

Taste and See

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[0 : 00] Come, my children, listen to me. I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.

Turn from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry.

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to blot out their name from the earth. The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them.

He delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all.

He protects all his bones. Not one of them will be broken. Evil will slay the wicked. The foes of the righteous will be condemned.

[1 : 07] The Lord will rescue his servants. No one who takes refuge in him will be condemned. One of the first things as I was looking at this psalm that just really stood out to me is that in this entire thing, David doesn't ask God for anything.

There's not a single request here. And as I got looking at it, I realized that this is a very different psalm than the ones that we've looked at so far. The ones we've looked at have been very personal.

David has addressed them directly to God. In this one, David's not talking to God. He's talking very much about God, but he's talking to people.

It's not a prayer. It's a poem or a song. It's actually an acrostic. It's got the different letters of the Hebrew alphabet start each line. But surprising to me.

I mean, with all that David has been through, and he doesn't ask God for a single thing in all of this prayer, in all of this thing that he writes, this psalm.

[2 : 16] So what does he say? The first thing that he begins with is an expression of his desire to worship the Lord. He says, I will extol the Lord, which means to elevate, to lift him up.

I will extol the Lord at all times. His praise will always be on my lips. I will glory in the Lord. David is ready to worship.

And you get the sense that this is not just a one-moment thing. He says, I will extol the Lord at all times. His praise will always be on my lips.

You are worthy of my worship and honor and glory, not just today, but at all times and always.

And at this point, David kind of turns and says, I don't want to just worship the Lord by myself. I want you to join with me and worship him with me.

[3 : 25] He says in verse 3, glorify the Lord with me. Let us exalt his name together. Let's give him honor.

Let's give him glory. Let's give him praise. Let's do it together. And his invitation is not just to those who are, for whom everything is going well and who are really feeling it.

At the end of verse 2, he says, let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Are you feeling afflicted? Do you have some afflictions in your life right now?

David wants you to hear what he is about to say about the Lord and to come to the place where you too are ready to join in and praise and celebrate and rejoice.

Which kind of brings us to the question, well, what's got David so eager to worship? Why is he just ready to give it and to get as many other people as he can to praise the Lord?

[4 : 36] Well, it's very personal for David. In verse 4, this is what he says. He says, I sought the Lord and he answered me. Verse 6, this poor man called and the Lord heard him.

Do you hear how David describes himself? This poor man. There I was sitting in a cell of the Philistines with nothing.

Everything that I once had back home in Israel, gone. I had nothing, nothing but fear of what they're going to do to me.

And I sought the Lord. I called out to him. In verse 4, he answered me. Verse 6, he heard me.

And what did the Lord do? David says, he delivered me. Verse 4, from all my fears. Verse 6, he saved this poor man out of all his troubles.

[5 : 51] What really strikes me is that word all. Not just some of my fears. Not just some of my troubles.

All of them. Everything that I was afraid of, I'm not afraid of anymore. The Lord has dealt with that.

Everything that was a problem for me that I was worried about, I'm not worried about anymore.

And this is amazing because we know that David's troubles are not over. I mean, now he's escaped from the Philistines and he's headed back to his home country as a wanted fugitive. And yet the Lord has done something amazing for him.

And that's why he's ready to worship and praise. He's got him out of the situation he was in. His very obvious, tangible, physical troubles.

His enemies right there. Him in a prison cell. But he's also done a work in here. And dealt with his fears.

[6 : 54] His perspective has changed. As I go back home, I'm not worried. I'm not afraid. Not in this moment anyway, because the Lord is with me.

If he can get me out of here, he can get me out of the next thing. He can deal with my problems. He can deal with my troubles. We know from the story that David actually did something to get out of this.

He pretended to be mad. And I would have loved to have been there just to see that. Especially knowing that it was all something that he was putting on.

But David doesn't take any credit for it whatsoever. He refers to himself as a poor man with nothing. Who got him out of there? The Lord.

He delivered me. If it weren't for him, Abimelech never would have bought it. He gives God all the credit and all the glory.

[7 : 56] This is a wonderful story for David. David. But David wants us to know that this is not just something that God does for him.

Because David was God's favorite. David wants us, as we've just seen, to join with him and worship with him. He wants us to think about the troubles that we have in our lives and what God can do about those things for us.

So that we might experience his deliverance too and come to the place where we're ready to join with him. And worship. And praise.

And so David, at this point, kind of takes up the role of a teacher in this psalm. The rest of this psalm, you could almost call it a wisdom psalm. He's going to share with us some of the things that he's learned.

And many of these things are rooted in his own experience that he has been through. But we also know that these are, don't just come from David. These are words that come from God himself.

[9 : 02] This is God's wisdom, which comes by his spirit through David to us. And so what does David have to say? Well, all of it has to do with how things are between the Lord and his people.

Let's look at verse 18 first. David says, The Lord, Yahweh, is close to the brokenhearted.

He saves those who are crushed in spirit. David knows what it's like to feel brokenhearted.

