

Psalm 116 Thanks to God for Deliverance

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 116

AFTER reading: If David is the author of this Psalm, does it seem more likely David penned it after he ran from Saul, his son Absalom, or someone else? Why?

DAVID: I love the Lord because He has heard my appeal for mercy.

ALL: Because He has turned His ear to me,

DAVID: I will call out to Him as long as I live.

ALL: The ropes of death were wrapped around me, and the torments of Sheol overcame me;

DAVID: I encountered trouble and sorrow.

ALL: Then I called on the name of Yahweh:

DAVID: Yahweh, save me!

ALL: The Lord is gracious and righteous;

DAVID: our God is compassionate.

ALL: The Lord guards the inexperienced;

DAVID: I was helpless, and He saved me.

ALL: Return to your rest, my soul, for the Lord has been good to you.

DAVID: For You, Lord, rescued me from death,

ALL: my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

DAVID: I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

ALL: I believed, even when I said,

DAVID: I am severely afflicted.

ALL: In my alarm I said,

DAVID: Everyone is a liar.

ALL: How can I repay the Lord for all the good He has done for me?

DAVID: I will take the cup of salvation and call on the name of Yahweh.

ALL: I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people.

DAVID: The death of His faithful ones is valuable in the Lord's sight.

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ALL: Lord, I am indeed Your servant;

DAVID: I am Your servant, the son of Your female servant.

ALL: You have loosened my bonds.

DAVID: I will offer You a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of Yahweh.

ALL: I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people,

DAVID: in the courts of the Lord's house— within you, Jerusalem.

ALL: Hallelujah!

Psalm 117 Universal Call to Praise

CHARACTERS: Leader, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: < 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 117

LEADER: Praise the Lord, all nations!

ALL: Glorify Him, all peoples!

LEADER: For His faithful love to us is great;

ALL: the Lord's faithfulness endures forever. Hallelujah!

Psalm 118 Thanksgiving for Victory

CHARACTERS: Leader, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 118

AFTER the first read through: How do the red lines relate to Isaiah 28:16 (Therefore the Lord God said: "Look, I have laid a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; the one who believes will be unshakable.), Matthew 21:42 (Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This came from the Lord and is wonderful in our eyes?) Mark 12:10 (Haven't you read this Scripture: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.) Luke 20:17 (But He looked at them and said, "Then what is the meaning of this Scripture: The stone that the builders rejected— this has become the cornerstone?) Acts 4:11 (This Jesus is the stone rejected by you builders, which has become the cornerstone.) Ephesians 2:20 (... Jesus Himself as the cornerstone.) 1 Peter 2:6 (For it is contained in Scripture: Look! I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and honored cornerstone, and the one who believes in Him will never be put to shame!) 1 Peter 2:7 (The stone that the builders rejected— this One has become the cornerstone,)

AFTER the second read through: How do the red lines relate to Matthew 21:9 (Then the crowds who went ahead of Him and those who followed kept shouting: Hosanna to the Son of David! He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One! Hosanna in the highest heaven!) Matthew 23:39 (For I tell you, you will never see Me again until you say, 'He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One!') (Mark 11:9) (Then those who went ahead and those who followed kept shouting: Hosanna! He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One!) Luke 13:35 (See, your house is abandoned to you. And I tell you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One!') Luke 19:38 (The King who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heaven!) John 12:13 (they took palm branches and went out to meet Him. They kept shouting: "Hosanna! He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One—the King of Israel!

AS you read a third time, imagine someone in the crowd leading this Psalm as Jesus entered Jerusalem prior to his death. How would a reading in that situation differ from one in the time of David (who most likely wrote this Psalm?)

Z: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;

ALL: His faithful love endures forever.

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Z: Let Israel say,

ALL: His faithful love endures forever.

Z: Let the house of Aaron say,

MALE VOICES ONLY: His faithful love endures forever.

Z: Let those who fear the Lord say,

FEMALE VOICES ONLY: His faithful love endures forever.

Z: I called to the Lord in distress;

ALL: the Lord answered me and put me in a spacious place.

Z: The Lord is for me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

ALL: The Lord is my helper,

Z: Therefore, I will look in triumph on those who hate me.

ALL: It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man.

Z: It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in nobles. All the nations surrounded me;

ALL: In the name of Yahweh, I destroyed them.

Z: They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me;

ALL: In the name of Yahweh, I destroyed them.

Z: They surrounded me like bees; they were extinguished like a fire among thorns;

ALL: In the name of Yahweh, I destroyed them.

