

Psalm 21 — “Praising God for the Victory After the Battle!”

The presence of God is a two-edged sword. For the faithful who **trust** him, God gives salvation and blessing, while for the rebellious who **resist** his rule, God’s coming means sure judgment (Gerald Wilson).

The literary outline of Psalm 21

- A v.1-6 = expressions of praise (the joy of the godly)
- B v.7 = the exalting of God (the king’s trust in God Most High)**
- A’ v.8-13 = considerations of doom (the doom of the wicked)

Background to Psalm 21

- Psalm 20 = prayer *before* the battle [*petition!*]
- Psalm 21 = prayer *after* the battle [*praise!*]

★ In our Messiah, we do triumph & have **victory!**

★ 1 Cor 15:57 - thanks be to God who gives us the victory thru our LORD Jesus Christ!

★ 2 Cor 2:14 - we **always** have the TRIUMPH in Christ

Interesting Interpretive/Historical Note:

✓ The Aramaic Targum translation renders Psalm 21:1, 7 as “King Messiah” – the early Jews believed this psalm pointed beyond David to the future Messiah’s victory & coming judgment.

✓ Additionally: Rabbi Solomon Ishaaki, known as **Rashi** (1040 A.D.) wrote: “Our old doctors interpreted this Psalm of King Messiah, but in order to counter (oppose) the Schismatics [i.e. the Christians] it is better to understand it of David himself”

*So: even Rashi acknowledged that early Jewish rabbis interpreted this as Messianic.

THESIS — in Psalm 21, when the King returned from battle, all rejoice. How can we, as God’s people, learn from this and praise God for what He has done in our lives?

1. TRIUMPH in your king’s victory (1-6)
2. TRUST in your King’s loyal-love (7)
3. TREMBLE before your King’s vengeance (8-13)

I. TRIUMPH IN YOUR KING’S VICTORY! (1-6)

>> The ABCs of praising God...

1. **answers** (1-2) — cf. v.2b - “*Selah*” (pause & ponder & marvel!)
2. **blessings** (3)
3. **continuance** (of life) (4)
4. **dignity** (5-6) -

II. TRUST IN YOUR KING'S LOYAL-LOVE! (7)

4 key words:

1. **Submission** —

2. **Strength** —

Elements included in the *loyal, steadfast lovingkindness of God [hesed love]*:

(1) divine; (2) unilateral; (3) covenantal; (4) faithful/unchanging; (5) eternal/unbreakable

3. **Savior** —

4. **Stability** —

Let us praise and join the chorus Of the saints enthroned on high
Here they trusted Him before us Now their praises fill the sky
 Thou hast washed us with Thy blood Thou hast washed us with Thy blood
 Thou hast washed us with Thy blood Thou art worthy Lamb of God
***John Newton ("Let us love and sing and wonder")*

III. TREMBLE BEFORE YOUR KING'S VENGEANCE! (8-13)

1. God **finds** them (8)

2. God **devours** them (9-10)

The fiery oven is ignited merely by the unbearable appearance of God and endures eternally. For the Day of Judgment will not last for a moment only but will stand throughout eternity and will thereafter never come to an end. Constantly the damned will be judged, constantly they will suffer pain, and constantly they will be a fiery oven, that is, they will be tortured within by supreme distress and tribulation. (Martin Luther)

Now, do not begin telling me that that is metaphorical fire: who cares for that? If a man were to threaten to give me a metaphorical blow on the head, I should care very little about it; he would be welcome to give me as many

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as he pleased. And what say the wicked? “We do not care about metaphorical fires.” But they are real, sir – yes, as real as yourself. There is a real fire in hell, as truly as you have now a real body. (Charles Spurgeon)

3. God **frustrates** them (11)

4. God **aims** at them (12)

All the language that strikes terror into our hearts – weeping and gnashing of teeth, outer darkness, the worm, the fire, *Gehenna*, the great gulf fixed – is all directly taken from our Lord’s teaching. It is from Jesus Christ that we learn the doctrine of eternal punishment. (J.I. Packer)

So what do we do — in light of the clear truths of vv.8-12?

1. Conduct yourself with integrity
2. Speak Law & Gospel with urgent clarity
3. Speak up and stutter not in warning of hellfire
4. Assure the wicked of their failure & doom.
5. Summon rebels to humble repentance & submissive faith in Christ

v.13 - “we” will sing and “we” will praise.

The “We” (plural) brings the song of Ps 21 to a close and brings it into the category of “CORPORATE PRAISE” (for the worship of the congregation in the Temple worship).

Psalm 21 — "Praising God for the Victory After the Battle!"**VICTORY IN JESUS**

I heard an old, old story how a Savior came from glory,
 How He gave His life on Calvary to save a wretch like me;
 I heard about His groaning, of His precious blood's atoning,
 Then I repented of my sins and won the victory

I heard about His healing, of His cleansing pow'r revealing
 How he made the lame to walk again and caused the blind to see
 And then I cried, "Dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit,"
 And some sweet day I'll sing up there the song of victory.

*O victory in Jesus, my Savior, forever!
 He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood;
 He loved me ere I knew Him, and all my love is due Him.
 He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood*

I heard about a mansion he has built for me in glory,
 And I heard about the streets of gold beyond the crystal sea;
 About the angels singing and the old redemption story,
 And some sweet day I'll sing up there the song of victory.

PSALM 21: Psalter (Isaac Watts)

Tune: Doxology (Praise God from whom all blessings flow)

David rejoiced in God his strength,
 Raised to the throne by special grace;
 But Christ the Son appears at length,
 Fulfills the triumph and the praise.

Honor and majesty divine
 Around his sacred temples shine;
 Blest with the favor of thy face,
 And length of everlasting days.

How great is the Messiah's joy
 In the salvation of thy hand!
 Lord, thou hast raised his kingdom high,
 And giv'n the world to his command.

Thine hand shall find out all his foes;
 And as a fiery oven glows
 With raging heat and living coals,
 So shall thy wrath devour their souls.

Thy goodness grants whate'er he will,
 Nor doth the least request withhold;
 Blessings of love prevent him still,
 And crowns of glory, not of gold.

All glory be to Christ our king! All glory be to Christ!
 His rule and reign we'll ever sing, All glory be to Christ!