



Silverdale Baptist Church

A SONG IN THE NIGHT • PSALM 118 • 4/4-5/2020

MAIN POINT

We are to give thanksgiving to God for His steadfast love and His great deliverance in our lives.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What passage of Scripture do you turn to when you are facing trouble, wrestling with fear, or worrying about your circumstances?

Where do you turn in the Bible when you are celebrating what God has done? What is your favorite passage?

For centuries, Psalm 118 has comforted the believers when they faced trouble and helped them celebrate when they saw God at work. Psalm 118 is part of the Passover celebration. This means this was likely the last song Jesus sang the night he was betrayed and arrested. Facing death by the hands of evil men, and the darkness of the burial grave, Jesus left the upper room with *His faithful love endures forever* ringing in His heart.

*"This is my own beloved psalm. Although the entire Psalter and all of Holy Scripture are dear to me as my only comfort and source of life, I fell in love with this psalm especially. Therefore I call it my own. When emperors and kings, the wise and the learned, and even saints could not aid me, this psalm proved a friend and helped me out of many great troubles. As a result, it is dearer to me than all the wealth, honor, and power of the pope, the Turk, and the emperor. I would be most unwilling to trade this psalm for all of it." **Martin Luther***

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ PSALM 118:1-4.

Now have the volunteer read the first phrase of verses 1-4 and let your group respond with the second phrase.

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;

His faithful love endures forever.

Let Israel say,

"His faithful love endures forever."

Let the house of Aaron say,

"His faithful love endures forever."

Let those who fear the Lord say,

"His faithful love endures forever."

Psalm 118:1-4 was written to be read or sung this way. One person, perhaps a worshiper, would sing out the first phrase, and a priest or worshiper would respond, "His faithful love endures forever."

In these four verses, who does the Psalmist say should praise the Lord for His faithfulness?

What do you learn about God in these verses?

The phrase faithful love, steadfast love, or lovingkindness refers to God's covenant faithfulness. The phrase reminds us God is true to His promises. The phrase acknowledges that Israel's victories and blessings, and ours, are not the product of skill or power, but the result of God's faithful covenant love. Our blessings are because of God's faithfulness.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ PSALM 118:5-9.

List what you learn about God from these verses?

How does what you learn about God in verses 5-9 relate to what we learned in vs 1-4?

We all face the temptation of putting our confidence in ourselves or in others. However, only God is good, and only God is always for us. The Bible is a record of God's promises kept and promises He will keep. By reminding ourselves of how God has been faithful to Israel and the saints of old, we can rest assured that He will be faithful to the promises He has made to us.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ PSALM 118:14-18.

List what you learn about God in these verses.

How does what you learn about God in these verses relate to the Psalmist's praise and worship in verses 1-4?

Have a volunteer read Psalm 118:22-29.

What phrases do you see in this passage that you are familiar with from the N. T.?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 PETER 2:4-8.

How does the description of Jesus in these verses relate to Psalm 118:22?

With Psalm 118:22 and 1 Peter 2:4-8 as the context, what does the Psalmist mean in verse 24? What day specifically?

The beauty of Psalm 118 is seen as we focus on the power and the majesty of the promise-keeping God. The beauty of verse 22-24 is seen in the promise kept, salvation sent to the sons of men.

By dying on the cross for their sins, Jesus grants salvation to all who will repent and believe. We are not righteous, but when we trust Christ for salvation, Jesus takes our sin and gives us His righteousness (Phil. 3:7-11). So when we stand before God on the day of judgment, we will be ushered into God's saving presence because we will be clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Jesus is the chief cornerstone of God's house, the one who makes salvation possible for sinners like us.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What have you learned about God's faithful love from these Scriptures?

Since God is the promise keeper and His love endures forever, how should we respond to the current crisis?

What are some ways that God has been faithful to you in the past? How will remembering those ways help keep your heart set on Him in the present?

Why is it essential that we acknowledge the faithfulness of God in good times? What about in bad times?

Who do you know who needs to be reminded that God's *faithful love endures* (vv. 1-4)? How might you encourage them to look to Christ in their circumstances?

PRAYER

Father, we praise you for His steadfast love endures forever. You are good, and You only do good. Thank You for being faithful to us despite our rebellion against You. We praise You because whatever we face in this world, You have the victory! Overwhelm us with the peace that comes from You because, in this world, we are anxious. Give us opportunities to share Your light with those who are cowering in darkness. May our boldness in You be used to bring new life into the kingdom. To You be all glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

COMMENTARY

| PSALM 118

118:1-29. This psalm describes the triumphal entry of the king in terms of humiliation and glory.

118:1. His faithful love endures forever, a standard liturgical formula, recurs in verses 2, 3, and 4 (see also 100:5; 105:1; 106:1; 136).

118:2. Compare this verse with 115:9-11; 135:19.

118:3. House of Aaron refers to priests—descendants of the first high priest (Num. 26:59-60).

118:5. Distress is a rare term (116:3; Lam. 1:3) from a related word that suggests confinement or restriction. The Lord's remedy is a spacious place.

118:6. On what can man do to me, compare 23:4; 56:4,11.

118:7. The term helper applies to Eve in Genesis 2:18 and frequently describes God and His actions on behalf of people (Ex. 18:4; Deut. 33:7,29; 1 Sam. 7:12; Ps. 20:2; 115:9-11; 121:2; 124:8; Isa. 41:10-13). To look in triumph is to overcome, as if in war.

118:8-9. The proverbial expressions in these verses are introduced by better to. This formulaic wisdom saying occurs several times in Proverbs (Prov. 15:16-17; 16:32; 19:1,22), while the concept of taking refuge in the Lord also enjoys wider usage (61:4; 64:10; 71:1; 141:8; 143:9; 144:2; Deut. 32:37; 2 Sam. 22:3,31; Isa. 14:32; 57:13). Nobles were those who distributed wealth willingly (see note at 146:3). People should prefer God over common men as well as over those in authority and power.

118:10-12. To act in the name of Yahweh could mean the king served as His regent and acted on His behalf, or that the king fought the nations relying on the strength of the Lord (v. 14).

118:13. Here the psalmist probably addressed the nations, who had pushed him when he was surrounded (vv. 10-12).

118:14. On my strength and my salvation, compare Exodus 15:2; Isaiah 12:2.

118:15-16. The Lord's right hand executes judgment, renders justice, and accomplishes salvation. Performs valiantly has a military tone. The raising of the Lord's right hand depicts judgment (89:13; 102:13).

118:18. The king acknowledged the discipline of Yahweh. The king's current circumstances reflected the Lord's rebuke, but his life would be spared (v. 17).

118:19. The plural form of gates refers to the Eastern Gate of the temple, a gate with two sections (24:7-10). On enter ... and give thanks, compare 96:8.

118:22. The cornerstone bears the weight of a building and serves as the standard for leveling the rest of the structure. The rejected king has been restored to a place of prominence. The imagery of a cornerstone representing the character of the Lord (Zech. 4:7) is further developed in the New Testament (Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20-21; 1 Pet. 2:4-8).

118:25-29. The last section of the psalm consists of a series of praises to the Lord motivated by the desire of the psalmist for rescue. The Hebrew word na', a particle of entreaty, occurs twice in this verse, emphasizing the desperate pleas of the psalmist. This was part of the expression "Hosanna" (please save) in the triumphal entry (Matt. 21:9), where the crowd alluded to verses 25-26 of this psalm. The phrase Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar is unusual since there is no evidence that a sacrifice was ever tied to the altar. However, this concept was fulfilled when Christ was nailed to the cross.