

# Psalm

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[ 0 : 00 ]     Speaking of the Lord's help, I direct your attention this evening to Psalm 18 and verse 46. Psalm 18 and verse 46.

The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

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Well, could the Psalmist David speak of a living God? Well, he had a sweet knowledge of him from his youth onwards, and could speak out of the experience of his heart of a God who heard and answered prayer.

He could speak in his youth of the God who delivered him from the lion and the bear. He could speak of the God who went forth with him to fight against Goliath, and moved on his behalf to spare his life.

[ 1 : 32 ]     He had such a knowledge of a prayer hearing and a prayer answering God. Equally, he had in his life a knowledge of a God who pardons sin.

He knew the Lord as his God. He knew the Lord as his God. The answer to that prayer in the scripture, the 51st Psalm.

There we see how he entered into the knowledge of his God in washing him with his precious blood upon his heart and conscience.

And the God who gave to him a broken and a contrite heart. Equally, he could speak of that God who taught him and led him into the truth.

He gave him a hope in himself and who enabled him to speak as he did in the 23rd Psalm and say, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

[ 3 : 02 ]     And as regarding the truth he spoke in that Psalm, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of righteousness. For his name's sake. Green pastures, the still waters, the paths of righteousness, where the divine teaching and truth which the Lord led his servant onward into in the experience of them.

The peace of God. The life of God. The righteousness of Christ.

The peace of God. The path of God. The paths into which the Lord had led him and taught him. And so, as we look at the life of the sweet psalmist of Israel, we see that these psalms which he penned are penned out of a knowledge of the living God.

As we come to look at this word tonight, we see here that it is a word of hope in darkness.

[ 4 : 45 ]     A word of hope in death. not the darkness and death of this world naturally, but the darkness and death of the heart and of the soul.

The solemn barrenness and lifelessness of the child of God as known and felt under the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

It is the work of God to reveal death in our soul feelingly. The solemn death of our fallen natures.

The death that loves darkness rather than light. The death that rebels against God. the death that is carnal and cold and lukewarm.

The death that is spoken of in the book of the Revelation as the Lord speaks of the condition of the churches. In that solemn passage which was written to the church at Laodicea, I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot.

[ 6 : 08 ] I would that thou were cold or hot. though then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot I will spew thee out of my mouth because thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing and knowest not thou are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich. this is the life that underlies our text tonight.

This blessed place to which the psalmist was brought had lying underneath it solemn things.

if we look at his pathway as he wrote this it was the pathway in which there were multitudes of enemies against him inward and outward.

He had come through a pathway of better conflict hated persecuted knowing his own fallen ruined condition.

[ 7 : 30 ] It was the pathway as we see in the opening of this psalm of the court of Saul where the Lord had seen fit to place his dear servant the pathway of trial and conflict the pathway in which he needed to see the Lord do everything for him and to bring him out of it.

And he opens this psalm with his eyes up to heaven in these lovely words the Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer my God my strength in whom I will trust my buckler and the horn of my salvation and my high tower and it's as though he was on the other side of his trouble here the Lord had brought him through and he could look back upon the great floods into which he had come he speaks in this psalm of the deep waters and the strength he had needed to fight and he says by thee I have run through a troop and by my God I have leaped over a wall and he had been brought into a deep conflict and the

Lord had come to him we read he sent from above he took me he drew me out of many waters he delivered me from my strong enemy and from them which hated me for they were too strong for me they prevented me in the day of my calamity but the Lord was my stay he brought me also into a large place he delivered me because he delighted in me and you know when the Lord does work love in the hearts of his children when they are brought low when they are cut down by the Lord and he appears then they come into the blessedness of these words the Lord liveth no none can ever utter these words except those who have known deliverance those who have known the

Lord to appear on their behalf those who have known to him to come to them in an hour of deep conviction darkness condemnation death to our counterbalance this living God is known in the hearts of his dear church in the experience of solemn death in their souls and I see two distinct matters here in the life of David one with the enemies outside and the other with the enemies inside one was the enemy in his heart luring deceiving attacking him and the other was the solemn enemy outside hating him for his religion persecuting him who desire to look just for a few moments at these two enemies and this death and the experience of deliverance what do we know about a persecuting enemy inwardly inside our heart ever at us ever luring us ever drawing us what do we know about the evils of our heart that would go with him what do we know about the solemnity of the conflict oh how few there are to know who appear to know anything about this solemn conflict so clearly set forth in the seventh of

Romans the seventh of Romans is relegated to the days of experience of God's dear church before they are born again by many late Dr.

