

Psalm 21

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

Psalm 21:

The connection with the preceding Psalm is apparent by comparing (verse 2 with 20:4).

The Psalm contains thanksgiving for the LORD's deliverance (verses 1-7, assurance of the king's future victories by his subjects (verses 8-12), and a final prayer (verse 13).

Verses 1-13:

The first part (of Psalm 21), is a thanksgiving for victory; the last part is an anticipation of future victories in the LORD through the king-general.

Two scenarios of victory provide a context for praise and prayer to the Commander-in-Chief of Israel's king-general.

- I. A Present-Past Scenario of Praise: Grounded upon Victories Accomplished in the Lord (21:1-6).
- II. A Present-Future Scenario of Prayer and Praise: Grounded upon Victories Anticipated in the Lord (21:7-13).

Psalm 21:1 "The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!"

Conferred upon him, and put forth, by thee, on his behalf, against his enemies.

Though by the king here we may understand King David, who composed this Psalm, yet it may be much better explained of the King Messiah.

Understood of whom, the words thy strength mean the divine power, which was manifested in the resurrection of Christ, and in the establishment of his gospel.

"And in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice":

God's "salvation" had been confidently anticipated see the following (Psalm 20:5-6, 9), and has now been experienced.

Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.

We Christians are the kings without the capital letter.

We will be subordinates of King Jesus.

Who rejoices in the salvation that King Jesus brought?

Those who accepted the salvation that He offered.

Our joy is in His strength.

Believers in Christ have much to rejoice about.

We have the hope of the resurrection.

Psalm 21:2 "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah."

Which the church had prayed for in (Psalm 20:4).

Whatever Christ's heart desired, or his lips requested, has been given him.

"And hast not withholden the request of his lips":

Whatever he asked in the council and covenant of peace was granted.

He asked for all the elect, as his spouse and bride; these were the desire of his heart and eyes, and they were given him.

He asked for all the blessings of grace for them, and all grace was given to them in him.

He asked for glory, for eternal life, and it was promised him; and not only the promise of it was put into his hand, but the thing itself (see Psalm 2:8, 1 John 5:11; and Psalm 20:4).

Whatever he requested of his Father, when here on earth, was granted.

He always heard him; that memorable prayer of his in (John 17:1), is heard and answered, both in what respects himself, his own glorification, and the conversion, sanctification, union, preservation, and glorification of his people.

Whatever he now desires and requests in heaven, as the advocate and intercessor for his saints, is ever fulfilled.

Which is an instance of the great regard Jehovah has unto him, and may be considered as a reason of his joy in him.

"Selah":

The pause here may have been for the presentation of a thank-offering.

Compare Psalm 20:4 (the before); Psalm 21:2 (the after).

The heart's desire of everyone who ever lived is to live forever.

This is what Jesus has provided for all who will receive salvation in Him, eternal life.

The cry of the people for God's help has never gone unnoticed by God.

Just as the children of Israel cried out for a deliverer and God sent Moses, all of mankind cried for a Savior and Jesus came to save mankind.

Psalm 21:3 "For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head."

"Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head":

This is symbolic of superlative blessing (note the reversal in Ezek. 21:25-27).

"Crown":

Metaphorically, it could refer to the security, glory and joy the LORD bestowed upon David.

Revelation 14:14 "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud [one] sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle."

Although Jesus wore a crown of thorns here on the earth, He was awarded the crown of Gold.

This crown of gold shows His godly power.

Notice also, in the next few verses that we Christians will also wear a crown.

The crown will be given us, but not for the deeds we have done, but because of who we put our faith in.

2 Timothy 4:8 "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Psalm 21:4 "He asked life of thee, [and] thou gavest [it] him, [even] length of days for ever and ever."

The first part of the verse most likely pertains to preservation of life in battle, and the second part to perpetuation of the dynasty (compare 2 Sam. 7:13, 16, 29; Psalms 89:4; 132:12).

We know that the gift of eternal life is from God.

We also know that Jesus rose from the grave, paving the way for you and me to be resurrected unto eternal life as well.

Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.

He possesses life eternal.

He has given those who follow Him the opportunity to live forever in Him.

Verses 5-6: The King had given great prominence to the king-general.

Psalm 21:5 "His glory [is] great in thy salvation: honor and majesty hast thou laid upon him."

That is, the glory of the King Messiah is great in the Lord's salvation of him.

Delivering him from all his troubles and sorrows, and out of the hands of all his enemies.

When he was raised from the dead, and was set at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honor.

Or the sense is, that his glory is great in the salvation of his people by him.

It was his glory as Mediator to be appointed to be the Lord's salvation to them; and it being effected by him declares the glory and greatness of his person.

