

Praising God for His Deliverances, Part V

Call to Worship: Psalm 119:137-144

Hymn #35- *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

1st Scripture: 2 Samuel 22:1-35

Hymn #772- *Deliver Me From Evil*

2nd Scripture: 2 Samuel 22:36-43

Hymn Insert- *O Church Arise!*

Introduction:

In our continuing journey through this Psalm, where David has been praising God for His deliverances, last time, we have begun to ponder three precious and essential resources, which God has continually granted David, and which have enabled David to prevail against enemies, which were naturally stronger than him. God has been a lamp for David, providing him with much needed light, so that he could take the best courses of action in each battle. God has granted David supernatural strength, enabling him and his minority army, to utilize abilities, skills and strength, which were not inherently natural to them. And finally, God has granted David, absolute assurance of His aid and blessing, providing David with the full motivation and morale to stand firm at all times.

This morning, we continue to add to this list of precious resources, leading up to the results, which David has then continually attained, in the conquering of his enemies. And again, all of this, confirms the main purpose of this Psalm, which is to glorify God, in the manifesting of His faithfulness to His people, as He continually prospers and delivers those who put their trust and confidence in Him. The path to glory is not easy. Scripture nowhere makes such a claim or an assumption. In fact, often, it states the very opposite. But, the Name of the Lord is a strong tower, and those who go into it, will find themselves safely prevailing in Christ!

I. Additional Resources for the Battles (vs. 36-37)

Here, we find at least three additional resources, which God provides for David, enabling him to prevail against his enemies.

1) God grants David the shield of His salvation. In verse 36a, David states, "You have also given me the shield of Your salvation."

Now, there are two ways, in which, we can understand this. First, in a physical sense, and in keeping with the main context of the Psalm, God defends and protects David from the attacks of the enemy, leading to his deliverance and salvation. To this end, God actually manipulates the offensive attacks of the enemy, such that they fail to harm David. In some way, He actually deflects the course of their attacks, away from David, thereby saving him. [Ex: It is said of General Thomas Jackson, that he received the nickname "Stonewall," because he would stand fearlessly, during the course of the battle. When viewed by others, it was evident that he was unmoved by the attacks of the enemy. Jackson, who was a faithful and committed Christian, had a profound understanding of the providence of God, leading him to commit the care of his life into the hands of his God. And amazingly enough, he stood firm in each battle, meeting his ultimate fate, only when he was later killed, accidentally, by friendly fire]. David fought with such confidence in the protective and providential care of God. And God provided him with the shield of His salvation.

But furthermore, we might do well to consider this reality in a spiritual sense, as well. That is to say, that God had graciously and freely granted David eternal salvation; the sparing of His soul from the effects of his own sin, which led David to be bold in the battle, recognizing that even if the enemy could somehow take his life, David could never lose his salvation, which was secured in Christ! He needed not to fear those, who could, at best, kill the body, because his immortal soul was secured in Christ. This reality then, would further serve to boost the morale of David and his men.

2) God's gentleness toward David, has made David great (vs. 36b). That is to say that, the way in which God has treated David, especially in the light of David's imperfections and remaining sins, has served to bolster David's appearance, making him great among the nations, and among his own people.

David knew very well that, should God mark his iniquities; should God treat David as his sins truly deserved, he would bear nothing but shame before the watching world. But God has been gentle with David; slow to wrath and quick to bless; constantly covering his sins, and shielding him from what would be the natural effect of them. God's tenderness; His grace and gentleness, have elevated David to a position, which he could never, ever, possibly deserve. The

words of David, found in his response to God's expressed determination to covenantally bless David's house indefinitely, speak well to this end: "Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord God; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come. Is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" (2 Samuel 7:18-19). Indeed, God's gentleness, and His graciously passing over and forgiving David for his sins, made David great. God exalted and prospered David, with the utmost determination, in spite of his sins and shortcomings.

