

Psalms 108
A Song or Psalm of David
Victory.

(Psa 57:7-11)

- 1 O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.
- 2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.
- 3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.
- 4 For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.
- 5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth;

(Psa 60:5-12)

- 6 That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me.
- 7 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.
- 8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;
- 9 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.
- 10 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?
- 11 Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?
- 12 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.
- 13 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. KJV

This psalm was our study this last Wednesday evening. It has gripped my heart on several levels and I have determined to attempt to share it with you this morning.

First of all, you should know that it did not appear first in the form that we have just read. Verses 1-5 first appeared as part of the 57th Psalm, vs. 7-11, and verses 6-13 first appeared as vs. 5-12 of

Ps. 60. Both of those Psalms, we believe, were written by David, so there is not doubt as to the origin of the words of Ps. 108.

The question that the scholars have is this, “was it David or someone else who copied and pasted these two sections of other Psalms into this one, and, why did they do that?” We have no historical documents to help us, so the question will remain unanswered until some of us may remember to ask David about the matter in glory.

Placed together in this way, these two collections of verses form a most unique passage of scripture and give exhortation concerning one of the most commonly recurring problem of believers in every age. But they also point us in a direction that we usually do not think of when in this type of situation.

Look with me, if you will, at the structure of the Psalm and then we will make some applications.

V. 6 states that God's 'beloved' is in need of deliverance and the psalmist asks God to 'save' and to 'answer.'

V. 10 mentions 'the strong city' as the source of the trouble for God's people, a stronghold of enemies that must be conquered before victory can be obtained.

V. 12 again appeals to God for help. It also affirms the refusal of human help.

The reason that the people of God are in trouble is found in v.11, God has 'cast them off.' They have fallen under the chastisement of God and He has allowed their enemies to triumph over them and oppress them.

The psalmist is convinced that this casting off is not total nor permanent because he retains the hope that "through God we shall do valiantly," v.13.

He believes that God is merciful and will be merciful yet again to His people, v.4.

Our writer has come to a fixed purpose of mind concerning his personal pursuit of a remedy for the problem, his mind is 'fixed,' v.1.

And, his chosen approach is worship and praise directed toward God with purpose and intensity, resolving to be faithful and to exert new and consistent efforts in that regard, vs. 1-3.

He is particularly going to remember three things: The greatness of God and the magnificence of His mercy, vs. 4,5, God's promises and past blessings to His people, vs. 7,8, and God's abiding purpose to defeat the enemies of His people, vs. 9,10.

I. As I studied this psalm again this week, I saw that there is in it an interesting concept, missed at times by modern Christians. **The church is to expect spiritual victory all of the time like Israel expected military victory all of the time.**

It was never acceptable to Israel to lose a battle or to see the enemies of God prevail over them.

You may recall that when Israel invaded the land of Canaan after the 40 years in the Sinai wilderness they enjoyed a great victory at Jericho. Beyond Jericho lay the small town of Ai and it was determined by the military leaders that the entire army should not go out against such a small town but only a sufficiently strong force should go while the rest of the army remained encamped. You may also remember the dismay of Joshua when this battle resulted in defeat for Israel and the death of 36 of Israel's soldiers.

Josh 7:6-9

6 And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.

- 7 And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!
- 8 O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies!
- 9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name? KJV

Joshua was dismayed and utterly undone. His army had been defeated and his men killed. He saw the probability of even wider defeat in the future. The point that I want to make is the he expected victory because of the promises of God and he expected victory in every battle.

You will recall, of course, that God revealed that the defeat was chastisement because one of the Israelites, Achan, had sinned and taken forbidden property from the defeat of Jericho.

You may also remember that David, as a young man, could not abide the idea that the army of Israel was intimidated by an enemy who mocked them and blasphemed God. He was visiting the army to bring provisions to his brothers when he heard Goliath ranting and cursing and mocking in the valley between the army of Israel and the army of the Philistines.

1 Sam 17:23-26

- 23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.
- 24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.
- 25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.
- 26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? KJV

It was unthinkable to David, even as a teenager, that an enemy should “defy the armies of the Living God.” So, he determined to remedy the problem himself.

The point is this. **The people of God are to expect spiritual victory all of the time.** It is not to be acceptable to them for the enemies of God to prevail.