[ 12 : 29 ] Martin Lloyd Jones relegated this chapter in the experience of the apostle Paul to the time between the death of Stephen and his own call by grace on the road to Damascus in fact he relegated this chapter to the time when the apostle speaks or the Lord speaks to the apostle of it's hard to kick against the prick it's into that period of his life he attempted to put the seventh of Rome and then said that beyond the day of his conversion he was a conqueror he never knew this conflict anymore let alone its defeat which is spoken of in the seventh of Romans but the seventh of Romans is I believe the very avenue to the knowledge of the living God and the apostle says that which I do I allow not for what I would that do

I not but what I hate that do I do you know anything of it to groan under those footsteps what I would that is the child of God longing to walk in the path of prayer I do not prayer is neglected and what I hate the sin that I hate that do I do you know it all the enigma the mystery of the pathway of God's dear children what a blessed thing that the apostle should see fit to so reveal this enigma in the scripture but it's the very avenue to the knowledge of the living God because it speaks of a child of God that is responsible before his God and yet walking in total inability this was the pathway you know that dear old

Gatsby and Kershaw and Warbuston used to outline yea and yea and name men used to laugh at them and say what a miserable lot they were you've got to walk out holiness in your life no they said there is nothing we know the plague of our own hearts so well that we know that walking out of that holiness will never lead to the living God he must come to us but you see the apostle goes on from that place what I do I allow not what I would that do I not what I hate that do I if then I do that which I would not I consent to the law that it's good you consent to God holy law that it's good then you come under its condemnation and under its curse cursed is everyone that doeth not all things written in the law this was the curse that godly men of old came under and they felt the solemn condemnation in their own hearts now then if I do that which I would not

I consent to the Lord is good now then it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me for I know that in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing that is the language of a living soul taught by the living God in my flesh dwelleth no good thing or how exclusive that is you see there is a religious world today that thinks that they can walk a life of holiness out that they can keep God's holy law and who are struggling today to make that law their rule of life godly men of old kershaw and warperston against me were shown that God's holy law was no rule to them they knew it was holy and perfect and right and just they came under its condemnation but they saw the keeping of that law in

Christ and Christ alone for them or do you see be able to say that the Lord live we need to be brought to this place where we know by sweet experience one who has kept his holy law for us that we are utterly condemned and cut off by it and brought down before God to be nothing under it the good that I would I do not but the evil which I would not that I do do you know anything of it I live it out day by day the evil that I would not that I do do you know it all the solemnity of it because I tell you this the experience of it of it brings into our heart sorrow and death darkness guilt and condemnation the evil that I would not that I do and you see

[ 18 : 33 ] I believe this is indeed the experience of all God's living family to a dying an the old man and the new in absolute conflict in their heart no perfecting of the old man no subduing of him no making him any different or any weaker he remains there a potent force in the heart and the things that the old man loved in the days of unregeneracy are still there in the days of regeneracy and the solemn thorns in the flesh that were there then will stay to a dying hour oh the conflict and the sorrow and the grief that lies in the hearts of God's dear children if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me

I find then a law that when I would do good evil is present with me for I delight in the law of God after the inward man sacred inward man that is the new creature in Christ Jesus so he comes finally to this I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members ever there we cannot relegate this to the days of unregeneracy or to the days of the dawn of a work of grace in our heart this is the experience of the living family of God all the days of their life then he comes to these words oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death and where is the service