3) Finally, God has enlarged David's path beneath him, such that his feet did not slip (vs. 37). Human beings are very, very prone to err, and to slip. We are laden with frailty. Poor decisions are becoming of us, and making the wrong move, is part and parcel for our course. As the Scriptures teach, "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." Trouble, tribulation, and sorrow, are all part and parcel for the course of humanity. *[Enemy also set traps... etc]

And yet, God had spared David from his own natural proneness to err, during battle. Not only did God advance him; not only did He supernaturally equip David to prosper onward, but furthermore, he kept David from slipping into his own faults. He prevented him from making decisions, which would lead to his own downfall and harm. David knew very well, that, if left to himself, he would blow it, big time. He would slip, giving the enemy some great advantage. And yet, when David found himself in such a position, where he might easily blow it, God "enlarged his path," as it were. Where the circumstances had greatly narrowed, increasing the potential for great and fatal danger, God stepped in, and widened things, causing David to safely make it to the other side of the challenge. Indeed, when David had even moved in a direction, which would lead to His own hurt, God recreated the scene, as it were, so that David's error would not lead to his downfall. God protected David from his enemies, but he also protected David from *David!* [Kept David from falling in the enemy's traps. They narrowed, He widened]

And so, God grants David the precious resources of light, supernatural strength, assurance, the shield of His salvation, grace motivated gentleness, and protection from his own errors and the traps of his enemies. And with all such resourceful helps, David finds himself, most assuredly prospering against his enemies, who are naturally stronger than him.

Notice how God's equipping of David, in these regards, leads to great and powerful victories:

II. The Blessed Consequences of God's Equipping (vs. 38-43)

[Read verses 38-43]

Notice brethren, that as David has mentioned the vital resources, which God has given him in the battle, he gets caught in a lengthy description of the quality of victory, which he has obtained because of God's help. In other words, it is not simply the fact that David has prevailed, by the help of God, or even that he obtained a substantial victory. No, he utterly destroyed his enemies! It wasn't even close! Though they were naturally far greater in number and in strength, David utterly crushes them. And that is the great emphasis of this portion of this Psalm of praise. Hear the language again:

"I have pursued my enemies" (they came after me, when I was weak or inhibited in some way, but I wound up chasing them down-- they wound up fleeing!). "I didn't turn back again, until they were utterly destroyed. I have destroyed them such that they could not rise. They were totally flattened! They have fallen under my feet! For You have armed me with strength for the battle, and You have subdued under me, those who rose against me! You have given me their necks, so that I have destroyed those who hated me! In their fleeing, they became desperate; though they originally thought that they could defeat me, they wound up searching high and low for help, but found none to save them! There was no escape for them! Indeed, they even attempted to enlist You for their help! In their desperation, they called out to YHWH, but You did not answer them! Then I beat them as fine as the dust of the earth! I pulverized them! I trod them underfoot, like dirt in the streets, and I scattered them!"

You see, brethren, what is David's main point here, in his use of this language? Is it not to show that the quality or type of victories, which God has granted him, were landslide victories! The extent to which David had defeated his enemies, was profoundly great! It wasn't even close! He utterly shattered them to pieces! They were no match for him! Why? Because God was David's strength! Because God had provided David with resources that would enable him to utterly annihilate any who came against him. The language is strong; it is superlative in

nature, so as to highlight the omnipotent, infinite power of God, and His gracious willingness to exercise it, in defense of His people!

III. Closing Thoughts and Applications

Well brethren, having worked through the allotted portion of this Psalm for this morning, let us then conclude our time, by considering a few, relevant, closing thoughts and applications. And once again, we will do this, by considering the same divine resources, which David had accessed, as resources, which are universally available for all of God's people:

1) God gives us the shield of His salvation. In various portions of Scripture (such as Eph. 6), the Bible describes spiritual armor, which is granted us in Christ. And, at times, this armor is described in different ways, so as to emphasize varying ways, in which, we can defend ourselves against the devious attacks of our enemies, the devil and his minions.

And here, the shield is referred to as the "shield of God's salvation." In Ephesians, it is the helmet, which is referred to, as the "helmet of salvation," and the shield is called the "shield of faith." There is no contradiction of terms here; it is just emphasizing the same kinds of realities, in different ways. But brethren, here in our text, we find that one critical resource, which we have access to, as we fight the fight of faith, is the constant reminder of our ultimate victory in Christ. We can take every risk in the battle; we don't have to resort to sinful means of dealing with conflict, because no matter what, our eternal salvation is always secured in Christ! No one can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord! And so, what we have in Christ, and who we are in Christ; these unchanging realities, serve as essential means of keeping us steadfast and immovable in the battle! In other words, brethren, our accomplished salvation, keeps us firm, with an unbending resolve in the battle, because nothing whatsoever can change who we are, what we've become, what we are becoming, and every blessing freely and eternally granted us in Christ!

