

7.3.21 pm

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Date: 07 March 2021

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

- [0 : 00] and a warm welcome to those who are tuning in, those who are watching online, those who may be tuning in and listening. Once more it's good for us to come together at the end of the Lord's Day and to worship him together. We're going to begin this time of worship by singing to God's praise.
- We sing from Mission Praise number 51, a familiar hymn, Be Thou My Vision, O Lord of My Heart. Cammie will sing here in the church and we sing to God's praise.
- Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, not be all else to me save that thou art.
- Thou my best thought by day or by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
- Be thou my wisdom, thou my true word. I ever with thee, thou with me, Lord.
- [1 : 28] Thou my great Father, I thy true Son. Thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.
- Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight. Be thou my dignity, thou my delight.
- Thou my soul shelter, thou my high tower. Raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.
- Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise. Thou mine inheritance now and always.
- Thou and thou only first in my heart. High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- [2 : 50] High King of heaven, after victory won. May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun.
- Heart of my own heart, whatever befall. Still be my vision, O ruler of all.
- Well, let's join our hearts together and let's pray.
- Our Heavenly Father, we thank you again at the end of this, your day, that we are found with the desire, with the freedom, and the opportunity to be able to come together in worship.
- And we ask that, as we have sang, that we would truly have you as our vision. We confess that our minds and our vision can be so cluttered and clouded at times.
- [4 : 05] We confess that in a world that is so busy, that we can sometimes lose sight of you. And we pray that you would forgive us for that. Help us, we pray in this hour, to be still, to know that you are God and to fix our eyes upon you.
- We thank you that you are our Lord and you are the Lord, the sovereign God over all things. And we thank you that even in a time such as this, where there has been so much that we could never have expected to have lived through.
- We are steadied by the fact that we know that you are the Lord over all, the sovereign God, and that you are working even in this difficult season. And we thank you that you are our Savior.
- We thank you that we are saved from our sin when we call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, when we look in faith to him. And we thank you that we are saved in such a way as to have a Savior, a shepherd who walks with us through every day of life.

Who guides us, who leads us, who strengthens us, sometimes who carries us through difficult times. And who promises, as we've sung, to take those who are trusting him to heaven when we pass from time into eternity.

[5 : 38] So enable us, we pray, to think much upon these gospel truths. Help us not to be so consumed with what is urgent in terms of our daily lives that we lose sight of what is important.

These eternal realities. We look back on our weak past and we confess our sin as we must each time that we come into your presence.

All that we have done and left undone. The things that we have said. The things that we should have said. The thoughts that have passed through our minds.

We confess, Lord, that we are sinners. Much of the sin that we are aware of, we bring to you. And we ask that you would cleanse us.

But we are conscious that there is much sin that we do not even have an awareness of. And so we pray that you would cleanse us thoroughly in the blood of Christ.

[6 : 36] And Lord, as we look forward into a new week, we pray that you would be with us in it. We cannot see what is ahead of us, but we pray that you would lead us and that you would guide us.

That you would equip us for the situations that you call us to live through. We pray that you would help us to be salt and to be light.

To be those who are always ready to give the reason for the hope that is in us. And for any who may be listening who do not yet have that hope of salvation in them. For any who are outside of Christ, we pray that even this evening they would look and see their sin and see Christ as Saviour.

And call upon his name so that they may be able to say with the psalmist that you are my Lord and my God. We ask that you would guide us Lord in the things ahead of us in this week that we are aware of.

We pray for the prayer meeting on Wednesday evening. We thank you for that time where we can gather together. And we thank you for the encouragement of being able to see each other. And we thank you for so many who have been so committed to pray.

[7 : 53] Especially through this difficult time. And we ask that you would help us to keep on keeping on. Not to give up. But to persevere in prayer.

And we pray for Gordon Thompson as he speaks to us this coming Wednesday. We thank you for Gordon and for the encouragement. And the challenge that you have brought to us through him.

As he has spoken in times past. We pray Lord that you would guide him in his preparation. And we ask that you would speak to us through him this coming Wednesday.