- I. When they find themselves in defeat or ‘retreat’ mode, the people of God are to remember what the psalmist remembered, **the mercies of God in time past and the great promises of God for blessing.**

The psalmist rehearsed God’s promises concerning Israel.

Ps 60:6-7

- 6 God has spoken in His holiness: "I will exult, I will portion out Shechem and measure out the valley of Succoth.
7 " Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter. NASU

And, he affirmed that the enemies of God have no right to hold any kind of power over God's people.

Ps 60:8

- 8 " Moab is My washbowl; Over Edom I shall throw My shoe; Shout loud, O Philistia, because of Me!" NASU

The Church is likewise to remember that she has great reasons to expect victory and not defeat, to believe that victory is ordained for her.

Matt 16:18-19

- 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. KJV

Matt 28:19 - 20

- 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. KJV

Eph 6:12-13

- 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. KJV

Rev 6:1-2

- 1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.
2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. KJV

Jesus Christ pledged Himself that the gates of hell would not prevail against His Church. Negative statements like this can be turned around, “My Church will prevail against the gates of Hell.”

His statement of being “with you” is not to be taken as “I will be there and watch with sympathy while you are defeated.” It is to be read, “you will prevail because I will be there with you to see to it.”

And Paul does not suggest the armor of God to us so that we can look good and be well dressed as we are defeated and carried off in chains. His idea is that we prevail, we win, we ‘stand in the evil day.’

And, finally, John’s vision of Jesus going with His church is “conquering and to conquer.”

Now the idea in the Christian era is not that the Church seize the government of some great country and conquer the world with its military enforcing righteous behavior on the world and making Christianity the premier world religion.

It is well documented that both Jesus and the disciples predicted that the church would know trouble and be often persecuted throughout her history. But her victory was to be that she would be victoriously devoted to Jesus Christ regardless of what came against her and that she would invade every country on the planet with His gospel, rescuing lost ones from the kingdom of darkness.

But it is my sad duty to report to you that at least in the Western world, the church is in sad circumstances and just about to be completely overrun by the kingdom of darkness. We are compromised, lukewarm, ineffective and weak. By seeking to please men and grow our numbers we have given up our very identity as a godly people. The so-called gospel that is preached lacks the power to truly transform lives and, so, we have become the wealthy, self-satisfied, comfortable, arrogant, and luke-warm church of Laodicea in Rev. 3.

Rev 3:14-19

- 14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;
- 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.
- 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.
- 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:
- 18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.
- 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. KJV

It was and is unacceptable to the Lord Jesus that His church should exist in such a state of defeat. “Be *zealous* therefore and repent,” He cried to that first century church and to the church in every age that falls into this sad condition.

It is intolerable in heaven and should be intolerable on earth for any Christian or group of Christians to be defeated and remain defeated.

I. **The psalmist had come up with a plan and a resolve to go with it.**

The more I think about it, his plan sounds like the plan that God gave Joshua concerning Jericho. Humanly speaking it makes little sense, but we are not in a human battle are we?

Eph 6:12

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. KJV

His plan?

Ps 108:1-3

...I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.

2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations. KJV

With a view to the promised victories of God over the enemy, he has resolved to worship and praise God for the victory in advance.

Now this will be a foolish thing to do if the causes for the discipline of God have not been removed. The psalm does not discuss this part of the issue but it is to be assumed. One would be foolish to be worshiping and praising God for victory while still living in rebellion or while the people of God are still in sin. God never gave such a victory without a return to Him with the whole heart.

That being said, he has decided to look to God and not man for the victory and praise Him expectantly for the victory.

His ‘decision’ is also something we should look at before we are done.

“O God, my heart is fixed,” he declared. He had firmly set his mind on victory and the deliverance of God as well as on his determined course of participation in it. He had fixed his heart on praising and worshiping God for the coming victory.

What does it take to have a fixed heart?

A vision of what one desires. In this case, victory.

A desire that makes this vision the greatest desire of one's life.

The willingness to sacrifice whatever it takes to remain faithful to the vision.

The purpose to drive forward to victory.

And why do the people of God remain in defeat when victory is their heritage?

No vision. No desire. No willingness. No purpose.

Return with me to my favorite passage and remember with me that victory was the goal of Paul's prayer.

Eph 1:15-23

- 15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,
- 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;
- 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:
- 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,
- 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,
- 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,
- 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
- 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,
- 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. KJV

If you can't hear victory in that, you are not listening.