightforward.” It means that there are no ulterior motives; no systems to maintain, no organization to perpetrate! What do we care for the advancement of mere men and their systems? Wherever truth is corrupted, there is that inevitable tendency to promote a system; to draw attention to men; to under-emphasize the Lord Jesus; to establish non-apostolic foundations. I find in this movement that too much proceeds from ignorance; there is too little discernment of the mind of the Lord; too much of a surface view of the Word of God, the principles of God, the purposes of God!

**Fifthly, there is a toleration of false doctrine that is extremely dangerous.** One of the earmarks of a questionable movement is when the truth is lightly esteemed, and when error is easily tolerated. This editor has heard with his own ear Roman Catholics that retained an unholy and ungodly view of Mary, and who openly taught that Christ is actually sacrificed each time the mass is offered, minister with unquestioned acceptance among “full gospel” people. Their doctrine was not questioned and their retaining of the appellation “father” in reference to their clergy was not only accepted, but was actually employed in the introduction of these “brethren.” What they had to say was not altogether true; it was shallow; in some instances it was altogether a lie — but these men were accepted upon the basis of their experience of the “baptism in the Holy Ghost” with the consequent evidence of speaking in a heavenly language. They professed that they had been liberated from tradition, and yet they were still bound by it — they worshipped Mary, energetically attended and perpetrated the Mass, said the Rosary, and all of the other heretical dogmas that have been instituted by the great Whore. In short, one can be a part of the charismatic movement and retain all of the distinctions of denominationalism! If you are an Episcopalian, you may stay one; a Methodist, you may stay one (retaining all of the distinctive dogmas that characterize the group) — and on and on we could go. There is a claim to unity, and yet there is an open embracement of schisms, which are expressly called works of the flesh by the Lord (I Cor. 12:25; Gal. 5:20). There are some of us that cannot understand this — yea, that refuse to understand this! While God commands His people to separate from lifeless forms of religion (I Tim. 6:1-5), these men, in the name of advanced spirituality and liberation, declare it to be unnecessary! I do not believe that we are anywhere asked to countenance the propagation of false and heterogenous doctrines; in fact, they are to be exposed, denounced, and left behind us altogether!

**There are some comely traits in this movement, however, which give us ground for good hope in some cases.** There is evidence of brotherly love in the charismatic movement which certainly transcends that of the denominational world. There is also a great emphasis put upon this point in an effort to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” These people are not hesitant to meet often together — certainly a trait which many would do well to emulate. Their singing also brings a great contribution, as many songs from the Scriptures themselves are often found among them. The presence of these things, as well as

others which we will not at this time mention, declare to us that this movement might well be a notch above contemporary religion — and yet, we summon men to that form of faith which the Apostles had and which they preached; which caused them to separate from every form of perversion and “cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart.”

I would suppose that it is necessary to say that this is certainly not meant to be an indictment of every member of this movement. What we have said, we have said of the **movement**, not of individuals. We have declared that we do not believe the movement, or the emphasis of the movement, or the direction of the movement, demonstrates it to be of a **superior** spiritual order. There are, no doubt, many within its confines that have risen above its defects (which thing may be said of most movements).

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## EXPOSITION OF PSALM 121

*(From page 1)*

that He can interfere with the course of nature and control it for the good of His people. The Scriptures teach that He does precisely this all the time (Rom. 8:28). In short, if He made heaven and earth, certainly He controls everything and is abundantly able to take care of me.

v. 3, 4 “He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

Man is basically a four-footed creature. He has two spiritual feet and two physical feet. This verse is true for either set.

To have our foot moved is to be forced out of our path or place. It is to lose our station and benefits.

Let us look at Christ's earthly life for a clear example of this. Then we can learn more of ourselves and our own case. Satan tried to move Christ's spiritual feet out of the way of holiness when He was tempted for forty days. This failed. Next Satan tried to remove Christ physically out of the world through the death of the cross. However the resurrection of Christ and His second coming make this attempt also a failure. So it is with the saints: they shall be kept from sin in this life and shall inherit the earth in the next life. “He that doeth the will of God abideth forever” (I John 2:17).

