

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adults Sunday School

PSALM 21 – THE JOYFUL KING

I. INTRODUCTION

“To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.” It is believed that Psalm 21 is the follow-up psalm of Psalm 20. Psalm 20 is a psalm of victory. And Psalm 21 contains the joy of the king which testified how God was the One who has blessed him with victory over his enemies. No wonder David is rejoicing. There could be many things that brought joy to the king such as power, and wealth. But it was in the Lord whom David rejoiced in that filled his heart and soul.

Nothing can compare with the joy of victory God was pleased to give him. This is not an ordinary victory. It is a special victory simply because it was obtained due to God's power and greatness that played the whole part in David's battle.

The psalm is divided into 2 parts: 1) How Joyful? (1-6), and 2) Why Joyful? (7-12). David experienced true joy of the Lord and no one will be able to take that away from him. Do you long to be joyful? May God help us.

II. HOW JOYFUL?

Verse 1, “The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!”

Right from the beginning of this psalm, we can easily tell that the psalmist is overwhelmed with the joy in his heart over the victory that God was pleased to give him over his enemies. The psalmist put himself in the third person and this reveals how humble he is as the king of Israel. He dared not put the emphasis of himself being the king before God. Instead he placed the emphasis upon God, for He is rightfully the King of the whole universe. Moreover the victory that he gotten was entirely God's work. He is just an instrument which God is pleased to use to defeat the enemies.

The king can easily take comfort in his wealth, power, and material blessings. But to the psalmist, it was not in these things but the strength of the LORD. Strength is the ability to empower. God has empowered the king with strength to rule wisely and defeat all his enemies. Salvation speaks of the deliverance which God grants unto the king. Without God's help, he could have been destroyed by the enemies. Therefore it was God who saved him and delivered him from death and destruction. In this, the king rejoiced.

Verse 2, “Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.”

The desire of a natural man is always, sinful, selfish and worldly. God will certainly not hear and grant that which is to man's sinful desire. But the desire of the psalmist is that of a child of God. And the psalmist was careful to put himself as the third person, meaning to say that he is writing in full acknowledgement and awareness of his own desire before God that is according to what He will be pleased with. Should the psalmist harbour any desire that is sinful, surely God knows and will surely take him to task. We can safely say that the desire of the psalmist is one that is pure and well pleasing in the sight of God. Will God not grant such a beautiful desire? Absolutely! This is a synonymous parallelism. The psalmist has uttered his desire through his mouth. In other words, his desire was made known through a proper prayer and likely to be done with worship and offer of sacrifices.

Verse 3, “For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.”

The words “preventest him with” means that God has provided in advance. In other words, God has provided the psalmist the blessings of goodness in advance. God has no qualm to do that because he loves David. And because He loves him, He is more than glad to provide for him whatever he needs. He even wants to reward him even before he passed the test of faith. That's how much God loves him. No wonder the psalmist is so overwhelmed with joy.

It is more than a physical crown which David was wearing as the king of Israel. He acknowledged that God was the One who made him king. With the crown of gold on his head, it is a symbol of the highest honour that one can enjoy. God is more than please to grant that to David.

Verse 4, “He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.”

What the psalmist has asked for is common among mortal men. Who does not want to live longer? Life and death are in the hands of God (see Ecclesiastes 8:8). The source of life comes from God. The psalmist has asked the right Person for He alone has power to give life and prolong life as He wishes. And the psalmist knew that he could have lost his life in many occasions but God preserved him.

Even though the reason why the psalmist wanted to live longer is not explained here, it is definitely not for selfish reason. If so, God would not have granted him his desire. David could have wanted to serve God more and longer. He might have wanted to complete the mission God gave him. And since it was not completed yet, he wanted to be responsible to finish it well. All these could be possible reasons why he asked for a longer life. What about you? What is your reason for a longer life? Is God in the picture?

Verse 5, “His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.”

How great is David's glory? He is so glorious that Israel has his star engraved as the national flag. He is glorious enough for the Israel as well as the whole world to remember him for the greatness he possessed as the king of Israel. Even the children love him when they learnt of the story how David defeated giant Goliath with a stone. How did David became so great then? Certainly not of his own effort and will, but God was the One who lifted him up and gave him this glory without match.

Verse 6, “For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.”

It is not David himself that is so skillful in warfare that he obtained victory after victory over his powerful enemies. God is the One who gave David all these blessings. And therefore for David to give all glory to God, this is significant. David dared not rob God of His glory because it is the absolute fact that God is the One who gave him all these blessings.

