

# The Song of a Soul Set Free

## Psalm 116

Introduction:

1. We are not sure when this psalm was written
  - a. Some place it among the post exilic psalms written after the Jews returned from Babylon
  - b. Rotherham thinks that it was written by Hezekiah when he was childless, facing death, with the Davidic line facing extinction - he was facing a dark and lonely hour
2. This is a very personal psalm
  - a. The writer refers to himself 37x in the 19 verses
  - b. Only 3 verses have no direct personal reference
  - c. It is not sinful preoccupation since he mentions the Lord 15x
3. This psalm was one of the six psalms that the Jews sang every year at the Passover meal.
  - a. In fact, many still do.
  - b. First they sing Psalms 113, 114, 115 and then they eat.
  - c. When they finish eating they sit back in their chairs, and relax, and talk about the good old days when God delivered them out of Egypt.
  - d. Then they sang Ps 116, "I love the Lord."

### I. The Condition - vs 3

**3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.**

#### A. Death

1. The psalmist was facing death
2. We don't know what the problem or situation was, we know that it was dangerous and serious
3. We all face death one day- Rom 5:12  
*12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*
4. Death is an appointment that we all keep – Heb 9:27  
*27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

#### B. Hell

1. The fear of hell got hold of the psalmist
2. He knew that he was not going to heaven
3. There are only two destinies – heaven and hell
4. If you are not going to heaven, then you are going to hell

## II. The Contrition - vs 6

6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

1. Sometimes the Lord has to bring a person low
2. Sometimes it is to a hospital bed
3. Sometimes it is financial problems
4. We are brought low so that we have to look up to Him for help
  - a) *Ps 34:18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*
  - b) *Jas 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

## III. The Compassion - vs 5

5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

### A. God is Different From the Idols of the Day

1. They are cold and impassive
2. They are distant and demanding

### B. God is Gracious, Righteous, Merciful

1. God is Gracious
  - a) *His grace give us what we do not deserve*
  - b) *He offers us a home in heaven by grace*
2. God is Merciful
  - a) *Grace is getting what you don't deserve*
  - b) *Mercy is not getting what you deserve*
  - c) *We deserve punishment*
3. He has forgiven our sins – Ps 103:10  
*10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*

## IV. The Conversion - vs 4, 10, 13

4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. 10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: 13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

1. Reach out and take the free gift of salvation  
*Joh 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*
2. Call upon the name of the Lord right now
  - a) *Ro 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*
  - b) *Joh 9:38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.*

3. Let us pity those who are calling out to a deaf heaven the names of Mary, Buddha, Mohammed or Confucius
  - a) *The names of bankrupt sinners, no matter how great their reputation among men, cannot move the heart / hand of God*
  - b) *There is salvation in only one name – Acts 4:12*  
 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
4. Believe today – vs 10
  - a) *This is faith. The psalmist believed God's Word*
  - b) *Many believe the media, the ungodly, the world*
  - c) *They will not believe God*
  - d) *God is the one person we can believe above all others*
  - e) *His Word is absolutely trustworthy at all times*
  - f) *God can never be charged with untruth*

## **V. The Confession - vs 1**

**1 I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.**

### **A. "I Love the Lord"**

1. The abruptness of this opening has puzzled commentators
2. What a good way to begin a psalm, a day, a business venture, etc
3. A bold confession of love for the Lord will set the sails aright and determine a great deal of what happens next
4. John Phillips said, "When I was in the army it was always my practice, when transferred to a new unit, I would open my duffle bag and take my Bible out first. I would place the Bible prominently on my bed while I put my other things away. It proclaimed to the others in the room that "I love the Lord." No one ever asked my to go drinking. No one ever asked my to gamble away my paycheck. I was never asked to go pick up some girls. The message of the Bible was loud and clear. It spoke for me even when I was too nervous to speak out for myself.
5. Eight year old children were asked to define "love"
  - a) *"Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on cologne and they go out and smell each other."*
  - b) *"Love is when you go out and eat and give somebody most of your French fries without making them give you any of theirs."*
  - c) *"Love is when my mom makes coffee for my dad and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is ok."*
  - d) *"Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt and then he wears it every day."*