We pray for him in the work that he does. Down in South Scotland. As he seeks to reach out. With the good news of the gospel. We pray that you would help him.

That you would guide him. That you would continue to use him and bless him in your service. We thank you that he is a great example. Of one who is always ready. To give the reason for the hope that is in him.

[8 : 51] We thank you for the light of Christ that shines through him. And we pray that you would bless him. And bless his family at this time. We pray for Donnie Faith Mission as well. And the work of the faith mission in general.

We thank you for the blessing that has been here in the past. And we pray that in future times we again may know that blessing. Of your people coming here to share your word.

We pray also for Gordon MacLeod. As he continues in the work of youth and discipleship in this area. We thank you for him and we ask that you would lead him.

And that you would guide him. As he thinks about reaching out to those who are lost. As he thinks about how to build up and disciple those who are found.

Those who are yours. We pray for the young people of this area. And we ask that you would minister to them. And minister to Gordon as he seeks to come alongside them.

[9 : 55] And Lord we pray not only for the young of this area. We pray for those who are old. Those who are feeling the weight of the years. We pray for those who may feel lonely.

Who may be isolated. Especially at this time. And we pray as we have done so often. That they may know your presence. That you are with them always.

And we pray for your protection over them at this time. And as we hear of the virus in Harris. We pray that you would protect those who are most vulnerable.

For Harris House and for the care home in Leverborough. We ask Lord that those residents there. And those who are up in years.

Who are so precious to us. Lord that you would protect them. And that you would take them through this time. But above all Lord. We pray that they and each of us.

[10 : 49] Whether we are young. Old or whether we are in the turbulent middle years. Where there are so many conflicting responsibilities. Enable us we pray. To seek first your kingdom. Enable us to know that we are your children.

Enable us to know the assurance of being in Christ. So hear our prayers. Take away our sin. Lead us and guide us in the power of your spirit.

And speak to us through your word we pray. And we ask these things in Jesus name. And for his sake. Amen. If you could turn in your Bibles please.

Now to Psalm 144. As we continue through the Psalter. We're coming towards the end now. And we read from Psalm 144 this evening.

It's a Psalm of David. As you can see from the title. Praise be to the Lord my rock. Who trains my hands for war. My fingers for battle. He is my loving God and my fortress.

[11 : 53] My stronghold and my deliverer. My shield in whom I take refuge. Who subdues peoples under me. O Lord what is man that you care for him. The son of man that you think of him.

Man is like a breath. His days are like a fleeting shadow. Part your heavens O Lord and come down. Touch the mountains so that they smoke. Send forth lightning and scatter the enemies.

Shoot your arrows and rout them. Reach down your hand from on high. Deliver me and rescue me from the mighty waters. From the hands of foreigners.

Whose mouths are full of lies. Whose right hands are deceitful. I will sing a new song to you. O Lord O God. On the ten string lyre.

I will make music to you. To the one who gives victory to kings. Who delivers his servant David. From the deadly sword. Deliver me and rescue me from the hands of foreigners.

[12 : 51] Whose mouths are full of lies. Whose right hands are deceitful. Then our sons and their youth will be like well nurtured plants. And our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace.

Our barns will be filled with every kind of provision. Our sheep will increase by thousands. By tens of thousands in our fields. Our oxen will draw heavy loads.

There will be no breaching of walls. No going into captivity. No cry of distress in our streets. Blessed are the people of whom this is true. Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We'll hear that psalm. Or the first nine verses of that psalm being sung now.

Blessed ever be the Lord who is my strength and might. Who doth instruct my hands to war. My fingers teach to fight. My goodness fortress.

[13 : 54] My high tower. Deliverer and shield. In whom I trust. Who under me my people makes to yield. Down to the end of verse 9. Cammie will sing Psalm 144 verses 1 to 9.

To God's praise. Oh blessed ever be the Lord.

Who is my strength and might. Who doth instruct my hands to war.

My fingers teach to fight. My goodness fortress. My high tower. Deliverer and shield.

In whom I trust. Who under me. My people makes to yield. O Lord.

