

Psalm 21 • Be exalted, O Lord, in your strength!

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Calvary Chapel Ontario

Okay, Psalm 21. This is another of the royal Psalms. But it's a Psalm of praise essentially and thanksgiving for victory is won. And so this is an easy Psalm to read from the standpoint that it's just, this is just a praise. This is David worshiping and praising the Lord.

He says,

"¹ O Lord, in your strength the king rejoices, and in your salvation how greatly he exalts!"

² You have given him his heart's desire and have not withheld the request of his lips." (ESV)

Remember in the previous Psalm we read about how the people are interceding, and may the Lord give you the desire of your heart. Now David comes back and says, You did just that. You gave me the desire of my heart.

Verse 3,

"For you meet him with rich blessings; you set a crown of fine gold upon his head."

And by the way, that would be the crown of the enemy that they conquered. This is not David's own crown. It's the crown he took from the nation through which he was victorious over.

And he says,

"⁴ He asked life of you; (meaning I asked for safety. I asked You to protect my life in the battle and) you gave it to him, length of days forever and ever."

⁵ His glory is great through your salvation; splendor and majesty you bestow on him. (He's talking about the things he's been given)

6 For you make him (He's talking about himself in the third person) most blessed forever; you make him glad with the joy of your presence.

7 For the king trusts in the Lord, and through the steadfast love of the Most High he shall not be moved."

How would you... This is something you and I can say in our prayers. And it's a declaration of faith. You can say, for, instead of, the king, you put your name there. For, and then your name, trust in the Lord. Or you can just say, I trust in the Lord. And through the steadfast love of the Most High, I will not be moved. This is what you can take right into your own prayer time.

And he says in verse 8,

"Your hand will find out all your enemies; your right hand will find out those who hate you."

Now he's talking about the future. Now... You see, he's been praising the Lord for the victory that's been won. But now he's moving beyond that and he's saying, You're going to ultimately do this to all Your enemies.

Verse 9,

"You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear. The Lord will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will consume them.

10 You will destroy their descendants from the earth, and their offspring from among the children of man.

11 (And) Though they plan evil against you, though they devise mischief, they will not succeed.

12 For you will put them to flight; you will aim at their faces with your bows."

And then this Psalm ends by saying,

13 Be exalted, O Lord, in your strength! We will sing and praise your power."

"We will sing and praise your power." Beautiful Psalm; lovely Psalm; Truly a celebration of the Lord's deliverance. His strength on behalf of those who are trusting in His name who have cried out to the Lord. And laid their petitions

before the Lord and received from the Lord, a wonderful response in answer to those prayers.

And here's what I think is really important as the takeaway from this Psalm. We're good at singing songs. And not necessarily meaning the words or meaning what the lyrics are talking about in that song that we're doing in worship.

But we need to praise the Lord because He's worthy. And it's good to praise the Lord. And it's good to remember the good things that the Lord has done and the answers that He has given.

I find myself defaulting on this. I find myself falling short of this idea sometimes. I pray for something; I receive what I'm asking for. And then I move on rather than taking time to do what David did. And just lift up his voice to God and just say, God, You're so good and You've given me my heart's desire. You've blessed me with rich blessings.

We pray for something and then we, it's like we don't really appreciate what He's done for us. Because we don't really respond out of a heart of gratitude. It's like we treat Him like a vending machine. When's the last time you thanked a vending machine? I mean, you put in your money, you push the button, out comes your candy bar, and you walk away. Nobody... We treat God that way. He gave us what we wanted. Alright, it's what He does. It's what He's there for. I push the right buttons, out comes my answer to prayer, I'm out of here. That wasn't David's heart.

There was an event that took place during the ministry of Jesus that's recorded for us in the gospel according to Luke, that really illustrates this very well. And I'm going to put it on the screen so we can read it. It says,

Luke 17:11-19

Now on the way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us! When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed."

Now on the way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. (I'm going to have you come up, Brandon. We're going to do another song here as we end so as I'm reading this, it says,) As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called

out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" And when he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourself to the priests." (That was what they were commanded to do in the Word. And look at this.) As they went, they were cleansed.

Now it goes on to say that,

Luke 17:11-19

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him- and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

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That is a powerful and convicting passage of Scripture, is it not? I'm afraid to say that many, many times in my life, I have been one of the nine. And not the one who came back and fell at the feet of my Savior and said, thank You so much for answering my prayer. Thank You for being so good to me. I appreciate all that You've done. But instead, like these other nine, I just run off my merry way and go ahead and do my own business.

That's why I love this Psalm. It's that reminder to you and I. Let's take time in the victories, in the answers to prayer, or even just to thank God for what He's given us in the salvation that is ours in Jesus. Good grief, He saved us for eternity.

We have things we can praise Him for, regardless of what's happening in your life. Regardless of the difficulties or the challenges that you're experiencing in your life right now. You have reason, you have things to praise Him for.

And we need to be able to do that. We need to be people who are thankful. We should be the most thankful people on the earth. We should be the happiest and the most thankful, the most joyful people on the face of the earth. We have more to rejoice in than anybody. And that's why we're told in the Scripture, ...and again I say rejoice in the Lord! (Philippians 4:4)