Furthermore, this Divine Watchman shall neither slumber nor sleep. His people are compared to a city that is watched over at night by a watchman so that the people will be safe even when they are asleep and vulnerable to a surprise attack from the enemy. Since they are defenseless when asleep, this Divine Watchman uses omnipotent power to keep the enemy at bay and an omniscient never-sleeping eye to prevent any sneak attacks. This is certainly a marvelous thing to behold, yet it is by beholding it that we are relaxed and able to sleep well. By faith we rest in Him.

v. 5 “The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.”

The Lord keeps as his choice vineyard those whom He loves. He waters them with His Spirit, shines the light of His word upon them, digs and dungs about them, and trims off their unsightly outgrowths with His pruner.

The "shade" represents protection, particularly from the heat of the sun of persecution (Matt. 13:6, 21). This shade is upon the right hand, indicating that it is always handy and accessible.

v. 6 "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night."

For a comment on the sun, see the previous verse.

The idea of this verse is that God's protection extends to both day and night.

v. 7 "The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul."

This promise is only for those who are looking to the hills of heaven where God dwells, trusting Him for His protection. Indeed, there is a sense in which no evil ever happens to a child of God in that God makes all things (including troubles) to work together for his good (Rom. 8:28).

The soul is much harder to preserve than the body, although the body requires trouble enough. The body requires a continual supply of nourishing food, clean air, pure water, moderate exercise, adequate sleep, and protection from heat, cold, rain, etc. Yet this is not enough. The soul requires continual feeding upon the Word of God, the spirit of faith, the water of life, a ministry to be exercised in, adequate time for recuperation, and protection from Satan's persecution, blasts of coldness, etc. These commodities are scarcer than the physical necessities. Besides all this, Satan attacks the soul more often than the body because he knows that if he can conquer the citadel of the soul, then control of the body will immediately follow.

v. 8 "The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."

"The Lord will preserve thee at home and abroad; yea, he will keep thee in all thy ways" (Psa. 91:11). Even in eternity thy ways shall be kept.

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### Just How Important Is The Resurrection?

*(From page 2)*

fort for those that suffered for righteousness' sake. It means that all of the promises of God concerning the sufferings of this world not being

worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us, are but lies. No glory, no honour, no reward, no reign, no power, no spiritual body! If the dead are not raised, this is the state of those that died believing — they are no different than a swine or an ox that falls to the ground devoid of breath!

If the dead are not raised, then we are truly of all men most miserable — we have made the most classic blunder of all; the most serious of miscalculations! We have admitted that we are strangers and pilgrims in the earth; have disowned the entire world order and chosen to have a heavenly citizenship! We have endured all manner of abuse, persecution, and false judgement of men; have forfeited friends, associations of life-long enjoyment, and permitted the sword of division to fall in many of our own homes. All of this because of the hope of the resurrection! We have denied the lusts of the flesh, the tug of the world, the allurements of temptation. We have "buffeted" our bodies, keeping under them and bringing them into subjection, and "mortified our members that are upon the earth." But of what avail is this if there is no resurrection! We have experienced an uninterrupted battle within — the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit lusting against the flesh. We have laid hold of the hope that is set before us, and lived in view of that! We have anticipated the coming of the Lord and longed for that day, expecting a grand liberty into a sphere of exceeding joy and unhindered expression toward God. But if the dead are not raised, all of this has been for nothing, and we are foolish and miserable for nothing!

But, praise God, the dead shall be raised — CHRIST HAS BEEN RAISED, and we shall be raised. There is not the slightest fragment of a possibility that this is wrong! It is truth — total truth! As a result our preaching is NOT in vain, our faith is NOT in vain, the Apostles are NOT false witnesses, we are NOT yet in our sins, those that have fallen asleep in Christ have NOT perished, and we are NOT of all men most miserable! The resurrection is what gives substance and vitality to all that we are and have in Christ Jesus! Rejoice, therefore, in it; live for it! It shall come! You too shall be raised, because Christ was raised! This is truth!

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### Without The Deeds Of The Law

*(From page 4)*

unto that individual that reverts to such a Law as a means to righteousness, or justification!

Rather than coming to God with the deeds of the law in our hands, seeking to gain approval, we come confessing that we have not kept the law, that we are sinners, and that we have transgressed the holy commandment. Rather than seeking merit, we seek forgiveness — and how wonderful that such is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. Rather than establishing our own righteousness, we abandon it and accept the righteousness of Christ. In so doing, God declares us to be righteous "without the deeds of the Law", and possessed of that righteousness our lives become a veritable living sacrifice of acceptance to God, His commandments no longer being grievous!