[14 : 56] What is man that of him. Does so much knowledge take. Or son of man.

That thou of him. So great account does make. Man is like vanity. His days.

As shadows pass away. Lord bow thy hands down. Come down to hills. And smoke they shall.

Cast forth thy lightning. Scatter them. Thine roots shoot them round. Thine hand send from above me.

Save. From great depth draw me out. And from the hand of children strange. Whose mouths speak vanity.

[15 : 59] And their right hand is a right hand. That works deceitfully. A new song I to thee will sing.

Lord on a psaltery. I on a ten stringed instrument. Will praise us sing to thee.

Well let's turn back to the psalm that we sang. And the psalm that we read just a moment ago.

And let's ask again for the Lord's help as we study it for a moment. Heavenly Father we thank you for your word that we've sung. That we've read.

We pray that you would speak to us now in the power of the Holy Spirit. Give to us encouragement we pray. Give to us that sense of your presence.

[17 : 05] We pray that we would know that heartwarming touch of your hand upon us. So help us Lord we ask as we look to you.

And speak to us through your word we pray in Jesus name. Amen. I've got an uncle in Aberdeen.

Uncle Jim. He might even be watching this. If he is watching this he'll be wide awake now. And he was a taxi driver for a lot of years. And my memory as a wee boy when I would go through to Aberdeen to see him.

Was that he would wash and Hoover his car. Not once a week. But every day. After he went out and did his taxi shift. He'd be back and he'd be out with the wash.

He'd be out with the polish. He'd be out with the Hoover. The car was immaculate. Always. He absolutely loved his car. Now if I was to ask him.

[18 : 09] Or if I was to ask any other car lover. What do you like most about your car? Well some would say the looks. I like the way it's styled.

I like the way the car looks. Others might say well I like the smoothness of the drive of this particular model. Some people may say I like the space that there is in this car that we're driving.

Others may talk about the acceleration and the handling. But probably no one would say when they think about what they like about their car. Probably no one would say well the favourite thing I have about the car is the airbag.

And yet if we crash. It's probably the most important thing. We just don't really give it much thought or attention.

Until we're in trouble. There's such a thing. Such a term that's been coined. As airbag Christianity.

[19 : 11] You know people who don't give God much of a thought. Until they're in trouble. Until they're looking for some kind of protection. From danger.

And from distress. And as we turn to Psalm 144 here. We see that this is a psalm of David. We perhaps feel that we've got to know David well.

As we've travelled through the Psalter. And we know that David was often in trouble. There's many psalms in the Psalter. Where we have the prayers.

The cries. The laments of David. As he reaches out. As he cries out to the Lord. For help and protection. In fact the last two psalms that we studied. Psalm 142 and 143.

We see that David is in that kind of situation. He's being pursued by King Saul. He's hiding in caves. He's running for his life. And so we'd expect David.

[20 : 11] We'd expect anyone who's in that kind of trouble. To be crying out to the Lord for help. But as this psalm begins. Psalm 144.

We can see that David. He's not in a cave. He's in a palace. And he's not at this point in his life. Being pursued by King Saul.

Because King Saul is no more. David is now the king. So David you could say he's in a good place. He's not in trouble.

At the point at which this psalm begins. And yet in this good place that he finds himself in. He hasn't forgotten God.

As we can often do. He isn't guilty of airbag Christianity. He's praising the Lord in the calm.

[21 : 08] And that's the first point to look at in this psalm. We see that David is praising God in the calm. In the good times. Verses 1 and 2. Praise be to the Lord my rock.

Who trains my hands for war. My fingers for battle. He is my loving God. And my fortress. My stronghold. And my deliverer. My shield.

In whom I take refuge. Who subdues people under me. So at this point. As we've said. For David. Everything is calm. Everything is going well.

One of the commentators. Ligon Duncan. I think it was. Said that. This is the point. At which David. Is at the pinnacle of his strength.

As king. And people would have been looking at him. And with a great sense of admiration. And appreciation. Because when the king is in a strong stable position.

[22 : 07] The people within the kingdom. Feel a sense of security. So people likely would have been looking to David. And saying. Look at the strength of this king.

