

Psalm 138 • Praise God for answered prayer!

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Psalm 138 is back to David, king David, as our author. And basically this Psalm glorifies God and praises God for answered prayer. But you can hear as you go through this Psalm you can see that David is still, even though he's praising God for answered prayer, he's still in a vulnerable place.

He says in verse 1,

"I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise;" (ESV)

Now, isn't that interesting? We've been hearing a lot about other gods tonight, or references to other gods. And we know that there's no god like our God. And in that sense, there are no other gods. But the point is there are a lot of things that people worship as god.

And I love how David says, *"I give you thanks, O LORD,"* even before all the other gods, *"I sing your praise;..."* In other words, right in front of the gods of this world, I'm not going to be bashful about singing the praise of the Lord God, the creator of the universe. And I don't really care who hears me.

He says in verse 2,

"I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word."

Isn't that an incredible verse? Wow! *"...you have exalted above all things your name and your word."*

He says,

"3 On the day I called, (look at this) you answered me; my strength of soul you increased."

He said, he's praising God for answers to prayer. You answered me. You increased the strength of my heart.

"4 All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O LORD, for they have heard the words of your mouth,"

Now, in this verse 4, David is looking prophetically forward to the Millennial Kingdom during the reign of Christ. When all the kingdoms of the world will gather and come and listen to the wisdom of Jesus on the throne. David is speaking, prophetically, into the future. One that has not yet come to pass.

He says in verse 5,

"and they shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD."

And I love verse 6. It says,

"For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly,"

In other words, he thinks about it. He takes stock in the ways of the lowly, those who are humble.

"but (he says,) the haughty he knows from afar.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, (and David did walk in the midst of trouble often, he says,) you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me."

Well, that's another good verse to input for your praise. If you're looking for verses to really bolster your praise, just read that one and meditate on that one. *"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; 'God, I praise you for preserving my life. I thank You for delivering me. Your right hand delivers me from the wrath of my enemies."*

And then verse 8, he says,

"The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands."

And I want to just focus just for a moment on this very last verse, because he says here, "*The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;*" And I've told you here from this pulpit many times, and I hope you're hearing me. That God has a purpose in your life. He has always had a purpose for your life. And as you submit to Him, and as you open your heart to Him, God is going to fulfill His purpose. Praise Him for that and expect the LORD will.

This is what I love about what David says. It's full of faith. He says, "God, You will, You will fulfill Your purpose in my life and with my life," and so forth. And then he says, "*Your steadfast love, O LORD endures forever.*" We repeated that 26 times in the earlier psalm. I hope we got that now, by this time.

And then the last thing he says here is, "*Do not forsake the work of your hands.*" And he's referring to himself. He says, "God, I am the work of Your hands. Do not forsake me. '*Do not forsake the work of your hands.*'"

Do you know why you and I can praise God about that? Because there was someone who was forsaken for you. And He was hung on a cross. And while He was hung on that cross, or hanging there bearing the punishment of your sin and my sin, He cried out. And He said, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*" (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34)

And Jesus was forsaken on the cross by the Father. That wasn't an empty cry. But He was forsaken so that you and I would never be forsaken. He was forsaken for us. And that's the beauty of that. And you and I can turn this statement into a praise.

Lord, I thank You that You will never forsake me. I thank You so much that Jesus Christ was forsaken for me so You will never forsake me.

I know that You will never, ever turn Your back on me. You will never leave me. You will never forsake me.

That's reason to praise!