And such is the sense his people have of it, that it obliges them to ascribe the glory of it just to him alone.

"Honor and majesty hast thou laid upon him":

Which is to be understood not of the honor and majesty of his divine nature, which are essential to him, and not laid upon him by any.

Nor of the glory which the saints attribute to him on account of their salvation by him.

But of that which his Father has put upon him, and lies in the introduction of him into his glory after his sufferings and death, and resurrection from the dead.

In exalting him at his right hand above all creatures and things.

In giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and in putting all the gifts of the Spirit into his hands, which he receiving, gave to men, and in ordaining him Judge of the quick and the dead.

The glory of the Lord is in the salvation He provided for you and me.

We (the Christians), are his inheritance.

God has magnified Him above all others.

Philippians 2:9-11 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:" "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;" "And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

In some wonderful and peculiar way, we see that God the Father was magnified along with Jesus in the crucifixion.

Jesus was a sweet savor offering unto God.

Jude 1:25 "To the only wise God our Savior, [be] glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

Psalm 21:6 "For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance."

Not as God, for as such he is over all and blessed for ever, and not made so, but as both a man and Mediator.

The words may be rendered, "thou hast set him to be blessings for ever".

Which design the blessings which are laid up in Christ for his people, and which he imparts unto them, and they are blessed within him.

So that he is made a blessing, or rather blessings to them.

Such as redemption to free them from bondage, righteousness to justify them, sanctification to make them holy.

Wisdom to direct and guide them, and strength to assist and support them.

Through whom they have the forgiveness of sins, by whom they have peace with God.

And from whom they receive all their joy and comfort, and at last, eternal life and happiness.

And all these are forever; they are irreversible blessings, are never repented of, nor taken away.

Or this blessedness may be understood of that which Christ himself enjoys as man.

Which lies in his human nature, being exalted to union with the Son of God; in being heard and helped in the day of salvation.

In being raised from the dead, and glory given him.

In being set at God's right hand, angels, authorities, and powers, being subject to him.

And in seeing the travail of his soul with satisfaction.

The particular instance of his blessedness follows.

"Thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance":

The glorious presence of God in heaven.

Christ having done his work on earth ascended to heaven, where he was received by his Father with a cheerful countenance.

And was made to sit down on the same throne with him, being well pleased with his obedience, righteousness, and sacrifice.

And being now in the presence of God, in which is fullness of joy.

And at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore, the human nature of Christ is filled with an excess of joy.

The words may be rendered, "thou hast made" or "wilt make him glad with joy, with thy countenance" (see Psalm 16:11).

We know that one of the promises God made unto Abraham, was that all the earth would be blessed through the seed of Abraham.

This was speaking of the world of believers in Christ.

All who believe in Christ are spiritual seed of Abraham.

He believed God, and it was counted as righteousness to him.

We Christians believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are counted righteous in God's sight, because we believe.

The One who blessed all of us, is the one blessed Himself.

He is the Lord Jesus Christ who is blessed forevermore.

Romans 9:5 "Whose [are] the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ [came], who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

Acts 2:28 "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."

If the countenance of the Lord fills us with such joy, let us take a look at that countenance in the next verses.

Matthew 28:3 "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:"

Revelation 1:16 "And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance [was] as the sun shineth in his strength."

Psalm 21:7 "For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved."

"For the king":

The human responsibility dimension of the previous divine blessings is identified as the king-general's dependent trust in God.

But the sovereign grace of God provides the ultimate basis for one not being moved or "shaken" (compare Psalms 15:5; 16:8; 17:5; Prov. 10:30).

We have spoken before about trust, but it bears repeating here.

Trust is a state beyond faith.

It is when we depend entirely upon the Lord, knowing that every single little thing that happens to us is for our own good.

Possibly a better saying would be to say, resting in the knowledge that all is well with you in the Lord Jesus.

Jesus said it all when He said, "Not my will but thine".

We are told that we should stand, and then having done all to stand.

Put your faith and trust in the merciful God, and you shall not be moved.

Verses 8-9:

God would cut off David's foes with His divine wrath ("fire"), and their defeat would be final.

Psalm 21:8 "Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee."

"Thine ... thee":

Without denying the mediatorship of the king-general, these delineations obviously put the spotlight upon the Commander-in-Chief.

The Right Hand of God (Jesus Christ), has defeated His enemies and our enemies.

He defeated sin on the cross, and defeated death when He rose from the grave.

We may think that our enemies are the people around us, who are giving us a hard time, but they are under the control of Satan.

Satan was defeated on the cross by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our protection from such enemies if we are Christians, is the name and the blood of Jesus Christ.