And look at the security that he brings us. And yet through this psalm. And these opening verses. David is saying. Don't look to me.

Look beyond me. To the source of my strength. And that was a majorly counter-cultural thing. In that day. You can read literature.

From the ancient Near East. Of this time. And kings. And rulers. They loved to boast about their own strength. They loved to write.

About how great they were. How mighty they were. How glorious they were. And yet David. Will have none of that. From the outset.

[23 : 04] He says. I have no strength of my own. The Lord. Is my strength. He is my rock. Verse 1. He is the one who gives me. Stability.

He is the one. Verse 1. Who trains my hands for war. My fingers for battle. He is the one who gives me the skill to fight. And who gives me the victory. When I do fight. He is my loving God.

Verse 2. The one who cares for me. He is my fortress. He is my stronghold. Verse 2. The one who gives me protection. He is my deliverer.

Verse 2. The one who rescues me. He is my shield. Still in verse 2. Who guards me from the attacks of the enemy. He is my refuge.

Who gives me rest. And refreshment. And so David we see. As he takes all these terms. All these words. He layers them. He piles them one on top of the other.

[24 : 03] So that we will get such a sense of the strength of God. And the power of God. And yet there is one little word there.

Which we must not miss. One little word that was so crucial. And it is the word my. David says that God is my rock.

He is my loving God. He is my fortress. He is my stronghold. He is my deliverer. He is my shield. He is my refuge.

See David is not talking about a God. Who is far away. And disconnected from him. The Lord is my God.

David says. And I wonder can we. Take that word. That little word my. For ourselves.

[25 : 07] As we think about. The God. Of heaven. And earth. Can we say that he is my God. We may not be living.

In the context. Of physical warfare. As David had been. Previously. And would very soon be again. But we are in a spiritual battle.

That goes on every day. And sometimes we are aware. Of direct attacks. From the enemy. Sometimes there can be that. Kind of incremental attack.

Of discouragement. Or just. That tiredness. Feeling jaded over. What is a difficult season. So we are in a spiritual battle.

Not with flesh and blood. But against principalities. And powers. We are in a battle. Against sin.

[26 : 04] And self. And Satan. And death. And hell. In that context. Can we say. That God is my rock. My loving God.

God. He is my fortress. He is my stronghold. He is my deliverer. My saviour. My shield. My refuge.

See if we can say that. In our hearts tonight. That the God of all. He is my God. And he is the one. Who gives me. The protection. That David. Writes of in this psalm.

If we can say that. Within our hearts. We shouldn't just. Leave that within our hearts. We should profess. That our faith is in him. We should praise him. As David praised him. We can say that.

God is my God. We should say it loud enough. For people to hear us. And if tonight.

[27 : 03] There is. Anyone who's. Who's listening. Who's not. Yet able to say. This God is my God. Then you have opportunity.

Even this moment. To change that. To trust him. Whilst there is still. Time. God does not. Reveal himself. To us.

In order to hide himself. Then from us. He reveals himself. To us. In order. That we will trust him. So if we have ears to hear.

Then we have opportunity. To respond. Think about how different things would have been. For David. For David. If he did not know.

The loving God. With him. And for him. In his position as king. How tragic. It would have been. To have been the king.

[27 : 59] And yet. Not to be connected. By faith. To God. And the power. And the protection. And the wisdom of God. And how tragic it would be.

For any of us. To go from time. Into eternity. And to hear. This Lord. Saying to us.

Away from me. I never knew you. How tragic. To have. Such. Great salvation. Such. Eternal security.

Offered to us. In Christ. And to neglect. That offer. To know. The Lord. As my. Loving God. My savior.

My deliverer. My shield. My refuge. My fortress. So we hear David.

[28 : 56] First of all. And he is praising God. In the calm. The second point. Is. We see. Or we hear. That David is praising God. For remembering him.

Verse three and four. Oh Lord. What is man. That you care for him. The son of man. That you think of him. Man. It's like a breath. As days. Are like. A fleeting.

