

Rev. Lex DeLong / General Adult

Thanksgiving 2025 / Psalm 116:1–19

When one is humbled and uplifted by God's compassionate hearing and redeeming rescue, prayer erupts like a pillar of fire—a radiant torrent of fervent love, exuberant gratitude, and bold public proclamation.

Notes

11/16 Ps. 116:1-19, "Prayer: A Heart's Thankful Echo to God," Scripture: Ps. 138:1-3

Derek Kidner wrote in the *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary* that, "the Psalter [the book of Psalms], taken on its own terms, is not so much a liturgical library, storing up standard literature for cultic requirements [meaning texts related to formal religious worship, rituals, and ceremonies.], as [it is] a hospitable house, well lived in, where most things can be found and borrowed after some searching, and whose first occupants have left on it everywhere the imprint of their experiences and the stamp of their characters." [1]

[1] Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1–72: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 15, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 32.

He's arguing that while the Psalms do include liturgical elements, they are better understood as a dynamic, personal, and experiential compilation—reflecting real human emotions, historical events, and individual faith journeys—rather than just a sterile catalog of ritual texts. This highlights the Psalms' depth as both devotional poetry and a window into ancient Israelite spirituality.

Psalm 116 is 6th of 9 Psalms without titles in a row, beginning with Psalm 111 and ending with Psalm 119, which itself is the last Psalm before the section of Psalms known as the Hallel Psalms (113-118). We know nothing about the author or the historical setting that prompted the writing of this Psalm.

Psalm 116 definitely gives the impression of a Psalm that was written, "In the moment," inspired by real life experiences at a time when that experience has either just happened or is still very fresh in the mind of the author, rather than a form intended for a part in structured worship activities or Jewish holidays. This Psalm seems clearly to describe the personal experience of the author and how he responded to that

experience.

Have you ever been in a place so low, where the darkness felt so absolute, that the only thing you could manage was a whispered **cry for help**? That moment when you've finally surrendered your pride and let out the rawest, most honest plea of your life? In those quiet shadows of our deepest pain, we often discover a God who doesn't just listen from a distance, but **leans in with tender mercy**. Psalm 116 is the beautiful, personal journal of a heart that was lifted from the brink of despair. It is a story of a voice that cried out and was **heard**; a life that was sinking and was **rescued**. Today, we're not just reading ancient poetry; we're tracing the journey from desperation to a deliverance so profound that our only fitting response is a passionate **outpouring of love, gratitude, and bold proclamation**.

Cry Out: God Hears Your Plea! (Ps. 116:1-4)

- Love is not blind when you realize He hears you (vv. 1-2)
- ++When life terrorizes you, cry out to the LORD (vv. 3-4)

Experience Deliverance: God Saves the Humble! (Ps. 116:5-11)

- The LORD is gracious, righteous, and compassionate (v. 5)
- ++The LORD preserves the simple (v. 6)
- ++Let your soul rest in the LORD (vv. 7-11)

Respond in Gratitude: Offer Fervent Praise and Proclamation! (Ps. 116:12-19)

- Accept God's salvation and call on Him (vv. 12-13)
- ++Embrace your debt of praise to the LORD publically (vv. 14-19)
- ++Praise the LORD

When life's afflictions drive us to cry out in desperation, God hears and delivers with gracious mercy. Our only fitting response is fervent prayer—overflowing with ardent love, sincere gratitude, and bold public proclamation.

In the quiet shadows of our deepest pains—when sorrow wraps around us like a relentless storm—a single cry pierces the heavens. And there, in that vulnerable moment, we discover a God who leans in with tender mercy, lifting us from the brink. Psalm 116 whispers this timeless truth: from desperation to deliverance, our hearts awaken to a love that demands joyful echo.