

# Psalm 28

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[ 0 : 00 ] Psalm 28. Of David. To you, Lord, I call. You are my rock. Do not turn a deaf ear to me, for if you remain silent, I shall be like those who go down to the pit.

Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands towards your most holy place. Do not drag me away with the wicked, with those who do evil, who speak cordially with their neighbours but harbour malice in their hearts.

We pay them for their deeds and for their evil work. We pay them for what their hands have done and bring back on them what they deserve. Because they have no regard for the deeds of the Lord and what his hands have done, he will tear them down and never build them up again.

Praise be to the Lord, for he has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart trusts in him and he helps me.

My heart leaps for joy and with my song I praise him. The Lord is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.

[ 1 : 17 ] Save your people and bless your inheritance. Be their shepherd and carry them forever. Amen. Ray, over to you. Hi everyone.

Let's praise. We ask God to help us to understand and hear his word together tonight. Father, thank you for the opportunity we have of hearing from your word.

We thank you for that psalm of David. Speak to us, Lord. Make my words clear. Make all of our thoughts clear. And will you please do your work in us this evening.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So this psalm is a prayer or song of David. And as it was read through, you've probably picked up there that he is pouring out his heart to God, his needy heart. He's expressing to God where he's at at that particular moment. So that's our starting point tonight. Where are you tonight in your experience with God?

[ 2 : 28 ] Does God, as it seems at the start of the psalm here, does God seem distant to you? Do you find it hard to pray? Perhaps the joy that you think you should have as a Christian, you just don't feel that.

Or maybe you had it once, but it's kind of evaporated. Is that your position tonight? Or are you more like the end of the psalm? You're assured that God is walking with you.

You're happy in that. You're rejoicing in his strength. And you're giving thanks with a joyful heart. Where are you tonight? That's where we're starting. But I want us all to realize that both of those experiences can be true of the Christian tonight.

And in fact, it was David's experience both of those experiences just in this one psalm. So we're going to delve into that and see if we can explore that a bit more.

We first of all see David's despair in verses one to two. David here is expressing, above everything, he's expressing his need of God.

[ 3 : 37 ] Let me read those verses to you. To you, Lord, I call. You are my rock. Do not turn a deaf ear to me, for if you remain silent, I will be like those who go down to the pit.

Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands towards your most holy place. So David here is desperate.

You can get from the tone of this that he's calling out to God from his desperation. He is pleading with the Lord to hear him. Verse one, he says, to you, Lord, I call.

Do not turn a deaf ear to me. Verse two, hear my cry for mercy as I call to you to help. Help me as I lift up my hands to your dwelling place.

What's at stake here for David? David. He's saying, if you remain silent, I should be like those who go down to the pit. In other words, it's as if I was dead, as if I'm a goner.

[ 4 : 41 ] No hope if you remain silent. So he needs to hear God answering his prayer and he's praying from a point of weakness.

He's praying, feeling his great need. If that happens to be where you are tonight, then you are in a good place. I say that because when we feel our weakness, we are then open to God and what he has for us.

And he is able to deal with us. If we're coming in strength, then, you know, it can be from a point of pride, can't it? Praying from a point of weakness is a good place to start because we then throw ourselves on God's mercy.

And as we see later on in this psalm, God becomes our strength. So he's pleading with God to hear him. But as we read on, verses three to five, we see that he's particularly troubled by the behavior of the wicked.

So he has his issues with whether God is hearing him, but particularly, his troubles revolving around the attitude and the presence of the wicked.

[ 5 : 56 ] Verse three to five. Let me read that for you. Do not drag me away with the wicked, with those who do evil, who speak cordially with their neighbors, but harbor malice in their hearts.

Repay them for their deeds and for their evil work. Repay them for what their hands have done and bring back on them what they deserve. Because they have no regard for the deeds of the Lord and what his hands have done, he will tear them down and never build them up again.

So this is what David is saying. Follow with me. Verse three. They're hypocrites. They're speaking cordially with their neighbor, but in their hearts is malice, pretending to be friends, but actually getting evil.

Verse five. They've got no regard for the Lord. And if you look at what verse five says there, it's no regard for evil for what the Lord does or no regard for what the Lord has made.