Shadow. Sometimes. If you go out for. For dinner. To a restaurant. Remember these things. We used to be able to go out to. For. For a meal. But sometimes.

In a. In a place like that. In a restaurant. You'll see the waiters. Or the waitresses. And they're. They're buzzing about. They're busy. And occasionally. You'll get. Somebody in the. In the restaurant.

Who's. Who's somewhat obnoxious. And kind of clicks their fingers. And before anybody else. Gets a chance to speak to. To a waiter. He's. He's shouting them. To them. And just.

[29 : 53] Saying. Come on. I want to be served first. Before anyone else. And if we. See that. We tend to think. Well. It's just rude. You know. To speak to somebody that way.

To treat somebody that way. And yet. When we think about it. People often. Treat God that way. It's not.

Uncommon. To hear people. Getting. Angry. When God. Does not do. What we tell him. When we tell him. In prayer. People can be very quick.

To blame things. When. Things don't go. The way they. They want them to go. People will often. Be very quick. To close their Bibles. When the Bible. Doesn't give approval.

To the issues. That they think. Are the right issues. And in that situation. Which is very much. Where we are. At a cultural level. What we're doing. As a culture.

[30 : 52] We're putting ourselves. Above God. God. We make ourselves. God. We make him. Our servant. When something bad.

Happens. Like a pandemic. A nation. Shakes a fist. At God. And says. Why did he allow this. To happen. And when we pick up. The Bible. And it clashes. With our culture.

We close the Bible. And say. We know better. And that's to get everything. Upside down. It's to get everything. The wrong way around. And David shows us.

That in this psalm. Who is David? Remember. He is the king. He's the greatest king. That Israel had ever known. He is powerful.

He is a military strategist. He's handsome. We're told. Ruddy in looks. He's successful. He is. A manager of people.

[31 : 47] With great skill. He's in charge of so many people. He's been so. Notably victorious. In battle. He. Is a. A great statesman. We could say.

He's a. An impressive. Ruler. And yet. As he thinks of God. And as he thinks of himself. In relation to God. He says in verse 3.

Oh Lord. What is man? That you care for him. The son of man. That you think of him. Man is like a breath.

His days are like a. A fleeting. Shadow. There's echoes of. Of Sam 8 here. As well. When I consider your heavens.

The work of your fingers. The moon and the stars. Which you have set in place. What is mankind. That you are mindful of them. Human beings. That you care for them. I can't remember.

[32 : 46] Was it. Was it Wednesday night. Or Thursday night. That there was that. Huge moon. In the sky. Here. We were seeing pictures of it. All over. Social media.

It just seemed to fill. The sky. And it was such a. A majestic sight. The sky was clear. And it was such a. It was such an awesome thing.

To see. And when we see something like that. It does give us a sense of wonder. It does give us a sense of the vastness of the galaxy.

And the stars above us. The majesty of the creator. The creator God. Who made them all. With a word from nothing. And our own.

Smallness. When we see something like that. Even. Even something like the moon. This week. It humbles us. And creates.

[33 : 45] Within us. A sense of reverence. For the God. Who made everything. Who holds it together. And yet. Who cares for us. The sons and daughters of.

Of men. Whose lives. Are just like a. A breath. A mist. A fleeting shadow. And that's the kind of.

Humility. And reverence. That comes through this psalm. David may be the king. He may have a. High profile.

In the eyes of his subjects. He may. Be very much. Cared about. By those. Who were under his leadership. He may have been. Very much. Remembered. And celebrated. By his people.

But David is amazed. That the God of heaven. And earth. Cares for him. Remembers him. And we should have something.

[34 : 46] Of that. Humility. And that reverence. And that awe. That this. Same God. God. He would remember us.

He does remember us. He cares for us. And if the children were here just now. I would say. How much does he care?

How do we know that he cares for us? And they would tell us about the cross. God cares. Enough for us. That the father would send his son.

To die for us. God cares. Enough for us. That the son of God. Would come. From the realms of glory. To this world.

To go to a cross. To suffer for our sin. God cares. Enough for us. That the Holy Spirit. Would open. Our eyes.

