

Psalm 118

The Refused Headstone

Text: Psalm 118

Introduction:

1. God had promised that the seed of woman would crush the head of the serpent and the enemy of man would be defeated (Genesis 3:15).
2. He showed that this victory would include blessedness for all through the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3).
3. This Victor would be a mediator (Job 19:23-27), a ruler (Genesis 49:10), a star (Numbers 24:17), a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-19), a priest (1 Samuel 2:35), and a king (1 Samuel 2:10) - ruling from the throne of David (1 Chronicles 17:11-14).
4. During the time of David, the “sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Samuel 23:1) recorded many prophecies of Jesus in the Psalms.
5. Psalm 118 reveals the Messiah as the refused headstone...

I. THE SETTING OF THE PSALM

Ezra 3:10-11

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

11 And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

- A. Likely, this psalm was written by David.
- B. It may have been the psalm that was sung at the dedication of the foundation of the Temple after Israel's return from captivity (cf. Ezra 3:10-11).
- C. It seems to have been written as a processional for worshippers on their way to offer sacrifice.
- D. David himself may have been the subject of the psalm, though there are also references to the Messiah.
 1. It describes one who was rejected by his friends, mistreated by his enemies, but delivered by God.
 2. Thus, he journeyed to the house of God to offer sacrifice in praise and thanksgiving.
 3. In this, he becomes an example of the nation in their struggles and victories.

II. THE STUDY OF THE PSALM (PSALM 118)

- A. Verses 1-4 - A Call to Praise
 1. God is to be praised by all who fear and reverence Him.
 2. He is to be praised for His ever-enduring mercy.
 3. The word for ‘mercy’ also refers to “kindness,” “goodness,” or “favor.”
 4. The ASV translates it as “His lovingkindness;” the ESV as “His steadfast love;” and the ISV as “His gracious love.”

Prophecy of Jesus

- B. Verses 5-18 – The Deliverance of God
 1. The psalmist calls for praise to God for the deliverance He has accomplished.
 2. With trust in God, there is no need to fear man.
 3. With trust in God, there is no need to rely upon man.
 4. Note that verse 6 is quoted in Hebrews 13:6.
 5. Also note that verse 8 is the middle verse of the Bible!
- C. Verses 19-20 – A Request for Admittance
 1. Upon arriving at the Temple, the psalmist sought admittance that he might praise the Lord.
 - a. Consider that it is a privilege to enter into God's house.
 - b. One must approach on God's terms and in God's way.
 2. The means of entrance are gates of righteousness – for the righteous to do righteousness and for righteousness to go forth.
 3. Because it is the gate of the Lord it should be approached with respect and submission (cf. John 10:7, 9).
- D. Verses 21-27 – The Song of the Levites
 1. As the psalmist and his procession passed through the gate, the Levites took up their song.
 2. They also praised God for the deliverance of their champion and leader.
 3. Because of God's blessings the sacrifice would now be offered.
- E. Verses 28-29 – A Conclusion of Praise
 1. The psalmist ends by singing again his praise and exaltation of Jehovah.
 2. The psalm ends as it began – with the never-ending mercy of the Lord.

III. THE SAVIOR IN THE PSALM (PSALM 118:22-24)

- A. This passage is quoted six times in the New Testament.
 1. Jesus quoted it about Himself (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10-11; Luke 20:17).
 2. Peter quoted it to prove that Jesus is the Messiah (Acts 4:11-12).
 3. Paul quoted it to show Jesus as the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20-22).
 4. Peter referenced it again in his epistle (1 Peter 2:4-8; cf. Isaiah 28:16).
- B. Though Jesus was “despised and rejected of men,” He still became the cornerstone of His kingdom – the church.
- C. As a building can stand only in proportion to its foundation, so the church can exist, endure, and thrive as it remains upon the foundation of Jesus and His Gospel.