Today, sinful men and even some professing Christians dare to rob God of His glory by exalting themselves and trusting in their efforts to gain success. How wrong they can be! Will they realize and spare themselves of such foolishness that will certainly without a doubt lead them to destruction?

We end with the first section how joyful the king was because of what God has done. But why was the king so joyful? We come to the next section to study the reason why.

III. WHY JOYFUL?

Verse 7, “For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.”

It was the covenantal LORD in whom the psalmist had an intimate relationship with. He could not have been close to anyone without a relationship to enjoy in the first place. God is pleased to make Himself known to David since he was young. And David's trust in him did not begin in the palace. It was when he was still young, probably at home when his parents taught him the Bible and also through experiential knowledge as he tendeth the sheep as a shepherd boy. He must have seen God's power with his eyes of faith.

All these add up why he trusted in the LORD. And he knew that he will never be moved because of God's mercy upon him. There is stability and surety when we stand with the Lord. We will never fall. We will never be defeated. And this is all by the mercy of God. We definitely do not deserve mercy, otherwise mercy will not be rightly called mercy. Mercy is when we do not deserved to be saved at all but God is pleased to spare us from destruction and death which we rightly deserved.

Verse 8, “Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.”

God's hand symbolized power and authority. Indeed God has all the power over His enemies. He is not ignorant of the evil and wicked scheme of the enemies against Him and His people. He is God. He can see through hearts and minds. He is the omniscient God. He knows everything. Nothing is hidden from Him.

Since God knows everything, He knew who are for Him and against Him. And to those who are against Him, He knew the degree of their hatred toward Him. Do you think God will not deal with them? Anytime God can destroy them. And for them to live and not destroyed yet for another second, they are absolutely at the mercy of God.

Verse 9, “Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.”

It is all about God's timing. It is a matter of time God will pour His wrath upon those who hate Him. And His wrath and anger upon them is described as a fiery oven. The fiery oven is a place where everything placed in there will all be burnt up and destroyed. This is a vivid picture of punishment for those who hate God.

Why will God not be angry with those who hate Him? Why are they not loving Him instead of hating Him? What has God done for them to hate Him? They ought to hate themselves for the sins they had committed against God. They should instead ask God for mercy and salvation.

To go against God and hating Him is the most foolish thing. And worst still there is a judgment and punishment awaits those who refused to repent and continued to hate God. They will be swallowed up in His wrath and be totally consumed by the fire of hell.

Verse 10, “Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.”

“Fruit” here refers to their children. When parents are worldly, it is likely their children will also become worldly. What parents do affect their children. This is the kind of impact parents must realize that they had upon their own children. And so when parents live their life in a godliness manner, their children will follow suit and behave also in a godliness manner. And God will surely punish them. No one can escape from God's judgment.

And God will cut off and destroy one's lineage so that his name will forever disappeared from the face of the earth and not be remembered at all. For God to do this means that we are not to take this lightly. As parents, we have the responsibility to raise up our children to fear God as they ought. How long can the parents be with their children? Will the parents succeed in nurturing their child to live a God-fearing life? That's why we must pray for all Christian parents that they will have God's wisdom and patient, and not give up easily.

Verse 11, “For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.”

This verse reveals to us who is in control. No matter how powerful and influential our enemies can be, they can never be more powerful than God. God is in control all the time. Not once did He lose control. When it seems like the enemies are winning over us, it is only because the Lord allows them to afflict us, either to wake us up from our sins or to strengthen our faith so that we will learn to trust in God even more and not self.

We must never underestimate the power of our enemies. Having said that, it does not mean we are then at their mercy. Not at all! We must not underestimate our enemy because to do so is to take them lightly and become proud. They are dangerous people whom we must stand our guard against all the time. They may not come to us in a harsh and offensive mode. They may come to us in great gentleness and humility, offering us whatever help we need so that our guard against them will be put away. That's the kind of evil, mischievous device which seek to deceive God's people. Will you be deceived? God has given us the wisdom and knowledge to discern and defend ourselves against any of such deception. Will you fail or succeed? You lean upon God, you succeed. You trust in yourself, you fail.

Verse 12, “Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.”

It is the Lord's doing, by His power and wisdom, He can make His enemies retreat and run for their dear life. “Turn their back” means they could not proceed anymore with their plan. They must abort their plan and return to zero. Is that not the power of God that the psalmist is rejoicing in? Only God can do it.

IV. CONCLUSION

Verse 13, “Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.”

Only believers will want God to be exalted (be lifted up above all things). And the psalmist is calling upon God to do it since He has all the power to lift Himself up the highest. All men combined is still not powerful enough. And all that the psalmist and all those who stand with him can do is to sing and praise Him. Will you join him? May God help us. Amen.