[35 : 42] Our individual eyes. That we would see. These gospel truths. So David.

He's praising God. For remembering him. He's praising God. In the calm. And then. In the third point here. We see. That there's a change.

And we hear. David. Begin to. To put up a prayer. For rescue. Give us about. Ten days ago. Maybe. And.

Murdo. Murdo from Scalpy. Murdo Ferry. As we know him. I was speaking to him. Quite early on. One morning. And the ferry. Hadn't moved that morning. And.

I wondered. Why. It was quite. Calm. So I asked him. Why is the ferry. Not gone. And he said. It was a bad forecast. Scales forecast. For the afternoon. But looking out.

[36 : 38] It seemed so calm. So. I had my doubts. But sure enough. By about three. O'clock. That afternoon. The sea was. Rough. Things were wild. It was stormy.

Things changed. Very quickly. And things very. Quickly. Change. In the experience. Of David. Here. He goes from the calm. Of verses one and two.

To the storm. Of verses five. To verse eight. So what does David do. When he. Begins to. To see. And feel. The storm.

Crashing in. Well he prays. For rescue. See his. View of God. Is. Is so big. As we've seen. That.

When enemies. Begin to attack. When the enemies. Come into. Focus. They don't obscure. His vision of God. See David's God.

[37 : 34] Is not a small God. David sees God. In his majesty. In his bigness. In his vastness. In his glory. And so when he. Sees these enemies. Coming in on the scene.

They don't. Obscure his vision of God. He sees. His enemies. In proper perspective. He sees them. As dangerous. Certainly. But they're not. Too big a problem.

For God. To handle. And so he prays. For rescue. And David. Had learned. Through experience. That. The God.

That he. He prayed to. Was well able. To rescue him. He could think back. To. When he was just. A shepherd boy. And David. Encountered. Lions and bears.

Who attacked the flock. But with God's strength. He was able to. To overcome them. David. Could think back. To the. To the battlefield. As the. The Philistine.

[38 : 29] Giant. Goliath. Roared. And David. Faced him. And overcame him. In God's strength. And David.

Could think. Back. To recent times. Relatively. When he was. Pursued. By this. Jealous. Bloodthirsty. King Saul. Who wanted to kill him. But the Lord.

Removed. King Saul. And put David. On the throne. As he had. Promised. And so. In this. Situation. As David. Reflecting. On who.

God is. And what. God had done. For him. In the past. David. Doesn't panic. But he. Instinctively. Looks.

To the Lord. And he. Prays. For rescue. Verses. Five. To eight. Part. Your heavens. O Lord. And come.

[39 : 24] Down. Touch. The mountains. So that. They smoke. Send forth. Lightning. And scatter. The enemy. Shoot your arrows. And route. Them. Reach down. Your hand.

From on high. Deliver me. And rescue me. From the mighty waters. From the hands. Of foreigners. Whose mouths. Are full. Of lies. Whose right hands. Are deceitful.

teams. Plugged up. Oh. ■■■ata. Mm-hmm. Philipians. But David as king, with the whole civil service under him, could have called for an emergency meeting of his political staff as these enemies came onto the radar.

He could have pushed a button and had all the military commanders in place and the armies mobilized. But it seems that before he spoke to anyone else, before he saw any political or military council, he lays it all out before the Lord in prayer.

And he asks the Lord. He asks the one whom he has called my rock, my loving God, my fortress, my stronghold, my deliverer, my shield, my refuge.

[40 : 36] He comes to this God and he asks him to help him. See, David's theology, from verses 1 and 2, his vision of who God is, is not disconnected from the events of his daily life.

David's theology is what determines how he will act and react when he faces good times and bad times.

So when he's under pressure, when he feels his own need, he immediately prays for rescue. Do we believe that God is who he says he is?

Do we believe that he is our rock, our loving God, our fortress, our stronghold, our deliverer, our shield, our refuge?

If we believe these things, then that should be heard, certainly, as we profess faith in him and praise him. But it should also be seen as we look to him and as we lean upon him when we face difficult situations in life.