Psalm 21:9 "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them."

Thou shalt consume or destroy them, as if they were burned in a heated oven.

Or, they shall burn, as if they were a flaming oven.

That is, they would be wholly consumed.

The word rendered "oven" means either an "oven" or a "furnace."

It is rendered "furnace and furnaces" in (Gen. 15:17; Neh. 3:11; 12:38; Isa. 31:9); and here.

"Oven" or "ovens," in (Exodus 8:3; Lev. 2:4; 7:9; 11:35; Lev. 26:26; Lam. 5:10; Hosea 7:4, 7:6-7; Mal. 4:1).

It does not occur elsewhere.

The oven among the Hebrews was in the form of a large "pot," and was heated from within by placing the wood inside of it.

Of course, while being heated, it had the appearance of a furnace.

The meaning here is that the wicked would be consumed or destroyed "as if" they were such a burning oven; as if they were set on fire, and burned up.

"In the time of thine anger":

Or "of thy countenance":

Not his gracious, but his angry countenance.

When he shall put on a fierce look, and appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and then stir up all his wrath.

"The Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath":

Not that they would be annihilated; their souls remain after their death, and their bodies also after the resurrection.

And will be tormented with the fire of God's wrath for ever and ever.

The phrase is expressive of utter ruin, of the destruction of one's soul and body in hell (see Psalm 35:25).

Jarchi takes it to be a prayer, "may the Lord swallow them up", etc.

"And the fire shall devour them":

That is, as the Targum paraphrases it, the fire of hell.

Or, however, it designs the wrath of God, who is a consuming fire.

Or that fiery indignation of his, which shall devour the adversaries.

Which comes down upon them either in temporal judgments here, or in their everlasting destruction hereafter.

This is so sad to think that these enemies are headed for total destruction, and really do not even know it.

They have been deceived by the devil.

Look at the following Scriptures on this subject.

They tell why and what, this wrath of God is.

John 3:36 "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Romans 1:18 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"

Revelation 14:10 "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:"

Psalm 21:10 "Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men."

Meaning the offspring of wicked men; the fruit of the womb (Psalm 127:3).

The same with their seed in the next clause.

"And their seed from among the children of men": See (Psalm 37:28); which must be understood of such of their seed and offspring as they were when they were born.

Are never renewed and sanctified, but are like their parents.

As the Jews were, their parents were vipers, and they were serpents, the generation of them.

And were the children of the devil, and did his works.

Now these passages had their accomplishment in the Jews, when the day of God's wrath burnt them up, and left them neither root nor branch (Mal. 4:1).

And in the Pagan empire, when every mountain and island were moved out of their places, and the Heathen perished out of the land (Rev. 6:14).

And will be further accomplished when the LORD shall punish the wicked woman Jezebel, the antichristian harlot, and kill her children with death (Rev. 2:23; see Psalm 104:35).

We know about the teaching of the fruit tree that does not bear fruit, of it's being destroyed by the husbandman.

This is saying the same thing here.

Those who choose not to follow God, bring their own destruction upon themselves.

God is longsuffering, not willing that even one should perish, but there is a time when He is so angry that His wrath comes up in His face, and He destroys them.

This is the very thing that God did when He looked down from heaven, and He saw the evil in Sodom and Gomorrah.

His wrath came up in His face, and He rained down fire and both brimstone upon them and destroyed them.

The next Scripture is the best advice that I can give anyone.

Matthew 10:28 "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

It is in the power of God to save us or to destroy us.

We are His creation.

The answer is to accept the free gift of salvation today.

Make Jesus your Savior and Lord and you will be pleasing unto God.

Psalm 21:11 "For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, [which] they are not able [to perform]."

All evil, whether in thought or deed, if not immediately and directly.

Yet is ultimately against the Lord, whose law is transgressed, and who is despised and reflected upon as a lawgiver.

All sin is a hostility committed against God, or against Christ.

Against the Lord and his Anointed, or against his people, who are all one as himself.

The intention of evil is evil, and is cognizable by the Lord, and punishable by him.

"They imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform":

Not the death of Christ; that was indeed in itself a mischievous device of theirs.

But that they performed, though they had not their end in it.

They expected his name would then perish, and they should hear no more of him.

But rather it respects his resurrection from the dead, they could not prevent, though they took all imaginable care that there might be no show of it.

And when they found he was really raised from the dead, they contrived a wicked scheme to stop the credit of it, but in vain (Matt. 27:63).

And Jews, Gentiles, and Papists, have formed schemes and done all they can to root out the Gospel, cause, and interest of Christ, from the world, but have not been able to accomplish it.

