

## Psalm 108-109

Psalm 108 is a compilation of sorts combining parts of Ps 57 and Ps 60, placing them together. Evidently the psalmist (like Peter) was going to be faithful to remind us of these things; I find that anytime God has it in His heart to repeat a matter it's because I need to hear of the matter again. I wish it weren't so but it's true, as humanity we're needing constantly recalibrated to the things of the Spirit, we're needing to be consistently reminded of the fundamentals of the faith. We've spoken of how a professional athlete will rehearse basic regimens and routines over and over and over again so that when it's game time there's not a lull in his performance but things are just firing off like they should because he's so familiar with what he needs to know it comes naturally to him/her. If that athlete takes a little time off, or decides to retire, but then comes out of retirement often times they're a little rusty, they need to be re-acclimated to some of the things that at one time came so quickly, so naturally when they were on top of their game.

When it comes to spiritual things it seems as though it's all the more applicable, it's Sunday to Wednesday; we have a tendency to be on top of our game (so to speak) having just exercised our spiritual muscles on Sunday, but by Wednesday we need recharged, we've gotten a little rusty. We haven't stayed on top of our game so many times and we need to be re-acclimated once again to the things of the Spirit. It's called the war between the flesh and the spirit, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak; God knows that about us. Therefore in His mercy He constantly, unrelentingly and patiently reminds us of the fundamentals of the spiritual life. Ps 108 is one of those reminders.

Vs1-4

In Vs 1 you find a man who has readied himself to praise the Lord. Make no mistake, when it comes to praising the Lord you have to purpose to do so in your heart. Oh there are times when we feel so overwhelmed, so blessed that we just can't contain ourselves and we erupt spontaneously in praise. But for the most part our praise to God is something that needs to be purposed on our hearts. The bible says, "*The preparations of the heart belong to man,*" Prov 16:1 If you come into this sanctuary expecting to be swept off your feet in a manner that all but forces your heart to praise the Lord and if it doesn't you won't guess what? You probably won't praise the Lord, you probably won't sing or give praise. Because your heart needs to be prepared to praise God, and guess who prepares your heart? You do; when David says, "O God my heart is *steadfast*," he's saying, "My heart is fixed, it's focused upon You, *purposed* toward praising You."

Let me also say this in passing as it regards to praise; there are people who will say something to the extent that they will “*lead lives*” of praise, that they don’t really sing but that they cause their praise to God to be seen by the way they lead their lives. Listen, though it’s true that I believe we should have lives of worship unto the Lord; the fact of the matter is that when the bible speaks of praising the Lord it’s not speaking of how you lead your life (that’s the given) it’s speaking of what comes out of your mouth. We praise the Lord with our lips, in song, in singing and sharing with one another of His goodness, His greatness, His grace, His lovingkindness and all.

Your life might show people that you belong to Jesus, that’s great, but that’s not biblical praise. Praise is what comes out of your mouth. David says here, “I will sing and give praise” which is to say I will praise God through song. So fix your heart *upon* the Lord lest you be distracted *from* the Lord and give to Him *praise*.

The bible exhorts us to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5); again this is something that you need to be purposed in. When it comes to having a steadfast heart, a fixed and focused heart; that is, a heart that’s not divided but rather a singleness of heart you’ve got to safeguard yourself from distracting cares, or wandering thoughts. God doesn’t want you to be *pulled* by this, or *torn* by that but rather He wants you to be totally sold out to Him.

That’s what he’s talking about when he says that he will praise Him even with his glory. The word glory is translated in the NASV as “soul” we’re talking here about that deep inner being of the heart; with all that is within me I will give You praise intentionally, not just singing as the day goes by, but a purposed heartfelt praise.

In Vs 2 David calls upon his skill as a musician to offer his gifts to the Lord; he wanted to consecrate his gift to be used for the glory of God, not solely personal profit. It amazes me the amount of musicians out there who will use their gifts for their own personal profit even though they’re believers, but you’d never know it by the music they write or play. They write about life relationships, broken hearts and positive perspectives, but they don’t awaken their gifts to be used for the glory of God. If there’s a particular field or practice that you excel in, do it to the glory of God... He says, “Awake, lute and harp!” Which is to say he isn’t about to sing some dull and dreary tune, man David wants to jam for the Lord! To play skillfully, lively as unto the Lord.

