

A Plea for Relief Part 1

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of remembering God's presence in our lives and the nation's history, and trusting in God's protection and care.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: Psalm 120:1, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Relief"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the importance of seeking help from the Lord in times of trouble. He emphasizes the significance of believing in a Creator and seeing God in creation, as it shapes our perspective on life and circumstances. Pastor Chuck encourages listeners to trust in God's ability to take care of their problems, drawing from the analogy of a treacherous path up a valley. He concludes by praying for God's protection and guidance in living a holy and righteous life.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove We'll descend upon your life and make you whole
Beginning with verse 1 And now with today's message Here's Pastor Chuck According to the Jewish law They were to have three major feasts in the year These feasts lasted for seven days They were feasts that were called memorial feasts For they were reminders to the people Of God's work in the history of the nation How that God was there at the founding of the nation How that God was there to preserve that nation that He founded And so, in order to keep the consciousness of God's place In the national life It was required by their law That every adult male Gather from

the areas where they lived Three times a year to Jerusalem To stand there before the Lord At the holy place Of course, during the reign of David The tabernacle that he had built in Jerusalem And of course, later under Solomon the temple And so, it was a requirement That the adult males come Now, often, of course, when they would come They would bring their families with them And they had these pilgrimages to Jerusalem Three times a year Now, as time went on And the Jews were dispersed Into many parts of the world They were not able to make it back To Jerusalem for these feasts The three times a year It was always, though, in the heart of the Jew To go to Jerusalem for these feasts Even today, in the modern days As in the Jewish homes They observe the feast of the Passover They always

declare at that feast of the Passover Next year, Jerusalem Expressing the heart and the desire Of going back to Jerusalem for these feasts The desire to keep that law of God That required them to be in Jerusalem To stand before God during these times In which they were reminded Of the central place that God had In the developing, in the creating And in the developing and molding of the nation I think that it is tragic in the United States That we do not have those kind of holy days That bring us into a national consciousness Of the place of God in the founding of our nation And I think that it is extremely tragic That those holidays that have been Traditionally celebrated in our nation Have gradually become paganized So that what used to be Easter vacation When I went to school And

everybody knew that we were getting out for Easter Which was the time in which we celebrated The resurrection of Jesus from the dead His death on the cross on Good Friday We all knew that Now it's spring break Not even called Easter vacation anymore The Christmas vacation that we used to have And we all knew it was to celebrate the birthday of Jesus And we would sing in school Silent Night, Holy Night We would sing Old Little Town of Bethlehem But now it's the winter vacation Or the winter break And gradually there has been that endeavor To take away from our national consciousness The place of God in our nation In the establishing and the developing of our nation And the humanists of the day have sought to rewrite the history And to take away the consciousness of God from the national

life Which is indeed a very tragic thing So God incorporated in the law Because God knew that man does have that tendency In time of need to seek after God But in the time of prosperity to sort of forget God We don't need you now We're able to do it on our own And so God incorporated into the very culture Into the very patterns of their culture Those things that would bring them into that national consciousness Of the place of God in the history of their nation And thus they would go to Jerusalem And they would celebrate these holy days These feast days As they would just remember the place of God in their national life So those that were living in the distant areas Who maybe could only get to Jerusalem once every ten years Maybe once in a lifetime It was always something that they were

looking forward to Something that they were anticipating And naturally something that they had to plan months in advance And they would be thinking about it months in advance Even as if you are going to take a trip In the summer time You're already thinking about it You're already planning it Say you've never been to Europe And you're planning to go to Europe this summer You're already buying books And you're trying to get familiar with the places that you're going to be visiting And you're planning and you're thinking about it As a part of the anticipation And thus that anticipation and looking forward to being in Jerusalem We're going to be there to worship God with all of God's people And that excitement that came through the anticipation And these psalms, the 15 psalms that begin with

Psalms 120 These 15 psalms are called the psalms of a sense And they are those psalms that were written To express the feelings of those Who were preparing to journey to Jerusalem They were the psalms of the pilgrims Who were going to make this pilgrimage to Jerusalem At a time of the feast to worship God And so they're starting to become conscious of God They're starting to become conscious of Jerusalem Their journey to Jerusalem They're standing within the walls of the city of Jerusalem And standing with the people of God to worship God And that's the background for these next 15 psalms Psalm 120 The psalmist speaks of dwelling in the midst of these heathen people In Meshach and Kedar And the hostility of these foreigners towards him And his crying to the Lord Verse 1, in my distress I

cried unto the Lord And he heard me The Bible says that his ear is open to the righteous And he heareth their cry In my distress I cried to the Lord He heard me This is his cry Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying

lips and from the deceitful tongue He was distressed because people were lying about him And so he says, what shall be given unto thee Talking about those people who were lying about him What shall be done unto thee, you false tongue And this is what he desires to be done That sharp arrows of the mighty That God would really bend his bow and smite them with sharp arrows And with coals of juniper The juniper tree there Makes some of the best charcoal that is hottest and longest lasting And so he's really wanting his enemies to experience The arrows of the mighty and the coals of

juniper Woe is me, he said Because I sojourn in Meshach The area to the north That I dwell in the tents of Kedar Dwelling among the heathen For my soul hath long dwelt with him that hates peace Living under difficult conditions because of the hostility That is there towards him as a Jew I am for peace, but when I speak They are for war So that longing of his heart To be gathered with God's people where there would be that Commonality among them He would be away from this hostility that he's experiencing In these foreign lands So, to that I will lift up mine eyes into the hills From whence cometh my help As we mentioned, Jerusalem Is situated in what they call the hills of Jerusalem And the Jews have this thing that they Always say, let's go up to Jerusalem You never go down to Jerusalem