[42 : 03] It's what David teaches us in this point. We see him praying for rescue. Point number four. Having prayed for rescue, David is praising the Lord in advance.

He's thanking the Lord for what the Lord would do in advance. And sometimes we see that kind of terminology, we see it in adverts or in posts on social media. Sometimes people will put a post up asking for help, maybe with computer advice or help with a question about a recipe or even help with something critical like sharing a post for a missing person.

At the bottom of the post, they'll have these three letters, TIA, which means thanks in advance. They're asking for help and they're anticipating in advance that that help will come.

David kind of does that here. He's in a difficult situation. There is clear, there is present danger. So he prays for rescue. And having asked for the Lord to help, he believes that the Lord hears.

He believes that the Lord answers prayer. And so he praises the Lord before he gets the answer to his prayer. He says in verse nine, I will sing a new song to you, O God, and the ten-stringed lyre, I will make music to you, to the one who gives victory to kings, who delivers his servant David from the deadly sword.

[43 : 35] He praises the Lord in advance of actually realizing the victory. Now, do we ever do that? I think it's something that we're taught that we should do here.

Now, we tend to pray, if you're anything like me, we tend to pray. We ask for help. And then ten minutes later, we're worrying again about the thing we prayed about rather than leaving it with the Lord.

We're acting like we never prayed. Sometimes we pray, we hand over our struggles, we hand over our burdens, we hand over our problems to the Lord, we ask Him to help, and ten minutes later, we're wresting the problem back from the Lord as if it's too big for Him to handle, and as if we could handle it.

And then we're scratching our heads trying to engineer our own solutions from the non-existent wisdom that we think we have within ourselves. David teaches us here what we should be doing.

And what we should be doing is handing over our problems to the Lord in prayer and leaving them there. And then thanking the Lord for the answers that He will give.

[45 : 00] And the answers that the Lord gives may not always come at the speed we want, but we have to remember God's timing is best. And the answers that we pray for may not always come in the way that we expect it.

But we have to remember that God's wisdom is higher. So when we pray, even before we get the answer, we should praise Him. Speaking to Gordon Thompson a few months back, I was reminded of the conversation as I was going through this psalm.

And I asked him when I came on the phone, how are you today? And he was in his usual good form. Great, he says, you know, doing okay. Praising the Lord. And we chatted for a while about various things.

And just before we finished the conversation, I said to him, Gordon, just before I go off the call, is there anything I can pray about, anything I can share with the congregation, anything we can be praying for for yourself?

And he said, well, you could pray for my wife and my daughter. I'd appreciate that. I said, yeah, what's the problem? And he says, well, they're both in bed just now.

[46 : 16] They're really pretty ill. They have COVID. So, I would really appreciate you praying for them. So for Gordon, it was an anxious time.

It was a worrying time. But he was so evidently still praising the Lord and trusting in the Lord. And we see that in David here.

He's praising the Lord in the calm times of peace. And he's praising the Lord in the stormy times when he's under attack.

We see also in the Apostle Paul as we've been studying in 2 Timothy. Paul, he's in prison in Rome. He is one who has been abandoned by most of his Christian believers.

Those he was in fellowship with and had served for so long. They had abandoned him. There was hardly anybody now with him. He's in a prison cell. He's suffering. He's struggling. He's soon to be executed.

[47 : 24] But he's still praising the Lord. He's still trusting the Lord. The final thing here is we hear David praying for the nation.

And that's how the psalm finishes. We get a sense as the psalm comes to towards an end that David himself, he is composed. He's trusting in the Lord.

He believes the Lord will protect him. But David's burden is not just for himself, but it's for the nation. And so we hear David praying for the people, for the nation that he ruled over.

Verses 11 through to verse 15. Deliver me and rescue me from the hands of foreigners whose mouths are full of lies, whose right hands are deceitful.

He's praying for national security. Verse 12. Then our sons and our youth will be like well-nurtured plants and our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace.

[48 : 27] He's praying for their families. He's praying for the family. Verse 13. Our barns will be filled with every kind of provision. Our sheep will increase by thousands, by tens of thousands in our fields.

