

Psalm 108:1-13 A Boost in Hope Falls Ch. PM 3/26/2023

This Psalm comes from the heat of battle, and it is confident of victory!
Whenever we are facing a difficulty, how do we start our day?

In this Psalm, we will learn how David start his day when he was going through a difficulty.

Shaq is now retired, but when he was competing, how did he start his day on game day? How did a basketball player named Shaq (Shaquille O'Neal), who is 7 feet, 1 inch tall, start his day whenever it was game day, and he was playing basketball in the National Basketball Association? Not with coffee! Shaq has never had a cup of coffee in his life. Since the majority of his basketball playing career took place in Florida, he chose a glass of orange juice. Along with his orange juice, he ate an egg omelet for a boost in protein. The difference between his omelet and yours is that his omelet had a dozen eggs. If we could learn from Shaq how to prepare for game day, we could learn from David how to start a day of difficulty.

Psalm 108 consists of a repeat of the boost in hope from the end of Psalm 57 and a repeat of the boost in hope from the end of Psalm 60. In Psalm 57, David was being hunted by Saul, and in Psalm 60, David was facing defeat by Edom; but then each Psalm ended with a boost in hope by remembering how God helped David through each problem. So, in Psalm 108 David formulated a double boost in hope!

Why? Because David the king was going through more hard times, and he wanted to do that in a godly way by turning to the God who helped in the past!

During any difficulty, Christians can have a boost in hope.

1. Awaken your hope as the first thing in your day. (v.1-5)

The title of Psalm 108 is "*A Song. A Psalm of David.*" It could be translated melody of David. It means that David wrote not just the words, but also the music.

David was a warrior, a poet, and a musician. This Psalm is a warrior's morning psalm for a day of battle, designed for a double boost in hope.

In verse 1, the first thing that David wrote was "*My heart is steadfast.*" He was committed and unshakeable. In fact, in the original Hebrew language, the very first word of verse 1, is the word steadfast, which means that word is emphasized. Why? David later explains in verse 4, that it was because God is steadfast and because God is faithful. Even on a difficult day, even on the day of war, David experienced stability, because David got his confidence from God.

David already in verse 1 had begun to sing and make melody, but David did not start with the musical instruments. Nor his own voice singing. In verse 1, David wrote, "*I will sing and make melody with all my being.*" David started his day by tuning his heart, and getting his mind right.

In verse 2, only after the heart of the harpist was ready to create the music that he was designed to offer, then the harp was awakened to do what the harp was designed to do. David and the harp then together wake up the next instrument, called a lyre. By the end of verse 2, a new instrument gets added. The dawn itself!

We even have the words that David was singing, written down in verse 3-4. Listen, *“I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations. For Your steadfast love is great, above the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let Your glory be over all the earth.”*

A fascinating thing happened when Our Lord Jesus prayed similarly, in John 12:28, *“Father, glorify Your Name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified [My name], and I will glorify it again.”*

When we are facing difficult times, we need to rehearse truth, such as God is exalted! David was giving praise among peoples, and singing praises to God among all nations. David was forcing himself to accurately estimate the size of the faithfulness of God. It is so great, that if we were to stack up the faithfulness of God, the stack would be so high, that it would reach above the heavens!

Matthew 13, Jesus taught what David showed here - that when the truth comes to you, it is a matter of your heart. Will the truth miss the soil of your heart and instead fall like seeds on a path, only to be eaten by birds, so that you are left with none of this truth in your difficult day? Or, will the seeds of truth fall on the shallow soil of your heart, and wither in the scorching sun? Or, will the thorns of despair and complaining in your heart end up choking the seeds of hope that were starting to grow in your heart? Jesus taught that only the 4th portion of the seeds fell on good soil of good hearts cultivated, watered, and ready to receive seeds of truth, and cause them to produce a crop 30, 60 or even 100 times as much as the truth of hope that was given out.

We hear the truth of hope in God. What do you do with it?

Both David and Jesus point us to the truth of God’s Word for a boost in hope. David could not have a boost in hope without a dose of truth. The truth is that God IS exalted. God’s glory DOES fill the earth.

