

Help From The Divine Side

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Psalms 46:1-11

Psa. 46:1-3, 7, “*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. ... The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.*”

Many people seem to conclude that God is too far away and too busy running the universe to care very much about them; that Jesus has already done all He will do; that the angels have nothing to do with them, or for them. This leads them to depend on their weak selves when they really need help from God. This is available if they will only use it.

The psalmist David recognized the support that God gives to those who love Him.

Psa. 121:1-3, “*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*”

For God to help His people would be a simple task for one who designed and created the entire universe.

- God parted the Red Sea.
- Jesus was born of a virgin birth.
- Jesus and the apostles raised people from the dead.
- Jesus rose from the dead after He was crucified.
- Just a few of the many examples of Divine help.

Divine help in the hour of temptation.

One thing that has plagued man since the beginning of time is how to deal with the varied temptations that are constantly before him. Not everyone has the same temptations. Satan knows our individual weaknesses and concentrates his attention on these areas.

However, these temptations are common to mankind. There is no new temptation.

1 Cor. 10:13, *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*

Have we been left to our own defenses against Satan in dealing with these temptations? No. God has promised He will help us.

Firstly, He has promised we would not be tempted above what we are able to bear. If we say the temptation before us is too hard to bear, then we call God a liar and are giving in too easily to our desires.

2 Pet. 2:9, *“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”*

God allows us to be tempted because He knows when we overcome our temptations that we will be a better person for it.

James 1:2-3, *“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”*

Secondly, He has promised that when we are tempted there is a way of escape from it. Look for it! It is there. He has promised it.

If you start to rationalize with yourself with reasons to give in to your temptation you are surrendering yourself to Satan. Think, what would Jesus say. What would Jesus do?

Jesus endured the same temptations that we do. How did He handle them?

- Matt. 4:1-11, *“Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith*

Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”

- Heb. 4:15, *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”*
- Heb. 2:18, *“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”*

Because Jesus has gone through these temptations successfully He knows how to deliver us from these temptations.

Divine help in every time of need.

We can receive divine help not only when we are tempted, but during any time of need or crisis.

Heb. 4:14-16, “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

So often when we are in the midst of troubling times we forget God and try to deal with the problem in our own way. Our anxieties heighten; we worry and can't sleep at night; we fuss at our spouses and yell at the kids. All because we try to solve our problems on our own.

Paul found grace to help him in time of need.

2 Cor. 12:1-9, “It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above

measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Many scholars believe his infirmity may have been very bad eyesight. Three times Paul prayed that this infirmity might be removed from him, but God said, “*My grace is sufficient for thee.*” Paul accepted this; he never complained about it. If this weakness was to make him strong, then he said, “*I will glory in it.*”

2 Tim. 3:10-17, “*But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*

Paul mentioned several times of all the different things that happened to him while in the service of Christ. Today, many would give up and say that God is against them to allow these things to happen to them. Paul said it made him stronger and he learned patience from them. He never gave up on God.

If we are truly righteous and when we pray about something and it doesn't happen it doesn't mean that God has turned His back on us. He very well may have His own reasons for not granting us what we wish; or He may grant it in a different way or time than what we may think. When I look back in my own life I can see the hand of God at work in changes that, at the time they were happening, I didn't understand and couldn't see it. So we should do as Paul and accept these things as they happen and don't complain or be impatient. Jesus didn't even have a pillow for His head.

Don't be overly concerned about things in this life.

The promises of God are abundant to those who follow Him in spiritual things rather than temporal things.

Heb. 13:5-6, *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”*

It is natural for man to be concerned with the things about him, but this is not the way God wants us to be.

Have a prayerful life with God. Be close to Him and He will be close to you and help you when you truly need Him.

- Heb. 4:16, *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”*
- *“...find Him responsive when we need His help.”* (Goodspeed.)
- Phil. 4:6-7, *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”*

God knows our needs, but He still wants our prayers in petitioning Him for them. By doing this He has promised peace to keep our hearts and minds. Sleeping at night is a lot easier when knowing God is on the problem.

And it is a lot easier to work on the problem knowing God is with us.

Phil. 4:13, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

Cast your care upon Him.

1 Pet. 5:7, *“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”*

To some this means entirely turn all our cares over to God, and then sit back and do nothing. This is not what God intended. He wants performance from us and then He will help us. For example:

We know that we are not to be concerned for things temporal, but things spiritual. Does this mean that we should not work?

- 1 Tim. 5:8, *“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”*
- Eph. 4:28, *“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”*

Paul worked with his hands making tents as he traveled to support himself.

Acts 18:1-3, *“After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.”*

One cannot sit back and let others do all the work that you should be doing.

Help means to assist or aid someone in a task. By definition, then, one has to make an effort himself before another could be said to help him. If the other person is doing all the work it is not help.

- Psa. 28:7, *“The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.”*
- Psa. 31:23, *“O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.”*

We may have divine help in our efforts to pray.

Rom. 8:26-27, *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”*

It's like a little child trying to write a letter with some difficulty and an adult helping him out.

We may have divine help when we fall into sin.

1 John 2:1-2, *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

Advocate – helper. He helps us battle our temptations.

We have to try not to sin, but when we do all is not lost. Jesus is there to help us when we turn from our sin and ask forgiveness.

Simon the Sorcerer. Acts 8:9-24, *“But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the*

people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me."

We also can have the assistance of our brethren.

James 5:16, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

The angels stand ready to help also.

Heb. 1:13-14, "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

It is comforting to know that there are angels looking out for the faithful.

Conclusion.

God, Christ, the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the angels are all accessible to God's children to help them in every time of need.

Although this lesson is primarily addressed to Christians, I would not fail to let the alien sinner (one who has never become a Christian) know that he, too, may have help from the divine side.

- Rom. 5:6-8, “*For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*”
- 1 John 2:2, “*And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*”

How does one become a Christian? The following are the steps necessary to make that happen:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*” When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, “It doesn’t work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him.”
- **Repentance.** Acts 2:38, “*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” Acts 11:18, “*... Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*” If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, “There’s a burglar in my house!” So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, “I’m sorry; I’m sorry!” What is he sorry for? He is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true

repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.

- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are **“UNTO”** righteousness, life, or salvation. “Unto” means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, *“But John forbid him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said *“it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”* We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? *“for the remission of sins”*. Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* (Mark 16:15-16).

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”* (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a requirement given by God.

Baptism is called a burial. *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”* (Rom. 6:4). Our old man is to be dead to us. *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”* (Rom. 6:3-6). Baptism is God’s blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.

This doesn’t mean “sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don’t take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not yet become a Christian, won't you consider it today?