You may be living in the north part of the country But you wouldn't say, well let's go down to Jerusalem You'd say, let's go up to Jerusalem If they lived in the northern part on the top of Mount Hermon 10,000 feet They'd say, well let's go up to Jerusalem Because the final leg of the journey to Jerusalem Is uphill No matter what direction you're coming from Your final last lap into Jerusalem is uphill Whether you're coming from the coastal area Whether you're coming from Ephraim Whether you're coming from the south or of course from the Area of the Jordan Valley It's always up to Jerusalem And there in the Jerusalem hills When the pilgrims Many of them after long, long journeys By ship, by camel, by donkey By walking Finally coming into view Of the hills of Jerusalem Hearts begin to beat

faster Lifting up my eyes into the hills The excitement of soon being standing Within the city of Jerusalem From whence cometh my help is, I believe, a question He's not declaring, surely that my Help comes from the hills And I think to read it that way is to read it wrong I will lift up my eyes into the hills from whence cometh my help The hills don't help me But my help comes, and he answers it in verse 2 From the Lord which made the hills The Lord which made the heaven and the earth And again The vast importance of believing in a creator Seeing God in creation It makes such a vast difference in the whole way That you look at life, that you look at circumstances in life Whether or not life has meaning and purpose Or life is just a mistake And a series of accidents It all depends on

whether or not you believe in a creator And you believe in creation And I really feel sorry for those people who have been hoodwinked Into believing that we have come into existence As the result of billions of years of Fortitudious occurrences of accidental circumstances Which is their phrase They use a lot of big words just to snow you That you're the byproduct of just millions of years of Fortunate mutations of the cells And the codes within the cells Being altered and varied as the need arose Rather than, I am here because God has created me in his image And after his likeness And he has created me for the purpose that I might know him And fellowship with him And he has a plan for my life He has a purpose for my life There's a reason for my existence It's a divine reason And it's that

I might spend my eternity with God In the glories of his eternal kingdom And thus I live with purpose And I live my life with meaning But if you don't believe in the creator Then life is just, you know, here today, gone tomorrow And, you know, let's eat, drink and be merry For tomorrow we die And there's no meaning for life There's no purpose for life There's no purpose for your existence Makes a big difference My help comes

from the Lord who made the heavens and the earth Surely if God is great enough to make the heavens and the earth He's great enough to take care of my little problems For he will not suffer thy foot to be moved He that keepeth thee will not slumber Coming up the path from Jericho Was a pretty tough path You have a very deep valley That you are coming up sort of on the

upper side of that valley A narrow path, and it's rocky all the way Not good footing Very easy to slip My help comes from the Lord And he will not allow my foot to slip For he that keeps me will not slumber Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep God is always there when I need him Anytime I call him, he's available He never slumbers, he never sleeps I think of how when Elijah was having that contest with the prophets of Baal And they were to build their altars and they were to pray to their God And whichever God answered by fire let him be acknowledged as the true God And how that the prophets of Baal built their altar They put their sacrifice on and then they started to pray to Baal To send the fire to consume their sacrifice And how they got into the frenzy They

began to cut themselves and throw themselves on the altar And going through all kinds of these kind of actions Trying to provoke their God to activity in their behalf And finally Elijah just sort of having a little fun with them Said fellas I'll bet your God's asleep You need to cry a little louder And he just sort of egging them on to put on a real show But he who keeps Israel neither slumbers or sleeps When they were through with their show and there was no fire Elijah without a lot of fanfare and a lot of emotion or anything else Said Lord I know you can do it but not for my sake but for their sake That they might know that you're God go ahead And of course before that he had them pour water all over the thing Until it was soggy And then the fire of God came and consumed the sacrifice

The wood and even the stones that they'd used to make the altar with And the one who keeps us neither slumbers nor sleeps For the Lord is thy keeper He is your shade upon your right hand Now that is a very arid area And the dangers of traveling were the sun By day sunstroke or dehydration Any of you that know anything about the desert Know the dangers of dehydration And so the Lord is your keeper he is your shade on your right hand The interesting thing the right hand was the The right side was the side that you were most vulnerable on Because you always held your shield with your left hand And thus your left side was pretty well protected by the shield But the right side of the fighter was exposed And so he will be your shield on your right side He'll be the protection on the right side

That side that is most vulnerable And the sun will not smite thee by day nor the moon by night Now there was a feeling That sleeping in the moonlight had dangers I don't know from a scientific standpoint If that has proven to be factual or not I know that up until a few years ago There were still many who felt that Sleeping under the full moon could affect a person In fact the word lunatic Comes from the Latin word luna which is moon And so lunacy or lunatic comes from the idea That sleeping under a full moon can affect a person mentally It was interesting how that Caver said it's full moon honey Take the phone off the hook you know So there is a relationship between mental disorders And the full moon People get more agitated or whatever Who do have mental problems during that time And

that's why probably they related mental disorders To the moon Sleeping under the moon We'll return with more of our verse by verse venture Through the Bible in our next broadcast As Pastor Chuck continues his study of the Psalms We do hope you'll make plans to join us But right now if you'd like to secure a copy of today's message Simply order Psalm 120 verse 1 When visiting thewordfortoday.org And while there be sure to browse the many additional Biblical resources by Pastor Chuck You can also subscribe to the Word for Today podcast Or sign up for our email subscription Once again that's thewordfortoday.org And

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