He says, “I will awaken the dawn.” What does that mean? It means that he’s going to give the 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of his day to the Lord; he’s going to have personal private time with God. I think that it’s so important that we endeavor to start our day with the Lord. I mentioned Sunday morning that things like anxiety, depression and misery aren’t the fingerprints of God in a person’s life. However that doesn’t in anyway diminish the fact that there are times that those emotions can be very real in the child of God. In light of that we spoke about fellowship with God being directly related to fullness of joy, and I think that one of the very practical things that we can do if these things are plaguing us is to make sure that I get up in time to start my day with the Lord. Get up early to praise Him, allow time before work, don’t wait on the kids to wake you up, or don’t get up just in time to get them up for school. Get up in time to get in the word, to fix your heart upon the Lord, purpose to praise Him and spend time in prayer with Him from the very onset of your day.

Vs3

Not only does David state that he will praise the Lord privately, devotionally, he’s also emphatic here about the fact that he will praise God publicly, openly, among the peoples and among the nations. If you praise God personally, devotionally, passionately, odds are you will praise God publicly as well, however if you are one who refuses to praise God in the assembly I would suspect that you probably don’t spend time praising Him privately too much.

I’m not saying you don’t jump in the word, or pray, but as for praising...they seem to be connected, if you won’t praise Him privately you sure won’t praise Him publicly. David here declares that be it in private or be it in public he will focus his heart *upon* the Lord and offer up his praise *to* the Lord. Why?

Vs4

In short 2 reasons, #1 His great mercy and #2 His unending faithfulness. This is what we were talking about a few minutes ago, it’s going to be that realization of God’s mercy toward us, His lovingkindness, His faithfulness to us even though we’re so often faithless that will invoke a heart of praise in us. Remember when Jesus told the Pharisee who was scoffing at Jesus for allowing that sinful woman to wash His feet with her tears that whoever has been forgiven much loves much? It wasn’t that they weren’t both sinners (the Pharisee and the woman) it was that one had a deeper realization of her sin, of God’s great mercy and it invoked her praise, her worship of the Lord in a dramatic fashion.

## Vs5-6

Seems to be a bit of a play on words here in that the name “David” means “beloved.” David is saying, “Deliver me O God from the hand of my enemy, exalt Yourself through delivering me.” But you might note that from *praise* David moved into *prayer*, the 2 so often go together, prayer might lead me to praise, praise might lead me to prayer; they can volley back and forth.

## Vs7-9

In Vs 6 David cries out for help and here in Vs 9 God basically announces that He will deliver him from his enemies all around.

## Vs10-13

I think most obviously the portion that we need to lift out from these last few Vs is what David realized specifically and what we would do well to incorporate into our lives personally; Vs 12 “The help of man is useless.” Jesus said that with out Him we could do nothing. Every problem, every predicament, every rock and hard place; God is the One to Whom we should turn. He is our shield, our fortress, our hiding place, our Wonderful Counselor. We have a tendency to think that we need help from this guy, or that counselor, but David declares that it’s the Lord who will be a very present help in time of need. We need the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, moving through us, too often we look to do things on our own, take care of things through our own endeavors. A.W. Tozer said something to the extent that if the Holy Spirit was removed from the 1<sup>st</sup> century church that 90% of their work would come to a halt. But if the Holy Spirit was removed from the church today 90% of our work wouldn’t be effected at all.

We have all these counselors and therapist who are all too eager to keep you coming back, keep you dependent upon them. The help of man is useless, they should be pointing you to Christ, “Through God we will do valiantly” or in the words of Paul the apostle; “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*” Phil 4:13 “For it is He who shall tread down our enemies” those things that come against us personally or collectively. He’s the One who will defend us and deliver us; fix your heart *on* Him and purpose to give praise *to* Him.

### Psalm 109

Psalm 109 is one of those psalms that you don’t want to stand in the way of if you’re on the receiving end of it because David seems to be unleashing some explosive kinda prayer requests.

As for what exactly this prayer revolves around I don't know, different people say different things but in reality know one really knows. It's obvious that whatever it was and whoever it was David was on the receiving end of some pretty venomous activity and he felt that if they were sowing it, it would only be just if they were reaping it. He says beginning in Vs 1

Vs1-5

I would title this section, "Welcome to the ministry" 😊. Oh don't get me wrong, it's a wonderful thing, the rewards are great and there's nothing better you could hope to do, but don't be deceived it can be tough. You're often on the receiving end of lies, and people speaking in such a way as to obscure the truth so that people believe deceitful things, they will surround you with hate and fight against you with out a cause. In return for your love they become your accusers.

