

Memory Verse

Psalm 118:5-6

Out of my distress I called on the LORD;
the LORD answered me and set me free.
The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What
can man do to me?

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Selections from the Psalms
Part 15

Psalm 118
Having Confidence in
The LORD

Today we study *Psalm 118*. It is a *praise and thanksgiving Psalm*. It expresses confidence in the Lord. *Psalm 118* is part of the Egyptian Hallel, or praise Psalms, which include *Psalms 113-118*. These were and are read at the Passover meal in Jewish homes. *Psalms 113-114* are recited **before** Passover and *Psalms 115-118* are recited **afterwards**.

Psalm 118:1-7

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! **2** Let Israel say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” **3** Let the house of Aaron say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” **4** Let those who fear the LORD say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” **5** Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the

Psalm 118:1-7

LORD answered me and set me free.

6The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.

What can man do to me? 7The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.

A. Psalm 118:1-4 – The Love of the Lord

We see a general call to *give thanks to the LORD*, because He is good and *His steadfast, covenant keeping loyal love, endures or lasts forever!* The Psalmist calls 3 groups to *proclaim and praise God* for His steadfast love enduring forever. **1.** Israel. **2.** House of Aaron. **3.** Those who fear the LORD.

A. *Psalm 118:1-4* – The Love of the Lord

1. *Israel* is the nation, paralleling to the call for the congregation to *give thanks to the LORD*.

2. The *House of Aaron*. The Priesthood.

3. Those *who fear the LORD* or faithful worshippers, to say that His steadfast love endures forever.

A. Psalm 118:1-4 – The Love of the Lord

1. How do I *learn* about His love?

Scripture. If our understanding of God's love is **not based** in Scripture, then *our foundation about His character and love will be shallow, unstable, limited and more.*

The only way we can build a *strong foundation of His love* is to first **objectively** learn about His love from Scripture.

A. *Psalm 118:1-4* – The Love of the Lord

2. What if I *don't feel* His love?

Our *feeling or lack thereof* does not destroy the truth. We talk about *feeling God's love* as an **emotion**. Emotions are important and God given, **BUT** the *Bible defines love as an action!* It's great when we experience His love, but Scripture tells us to start with *truth to transform our thinking.*

A. *Psalm 118:1-4* – The Love of the Lord

We will *feel His love* when we *understand our sin and forgiveness*. That is what Jesus said in *Luke 7:36-50* about the woman who broke her alabaster flask and anointed His feet and wiped them with her tears.

A. *Psalm 118:1-4* – The Love of the Lord

Jesus said: *verse 47* - Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven - for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.” - When we *understand our sin and His forgiveness*, we learn about *His love for us*. That **truth** *impacts us, changes us and can help us feel His love!*

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

Verses 5-22 is a personal testimony to God's rescue, His strength, protection, and His discipline. In *verse 5* we see *the change* from a call for the nation and groups to praise the Lord, to a *personal testimony* of what God did. We are *not told specifics* about his situation, but we are told about God's rescue of the Psalmist.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

1. God answers us - *vs. 5a, 21a*

These verses are *bookended* with God answering us. In *verses 5 and 21*, the Psalmist thanks God for answering him.

The Psalmist was in *distress*. We don't know how long the Psalmist prayed before God answered, but *God answered!*

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

2. God sets us free - *vs. 5b*

The Psalmist says God *set him free*. Free from what? We don't know. God still sets people free today. In salvation, He sets us free from the penalty and power of sin. He can set us free from addictions, anger, selfishness, laziness, hypocrisy, idolatry, materialism and more.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

3. God is on our side - vs. 6a

This was a covenant promise under the Mosaic Law. We are *partakers of the New Covenant given to Israel*, and we can say the Lord is on our side! If you know Jesus as Lord and Savior, you **are** God's child! He *adopted* you. He *cannot unadopt* you!

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

4. God gives us courage - *vs. 6b*

Read *Romans 8:31-39* if you are fearful.

