



Psalm 118
Give Thanks to the Lord
His Faithful Love Endures Forever

The Bible chapter divisions as we know them weren't added until 1227 by Stephen Langton, an Archbishop of Canterbury. The Old Testament was divided into verses by a Jewish Rabbi, Nathan, in 1448 and the New Testament by Stephanus in 1555. So, chapter and verse numbers aren't original nor inspired by God. However, it is interesting that Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the Bible. Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter and Psalm 119 the longest. The Bible has 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 chapters after. If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118 there are 1188 chapters. 1188 or Psalm 118:8 is the middle verse of the Bible.

The Original Song

Psalm 118 may have been written for the dedication of the restored walls and gates of Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles in 444 BC in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. Gates (vv.19-20) and building (v.22) and joy in overcoming opposition are mentioned. Although the Jews were opposed by enemies who didn't want a restoration, with Nehemiah's leadership and God's faithfulness the walls were completed in 52 days. The work and its speed surprised the surrounding nations.

Jesus and the Song

When the book of Psalms was compiled, Psalm 118 was the last in a collection of Praise Psalms (Psalm 113-118) that were called the Egyptian *Hallel*. *Hallel* means "Praise." "Egyptian" comes from Psalm 114's theme of the Exodus and the psalms special place in the Passover. Other *Hallel* collections are Psalms 120-136 called the "Great *Hallel*" and Psalms 146-150. Psalm 118 was likely the psalm Jesus and the disciples sang before they went to the Mount of Olives (Matt 26:30 and Mark 14:26). Jesus is seen throughout the psalm. His triumphal entry (v. 25-26); possibly his rejection (v.27) as the sacrifice is bound; possibly his death and resurrection (v.17-18); certainly, his exaltation as God's chosen Stone (v.22-23), and maybe the Lord's Day, resurrection day, is hinted at too (v.24).

Us and the Song

Give thanks in all circumstances (v. 1-4) (1 Thess 5:18; Eph 5:20). Whether good or bad thank God because He is good, and He is in control. Since He has promised to work all things out for good (Rom 8:28) we can always give thanks. **Trust God in all Crises (v. 5-14)**. Everything and everyone will eventually let us down, but not God. We can trust Him to be with us, give us wisdom, give us endurance and see us through every trial. **Praise God for every victory (v. 15-29)**. When God does something in your life let everybody know! Celebrate God in your life, with friends, and at church.