Z: You pushed me hard to make me fall, but the Lord helped me.

ALL: The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.

Z: There are shouts of joy and victory in the tents of the righteous:

ALL: The Lord's right hand performs valiantly!

Z: The Lord's right hand is raised.

ALL: The Lord's right hand performs valiantly!

Z: I will not die, but I will live and proclaim what the Lord has done.

ALL: The Lord disciplined me severely but did not give me over to death.

Z: Open the gates of righteousness for me;

ALL: I will enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

Z: This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous will enter through it.

ALL: I will give thanks to You because You have answered me and have become my salvation.

Z: **The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.**

ALL: This came from the Lord; it is wonderful in our eyes.

Z: This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

ALL: Lord, save us!

Z: Lord, please grant us success!

ALL: He who comes in the name of the Lord is blessed.

Z: From the house of the Lord, we bless you.

ALL: The Lord is God and has given us light.

Z: Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.

ALL: You are my God, and I will give You thanks.

Z: You are my God; I will exalt You.

ALL: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;

Z: His faithful love endures forever.

Psalm 120 Truth and Peace

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 120

DAVID: In my distress, I called to the Lord, and He answered me.

ALL: Lord, deliver me from lying lips and a deceitful tongue.

DAVID: What will He give you, and what will He do to you, you deceitful tongue?

ALL: A warrior's sharp arrows with burning charcoal!

DAVID: What misery that I have stayed in Meshech,

ALL: that I have lived among the tents of Kedar!

DAVID: I have lived too long with those who hate peace.

ALL: I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war.

Psalm 121 The Lord Our Protector

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 121

DAVID: I lift my eyes toward the mountains.

ALL: Where will my help come from?

DAVID: My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

ALL: He will not allow your foot to slip; your Protector will not slumber.

DAVID: Indeed, the Protector of Israel does not slumber or sleep.

ALL: The Lord protects you;

DAVID: the Lord is a shelter right by your side.

ALL: The sun will not strike you by day or the moon by night.

DAVID: The Lord will protect you from all harm;

ALL: He will protect your life.

DAVID: The Lord will protect your coming and going both now and forever.

Psalm 122 A Prayer for Jerusalem

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 122

BEFORE you read: think of a place you love to go, where people get along and you can worship with joy. This may be how David felt about Jerusalem. For added meaning, write or say the Psalm substituting in the name of your special place for Jerusalem.

DAVID: I rejoiced with those who said to me,

ALL: Let us go to the house of the Lord.

DAVID: Our feet are standing within your gates, Jerusalem—

ALL: Jerusalem, built as a city should be, solidly joined together,

DAVID: where the tribes, Yahweh's tribes, go up to give thanks to the name of Yahweh.

ALL: This is an ordinance for Israel.

DAVID: There, thrones for judgment are placed, thrones of the house of David.

ALL: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

DAVID: May those who love you prosper;

ALL: may there be peace within your walls, prosperity within your fortresses.

DAVID: Because of my brothers and friends, I will say, "Peace be with you."

ALL: Because of the house of the Lord our God,

DAVID: I will seek your good.

Psalm 123 A Prayer for God's Favor

CHARACTERS: Leader, Male and Female voices

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 123

Consider: how does this Psalm relate to Matthew 6:7 (When you pray, don't babble like the idolaters, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words.)

DAVID: I lift my eyes to You, the One enthroned in heaven.

MALE VOICES ONLY: Like a servant's eyes on his master's hand,

FEMALE VOICES ONLY: like a servant girl's eyes on her mistress's hand,

DAVID: so our eyes are on the Lord our God until He shows us favor.

MALE VOICES ONLY: Show us favor, Lord, show us favor, for we've had more than enough contempt.

FEMALE VOICES ONLY: We've had more than enough scorn from the arrogant and contempt from the proud.

Psalm 124 The Lord Is on Our Side

CHARACTERS: David (or Joshua or Deborah), All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 124

Consider Joshua 5:14 (When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in His hand. Joshua approached Him and asked, "Are You for us or for our enemies?" "Neither," He replied. "I have now come as commander of the Lord's army."). How might Joshua leading this Psalm be different from how David might lead it? How might Deborah lead it differently? (see Judges 4-5) How does a situation change when you know you have a powerful ally on your side?

DAVID: If the Lord had not been on our side—let Israel say—

ALL: If the Lord had not been on our side when men attacked us,

DAVID: then they would have swallowed us alive in their burning anger against us.