David’s Psalm 108 is a boost in hope for us, as we get to know God as the God that He is, and that we might honor Him for being the God that He is.

2. Increase your hope by praying for victory, based on God’s promises. (v.6-9)

But what if you lost your job? What if you are lonely?

We need to increase our hope by praying based on God’s promises to us.

Verse 6, David prayed to God, *“That Your beloved ones may be delivered, give salvation by Your right hand and answer me!”* Here David prayed to God to save, help, and deliver. How did God answer those prayers?

Verses 7-9 give us God's answer to David's prayer, listen, "God has promised in His holiness, *'With exultation I will divide up Shechem and portion out the Valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim is my helmet, Judah my scepter. Moab is my washbasin; upon Edom I cast my shoe; over Philistia I shout in triumph.'*"

We know from Psalm 60, where these verses first appeared, that this little poem is God's announcement that God has granted a victory. God promised the land for His people. God promised that the land would be taken away from the enemies of God, and would be given to the people of God. Blessings are guaranteed. Shechem was where our forefather Jacob settled when he returned. Succoth was where Jacob had been previously and was cared for by God there, and those two places we on the eastern and western sides of the Jordan River, showing God's blessings were received on both sides of the river. Ephraim and Judah were the tribes to the West, and remind us that God blessed His people with the land there, too, fulfilling God's promise. This little poem is God's reminder that God's promise is what leads to our victory.

Our praying is based on God's promise.

Our victory is based on God's promise.

Our boost in hope is based on praying God's promise.

3. The more bleak the scene, the more your hope is purified to rest in God alone, deepening your joy-filled confidence! (v.10-13)

The last part of Psalm 108 presents a real challenge to our hope.

What if there is a surge in enemy activity for David? What if our problems are multiplied?

Years before, David had defeated Edom, and made it a part of his own kingdom. 2 Samuel 8 reads that King David, "...became famous after he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites...all the Edomites became subject to David. The LORD gave David victory wherever he went."

But then, by the time David sang psalm 108 in the mornings, the Edomites had power again, and a new battle was coming.

Verse 10, listen to David's awareness of this hit on his hope, "*Who will bring me to the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom?*"

The fortified city, called Petra, was legendary, inaccessible, and impregnable, and the army of Edom was in that mountain stronghold. There are cliffs for thousands of feet on both sides. The passageways to get there are so narrow that only two horses can pass through side-by-side. Because of the narrowness, the passageway could be defended by just a handful of brave men of Edom. Even if David did somehow succeed in getting through that passage, he would still have to conquer the mountain fortress beyond it.

When David asked in verse 10, “*Who will bring me to the fortified city?*” it is David’s way of saying – ONLY GOD could give a victory over that fortress. David knew it. God knew it. In this Psalm, David is teaching to us that truth.

When you are facing something in which ONLY GOD can give a victory, the question becomes – will God give a victory or not?

Your hope depends on God granting your prayer, right?

Look at verse 11, “*Have You not rejected us, O God? You do not go out, O God, with our armies.*”

Who can conquer? Only God.

Who rejected David and the people? God.

This brings David to the only thing possible to do in verse 12 – ask God for help. “*Oh grant us help against the foe, for vain is the salvation of man!*”

Do you see how this exposes the object of our hope?

In what or whom are we grounding our hope?

Oh, grant us unity in the country, for vain are the politics of man.

Oh, grant us true love for each other, for empty are the social changes brought by groups of people.

Oh, care for each of us, for insufficient is the philanthropy of man.

Think of David – will God give him the fortified city, held by Edomites?

Will God do it, or not?

David is confident that God will. Listen to the last verse, coming from the steadfast heart of David, “*With God, we shall do valiantly; it is HE who will tread down our foes.*”

How can we take this Psalm, sung by the ancient songwriter, and properly apply it to our difficulties today? We are not kings with sword fights approaching, and soon facing a big attack on a fortified city. None of us have ever fought an Edomite. However, God has battles for us to fight, such as our battle against despair, and this Psalm is given to us as a weapon in our fight. As modern followers of King Jesus, and members of His kingdom, our task is to advance the kingdom toward strongholds. Paul gives us warfare language in the New Testament warfare, that sounds a lot like David’s Old Testament warfare language! Listen to Paul’s words from Ephesians 6:12, “*...we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*”

Who had the more difficult task – David conquering the stronghold of Edom, or our wrestling against ‘*spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places*’?