Interesting the word "accusers" in Vs 4 is literally the word from which we get the our word, "Satan" it means "accuser." That's why Satan is referred to as the "accuser of the brethren." When someone is coming unjustly against you, deceitfully accusing you, you can know who's behind it. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but powers, principalities, rulers of darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. It may surface in the form of personal attack from someone, but the reality is there's something deeper. That's why we call it spiritual warfare.

He says in Vs 5 "They have rewarded me evil for good and hatred for my love." It's been said that to render good for good and evil for evil is human, that to render evil for good is satanic, and to render good for evil is Divine. That's what Jesus called us to do remember? He said, *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* Matt 5:43-45 You see it goes deeper than the way things appear on the surface, it's a spiritual matter. How then do we deal with it, how are we to combat it?

Vs4 "But I give myself to prayer." That's what we call hitting the nail right on the epicenter, whenever I find myself wrestling the flesh, be it my children, be it arguing with my wife, or whoever I'm distracted from the primary point of opposition. Where I need to be engaged isn't against people it's against principalities and powers that seduce them or seek to work ruin in some way; and the way that happens is through prayer.

David says, “Do not keep silent O God of my praise.” He’s calling upon the Lord to vindicate him, you’re not generally going to be in a position to defend yourself and as a general rule you *shouldn’t* defend yourself. You should trust the Lord to be your defense; you should give yourself to prayer, take to your knees and fight the good fight. What a testimony. To be able to say that as it pertains to your accusers, those contentious times of life, people breathing lies and deceit about you that you not stand up and shout obscenities at them or return fire for fire toward them, but that you trust in the Lord, and you give yourself to prayer; that you trust the Lord to vindicate you in His time, His way.

Now, some will say that Vs 6-20 are what the enemies of David were saying about him, others say that this is David’s prayer to bring judgment on his enemies. Either way the words are vicious and as for which direction they’re going (from David or toward him) I don’t know it would seem they’re David’s words to me, but I suppose that could be subjective.

#### Vs6-13

I don’t know that there’s much need for exposition here it seems pretty clear doesn’t it? Whether it be David or about David there is some venom in these words. The given is that it’s taken for granted that the one being prayed against has made himself out to be an enemy of God and an enemy of God’s people, because of that the idea here is, “Don’t delay, just deal with it in a radical way.” You might note Vs 8, “...and let another take his office.” If those words in some way ring a bell it’s because Peter quoted them in the book of Acts Ch 1 Vs 20 with reference to Judas. Peter saw these word fulfilled in Judas and his betrayal of Jesus.

#### Vs14-20

Again if they’re words about David he would here be saying, “Hey, turn it on their own heads” if they’re words from David than it just means what it says. But Vs 16-19 kinda shed the light as to why this prayer is so potent. “As they’ve sown, so let them reap, he wasn’t merciful, but he persecuted the poor and needy, he loved cursing...so let it come to him.” He’s saying, “Hey let the whirlwind come, he’s sown to the flesh let him reap corruption.”

Do I recommend this style of praying? No, I recommend taking the approach Jesus commanded, loving your enemy, praying for those who speak ill of you and/or spitefully use you.

#### Vs21-25

What does David mean, “I am poor and needy” he gave over 100 tons of gold and over 200 tons of silver for the building of the temple. David was an incredibly wealthy man, the point here isn’t that he felt poor financially, but that he was broken spiritually, poor in spirit, he’s mourning before the Lord, crying out *to* the Lord. Just looking for God to get in there rescue him.

Jesus issued a blessing to the one who recognized his/her poverty of spirit, said that theirs is the kingdom of God. It's not for the prideful, but for the poor in spirit. David is of a broken and contrite spirit and he recognizes his need before the Lord.

Vs26-29

“God save me in such a way that it's obviously You.” I love that, “Don't let there be any confusion God, may Your deliverance of me be so incredible, so undeniable that You get all the glory. Every time they curse me, You bless me. Every time they arise against me, You do something great for me, in my life so that they're the ones left ashamed. Let it be obvious that You're for me and not against me.”

Vs30-31

When God stands with you, salvation is guaranteed *for* you. Note again Vs 30, where does praise come from? “My mouth” and among the multitudes; privately and publicly may we be a people of praise...

Prayer Points:

God we're so thankful for the greatness of Your mercy and Your overwhelming faithfulness. Teach us to be a people of praise, a people who want to proclaim Your goodness openly. That we would magnify You collectively; may we learn to trust You more. You are our defense, our shield, our fortress, You encompass us about, and we give you praise.