As we just talked about, he's had everything ripped out of his life, torn away from him. All the people he loves. His wife. His wife. His family. His best friend.

And what has David discovered in his brokenheartedness? That the Lord is with him. And not just with him, but close. Do you have some brokenheartedness in your heart this morning?

[10 : 15] Do you know that the Lord is close? If you do. David says he saves those who are crushed in spirit.

You can just picture David sitting in that Philistine cell with nothing. Wondering what they're going to do to him. Just feeling crushed in spirit.

And yet the Lord saw how he felt. And what was David's experience? He saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Not just David, but all of his people who are in these places. In verse 15, David says, The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous.

And when we hear that word, the righteous, there might be a tendency to think, well, does that include me? Have I lived good enough to be considered the righteous and get that blessing or that promise?

[11 : 23] I'm not going to go too deep into this, but we all know that there's those verses that say, no one is righteous, not even one. But the way that the righteous is being used here and often is used in the Psalms and Proverbs is not to refer to people who are sinless or perfect, because of course nobody is.

Nobody except Christ. It's used generally to refer to the Lord's people. To those who consider Yahweh, the Lord, Jesus, to be their God.

To those who trust in him. To those who look to him for help. To those who generally obey his commands and live rightly.

And when they don't and when they mess up and they blow it like Psalm 103 talks about, they trust him for his compassion and mercy and forgiveness. Those are the righteous.

And if there's any doubt whether or not we make the cut or we're in, all we need to do is look to Jesus. Because if there's anybody that was righteous, it's him.

[12 : 33] He lived perfect. He lived a sinless life. He's the son of God. And he and the apostles make clear for us that those of us who receive his gift, we are in him.

We become in Christ. And so the good things that are for the righteous, we get through Christ because we are in him.

Paul actually says this in his letter to the Corinthians. He says all the promises that are made are yes in Christ for us. And so these statements about the righteous, they're for us.

Those of us who belong to Jesus, who are in him. David is talking about how it is between the Lord and his people. He says the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry.

Verse 17, the righteous cry out and the Lord hears them. He delivers them from all their troubles. I love these words. Isn't it a comfort to know that the Lord's eyes are on his people?

[13 : 51] He is watching over you. He notices the things that are happening in your life. He is looking out for you. His ears are attentive to their cry.

I love that phrase. I couldn't help but think of those moments where I'm over at somebody's house and I'm visiting with them and my kids are playing with all the kids in the other room and there's lots of noise in both rooms and all of a sudden in that moment I hear somebody cry out and I know exactly who it is.

It's my daughter. And how do I know? Because amidst all the noise I know my daughter's cry. I know her.

She's my daughter. My ears are specially tuned in to that cry. It's not a perfect picture but it's a helpful one I think of how God's ears are attentive to the cry of his people.

He knows his people. And he's a better father than I am. In many cases for me it's well I hope they're alright. We'll give it a couple minutes and we'll see.

[15 : 11] We'll see how long they keep going. It doesn't sound like they died or anything like that. That's not what David's experience was though. He says that the Lord's ears are attentive to their cry.

The righteous cry out. The Lord hears them. He delivers them from all their troubles. He doesn't just sit back and say oh we'll see how they do. You know. He delivers them from all their troubles.

He steps in and brings them out. And that's really one of the things that David wants us to understand about the Lord and his people.

I mean we don't have the same troubles as David did. We've got all kinds of different problems and troubles in our lives. But David is speaking in general terms so that we will connect the dots to our own lives.

To our own troubles. The Lord can deal with and help us through those troubles too. In fact David he wants us to get this so much he says it again in verse 19.

[16 : 19] He says the righteous person may have many troubles but the Lord delivers him from them all. All of them. It's an amazing statement.

This is how it is between God and his people. And we don't know how long David was sitting in that Philistine cell. It may not be immediately that he delivers us from it.

And David's troubles are far from over. But he does deliver his people from all their troubles in his perfect time and in his wisdom.

Up in verse 5 David says those who look to the Lord are radiant. Their faces are never covered with shame. I was thinking about that this week like what a statement.

Those who look to the Lord are radiant. Their faces are full of joy. That's quite something to say after David has said that he was a poor man and crushed in spirit and broken hearted.

[17 : 35] Something to really meditate on in those moments where I'm not radiant and joyful. Perhaps it's because I haven't been looking to the Lord.

I've been looking instead at my circumstances. I've been looking at the problems in my life. I've been looking inward into my own soul and listening to my own thoughts and anxieties and worries. Those who look to the Lord are radiant. Verse 7 The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him and he delivers them.

I love the picture that we get from this. I, just in my own imagination picture, you know, here we are out camped with the army. The enemy armies are camped all around and we don't know when they're going to strike.

We don't know where they're going to come from at what time of the day and the night. But one thing we can be certain of, David says here, is that we are okay because around us the angel of the Lord is encamped.

