

Resurrection of Our Lord

WE ARE OUT TO GET YOU

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24

Resurrection of Our Lord

Analysis by Peter Keyel

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24

*1 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!*

*2 Let Israel say,
"His steadfast love endures forever."*

*14 The Lord is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.*

*15 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the
righteous:*

"The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;

*16 the right hand of the Lord is exalted;
the right hand of the Lord does valiantly."*

*17 I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the Lord.*

*18 The Lord has punished me severely,
but he did not give me over to death.*

*19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.*

*20 This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.*

*21 I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.*

*22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.*

*23 This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
24 This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it*

Author's Note: Although the psalm for today is partly abbreviated, no doubt to make time for all of the other celebrations planned for this day, the diagnostic troubles alluded to in this psalm are contained within the missing verses.

DIAGNOSIS: Deserving Death

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) : *"All nations surrounded me" (v. 10)*

This psalm marks some great victory, potentially by a king, over hard odds, though it has also been applied to Maccabean cleansing of the Temple. Whatever situation prompted this psalm was dire. Being an international pariah is not easy, especially when one's country is not a superpower. Interestingly, the psalmist does not blame others for his situation, but takes responsibility for the nations being arrayed against him. Although we do not speak as a king or other leader, how often does it feel like everyone is against us? Who IS out to get us?

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : *"Out of my distress" (v. 5)*

However, this responsibility is a heavy burden. Despite calling out to the LORD, the psalmist feels distress. If the LORD is to be trusted, if the LORD is truly the psalmist's strength and might, why feel distress? This reveals that the psalmist DOESN'T really trust the LORD, despite the wishful words. And don't we have days like that? When everyone is out to get us, that

reality doesn't engender warm and fuzzy feelings. Quite the opposite, in fact.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : *"I was falling" (v. 13)*

We can't go it alone. The psalmist cried out to the LORD in distress, in the last moments as a last ditch help that he didn't really trust. And without that trust, he was falling. The problem with falling, is that there is no way to stop gravity from pulling you down. Similarly, there's no way we can stop our deaths, or win against everyone trying to pull us down, much less against God's gravitational force.

PROGNOSIS: Surprise Salvation

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : *"but the LORD helped me." (v. 13)*

Although we cannot escape that intense gravitational pull of sin and death, we are joined in that falling by the LORD when Jesus is crucified on the cross. There is a "but" to v. 13 and there is a "but" to Jesus' death on the cross. The psalmist is delivered from certain death by the LORD. Similarly, Jesus is raised by God on the very day we celebrate today. This shows that there is a solution to escaping the falling to which we are condemned. "The LORD helped me" in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! The help the LORD gives is to end our rebellion against the LORD. The LORD truly is our salvation.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) : *"There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous" (v. 15)*

With that salvation, comes an interesting change. No longer are we in distress, but we are filled with joy. More than that, we have been reckoned as righteous on account of Jesus' salvation. This is truly something to sing about. Our hearts are light because they have been unburdened from the distress.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (v. 24)*

And we do sing songs of victory. Really, what else can be done in this day that the LORD has made? We tell and sing and rejoice with others about what God has done for us on this day. Maybe everyone is still out to get us. Maybe not. But that doesn't matter as much anymore. We are now out to get them, not for harm, but to share with them this victory won for all of us in Jesus Christ.