

THE COLLECT

KEEP, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church with thy perpetual mercy; and, because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1. With what do we beseech God to keep his Church?
A. With his perpetual _____
(Isaiah 54:10)
2. What must happen to man in consequence of his frailty, if he is not upheld by the power of God?
A. He cannot but _____ (Jeremiah 10:23)
3. From what do we pray God to keep us?
A. From all things _____ (Matthew 6:13)
4. To what do we beseech Him to lead us?
A. To all things _____ to our _____



INTRODUCTION.

What is the first word and middle word of the Collect? Keep. So the Collect is about God’s keeping. This prayer is very old, and was first used 1,500 years ago around the time the Roman Empire fell. Like the fall of a great tree, it seemed as though it would bring down everything about it. How much the Church needed keeping! There is an error taught that men could be good of themselves without God’s help. What does the Collect say? “The frailty of man without Thee cannot but fall,” i.e. it must fall. So this Collect is another of those beautiful flowers that sprang out of the decay.

Read Psalm 121, which says a good deal about God’s keeping. Remember that the word “preserve” is the same word in Hebrew as “keep”. So counting, how many times does the thought of keeping occur?



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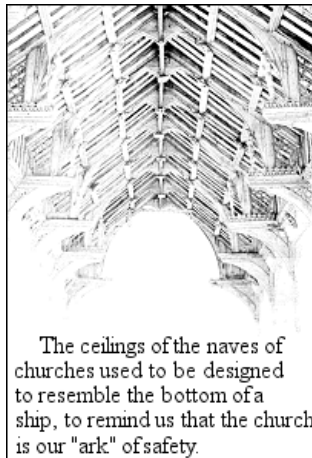
Read Psalm 121, which says a good deal about God’s keeping. Remember that the word “preserve” is the same word in Hebrew as “keep”. So counting, how many times does the thought of keeping occur?



I. WHAT GOD KEEPS.

1. **Thy Church.** Of course God keeps all mankind and all His creatures. But His Church is like Noah's ark (I Peter 3:20-21) or like a sheepfold (John 10), where God provides shelters and safeguards for His people. Let us thank God that He has put us in His Church, and let us use the shelter and safeguard He provides.
2. **Thy Soul.** His care is over each of us. So it is over me; and the most precious part of myself is my soul, and God promises to keep that (I Peter 4:19). It would be a dreadful thing to lose the soul (Matt 16:26) and our soul can only be safe if we ask God to keep it.

3. **Thy going out and thy coming in.** This is the promise of the Psalm- "to keep thee in all thy ways" (Psalm 91:11). When shall we most want keeping? In the hour of death. That is the most important of all our goings out and comings in—the going out of this life and the coming in to the next.



II. GOD KEEPS WITH MERCY

1. **Why mercy?** Because we are guilty, and therefore in misery, that is—in need of mercy. Even Christ's Church is not without sin, and no Christian is without sin (I John 1:8); and His mercy is perpetual (always ongoing) for the Psalm says, "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

III. GOD KEEPS US FROM FALLING AND ALL THINGS HURTFUL.

1. **The frailty of man without God must fall** (John 15:5, Jude vv.24,26). We pray "Lead us not into temptation." Many evil and hurtful things we don't know about, *e.g.* bad companions, bad books, places where we hear and see what is evil; and if we mean the Lord's Prayer when we say it we shall keep away from those things. God keeps us—by warnings, in His Word and in our consciences; by His providence; by filling our minds with what is good.

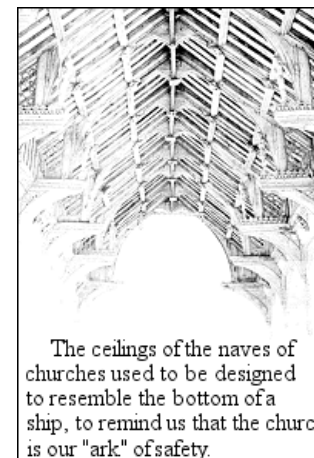
IV. GOD KEEPS US FOR SALVATION.

1. "Lead us to all things _____ for our _____"
(2 Timothy 3:15, Hebrews 10:25, I Thessalonians 5:17, I Peter 1:5)

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