[18 : 46] They're going to have to go through him first to get to me. So I don't need to be afraid. I can rest easy. the angel of the Lord may be unseen, but this is the Lord we're talking about.

All of this kind of stirs in our own minds the question that I think we need to all think about. What are the troubles that you're going through right now in your life?

what are the problems that you're facing? What are those things that are weighing on you? Be they circumstantial, be they relationships.

What will you do about those things? What have you been doing about those things? We all have a decision to make and David is aware of that as well.

will we try to manage these things on our own? Will we just try to make a plan and deal with them as best as we can?

[20 : 04] Or will we turn to the Lord and do as David did and call out to him and cry out to him for his help and ask him to come and deliver us?

It's a choice that we all need to make in each one of the different troubles and difficulties that we face. And David kind of comes to this moment in verse eight, which is kind of the centerpiece of this whole psalm where he says this.

He says, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. I love that metaphor.

Taste and see. There are some things in life that we can never fully understand or appreciate or enjoy until we taste and see.

I don't care how good a poet you are or how good a musician you are, but your words and your music can never describe what I just experienced there in all of his fullness and all of his goodness.

[21 : 23] So it is with the Lord. Until we take that step and entrust ourselves to him, our problems to him, call out to him, we'll never know just how good he is and how well he takes care of his people.

as David has been talking about here. Taste and see that the Lord is good. You need to come and experience this for yourself so that you can join with me in worship and glorify the Lord with me.

So do it. Blessed is the one who takes refuge with him and trust yourself to him and trust your problems to the Lord and see for yourself just how good he is.

How wonderfully he takes care of our needs, just how aware he is of everything that's going on in our lives and how he is faithful to deliver us in every situation.

It's a wonderful invitation. Taste and see. It's a delightful relationship that we can have with God. But it's also a serious reality when we take a step back and think about it for a moment.

[22 : 44] This is God, the creator of the universe, holy, righteous, good, and we are human beings.

We're his creatures and we're sinful. We're rebels at that. And so David follows up taste and see that the Lord is good with this.

Fear the Lord, you his holy people. Take the Lord seriously. Don't treat him lightly. Treat him with deep reverence and respect as is fitting for who he is.

He's the Lord. He's God. But as quickly as he urges us to do that, he reminds us of the good things that the Lord does for those who fear him.

Right away, he says, fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

[23 : 54] God takes good care of his people such that they lack nothing. That's an interesting thing for David to be saying right now when he has nothing and he has just barely escaped from the Philistines.

Those who fear the Lord lack no good thing. I don't have anything, but I believe it and I know it's true. This is one of those things that is easy for us to doubt.

Is that really how it is between God and his people? Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing? That almost sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? If we go back to the beginning, we remember that's kind of what Satan used with his conversation with Eve.

Is the Lord really good? Does he really care about you? Did God really say that you can't eat out of any of the trees in the garden? What a stingy guy.

What a selfish guy. He doesn't care about you. Oh, just one tree. Just one tree he said that you couldn't eat. Well, you know why he said that, right?

[25 : 19] Because he's withholding something good from you. He knows that if you eat it, you'll become like him. You'll know something good. You'll become something good.

God doesn't care about you. He's not good. He's withholding something good from you. David says exactly the opposite.

Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. The lions, they may grow weak and hungry. The Lord doesn't just take care of his people with slim pickings.

You know, just enough for us to eke out our existence like weak and starving lions that are looking around in the desert and they can't find anything to eat. That's not the way the Lord takes care of his people.

They lack no good thing. They lack nothing. He's generous and he's abundant in his provision. He gives and he gives and he gives. Why wouldn't he?

[26 : 23] I mean, we just celebrated what the Lord has done for us this morning and isn't that what Paul said? he who did not spare his own son the best most precious thing that he had but gave him up for us all.

How will he not also along with him give us all things? Everything that we need. Everything that's good for us.

Do you believe that? Oftentimes when we don't get what we desire, when our plans are frustrated, we question God, we doubt his goodness.

But he's already given us the most costly gift of all. It proves that he's willing to give us everything that's good for us. And so if he hasn't given us something good, then perhaps it's because he knows it's not good for us to have.

Or maybe not at this time. we have to trust his wisdom in that. And so I want to ask you again this morning, as we bring this to a close, what are your troubles?

[27 : 41] What problems are you facing right now? In the honesty of your heart, what is it? what are you going to do about it?

If there's one thing that we hear from David in this psalm, it's this invitation to entrust your problem, your troubles to the Lord.

Try it out and see for yourself just how good he is and how he will take care of you in your situation and your problem.

Taste and see for yourself. And when you see, then come glorify the Lord with me. Let us exalt his name together.

Let's pray. Amen. Father in heaven, we thank you for these precious words and it is amazing how you speak to every issue in our lives so clearly, so powerfully.

[28 : 53] You're an amazing God. We thank you for these words. We ask that you would guard them, that you would cause them to take root in our hearts, and that you would help us to truly take you up on this offer all week long, no matter what difficulties come.

we want to see just how good you are. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. We'll be right back.