We find as Jesus said, that to want to sin in your heart is sin.

God is going to judge the heart of man.

I truly believe that the books that are opened on our heart tell whether we intended good or evil.

Christians face the intended evil of the world, the same as did our Lord. Praise God!

Look at the great promise from Isaiah made to the believers.

Isaiah 54:17 "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue [that] shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.

This [is] the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness [is] of me, thus saith the LORD."

As I said in the beginning of this, to want or to think about destroying someone is just as much a sin as doing it.

God judges the heart of man.

Psalm 21:12 Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, [when] thou shalt make ready [thine arrows] upon thy strings against the face of them.

Or flee and run away to private places, to hide themselves from the wrath of God and of the Lamb, though to no purpose.

Or "make them turn behind thy back":

God will turn his back upon them, and be negligent and careless of them, and not regard them when they cry in their misery and destruction.

Some Jewish interpreters understand it of their being put together on one side, in one corner, and be separate from the people of God.

To which sense the Targum inclines, rendering the word for "back" the "shoulder", which sometimes signifies unanimity and union (Zeph. 3:9).

And thus, being all together by themselves, the wrath of God shall be poured forth upon them, and they shall be destroyed at once.

So the Christians were, only by the providence of God, were brought out of Jerusalem before it it's destruction.

And the saints will be called out of Babylon before its fall.

And the goats, the wicked, will be separated from the righteous, and set together at Christ's left hand; for they shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous.

But the best sense of the words is, "thou shalt set them for a butt" or "heap".

Or, as it is in the Hebrew text, a shoulder.

A butt to shoot at being so called, because it is earth heaped up like a shoulder (see Job 16:12); and to this agrees what follows.

"When thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them":

That is, direct the arrows of his wrath and vengeance right against them (see Psalm 7:11).

When I see this Scripture above, it reminds me of the 300 men with Gideon who caused an army, so great that the Bible speaks of them as being like grasshoppers, to flee.

Can you imagine thousands fleeing from 300?

You can read about it in (Judges Chapters 6 and 7).

I will show just one Scripture here that shows how God caused this large army to kill each other when the 300 in Gideon's army blew the trumpets.

Judges 7:22 "And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, [and] to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath."

Psalm 21:13 Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: [so] will we sing and praise thy power.

Exert thy strength, display thy power in such manner, that thou mayest be exalted and magnified on account of it.

This was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, when the kingdom of God came with power (see Mark 9:1).

And will be again when Babylon shall be utterly destroyed, because the Lord is strong who judges her (Rev. 18:8).

And finally, at the day of judgment, when the wicked will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power (2 Thess. 1:9).

"So will we sing and praise thy power":

Forms of such songs of praise may be seen, as Cocceius observes in (Rev. 11:15).

At the sounding of the seventh trumpet, at the victory over the beast, and his image, and at the destruction of Babylon.

We should exalt the Lord at all times.

It is difficult to remember to exalt Him in our times of trouble, but we can easily praise Him when He delivers us from the problem.

We should never cease to praise Him for not only His power, but for His salvation He freely gave us.

It is not by my strength, or by any power that I have, that I get anything done for God.

He is strong in my weakness.

Psalm 21 Questions

1. The king shall joy in thy _____ O Lord.
2. Who is King of kings?
3. Who rejoice in the salvation that Jesus brought?
4. What do the Christians have hope of?
5. What is the heart's desire of everyone?
6. When the Children of Israel cried out for a deliverer, who did God send to them in Egypt?
7. Who is the Christian's Deliverer?
8. What was the crown that Jesus wore on the earth made of?
9. What does the crown of gold symbolize?
10. Why will the Christians receive a crown?
11. The gift of eternal life is from _____.
12. What paved the way for us to be resurrected from the grave?
13. What are some of the names of Jesus that show His eternity?
14. Who must bow to the name of Jesus?
15. Who did God promise to bless through Abraham?
16. Who are the spiritual seed of Abraham?
17. Why are we righteous in God's sight?
18. Describe the countenance of the Lord.

19. What is trust in God?
20. How can you stand, and not be moved?
21. What 2 things did Jesus defeat at the cross, and at the resurrection?
22. He that believeth on the Son hath _____.
23. What abides in those who do not believe?
24. What will happen to those who do not believe?
25. Who brings destruction on those who do not believe?
26. How was Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed?
27. God will judge the _____ of man.
28. Which is worse: to sin, or to desire in your heart to sin?
29. What promise is made to all believers, in Isaiah 54:17?
30. What does verse 12 remind the author of?
31. Where, in the Bible, do we find the story of Gideon and his army?
32. When should we exalt the Lord?
33. Who is to receive all the glory?