ALL: Then the waters would have engulfed us;

DAVID: the torrent would have swept over us;

ALL: the raging waters would have swept over us.

DAVID: Praise the Lord, who has not let us be ripped apart by their teeth.

ALL: We have escaped like a bird from the hunter's net;

DAVID: the net is torn, and we have escaped.

ALL: Our help is in the name of Yahweh, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 125 Israel's Stability

CHARACTERS: Leader, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 125

DAVID: Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion.

ALL: It cannot be shaken; it remains forever.

DAVID: Jerusalem—the mountains surround her.

ALL: And the Lord surrounds His people, both now and forever.

DAVID: The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous,

ALL: so that the righteous will not apply their hands to injustice.

DAVID: Do what is good, Lord, to the good, to those whose hearts are upright.

ALL: But as for those who turn aside to crooked ways,

DAVID: the Lord will banish them with the evildoers.

ALL: Peace be with Israel.

Psalm 126 Tears and Laughter

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 126

DAVID: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

ALL: Our mouths were filled with laughter then, and our tongues with shouts of joy.

DAVID: Then they said among the nations,

ALL: The Lord has done great things for them.

DAVID: The Lord had done great things for us.

ALL: We were joyful.

DAVID: Restore our fortunes, Lord, like watercourses in the Negev.

ALL: Those who sow in tears will reap with shouts of joy.

DAVID: Though one goes along weeping, carrying the bag of seed,

ALL: he will surely come back with shouts of joy, carrying his sheaves.

Psalm 127 The Blessing of the Lord

CHARACTER: Solomon, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 127

SOLOMON: Unless the Lord builds a house, its builders labor over it in vain;

ALL: unless the Lord watches over a city, the watchman stays alert in vain.

SOLOMON: In vain, you get up early and stay up late, working hard to have enough food—

ALL: God gives sleep to the one He loves.

SOLOMON: Sons are indeed a heritage from the Lord, children, a reward.

ALL: Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons born in one's youth.

SOLOMON: Happy is the man who has filled his quiver with them.

ALL: Such men will never be put to shame when they speak with their enemies at the city gate.

Psalm 128 Blessings for Those Who Fear God

CHARACTERS: Ruth, Naomi, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 128

The author is unknown. Consider how this Psalm might relate to Ruth 4: 11 (11 The elders and all the people who were at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is entering your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built the house of Israel. May you be powerful in Ephrathah and famous in Bethlehem.) And verses 14-16 (Then the women said to Naomi, "Praise the Lord, who has not left you without a family redeemer today. May his name become well known in Israel. 15 He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. Indeed, your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." 16 Naomi took the child, placed him on her lap, and took care of him.)

NAOMI: How happy is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways!

RUTH: You will surely eat what your hands have worked for.

ALL: You will be happy, and it will go well for you.

NAOMI: Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house,

RUTH: your sons, like young olive trees around your table.

ALL: In this very way, the man who fears the Lord will be blessed.

NAOMI: May the Lord bless you from Zion,

RUTH: so that you will see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life and will see your children's children!

ALL: Peace be with Israel.

Psalm 129 Protection of the Oppressed

CHARACTERS: Leader, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 129

X: Since my youth, they have often attacked me— let Israel say—

ALL: Since my youth, they have often attacked me, but they have not prevailed against me.

X: Plowmen plowed over my back; they made their furrows long.

ALL: The Lord is righteous; He has cut the ropes of the wicked.

X: Let all who hate Zion be driven back in disgrace.

ALL: Let them be like grass on the rooftops, which withers before it grows up

X: and can't even fill the hands of the reaper or the arms of the one who binds sheaves.

ALL: Then none who pass by will say,

X: May the Lord's blessing be on you.

ALL: We bless you in the name of Yahweh.

Psalm 130 Awaiting Redemption

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 130

DAVID: Out of the depths, I call to You, Yahweh!

ALL: Lord, listen to my voice;

DAVID: let Your ears be attentive to my cry for help.

ALL: Yahweh, if You considered sins, Lord, who could stand?

DAVID: But with You, there is forgiveness, so that You may be revered.

ALL: I wait for Yahweh; I wait and put my hope in His word.

DAVID: I wait for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning—

ALL: more than watchmen for the morning.

DAVID: Israel, put your hope in the Lord.

ALL: For there is faithful love with the Lord,

DAVID: and with Him is redemption in abundance.

ALL: And He will redeem Israel from all its sins.