



A LETTER FROM YOUR PASTOR: OCTOBER 2020 *by Lee Shipp*

HOW I FIGHT MY BATTLES ... LIKE I AM NOT FORSAKEN

There is an amazing invitation in the Psalms. It is not obscure. It is not hidden. Actually, it is magnified and declared several times over. As a matter of fact, God is purposefully redundant with His invitation and concludes with this salutation, *"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD"* (Psalms 107:43).

Ok, so what is the invitation? It is the invitation to be delivered from it all – no questions asked! You cry and God will deliver! Why? Because God wants you to learn something about Him; He wants you to understand His lovingkindness.

There are no qualifications for this invitation other than the ability to cry! God doesn't ask if you are a Jew, or a Christian, or if your bondage was the result of a mistake. His lovingkindness is so great that if you will cry, He will deliver. This is for all people anywhere. What this means is that you are not forsaken, and you need to praise God like you are not forsaken!

God's reach is not limited. Wherever you are His reach is extended to you. His redemptive powers are not limited. At His rebuke, He dries up the sea and makes rivers in the desert (Isaiah 50:2).

So, God calls out to men to listen and look to Him for help. Your distress does not have to be your ruin; the God of loving kindness is with you; His arm is outstretched to you. His delight is not your defeat but your deliverance.

Your addiction is real, your oppression is real, your captor is more powerful than you are; however, with only a cry to God you can be free. Do you consider this too good to be true? Do you even claim to have tried this and it didn't work? I beg to challenge you that your conclusions are all wrong. Freedom and deliverance are what you are brought into, not just what you are brought out of.

God wants to be your comfort. If you are not brought into the Lord, then your deliverance is not authentic. Sadly, most are crying to be brought out of trouble but not into the Lord, *"Lord deliver me from this addiction! Lord deliver me from this immorality!"* Yet, they have no intention to draw near to God. They will not consider the lovingkindness of the Lord, nor understand that safety is a person in whom we are to now live with. It is by abiding in the presence of the Lord that we are secure in His comfort. It is here that we are free from the fear of men. It is living in Christ that we are filled with everlasting joy and gladness; all sorrow and sighing have fled away (Isaiah 51).

GOD'S COMFORT

Many have received God's help but not God's comfort. God's comfort is His abiding presence which affords to you all of His covenant promises. If you experience the Lord's help in regard to suffering, deliverance, and protection, only to forget the Lord then you will continue to fear the oppressor everyday (Isaiah 51:13).

When you make the Lord your refuge, your husband (protector, lover, intimate companion), then you shall not fear. His perfect love will be your constant deliverance. In this relationship you will not be defeated with depression, and shame will not dictate who you are anymore.

God promises that His love and kindness will not depart from you. His oath of

peace will not be removed. No weapon formed against you will prosper and every tongue that seeks to condemn you will be silenced (Isaiah 54:4-17). The reason some "believers" have many defeats, suffer so much shame, and experience overwhelming depression is not because the Lord is unfaithful to comfort, defend, and deliver; rather, it is their failure to live as though they have God for a husband. And though there is great unfaithfulness on our part, still the Lord is ready to deliver yet again those who have fallen back into captivity. For the Lord again calls, *"Listen, everyone who is needy, come to Me and live. I will revive your soul and you shall live. I will offer you the sure mercies of David. Just seek me and you will find me, call upon Me while I am near. Forsake the ways you have chosen that have brought you into these pits. Return to me and I will show you mercy and I will abundantly pardon! Then you will go forth with joy and be led through life with peace"* (Isaiah 55:1, 3, 6-7, 12).

The deliverance of the Lord is everlasting. You will not stay the same. He will give you a name that is better than sons and daughters. It is an everlasting name that will never be cut off. From the farthest parts of the world, those who join themselves to the Lord and love His name, and long to be His servants, He shall bring them into His Church and make them joyful in His House of prayer. Their prayers and praise He will accept with delight and His house (the Church) will be called a house of prayer for all people (Isaiah 56:5-8).

THERE IS NO EXCUSE

You have no excuse. You cannot say the Lord will not help you. I watch many accuse God of failing them because of their problems and pandemics, but they are not joined to His Church. Sure, they visit but they are not joined to it. Perhaps they are members and think they are a part of the Body, but they are so isolated from the Body of Christ that it is amazing they can believe they are a part of the Church. They are an unfaithful spouse. If they visited their husband as much as they visited the Church most people would not think they were married.