Our oxen will draw heavy loads. He's praying for material need. Verse 13. Verse 14. We hear that he's praying for social welfare.

There will be no breaching of walls, no going into captivity, no cry of distress in our streets. And then as the psalm comes to an end, he prays in verse 15 for the spiritual health of the nation.

Not as an afterthought, but as the emphatic closing word. He's praying that the people would be trusting in the Lord and knowing the blessing of the Lord.

Blessed are the people of whom this is true. Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. So he's praying for the nation. Now wouldn't it be good if we had leaders over us who would pray like this?

[49 : 40] what a blessing it would be if we knew that those whom were in positions of power in our nation would be praying to God in this way.

We, I think, have been so conscious of how determined our leaders are not to look to God, not even to acknowledge his existence, even in the extremity of a global pandemic.

It just strikes me it's such a contrast with what we hear from King David and yet the application here, I think, is not for us to bemoan what we do not have in terms of political leadership.

The application is not that we take the psalm and we use it to beat those who are in power over us. We're to pray for them. The application here is for us.

It's an example for us. It's an instruction for us. We're not kings. I know that. But we have people around us in our families. We have people around us in the circle of friends that the Lord has brought into our lives.

[51 : 00] We have people around us in this community. We have people all around us in terms of the country. who have many needs.

So what can we do? What must we do? What is the most important thing that we can do? And the answer is to pray for them.

We're to pray for our nation. As we're called to in 1 Timothy 2, pray for the leaders that God has put over us. We're to pray for the family, as David did.

The family is a unit which is so much under attack at this time in our history, in our culture. We're to pray at this time for those who have material needs, those who have financial struggles, those who are anxious, those who struggle with the daily bread issues of life in a difficult season.

We're to pray for those who are crying with distress on our streets, the homeless, the addicts, the refugees that we see as we walk through the cities of our land.

[52 : 26] and we're to pray for the spiritual health of all those that the Lord has put around us.

That God would awaken the souls of those who are dead in transgression and sin. And that God would touch and revive the hearts of his people.

That he would touch and revive our hearts. Because our desire, desire that is taught within this psalm, is that we will know the blessing of God.

And that we will pursue, as David did, the glory, not of self, but of God. takes us back to where we so often are, man's chief end.

What is it? To glorify God and to enjoy him forever. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this psalm.

[53 : 35] We thank you for these prayers. We thank you for these psalms of praise. We thank you for David, your servant, and all that we learn in and through the prayers that are recorded for us in this altar.

We thank you that we're taught there how to repent when we fall, no matter how hard and how low we fall. We thank you that we're taught that we are to praise you when things are going well and when things are going badly.

We thank you that we're taught to look to you for the salvation both the heart salvation and the material salvation that you are able to give to those who call upon your name.

We thank you that we're taught and we're reminded of the fact that our priority, our chief end, is not our glory, not our comfort, but the glory of God.

As we pursue that, there is joy that is eternal to enable us to be pursuing the glory of God and enable us to know your joy and your blessing in time and then on into eternity.

[54 : 59] For we pray these things in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. We'll conclude with the hymn 578 in mission praise.

Another prayer, revive thy work, O Lord, thy mighty arm make bear, speak with the voice that wakes the dead and make the people hear.

Revive thy work, O Lord, disturb the sleep of death, quicken the smouldering embers now by thine almighty breath. And so on, can we sing the whole of this hymn to God's praise.

Revive thy work, O Lord, thy mighty arm make bear.

Speak with the voice that wakes the dead and make thy people hear.

[56 : 04] Revive thy work, O Lord, Lord, disturb this leap of death, quicken the smouldering embers now by thine almighty breath.

Revive thy works, O Lord, create soul, thirst for thee, and hungering for the bread of life, O may our spirit be.

Revive thy work, O Lord, exalt thy precious name, glory, and by the holy ghost our love for thee and thine inflame.

Revive thy work, O Lord, give pentecostal showers, the glory shall be all thy known, the blessing Lord be ours.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all both now and forever more.

[57 : 58] Amen.