

What times we live in! But for all God's people before Christ returns, our situation is basically the same. We have suffered many trials and all is not well, either with us or society, but our experiences of His mercies evoke our thankful praise to Him now and strengthen our hope for the future.

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God, faithful and loving to me, makes me grateful and confident, even now.

I. I AM GRATEFUL FOR ANSWERED PRAYER (1-3): looking back, my blessings

- A. My expression of thankful praise (1, 2). "Praise" (1a, 2b) = thankful, verbal acknowledgement. My praise has seven traits:
- wholehearted (1a, utterly sincere), anything less is idolatry
 - bold (1b, "before the gods [*elohim*]" likely re: false gods/ idols), in front of God's people and in front of idol worshippers
 - joyful (1b, "sing," using one's voice as an instrument), true worship is necessarily emotional
 - humble (2a, "worship" = bow down), I am little in my own eyes
 - reverent/trusting (2a, "thy holy temple," i.e., Israel's God, He is great and faithful)
 - theological (2b, "lovingkindness, truth" = faithful covenant love)
 - ecstatic (2c hard to translate; poss.: "you have magnified your name and your promise above all [else]," Allen, cited by Ross)
- B. My reason for thankful praise (3). Testimony: I "cried" = called out in my weakness/discouragement. His response: He "strengthened," i.e., gave courage, a will to continue. Greatest needs are spiritual, not physical; so are our greatest blessings. Be as careful to thank God as to ask His help. "Those blessings are sweetest that are won with prayers and worn with thanks" (Puritan Thomas Goodwin).

TRANS: Gratitude for past mercies fosters confidence of future ones. Shall God—faithful and loving—change? No! So we anticipate more mercies.

II. I AM CONFIDENT OF GOD'S PUBLIC VINDICATION (4-6): looking around. Our confidence of a totally happy ending is threatened by looking around at all the sacrilege and stubbornness of sinners. Sight says God will always be dishonored and God's elect will always be oppressed. But faith says that God's revealed plan gives hope for the future.

- A. Future acclamation of God (4, 5). The godly yearn for God's glory. "Kings" are the most significant people of the world, sometimes blasphemous, oppressive, but God will have the last laugh. His glory shall appear like the blazing sun at noon. Here, not universal salvation for kings, but universal acknowledgement of God by kings (cf. Isa 52.15; Josh 2.9-11; Rom 3.19). Even their silence is praise!
- B. The mercy and justice of God (6). Follows from 4, 5 as conducive to His future acclamation. Beautiful contrast as a wisdom saying. 6a:

high God/lowly worshipper (e.g., the publican of Luke 18.9-14; 1 Cor 11.31, 32); 6b: proud (high) enemy (e.g., the Pharisee)/far from God—irony of high God's favor to the lowly (mercy) and the Most High's rejection of the lofty sinners (justice). Both are praiseworthy; the Last Day will show it (Rom 9.22, 23; 11.22a).

TRANS: As God, faithful and loving, shall fulfill this grand master plan of His own glorification, my confidence of His blessing me is most reasonable.

III. I AM CONFIDENT OF MY ULTIMATE BLESSEDNESS (7, 8): looking ahead, both in the remainder of my present life and for all eternity afterwards

- A. Salvation from trouble (7). Blessing of the remainder of my life.
- Acknowledgement of present misery. "Trouble," "wrath of mine enemies." I may "walk in the midst of trouble." Chronic pain, perpetual conflict, enduring angst are no signs one is not a true Christian with a blessed end (Rom 7.24; 2 Tim 3.12).
 - Anticipation of temporal deliverances. 1) In me → "Revive" or "preserve," to keep alive (LBSL). "Never did a believer in Jesus die or drown in his voyage to heaven" (Puritan Robert Traill). "They shall renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end" (2LCF 17.3). 2) Re: my enemies → "thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against [their] wrath," effectively disabling it against me, by overthrowing them. 3) For me → "thy right hand shall save me" from them: my rescue. True Christians are preserved even in this life and often delivered from our enemies (world, flesh, devil), while we witness many temporal, providential judgements against them.
- B. Perfection of blessing (8ab). Blessings of the grand finale.
- Assurance about me. "He will fulfill His purpose [covenant] on my account. . . . their complete and eternal salvation from everything evil" (Ross, in loc.). Similar to Psa 57.2. Same promise in Phil 1.6.
 - Assurance about Him. "The pledge of this completion is His everlasting mercy, which will not rest until the promise is become perfect truth and reality" (KD Comm.).
- C. Prayer for its realization (8c), i.e., forsake not *me* on the basis that I am "the works of thine own hands." God's promise not to forsake us, far from suppressing prayers for this, inspires it along with confidence He will grant what He has promised, answering our prayers. "Calvin quotes Augustine approvingly on this verse: 'Despise not the works of thy hands; see in me thy work, not mine. For if thou seest mine, thou wilt condemn it. If thou seest thine own, thou wilt crown it. For whatever good works are mine are from thee'" (NSBT "Covenant and Commandment," Greene, 116).

CONCL: From this day forward, will you make this psalm your psalm, embracing it by faith, sharing in its gratitude and confidence, so you can face the future with courage, hope, and joy? God grant it for all of us! Ω