"HE SENT. HE HEALED. HE DELIVERED. OFTEN PEOPLE GET TRAPPED IN PITS. HOW DO THEY GET OUT? THEY PRAISE."

When people justify and defend their reasons for oppression, they just give their captor strength. Many believers establish the devil's stronghold over their life by the way they talk. They give the devil more praise and power than God. Instead of defending the oppressor, believers must begin to fight for their freedom through praise. Jesus expressed in no uncertain terms the willingness of God to help the needy. The love of God cannot ignore needs in someone's life. God will not shut up his bowels of compassion from the needy.

God cannot pretend He does not see. And God's heart will not allow Him to be careless (1 John 3:17). God is attracted to miserable people. God's heart is poured out upon the hopeless, the weak, and the helpless souls.

He yearns for their cry of help. He rejoices to be their refuge in an evil day! He will never ignore the cry for help and will be quick to deliver from all anxiety! When persecution is overwhelming my life, I have a strong tower to run into! The indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost assures my soul of the hope I have in Jesus! The Holy Spirit guarantees that Jesus routed every foe, broke all enemy weapons by His finished work of obedience on the cross, and by His triumphant resurrection and ascension He completely overturned the hopes of hell.

The indwelling Holy Spirit is the evidence that Jesus has led the captives into freedom, has openly demolished Satan's reign of terror, and has forever triumphed over the enemy by His cross. When you take refuge in His name, He exults over you with loud singing!

WHERE GOD'S GRACE IS MOST EVIDENT

Jesus' glory is best displayed in making the weak strong. The praise of the glory of His grace is the fact that He has made us accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). His glory is not praised because He told us how to be accepted. His glory is the fact that He did it – He *"MADE US"* accepted in the Beloved!

Jesus' glory is giving grace to the sinner, and His grace to the redeemed. Jesus' glory is His goodness to the underserving. Jesus' glory is giving His power to the weak. Jesus' glory is releasing sinners from the debts of their sins, by mercy and grace! His glory is healing the sick, saving the lost, accepting the poor, delivering the captives,

healing the broken hearted, healing the blind, and giving freedom to the abused. All they have to do is cry!

When you are weak, Jesus will be your strength. When you are broken, Jesus will be your healer. When you are attacked, Jesus will be your defender. Jesus will never leave you. His love for you will not diminish, nor fail – LOVE NEVER FAILS!

GOD IS NOT TIRED OF YOU

You think God is tired of you because you are tired of you. But God is not tired of you. Wait upon the Lord, and He shall renew your strength. Don't throw away your confidence in God. Learn to fight by praising Him who never fails.

You have to fight your battles by praise. You must put on the garments of praise. If you are to once more mount up, run, and walk you must bring down the presence of God into your life. If you are going to get up again, survive this – you have to have God's power!

Do not look back, but forward! Do not look down, but up! Do not look within, but upon! Never rely upon your own heart. Your heart will condemn you. God is greater than your heart – keep looking to Jesus. All it takes is a cry of praise.

She sat before me. I could tell this was so very serious. It was life and death. She had no idea the evil that was attracted to her life. Pity had swallowed her. Despair was drowning her. Evil was lurking. She was suffering. It was the hardest thing to get her to talk, to open up. She wanted to talk; she just didn't know how to push out the words. It was so hard, there was so much shame and failure. So much hurt. So much rejection. Her mind was a battlefield.

Her habit was to get up, go to work, come home, fix a meal, then go to her room, shut off the lights, try to find an escape through some show or movie, then lay upon her bed lonely.

She was convinced that she would never be herself in the house of God. She was convinced that people made fun of her. This feeling brought embarrassment and limitation, convincing her that she could never be herself in the Church. She felt mocked. Though no one ever actually did anything to give her this impression, it was still her impression. It was wrecking her life. I tried to show her the truth. I could not prevail. I asked her to praise God with me. She said, *"No!"*

I was very concerned for her, assuring her that it was not Christians who were mocking her, but Satan. All of a sudden, I saw four devils standing in the room. They were calm and waiting. Her lack of praise and faith attracted them to her. They were waiting for permission.