Can you imagine how painfully excruciating it would be, to have no certain assurance, that our souls are eternally secured in Christ? Can you imagine how difficult; how unstable and impossible it would be, to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold of an eternal life, which, we are ultimately not certain, belongs to us? But God, indeed, vows the end, right from the

outset, and Christ has solidified that end, by His own death and resurrection, so that we can press on, with full assurance of hope! Indeed, He imprints the mold, by the cross of Christ, and He casts the seal of assurance within that mold, and He solidifies it, into the form of a shield, which cannot be broken! He takes every initiative to grant us such security! We are naturally naked and covered in the shame of our first parents, but God kills and sheds the blood, not merely of animal skins, but of His only begotten Son, such that we are covered, not merely with animal skins, but with the pure and eternally potent, righteousness of Christ! In Him, we have God's shield of salvation! And if you have God's shield of salvation, then you cannot fail.

2) God's gentleness toward us, makes us great! God never treats us as our sins deserve. Indeed, He chastens us, at times, but only in love, as He would continually rescue us, from our remaining corruption, rather than leave us there in the mire of our natural filth.

God is gentle and tender toward His children, isn't He? He never swings the sword of judgment toward us, but rather, He lovingly smites us with the rod of correction. And indeed, His rod and His staff, they ultimately comfort us! And, in spite of us, He continues to use us; He continues to bear with us, often covering and restraining our natural, fleshly tendencies, keeping us from causing our faith and our testimony to run aground; to run shipwreck. And with this kind of sincere, divine "therapy," as it were, we are made stronger in the love of God. We behold His unbending commitment to us, and we love Him all the more, and we love others all the more, because, by His example, we learn to reflect the same light, which originates in Him! The love of God compels us unto sincere, desired, heartfelt obedience, does it not?

Brethren, here is the reality. We naturally, are like little children, who would constantly run out onto the parkway. And left to ourselves, we would get run over, day after day after day. We would easily ruin everything pertaining to our faith, on our best day, even! But God lovingly restrains. He teaches. He guides. He chastens. He corrects. He rebukes. He exhorts. And He does all of these, with a spirit of gentleness! He is not in the lightning or the earth quake or the heavy winds. No, He is the still small voice, which whispers love and grace into our ears, repeatedly! Oh brethren, in the light of His unfathomable holiness, this seems to make no sense! It seems to be impossible. But then, we look upon the tree, and find our groaning Savior, enveloped in the darkness of judgment, shouting aloud, "My God, My God, why have You

forsaken *Me?*" And of course, the answer is quite obvious, isn't it? He was forsaken; He received the arrow of judgment and condemnation; He became the curse; He drank the full cup of God's wrath, down to the dregs... for us! We receive gentleness, kindness and tenderness, from our holy God, because He, who knew no sin, became sin for us, so that, we might become the righteousness of God in Him! He became the propitiation (the object of exhausting God's wrath) for our sins! God's gentleness toward us, makes us great... we are a pleasant sight to the angels, in the present, because our sins are never imputed to us! Only the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us! Brethren, let us never lose the, "Who am I?" factor, in our salvation! [Ex: Christ's treatment of His disciples, even after they were arguing over who would be the greatest in the kingdom of God, right after He spoke to them about His immanent death!]

3) God enlarges our path beneath us, so that we don't slip. Again, at any given moment, we would ruin everything. Our remaining inner lusts and pride would ruin everything. Our titanic tongues would steer the whole of our life ships, into the ice berg of catastrophe, but God enlarges our paths beneath us. He preserves us. He protects us not only from our enemies, but also, from ourselves! When we are walking the fine line of trials, and when we are on the verge of blowing it big time, He would often step in, keeping us from going astray. How often, brethren; how often, has God intervened to keep us on the path to life? Only God knows, but I am pretty sure that when we get to heaven, we will probably see a lot of potholes, which He has steered us away from, so that He might bring us safely home to glory. *[away from traps]

Does not Jude's benediction, which I read most often, at the end of the service each Sunday, ring true and loud here? "And now unto Him, who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you without fault before His presence with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen!"

And brethren, in all of this; with all of these resources given us, freely in Christ, we are more than conquerors! The enemy is ultimately no match for us! Their necks are given to us! They are pursued and destroyed, pulverized to dust. As Paul said to the Romans in Romans 16:20, "And the God of peace will crush satan *under your feet* shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen." [Address the unsaved???

The Lord's Supper!