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# Helps (Aug-Sept 1967)

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When the Scriptures give in detail the record of some every-day happening it is usually with the purpose of conveying a spiritual application. For instance, the miraculous filling of Peter's boat with an overload of fishes, as recorded in Luke 5, brought the owner of the little vessel down upon his knees in confession of his sinfulness, and the Lord used the occasion to assure His servant that from henceforth he would "catch men." The transition from fishes to men surely conveys a wonderful spiritual lesson.

A different scene is presented to us in Acts 27, where we have the record of a shipwreck, and that in very vivid language. The mariners resorted to various expedients in order to save the doomed vessel but all in vain. The ancient prison ship became a wreck, but its human freight of 276 souls "escaped all safe to land." Since this inspired record occurs at the close of a book which is really the only authentic account of early Church history it may serve as a prophetic foreview of the break up of Church testimony in the last days so far as collective witness is concerned. However, there may be in the incident a suggestion of the

## Voyage of Life

in which the believer, as a bond-slave of Christ, will encounter stormy seas, and be called upon to endure hardness, while assured of final deliverance. We note in verse 17 that "helps" were used to preserve the vessel, and they may remind us of many expedients used to

preserve some semblance of collective Church testimony. For instance, often has the “wheat” of eternal truth been cast out (v.32) and the chaff of human opinion been retained, in order to conserve outward conformity, at the expense of inward unity!

But we desire to draw attention to another Scripture in which the word “help” is used. It will be found in the previous chapter, v.22, where we have the testimony of the Apostle Paul before a pagan monarch, “Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day.”

That is exactly what we need—help from above to enable us to “continue.” It matters not whether we be babes or octogenarians in the grading of our spiritual experience. We need good shoes for rough roads, and constant watchfulness lest the enemy cut the lines of our communications and supplies, for, be it ever remembered, “our help cometh from the Lord” — the arm of flesh will fail us.

How encouraging then it is to note the care of God for His people, as indicated in the divine arrangement referred to in Deut. 17:8, “If there arise

## A Matter Too Hard for Thee.”

Those who were thus in doubt or difficulty were encouraged to bring that matter to the Lord. What wondrous grace, amplified by the added promise of Deut. 1:17, “The cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto Me and I will hear it.”

To have access to God in prayer is an immeasurable privilege, and, be it noted, the unrealized possibilities of such waiting upon God are open to every member of the household of faith, whether young or old. Especially is it

true of those young in the faith that life is full of “how?” and “why?” Youth is always questing and experimenting. This very fact should provide the urge for prayerful exercise in order to know the mind and will of God for future days.

Saul of Tarsus began to pray long before he opened his mouth in preaching. Heaven took a note of the street where he lodged and of his supplications (Acts 9:11). It is very interesting to note the two-fold petition of this erstwhile religious bigot in the early days of that new life which began with the vision of a glorified Christ. Let us take the petitions in order:

## “Who Art Thou, Lord?”

“That I might know Him” was ever the burning desire of this bondslave of Jesus Christ. No greater ambition can ever inflame the heart of a child of God. In Jer. 9:23-24 the possession of wisdom, might, or riches is of secondary importance compared with the knowledge of God. An experimental knowledge of God, gained in the school of prayer, is of priceless value. Prayer is not merely petition, it is contemplation also. “We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed.” Character is formed in the secret place of prayer, and godliness of life will be the happy result.

There are two men mentioned in the Scriptures of whom it is recorded that they “wist not.” Moses had been in the presence of the Lord for 960 precious hours, and when he came down from the mount after this experience he “wist not” that the skin of his face shone (Exod. 34:29). In contrast, it is written of Samson, when reduced to weakness by careless living, “He wist not that the Lord was departed from him” (Jud. 16: 20).

Which of these “wist nots” would you prefer as descriptive of your life?

But here is another use of these two words, recorded in that wonderful saying of the Perfect Worker, “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?” This brings us to the next phase of the early prayer exercise of the converted Pharisee, as recorded in Acts 9:

## “Lord, What Wilt Thou Have Me to Do?”

How perfectly does such a petition fit the lips of a new convert! Indeed, it may well be a question ever upon the heart and conscience of every believer. “What must I do to be saved?” was the burden of our cry in unregenerate days, but now we ask, “What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?”

“Love so amazing” makes its unspoken demands upon us, and sanctified youth should be placed at the disposal of our worthy Lord Jesus, to be used as and where He wills.

“I could not work my soul to save,

For that my Lord has done;

But I should work like any slave

For love of God’s dear Son.”

So, to those young in the faith we would give the urge to seek unto the Lord that He may give you direction and help in a happy and fruitful witness for Him. He will guide if you are in prayerful exercise before Him. “The cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto Me, and I will hear it.”