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord so then with my mind I myself serve the law of God with my flesh the law of sin and you know here is the language of our text the Lord lives when into that dire conflict of its reality a child of God has a visit from the Lord when in his impotency and yet his condemnation and guilt his God sees fit in sovereign grace and everlasting mercy to draw near and to touch his soul with a little sweet lifting out of his condemnation of his darkness of his death of his impotency and give him a little sweet strength and he draws near and puts his arms underneath him and lifts him up and there is a sacred experience of his saviour coming to him felt and known with almighty power and for a brief moment maybe he feels his presence his love his mercy his divine care then he can say as Thomas said my Lord and my

God then he can say as Peter said Lord thou knowest that I love thee then he can say as the psalmist David said the Lord liveth these are not words of worship they indeed are words of worship uttered in a vacuum I mean in a vacuum experience these are words uttered by a soul who is in the exercise of his heart crying out who shall deliver me from this body of death knowing the death feeling the death and all the solemnity of it feeling the conflict in his soul the bitter conflict feeling the power of Satan about him to tempt and deceive him feeling his own evil the law of sin in his members which would go with Satan that loves darkness rather than light and yet having in his heart another principle that hates that darkness hates that evil mourns over it longs to be free longs to be lifted up it is such a soul when the

Lord visits him who is able to say before his God the Lord living this is a soul who has known mercy David was here in a place where he had been brought out of deep waters by his God and he could rejoice in the presence of his God have you in your life been brought on occasions at times on special occasions on certain occasions can you look back to hours of divine deliverance when the Lord has come near blessed you sweetly granted you a cup of cold water spiritually in your heart a little sacred divine oasis at

[ 24 : 39 ] Elim to the children of Israel and you have rejoiced in his presence when you have come perhaps like Moses came to stand on the waters of the Red Sea his prayer answered after his God had said to him why cryest thou unto me command the children of Israel they go forward and there has been a sacred going forward and coming to the other side and a little precious rejoicing little precious lifting up a little knowledge of divine mercy what we spoke of last sabbath nehemiah spoke of the good hand of my God upon me precious simple sacred utterance of nehemiah then i told them of the hand of my God that was good upon me oh how

God's dear children in the hour of deliverance are able to say and to honor their God for these words the Lord liveth and blessed be my rock they have as it were known the sinking sands of the curse of God's holy law and the condemnation of sin and guilt and filth but they come into that oasis there is therefore now no condemnation only a week or so ago in fact last Friday dear godly Dutch friend of mine was laid to rest taken with cancer of the liver and passed to his eternal rest in nine weeks suddenly swept into eternity but the Tuesday before he died on the Friday he said to a friend there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in

Christ Jesus and I believe he knew it I had a sweet talk to him on the telephone a fortnight before he died and his heart was full of the mercy of his God to one who was so unworthy and so undeserving and these things were uttered in the face of eternity for he knew as the doctors had told him he only had days to live blessed be my rock all in a dying hour I remember many years ago now when I first went out to preach preaching in West Street Croydon and the sweetness on one occasion whilst I was preaching of those words as I spoke them bring me down to death and there banish all my guilt and fear the psalmist here could speak of Christ his rock and he could praise him that he had been able to stand upon that rock and who have been delivered out of deep water and who've been kept from sinking into despair he preached last Sunday morning from the word

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God he was standing upon the rock Christ Jesus the one who was able to keep him from falling in the hour and hour of death to keep him from sinking into hell the one who had died to take away his sin the one who had prepared that glorious righteousness for him the one who stood between him and the wrath of the father and who was his shield and his defender the one whom he describes here and he is speaking of Christ when he says in the second verse the Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer my God my strength in whom

I will trust my butler and the horn of my salvation and my high tower this is the one whom he equally spoke of in the twenty second psalm when he speaks of this they pierced my hands and my feet this is the one that he was looking to one of whom it was said they parted my garments among them and for my vesture did they cast off he could speak of his God as his rock and he could return the worship the feet of Christ the God he had stood upon that rock and he knew in the hour and article of condemnation and sin and guilt he knew in that hour what it was for his