The spirit of Suicide, the spirit of Misery, the spirit of Mockery, and the spirit of something else that I could not identify at the time, were present in the room. I told her what I saw. I told her there was a fourth spirit there, but his identity was not revealed to me – yet. I assured her I would know who he was before the night was over. She quickly responded, *"I know who it is."* I asked her who she thought it was. She told me, *"It is the spirit of Anger."*

I literally watched those devils stand in amazement as they were totally exposed by the Spirit of the Lord. They were stunned that I could see them, and we could identify who they were. They even inquired among themselves, *"How does he know who we are."* I asked the woman, *"How do you know this is anger?"* She told me that she had been fighting him for some time. She also knew that she had been under a great attack with depression and suicide.

Knowing she believed in this to be real and biblical, I encouraged her to begin to call upon the Name of the Lord. She responded to me by saying she could not praise; she did not even feel like trying to.

Mockery began to laugh saying, *"She can't!"* He mocked her. He told her nobody loved her. People made fun of her. She could never be herself. He said she could not praise.

I told her what Mockery was doing. I told her, *"This spirit of Mockery has been the one all along that has been destroying your freedom in Christ. Furthermore, Mockery has been blaming your shame on the Body of Christ. He has sought to deceive you into thinking that it was your friends in Christ that didn't like you or believe in you. But he is a liar and you need to rebuke his lies."*

Again, I asked her to praise with me. I was adamant that we desperately needed

the presence of the Lord, for Him to come and fight this battle. I told her these spirits were here because her attitude had attracted them. It was only by praise that she could drive them away and invite the beautiful Spirit of the Lord.

By faith she began to praise. It was not a good effort. Her praise was weak and feeble. Yet, she pushed praise out of her mouth – and God responded. God responded to the smallest amount of faith she could muster. God came. And in His presence, we rebuked the devils and they fled. She has been free ever since. That is how she fought her battles!

I celebrate the truth of the scriptures, *"Then they cry to the Lord in their trouble, and He delivers them out of their distresses. He sends forth His word and heals them and rescues them from the pit and destruction. Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and loving-kindness and His wonderful works to the children of men"* (Psalms 107:19-21).

He sent. He healed. He delivered. Often people got trapped in the pits: porn, the occult, drugs, stealing, betrayal, unfaithfulness, etc. And what did they do to get out? They cried to the Lord! They did not get rid of the TV. They did not go through a 12-step program. They turned unto the Lord from this destructive place they were in, and they cried to the Lord! He heard them and delivered them. Fantastic!

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? CRY!

As I browse through Psalms 107, I find the very different bondages people fall into. Psalms 107 speaks to those who have wandered from God, those who have joined hands with the enemy and are now suffering from hunger and thirst, those who sit in affliction and bondage because they rebelled against God, because they hated His instructions, those who are afflicted because they acted the fool with sin, those who tried to get as close to hell as they could. In every one of these cases, they cried, and He sent His Word and healed them and delivered them from all their destructions.

They became overwhelmed with their businesses and careers and accumulated debt. Life ran over them and they reeled as a ship in a hurricane. They were out of control, their kids were lost, their marriages were being destroyed. Then they cried and God stopped the waves of destruction and brought them what their hearts desired. No questions asked. No stinging rebukes. No, *"I told you so ..."* Instead, God just poured upon them His mercy and loving kindness.

So, I beg you: If you are in trouble – cry. If you are in bondage – cry. If you are lost – cry. If you are sick to death – cry. If you have been swallowed the sorrows of hell – cry! God can reach you!

Those who dwell in the dark cells of disappointed love – cry! Those who have failed in their life's purpose – cry! It may be that you have lost all sense of God's nearness and love – cry! This is how to fight your battles!

If your praise is weak and pathetic, do it anyway. Your moods do not affect your standing in Christ! It is not your emotion that God responds to, it is your faith.

So, you failed. So, you were unfaithful. Well God was not. So, do not treat Him as though He was unfaithful or failing. Ok, you did not follow Him as you should, you turned from the right way, now go present yourself before the Living God and praise Him like you are not forsaken! Cry! Sing! Praise! Pray! Worship!

I do not know how God forgives, heals, restores, and delivers – but He does! Funny thing is, He is still waiting for you to cry and you still haven't! What are you waiting for? Go ahead ... fight your battles with praise. Haven't you spent enough time in sorrow and despair? Is it not time to experience the loving-kindness of the Lord? *"Who is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord"* (Psalms 107:43)!

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