

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Eighteen - Enjoying Blessing Though Having Lived As A Relationally Ruinous Sinner (Psalm 118:1-29)

I. Introduction

- A. Guilt is an **awful** thing to experience -- any counselor will tell you that it is very destructive to the inner man! What is worse is **true** guilt that has produced chaos and destruction in relationships with others!
- B. In spite of the problem of personal sin and its guilt and destructive consequences, God can bless that **sinner**, and make him a blessing to others. Psalm 118:1-29 explains how that may happen as follows:

II. Enjoying Blessing Though Having Lived As A Relationally Ruinous Sinner, Ps. 118:1-29.

- A. There is a repeated emphasis in the psalm on the word *chesed*, meaning "loyal love" (v. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 29). It is used of God's "loyal love" to Israel, the sons of Aaron and to those who revere Jahweh, v. 2-4.
- B. What makes the psalm's author focus on this quality of God is his keen awareness of his being saved from total death by God's discipline for his sin, an experience he knows is due to God's loyal love to keep His promises to the author without anything good within the author motivating this divine restraint, 118:18.
- C. Accordingly, due to God's **unmerited favor** in keeping His **promises in love**, the psalmist enjoyed a rich variety and depth of divine blessings. They are enumerated in the psalm as follows:
 - 1. God saved the psalmist from narrow straits of distress when he called unto the Lord, Ps. 118:5.
 - 2. God gave the psalmist confidence in the face of human foes as he knew God would help him, 118:6.
 - 3. God even gave the psalmist victory over all human opponents because of His grace, Ps. 118:7.
 - 4. Accordingly, the psalmist learned to trust in God and not men for sustenance, Ps. 118:8.
 - 5. Then, in verses 10-13, the psalmist detailed his victory and exultation over surrounding, enemy nations of opponents that God had supplied through His grace.
 - 6. Accordingly, he offered praise to God, Ps. 118:14-17.
 - 7. In fact, the psalmist claimed that God would be able to praise God in the holy temple of his righteous God because he was made righteous himself by God's forgiving grace and **loyal love**, Ps. 118:18-20.
- D. The psalmist picked up an illustration to show his **renewal of relationships** after sinful defeat, 118:21-23:
 - 1. Cornerstones were often odd-shaped stones, and it was the tendency for a builder to view the odd shaped stone that came from the quarry as a flawed, errant, bad stone because of this shape.
 - 2. However, the odd-shaped stone, the cornerstone was the single most important stone as the **other stones** were **aligned** with *it* in being laid out for construction of the building walls.
 - 3. Thus, in God's grace, He had taken the Israel viewed as the odd-shaped stone of world trouble and had made it the key through which His blessing to other nations would come, cf. Bib. Know. Com., O.T., p. 878. This same figure is later used of the righteous Jesus as the cornerstone first sinfully rejected by Israel, and later set up as the Messianic King by God's grace to other undeserving men, Mtt. 21:33-44.
 - 4. Thus, the psalmist shows how God had taken him and his nation, Israel from the throes of defeat to make it and him the key of blessing to **others** around them. This was all done in **grace**.
- E. Accordingly, the rest of the psalm focuses on a temple procession to the glory of God's grace, 118:24-29.

Lesson: *An undeserving sinner, like the psalmist (or Israel), gains God's blessing and becomes the key through whom God's blessing comes to others because of God's loyal love alone. Thus, we can overcome guilt and a relationally destructive past by the grace of God Who loyally loves men.*

Application: *(1) If we are guilty of sin, even if it has been a very BAD sin, or if we have done MANY very great EVILS, forgiveness is available because cleansing depends on GOD'S inherent loyalty to HIS OWN promises -- not on us. Thus, (a) believe on Christ for salvation and cleansing if we have not done so, Jn. 3:16 with Col. 1:14. (b) As a believer, all we need to do is confess the sin(s) to God and find cleansing from all unrighteousness, 1 Jn. 1:9. (2) If we feel that our sin has blocked future divine blessing because of its past relationship destructions, recall that God specializes in taking rejected cornerstones and making them the key help to all around them! Thus, look to God for renewed relations no matter how we have failed in the past, for God is GRACIOUS!*