

## Sabbath School Lesson #4 – The Lord Hears and Delivers – 20-26 January 2024

**C**hrist would have us know that the Lord hears and delivers. “The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles” (Psalm 37:17). This is the consolation for God’s suffering children; He hears and delivers them. Their tears are all bottled up. Not a sigh or groan escapes their lips, or pang reaches their heart, but that is known and remembered in heaven. “The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; He is their strength in the time of trouble; and the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them because they trust in Him” (Psalm 37:39-40). “The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all” (Psalm 34:16-19). Knowing this to be true, the Lord always delivers His children, who can but join with David in the invitation, “O taste and see that the Lord is good” (verse 8). When Paul besought the Lord thrice to remove his affliction, the answer he got was, “My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Paul’s response is, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in my infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak then am I strong” (2 Corinthians 12:8-10). Let us then bear the reproach of Christ, knowing that our “sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory, that shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

**Sunday: My Frame Was Not Hidden From You** – Read Psalm 139:1–18. How does this text depict God’s presence (Ps. 139:7–12)? The Bible tells us plainly that the Holy Spirit is the direct Representative, the personal Presence of God; and the Father and Son share the same Spirit. So, God is present in every place by His Spirit. “Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 23:21). This is the Scripture teaching as to the “Real Presence.” Genesis 1:2 says, “the Spirit of God,” that is, ‘God’s Spirit’ – false teachers teach that this Spirit is a separate Entity from God; a teaching “through which Satan is working to make a nonentity of God and of Christ” {9T 68.1}. God and His Son are omnipresent and omniscient by their Spirit, and could not themselves be everywhere if their Spirit were a separate Entity. Of spirits, there is only “one Spirit” (Ephesians 4:4) that is holy; that one Spirit is shared by the Father and His Son as their Spirit, that is why Paul interchanges this by saying, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Romans 8:9); that one Spirit the Father gives us as the Spirit of His Son, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6); that one Spirit of Christ, as an integral part of Christ, when in us, is Christ Himself, for “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17); and as the Father and Son share that one Spirit, when that one Spirit is in us, Father and Son are in us, for Christ said: “If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him” (John 14:23). David says, “Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there” (Ps 139:7-8). Here the Psalmist clearly shows, that by God’s Spirit he means God Himself. Also, in the following text God’s Spirit is mentioned to signify God’s self. “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job 33:4). “But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them” (Isaiah 63:10). This text is to the point; by vexing the Lord’s Holy Spirit, they vexed the Lord, therefore the Lord’s Spirit was the Lord, and not an intelligent person distinct from Him. “But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:3-4). It is impossible to divide between any being and his spirit, to make two distinct persons of them. If you refresh my spirit, you refresh me, and if you vex

my spirit, you vex me: just so when they vexed the Lord's Holy Spirit, they vexed the Lord; and when they lied to His Holy Spirit, they lied to Him. That God and His Holy Spirit are the same person, will appear by comparing the following passages in the Old and New Testaments: compare Isaiah 6:8-10 with Acts 28:25-27; compare Jeremiah 31:33 with Hebrews 10:15-17; compare Psalms 95:8-10 with Hebrews 3:7-9. It is clear in these texts that the Holy Spirit is mentioned to express the person of God. No place can be found or mentioned where God is not. The only place where God does not dwell is in the hearts of the proud, rebellious, stubborn men. And even there He stands at the door and knocks for admittance (Revelation 3:20). Pride and rebellion usurped God's rightful place in the hearts of men, so that now He stands as a suppliant, pleading for admission to His rightful kingdom. His pleading is not evidence of weakness, but of forbearance and love; for "the longsuffering of our God is salvation" (2 Peter 3:15). And it is the pursuance of the object for which Christ "ascended up far above all heavens," namely, "that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10).

**Monday: Assurance of God's Care** – How does Scripture assure us of God's care? "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7). For whom does He care? – "The Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Psalm 145:9). And yet there are many people who are utterly unconscious of the Lord's care for them. They have the idea that God gives them no thought, except when some trouble comes, and then they charge Him with having sent it. Those who have that idea seem to take it as a matter of course that they live. They act as though their life depended wholly on themselves, whereas it is in God that "we live, and move, and have our being," for "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25, 28). This care of God for mankind is constant. Not a single moment does He relax His watchfulness. Representing His people (and He claims all the world as His own) as a vineyard, the Lord says: "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day" (Isaiah 27:3). "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; He that keepeth thee will not slumber" (Psalm 121:3). It is because God does not sleep, we can sleep in peace, and wake again. How terrible it would be if we had to attend to supplying ourselves with breath, would not dare do anything else.

**Tuesday: The Lord Is a Refuge in Adversity** – How do we deal with the times when calamity strikes, when we seem not to see the Lord's protection? We have now to learn to live in the house of the Lord before such calamity strikes. It is the principle we read about in Psalm 91:1-10. Here we see that the safety of God's people during the awful time of trouble just preceding the coming of the Lord (See Daniel 12:1; Luke 21:26-28), will be due to the fact that they have been and are then dwelling in the house of the Lord. The plagues that will be poured out upon the earth cannot touch them, because they will be dwelling safe in the place whence the plagues come. It is as one who is safe from the shot that comes from a fort, because he is in the fort whence the fire comes. And yet these people are at the same time on the earth, in the midst of the last plagues, with the wicked falling all around them.

**Wednesday: Defender and Deliverer** – Read Psalm 114. Think why it is that God is so nearby. Is it to destroy us? Far from it. It is to save us from sin. At Sinai, when the very earth trembled at the presence of the Lord, Moses said to the frightened multitude, "Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not" (Exodus 20:20). God has always been present; if He had designed to destroy us, He would have done it long ago; for we have deserved it. But instead of wishing to destroy, He has been present in love to uphold and preserve us. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not" (Lamentations 3:22). His presence is always salvation. Oh, recognise it, trust it, and find in His presence "fulness of joy" (Psalm 16:11).

**Thursday: Help From the Sanctuary** – What does it mean that, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" (Psalm 77:13). Our help comes from cleansing of the sanctuary above – blotting out our sins (Acts 3:19). The commanding voice cries, "Prepare ye the way of Jehovah!" (Isaiah 40:3). It is to prepare the way for the Lord's coming. What is hindering His coming now? Simply because the people are not prepared for His coming. The condition of His professed followers is hindering His advent. The way of the Lord is in the sanctuary, and His sanctuary is His people, therefore we see that the way of the Lord is prepared only by the preparation of His people – by cleansing of the sanctuary.