How can we join in this battle, and gain the greater victory?

First, we recognize that we are going to need God. We cannot face this alone, and not even if we were to team up with other Christians could we attempt to wage such a war without God.

In this great spiritual battle, we can borrow the truth of David from Psalm 108:12, that it is God and God alone who will tread down our foes. Or, to say it another way, worthless is the rescue effort of man against this enemy.

We need the King who is greater than David to fight for us.

We need the Son of David to come into this world, and wrestle against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

We need Christ to come and mount the cross to nail our sins of despair to the wood. We need Christ to do battle and to win by dying and rising again.

What do we pray for? That Christ Jesus will establish His kingdom, and will make our hearts steadfast, singing prior to dawn, giving thanks to God among the people.

We need to pray that God will be exalted above the heavens.

We need to pray that His glory will be over all the earth.

We must ask that God will defeat our discouragement and our complaining and our fears and anxieties.

We must ask for hearts that are encouraged and mouths that are quick to praise and thank God. We must request a trusting mindset and peace that passes all understanding to guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.

In Daniel 2, the vision is of a statue representing this world's powerful nations and empires, and Christ is the rock that crushes the statue. The rock of Christ then grew and filled the whole earth. That Rock is the baby who was born in Bethlehem, and mounted a colt on Palm Sunday, and a cross on Good Friday, and rose from the dead on Resurrection Sunday. If you are a Christian, you are a part of His kingdom now. You can put down all of your sadness and lethargy, and work diligently in His kingdom cause, and pray confidently for his kingdom advance.

With Christ, we shall do valiantly, for it is Christ who will tread down all of our enemies. Hosanna means O Lord save!

Conclusion:

1. Turn directly to God for help first. You are encouraged to receive help that God sends through humans – our parents, spouse, pastors, elders, others, but we always remember that they are human. You can have all of those other people helping you, but if you do not have God Himself directly helping you, you will be undone. The help of man by itself is vain. Yes God helps us through the agency of humans, especially through Christians. But that never erases the fact that we depend entirely on God directly for God's favor and God's grace for strength of mind and purpose,

as we move through difficulties. The mighty King David turned directly to God for help, and said man is helpless. Turn directly to God for help first.

2. A boost in hope comes from singing truth to Christ from your heart.

We have more revelation from God than just Psalm 108.

How does the story end? We learn from Isaiah 63, that there is a warrior who is prophesied to come from Edom with his clothes stained red with blood. He has trodden the winepress alone. In his anger, He has trod down the nations, and saved His people.

Who is that warrior in Isaiah 63? It is the Lord Jesus Christ, prophesied on the moment when He will return to Jerusalem after conquering all the hostile peoples of the evil world. It reminds us of the Book of Revelation. The sure punishment of the wicked is described. The certain vindication of believers is celebrated.

Hebrews 1:1, “*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His son, whom He appointed the heir of all things...*”

Christ Himself was born into this world, and went also to the cross and died. He conquered death in His rising again. He has already secured victory, and yet that day of full treading down of our foes has not yet come. We are still facing enemies of death and viruses, and divisions and tensions, and hard times and defeats.

A boost in hope is that we trust the truth just repeated, that Christ will help us through our hard times. That Christ will dispense grace to any who call on Him now. Trust Christ. One day, His glory will be over all the earth. One day, Christ Jesus will be exalted above the heavens! One day, Jesus will come for us. That is the dawn that we awaken with our singing. Come quickly, Lord Jesus. And in the time of waiting, our hearts are steadfast.

Or, as David wrote in Psalm 30:11, about our hope – “*You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth, and clothed me with gladness, that my glory may sing Your praise and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever!*”

We will sing and make melody with all our being. Singing the truth of God’s Word causes in us a surge of hope. With Christ we shall do valiantly.

A boost in hope comes from singing truth to Christ from your heart.