Perhaps for David, perhaps people around David. No regard for what the Lord has made. He's so concerned here for the honor of the Lord that this is grieving him.

[ 7 : 07 ] This is getting to his heart. This is causing him anguish. So he asked God to give them what they deserve. So he puts it like this, according to the work of their hands.

David here stresses that he doesn't want to be counted with them. He wants to be held separate from the wicked and from the judgment that they deserve.

So he asks in verse three, do not drag me away with the wicked. It's not so much the fear of death, but it's more the disgrace that being dragged away with the wicked would be.

He wants to walk with God. He wants to be separate from the wicked people. He doesn't want to suffer the same fate as them. So the mood again starts to change slightly in verse five.

There seems to be some kind of resolution coming. He realizes that really he doesn't have to worry about the wicked. So he asks God, he knows that God will bring them to judgment.

[ 8 : 18 ] He doesn't seek revenge. He knows he can just leave that with God. God's justice is assured in this case. This new perspective is the turning point of the psalm.

And from now on, we see a different language. From verse six onwards, it changes quite radically. So we can learn from David here that it is actually right to be troubled by wickedness around us.

That's not a bad thing. To actually be sad when we see some of these things on the news and it should cause us to pray for the wars that are going on and the various troubles.

For the persecuted church or injustice that we see around us. Or perhaps it's been committed to us, being poured on us, injustice to us.

We don't have to worry about those things. The God of justice will do things as he should. He will bring judgment at the right time.

[ 9 : 28 ] And it is for us to trust him and to leave it in his hands. And now we see verse six, David starts to address this trust. He starts to speak of this trust he has.

Verses six and seven. Praise be to the Lord for he has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart trusts in him and he helps me.

My heart leaps for joy. And with my song I praise him. So verse seven, this language and the tone completely changes. The Lord is my strength and shield.

from a desperate calling for help in verses one and two. He has assurance and a heartfelt praise to God.

How does he get there? We've seen in verse five that he leaves the wicked to God. He's not going to stress about that. He trusts God to do what is right.

[ 10 : 28 ] But now he also has assurance in verse six that God has in fact heard his cry for mercy. What's changed?

Certainly probably, yes, certainly not his circumstances. But his trust in God has changed because now he knows for sure that God has heard.

And this is an exercise of faith. It's not suddenly that something else has happened. But he casts his faith completely on the Lord and he aligns his heart with the Lord.

What do I mean by that? Verse seven, read this, heart comes up twice there. My heart trusts in him. My heart leaps for joy. So he's still got a heart cry but this time it's no longer a desperate cry but one of trust.

In verse two he's asking hear my cry for mercy. Now in verse six, he has heard my cry for mercy.

What was a prayer to the Lord in verse two is now a declaration of faith that God has heard him and his response is to sing out.

[ 11 : 41 ] His heart sings out. So he hasn't seen a resolution to his problems but what he does see now is the Lord is his strength and shield.

The Lord is his helper. the Lord is the source of his joyful praise. He trusts that the Lord has heard his prayer not because he now of what he feels but because of who God is.

It's a bit like what we were hearing this morning actually that our mind is what drives the change in us. When our mind is fixed on the Lord then our hearts change.

The final two verses here are a conclusion to the prayer conclusion to David's prayer and they're a prayer for God's people. We see that God has answered David's prayer had shown that David strengthened shield and we see here that he does something for him.

David here is called God's anointed. And what God does for his anointed so he does for his people. The blessing and this is important to grasp the blessing for God's people flows through the anointed king.

[ 13 : 05 ] Now you've probably from other psalms we've looked at already seen where we're going with that that Jesus is our anointed king our blessings flow through him and David is just a reflection he's looking forward to that.

So verses 8 and 9 blessing through the king the Lord is the strength of his people a fortress of salvation for his anointed one save your people and bless your inheritance be their shepherd and carry them forever!