## **B. We Love the Lord ....Because**

1. Our love is a consequent love  
*1Jo 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.*
2. His love is a causeless love - Deut 7:8
3. In the 1800s there was a young English girl named Elizabeth Barrett who suffered a spinal injury at the age of 15. She was left a semi-invalid. There was a man that she loved very deeply and eventually married - Robert Browning. Her love for him was beautifully expressed in her work, "Sonnets from the Portuguese". That title may not sound familiar to you but perhaps you will remember the words, "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways..." Then she went on to describe the depth of her love for her husband. That is what the psalmist does here. Why do I love the Lord? Let me count the ways

## **VI. The Consecration - vs 2**

*2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.*

- Here is a pledge of steadfastness
- Here is a promise of life-long service
- These things ought to be seen in every believer

### **A. Live for the Lord – vs 9**

*9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.*

1. Here is resolve before the Lord – “I will”
2. "The land of the living"
  - a) *The psalmist will serve the Lord as long as he is here in the land of the living*
  - b) *He wants to give his entire life to the Lord*

### **B. I Will Serve the Lord – vs 16**

*16 O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.*

1. He was a man set free – “loosed my bonds”
  - a) *No longer the slave of sin*
  - b) *No longer a slave to the world*
  - c) *No longer a slave of the flesh*
2. He had learned the secret that true freedom comes from one who is sold out to the Lord to be his bond slave
  - a) *The bond slave serves voluntarily*
  - b) *The bond slave serves out of love*

### **C. I Will Worship the Lord – vs 17**

17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

1. Thanksgiving
  - a) *Christians out to be the most thankful people*
  - b) *God does not want a sacrifice of a lamb or goat anymore, he wants you and your thanksgiving*
2. Prayer
  - a) *“will call upon the name of the Lord”*
  - b) *We need to be people of prayer*

### **D. I Will Be Found in the Lord’s House – vs 19**

19 In the courts of the LORD’S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

1. The psalmist would be found in the Lord’s house
2. After salvation comes a desire to be in the Lord’s house
3. *Heb 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

### **E. I Will Rest in the Lord and Be Thankful – vs 7**

7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

1. Rest in the Lord
  - a) *In Christ, your soul can rest*
  - b) *The searching is over*
  - c) *The search for satisfaction is over*
  - d) *The search for soul-peace is over*
2. And Be Thankful
  - a) *The problem with receiving a gift regularly is that one stops thinking that it is a gift.*
  - b) *Two friends bumped into each other on the street one day. One of them looked terribly upset, almost on the verge of tears. His friend asked him, "What's wrong?" The sad fellow said, "Let me tell you. Three weeks ago, an uncle died and left me \$10,000." "Wow, that's a lot of money." "Then two weeks ago, a cousin died, and left me \$25,000." His friend said, "I sounds to me like you have really been blessed." The man said, "No, you don't understand! Last week my great-aunt passed away and I inherited almost \$75,000." Now his friend was really confused. He said, "Then, why do you look so unhappy?" He said, "This week... nothing!"*

## **F. Speak Out for the Lord – vs**

**10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:**

- There is a very logical sequence in this verse
  - There is faith, then there is conduct resulting from that faith, and then there is an attack upon the person of faith
1. Belief - "I believed"
  2. Behavior - "...therefore have I spoken"
    - a) *Faith affects our conduct*
    - b) *It affects our walk - We walk uprightly*
    - c) *It affects our words - the tongue is affected - bad words are replaced by good - dirty stories are removed from the tongue*
    - d) *It affects our witness - the psalmist spoke about the Lord - you cannot be much of a witness for the Lord if your faith is weak*
    - e) *Conversion is a prerequisite for Christian service because faith comes before witnessing*
  3. Battle - "I was greatly afflicted"
    - a) *After faith and a change in conduct, persecution often follows*
    - b) *The enemy of his soul attacks*
    - c) *The psalmist was "greatly" afflicted*
    - d) *The trials that come on us because of our faith may not be little trials, but they may be big trials - Satan will see to that*
    - e) *Keep believing for faith overcomes the world - 1 Jn 5:4*

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