

Psalm 118 NIV

- ¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.**
² Let Israel say: "His love endures forever."
³ Let the house of Aaron say: "His love endures forever."
⁴ Let those who fear the LORD say: "His love endures forever."

This is our call to praise and thanksgiving!

Let God's church say, "His love endures forever!"

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- ⁵ When hard pressed, I cried to the LORD; he brought me into a spacious place.**
⁶ The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?
⁷ The LORD is with me; he is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies.
⁸ It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in humans.
⁹ It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

The "spacious place" represents freedom. The Lord has set us free from the power of sin, from death, from evil, and from Hell.

The Lord also delivers us to the ability to do what is right, to remain faithful and obedient no matter what is happening to us in life. We need to focus on walking with God regardless of our circumstances.

We must trust in God completely, depend on God completely. Fortunately, he is worthy of our trust and reliance! It is better to trust in the ways of the Lord and trust in his blessing than to live by the ways of mankind and seek human blessing.

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- ¹⁰ All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the LORD I cut them down.**
¹¹ They surrounded me on every side, but in the name of the LORD I cut them down.
¹² They swarmed around me like bees, but they were consumed as quickly as burning thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them down.
¹³ I was pushed back and about to fall, but the LORD helped me.
¹⁴ The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation.

Sometimes God empowers us to triumph over our troubles, for which we should thank him.

God always empowers us to have inner victory, relying on him for strength, resting easy in his care, and finding our joy in him, even when times are hard.

The only true defeat is if we let our worldly troubles convince us to give up or to drive us into behaving sinfully. During hard times, we must focus on depending on God and on continuing to find our joy, peace, hope, and love in him.

This is easier if we remember that no matter what happens, we have our salvation in Christ, which cannot be taken away or lost, and should not be forgotten.

- ¹⁵ Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: "The LORD's right hand has done mighty things!**
- ¹⁶ The LORD's right hand is lifted high; the LORD's right hand has done mighty things!"**
- ¹⁷ I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done.**
- ¹⁸ The LORD has chastened me severely, but he has not given me over to death.**
- ¹⁹ Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.**
- ²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD through which the righteous may enter.**
- ²¹ I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation.**

Sometimes God will allow us to suffer for some reason. We must learn to let this draw us closer to God, so that the result is we grow spiritually and grow in our dependence on God.

We must learn to submit to God, to seek his righteousness. When God brings us into righteousness, into true spiritual life with him, we must publically proclaim our praise and thanks for what the Lord has done!

We must learn to depend on God, to seek his deliverance. Whether God delivers us to earthly victory or helps us to endure hard times, we must publically proclaim our praise and thanks for what the Lord has done!

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- ²² The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;**
- ²³ the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.**
- ²⁴ The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad.**
- ²⁵ LORD, save us! LORD, grant us success!**
- ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you.**
- ²⁷ The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.**
- ²⁸ You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.**
- ²⁹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.**

God's love is exhibited by his deliverance. The author of the psalm remembered times of physical deliverance, then started discussing spiritual deliverance, including prophecy about Christ.

The crowds on the first "Palm Sunday" quoted this part of the psalm when they recognized Jesus as the Messiah-Savior. They called Jesus the one "who comes in the name of the LORD" and shouted "Hosanna" to him, which means, "Save us!" [John 12.13].

Jesus is the stone the builders [the religious leaders of Israel] rejected but is the cornerstone of the church and of God's plan. Jesus taught this in the parable of the vineyard [Matthew 21.42], and quoted from this psalm when he mourned over Jerusalem [Luke 13.35].

Peter quoted from this psalm to explain Jesus as the only Messiah-savior [Acts 4.11]. Jesus is the only one who can save us, because as the unique Son of God who came to be born as a man, he is the only one who can bring us peace with God the Father, through his sacrificial death on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. We must put our faith completely in God saving us by grace [unmerited favor], through our faith in Jesus and his sacrifice for us.

Until Jesus returns to set up his kingdom and deliver the world from evil, believers will suffer. But we can experience deliverance in the sense of intimacy with God, walking by faith and obedience, and being assured of our salvation in Christ, no matter what else happens in our lives.