[ 30 : 51 ] God to pardon him and he knew the sovereign grace and mercy of his God in salvation only could he utter these words because he had a sacred experience of the rock under his feet so we come to ask this question tonight what experience have you have I of this rock Christ Jesus have we known him as our shield and our defender have we known him as that one who is able to keep us from falling have we known him as that one who has washed us in the fountain of his precious blood him rightly says when all around my soul gives way he then is all my strength and stone how good it is to see his dear children brought into the valley of the shadow of death and to behold them as enabled to stand and not to sink in despair and darkness and death but to be like dear old

John Warburton as he uttered his last words in this world hallelujah standing upon the rock raising as it were the very glorious banner of truth which he had held aloft in the pulpit over many many years then in the hour and article of death to do what Philpot said he was doing dying on the truth he had preached dying not on the letter of truth but on the sacred experience of that truth in his heart and proving it for the last time in the pathway that the scriptures speak of how will it be with us in the swellings of Jordan how shall we stand in the swellings of Jordan having done all lived out our last hour to stand stand therefore says the apostle having your loins girt about with truth where will you stand in the swellings of Jordan what a solemn searching question it is all to be able to stand in that precious hymn

Jesus thy blood and righteousness my beauty are my glorious dress you see a child of God is a member of the living family of God and they are a people who know much temptation much affliction much trial many tremblings many sorrows many fears how will they stand they are living family not the godless who have no bands in their death these are the trembling afflicted family of God not those who have a religion which is like a marble monument cold dead these are those who religion has been tried in the fire of temptation they are exercised they have breathing to God they have cries their prayers are like hezekiah like a crane or a swallow so did

I chatter but they come out of the refiner's fire with some sacred refined truth heard of thee with the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth thee wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes is one of the glorious refinements of one who was standing upon the rock and could say blessed be my rock he came through a fiery furnace to a revelation which was given him of his redeemer and there he was I know that my redeemer lived God had brought him to that place given him that sacred ability delivered him out of the persecution of his so called comforter and brought him to a refuge a rock he could say blessed be my rock have you ever been able to say it and the psalmist goes on in this to add this word and let the God of my salvation be exalted well you see there's the nub of the whole matter the God of my salvation it is the sinner and his God as one they all may be one even as we are one

I in them and thou in me that they may be one in all all this is the experience of God's dear children that the God of their salvation will be in their hearts in the reality of it in the precious reality of it occasionally exalted here sweet precious moment in their experience when they will be able to exalt him and say such precious things as why was I made to hear his voice because they have heard his voice and enter wildest room say such precious things as why me because they have known a little living reality in their souls and the

[ 37 : 44 ] God of their salvation is exalted in their heart because he has come to them being precious to them revealed himself to them I say occasional rare moment of worship not the empty shoutings of hallelujah that men today take for evangelical religion not the solemn blending and mixing with the world many take baptism as their salvation I'm afraid sitting down at the Lord's table as heaven baptism then he'll say in that day haven't we not done many mighty works in thy name haven't we been baptized and sat down to the Lord's house I never knew you salvation is the Lord as the scriptures speak

Christ in you the hope of glory we needed to be to be united to Christ and you know a dying thief never took the Lord's supper nor was he ever baptized eyes but he entered glory for one simple reason that he could say that the God of my salvation be exalted the God who has given me one precious promise today thou shalt be with me in paradise and here is the vital crux of the matter do we know him as the God of our salvation or as solemn a salvation which has been prepared for us in eternity past accomplished upon the cross of Calvary and revealed by the

Holy Spirit in the heart in the new birth for one and one solitary reason sovereign grace that's at the root of why you will say why me because you'll know it's all of grace all of grace that's why you'll say why was I made to hear his voice Arminian can't say why me can he those who know that salvation is in the hands of the triune God Father Son and Holy Spirit and they will exalt the God of their salvation under the solemn knowledge one shall be taken and another left under the solemn divine teaching if ever my poor soul is saying this

Christ must be the why and all how we need this teaching in our heart we need every false prop every empty foundation taken right away and we need that foundation put under our feet crying in you a hope of glory I am says Christ the why and that is true and every other why is a false why all to be led in that precious why it is spoken of here by a living soul who has walked in the sweet experience of it and the language of his heart before God who searches all hearts was this the Lord living blessed be my rock and let the

God of my salvation be exalted amen