The Lord is David's strength in verse 7 so in verse 8 we're told he's also the strength of his people the Lord is a fortress of salvation for his anointed one verse 8 so David then prays to God save your people David's experience is the people's experience the blessing for the people flows through the king we know from the Psalms that the anointed king David is a picture of God's anointed king Jesus and what David experience foreshadows Jesus' experience so I want to just finish tonight by looking at how Jesus is the fulfilment of this psalm we know don't we that Jesus would have been familiar with this psalm he was familiar with all of the psalms he heard them every week when he went to he went to the temple and he heard that heard psalms read he sang them he no doubt memorised them and he probably memorised this very one it puts a different flavour on it doesn't it when we see that actually this is what the

Lord was singing himself but we can imagine that as he faced death the words of this psalm became starker to him in their reality we see there in verses one and two that God is silent or David feels that God is silent to him this was Jesus' experience of course on the cross the father was silent Hebrews 5 7 tells us that during the days of Jesus' life on earth he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death and he was heard because of his reverent submission so God always heard Jesus' prayers but in these three dark hours on the cross God did not answer my

God my God why have you forsaken me as Jesus repeats Psalm 22 verse 1 to God the response silence he was dragged away with the sinners verse 3 speaks of David though a sinner himself he pleaded not to be dragged away with the wicked not to share their fate and his David's plea in verse 4 was that they will be repaid for the evil deeds that they have done but Jesus was repaid for the evil deeds that we have done though pure and innocent the king of heaven gave himself to suffer death and hell for you and I he was dragged away with the wicked to share the fate that should have been theirs justice at the cross too was satisfied

[ 17 : 06 ] David called out for justice and here we see as David trusted the God who does justice and is just we see the justice of God satisfied on the cross who who!

who!

He's now interceding.

Because of his death, he prays for us, as David prayed there in verse 9, who prayed for God's people to be saved and to be shepherded and to be carried forever.

Now that is Jesus' prayer for us. So just to conclude, the blessings that belong to Christ because of his death for us are now ours.

[18:17] We know that because of Jesus, we needn't doubt as David did. God answers our prayers because of Jesus. Because of Jesus, God's justice is satisfied completely.

Because of Jesus, the Lord Almighty is our strength and shield. And because of Jesus, our hearts can leap for joy as we consider who he is and what he's done for us.

And may God help us to feel some of that joy as we reflect on him. Can I just pray and then hand back to Steve?

Father, we want to thank you so much for this psalm. We want to thank you particularly for how it shows us our Lord Jesus.

And how he satisfied your will, your justice so completely. He was prepared to be dragged away with the sinners for us.

[19:23] Thank you that all we have is because of him. And we pray that, Lord, we will live joyfully in response to his death for us.

In his name. Amen. Amen. Amen. If you'd grab your Bible again, turn with me to Isaiah 52, page 741.

741. I'm going to read this to us as we come to share the Lord's Supper together. That race shown us, hasn't he, just how brilliant it is what the Lord Jesus has done for us.

That he went through the rejection of Psalm 28 so that we could rejoice in him and not be likewise rejected. And that's the theme that Isaiah 52 and 53 pick up really famously.

And as we prepare our hearts to come to share the Lord's Supper together, perhaps you can reflect on these words as we read them. Thank the Lord that he has done this for you.

[20:34] Pray that the Lord would draw near to you as we share bread and wine. And as I finish reading that, we're going to have just a time of open prayer where anyone may pray and thank the Lord for what he's done for us.

Let's thank the Lord for this bread and wine before we share it together. But let me pick it up. Verse 13 of Isaiah 52. See, my servant will act wisely. He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

Just as there were many who were appalled at him, his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness. So he will sprinkle many nations and kings will shut their mouths because of him.

For what they were not told, they will see and what they have not heard, they will understand. Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

He grew up before him like a tender shoot, like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance so that we should desire him.

[21:39] He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces, he was despised and we held him in low esteem.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering. Yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was on him and by his wounds we are healed.

We all like sheep have gone astray. Each of us has turned to our own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted. Yet he did not open his mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

[22:38] By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet he of his generation protested. He was cut off from the land of the living. For the transgression of my people he was punished.

He was assigned a grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death. Though he had done no violence nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer.

Though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days.

And the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and

be satisfied.

By his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify many. He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will give him a portion among the great. He will divide the spoils with the strong.

Because he poured out his life unto death. And was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many. And made intercession for the transgressors.

[ 23 : 45 ] Amen. Amen.