God gives us **courage!** He gives us courage to raise kids, go to work, serve Him in a ministry, share Christ with others, confront someone in love, go out and street preach, or some days, just to get out of bed. He gives us *courage for the battle.*

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

5. God is our helper - *vs. 7a*

God helped the Psalmist, and He helps us too. This can be expressed in many ways. He may provide financially when there is a great need. He may provide clear direction, a new job or position. He may help you to face difficulty.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

6. God gives us victory - *vs. 7b*

God gave the *Psalmist* victory over his enemies: a covenant promise in the Mosaic Law. God has given us victory in Christ, shown in a variety of ways. We are responsible, and God can give someone victory over past sins, guilt, or shame and bring forgiveness, peace and boldness.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

7. God is trustworthy - vs. 8-9

These verses *do not mean we never trust anyone!* These are a contrast. It is better to take *refuge in*, or *trust in the LORD*, which is what the Hebrew says. We need wisdom to learn who to trust. We need discernment to learn how much to trust some people.

B. Psalm 118:5-21 – The Help of the Lord

8. God is our strength - *vs. 10-14a*

Note the repeated word *surrounded*, used **4 times** in these verses, showing the desperate situation the Psalmist was in. He was “*pushed hard*.” The nations, or Gentiles surrounded him, perhaps in battle. By **God’s strength**, He had the victory.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

8. God is our strength - *vs. 10-14a*

The Psalmist has as "*surely*," is used **3** *times*, paralleled to *the Lord's help*. When you read "*in the Name of the LORD*," in Scripture, it means an *individual, group, or the nation* represents the Lord in doing a particular action, based on *God's leading, God's character, for God's glory*.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

9. God is our deliverer/salvation - *vs. 14b, 21b* When we see *salvation* in the Bible, it can mean: *physical or spiritual deliverance*. The context here refers to physical deliverance. Sometimes *God delivers us* and *sometimes He doesn't*. It's His choice, but He **can**, and gives us a way of deliverance.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

10. God is a mighty warrior - vs. 15-16

He is a *mighty warrior* and *fights our battles*, when we do things His way and trust Him. Because of God's deliverance, the Psalmist declares, "the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!" In the ancient world, the "right hand" was *power*, and *strength*. God is Mighty!

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

11. God is our hope - vs. 17

The Psalmist again proclaims his *confidence in the Lord* that he will not die, but be delivered and proclaim the Lord's deeds. He was the Psalmists **hope**. What or who is our hope? The Psalmist had hope in God.

Do we?

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

12. God disciplines us - vs. 18

The Psalmist says the LORD *disciplined him severely*. Here, “*discipline*” also means to *correct*, and has *moral overtones*. Maybe God used the Gentile nations to *correct or discipline him*, to go in a way that was more in line with God’s character and the Law.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

12. God disciplines us - vs. 18

It's not that God doesn't love us, because as a child of God it is the opposite. It is because He loves you that He will discipline you, like any good father: Hebrews 12:7-11.

B. *Psalm 118:5-21* – The Help of the Lord

13. God is to be praised – *vs. 19-20*

The gates refer to Jerusalem, to get to the Temple **or** the *gates of the Temple*. It probably refers to the Temple, because of the *righteous*. When they entered, they could *praise Him appropriately* with **sacrifices and song**.

C. *Psalm 118:22-29* – The Sovereignty of the Lord

This section shows God's sovereignty. In *verses 22-24* are part of the Hallel, or **praise**, sung after the *Passover meal*. Jesus sang this, knowing it was about Him. Peter quotes *verse 22* in *Acts 4:11-12* and *1 Peter 2:7*, referring to Jesus as the cornerstone. *Verse 23* says this was *the Lord's doing!* **God did it!**

C. Psalm 118:22-29 – The Sovereignty of the Lord

Verse 25 is a prayer request for God to save and bless them. *Verse 26* is quoted in the New Testament when *Jesus rode into Jerusalem: Matthew 21:9, Mark 11:9, Luke 19:38 and John 12:13.* *Verse 27* is a declaration that the **LORD**, *YHWH is God*, and as a nation, He made His light shine on Israel. What is the response?

C. Psalm 118:22-29 – The Sovereignty of the Lord
Offer Him **sacrifices**, according to the Mosaic Law and give thanks to Him, extol Him and praise Him. We can offer Him a sacrifice of praise, thank Him, glorify Him and remember He is good. *Even if we do not understand or see it*, His steadfast, covenant keeping love lasts forever, because of His sovereign control.

Prayer

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6

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