

Nobody But Jesus: It Feels Like Resurrection Day!

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Easter! This is indeed the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Our Savior, Jesus, has saved us! His Hebrew name, Yeshua, means salvation.

Last week, we saw the crowd quoting Psalm 118:25-26— “Hosana. Save us, we pray!” Unfortunately, the Jews were not crying out for a spiritual Savior to save them. They saw Jesus, Yeshua, instead, as a political savior who could rescue them from Roman oppression.

Psalm 118 whispers the Savior’s name and gives Christians cause to rejoice and be glad in His day! It is a call to worship on Resurrection Sunday!

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Psalm 118 is known as an Egyptian Hallel Psalm. “Hallel” is the Hebrew word that means “to praise” from which we get the word “Hallelujah!” This psalm was sung as God’s people remembered the Exodus. Today, our Exodus is not out of slavery, but out of the slavery of sin. The Jews sang Psalm 118 after the Passover meal. Mark 14:26 seems to indicate that Jesus and the disciples sang this Psalm after the Last Supper. The Psalm kept Jesus focused.

Vs. 1 and 2 – Call to worship. Salvation is both individual and corporate. “Steadfast love” – *Hesed* - a deep and binding love that is formed when a covenant is made between two parties. God so loves his people that nothing on earth or in the spiritual realms ever could separate or cause God to violate His covenant love that he has for his people. *Hesed* is a durable love that is miraculous at its core and depth. *Hesed* causes people to worship God and rejoice with gladness, that they find themselves the recipients of the robust love of God.

What do you think was going through Jesus’ mind and heart as He sang about the *hesed* of God? Surely this was a reminder of what was at stake as he prepared to go to the cross. God’s covenant love demanded a deep and enduring, perfect sacrifice once and for all. He would be the perfect sacrificial lamb that would seal the rescue of God’s people forever, through all eternity.

Vs. 14-16 - Twice Jesus sang the word “salvation”—He sang his own name. The disciples sang this song remembering the past (Ex. 15:2,6), and they would soon understand the present and future implications of this song.

V 17 – The most powerful verse in the psalm. *I will not die but live and will proclaim what the Lord has done.* This verse was written on the wall in Martin Luther’s study.

Jesus is about to fulfill verse 17 as his death will not be permanent. He will live. He will rise again. Death will not hold Jesus down. He will be resurrected by the power of God. The deeds of the Lord will be recounted and told for generations. This is good news!

Christ’s death and resurrection would enable the salvation for all who put their faith, hope and trust in Jesus. His power over death gives us hope in our afflictions and suffering. Our afflictions will not end in death for eternity. Any death we face will be overcome by the power of Jesus, Yeshua, our salvation. Thus, we do not grieve in our afflictions as those who have no hope. We have hope in the power of Christ that lives within us!

That is what verse 18 ultimately means for the Christ-follower.

Vs. 19-21 - Death is not the final verdict for our existence. We find hope in overcoming death because of our covenant love that we have with God through his son Jesus. Such hope in our Savior causes us to worship. Worship is the natural response of those who have been rescued. The rescuer is the one worthy of such worship.

When Jesus laid down his life once and for all, those who put their faith, hope, and trust in Him would always be welcome to worship the Lord with thanksgiving. From that point on our worship and thanks for what God did on our behalf could be lived out in our daily lives. As Matthew Henry once said, "Thanksgiving is good, but thank-living is better."

Vs. 22-23 - A cornerstone is the most important stone of a building project. This is the stone that all the other stones are built around and built upon. Once the cornerstone is set in place, all the remaining parts of the building project can move forward until completion. Jesus is the cornerstone on which our lives are built and on which the Kingdom of God is built.

The cornerstone originally referred to Israel as the primary focal point. The nations rejected her, and she abandoned her job of being a light to the nations. Jesus would now be the focal point of this foundation God was building. He would send Jesus to be born as a Jew with a Messianic lineage from King David just as the prophets foretold. Jesus also would be rejected by the Jews, and yet God would make him the Savior of all His people and the One they would worship.

Before this salvation and worship would take place, rejection leading to crucifixion would come first. Psalm 118:22 alludes to Jesus' death and resurrection. How do we know this? Because Jesus said it himself in Matthew 21:33-46. The parable of the tenants.

Verse 22 also played an important part in Peter's life. He used it in a sermon to the Sanhedrin in Acts 4. Peter refers to Jesus not only as the rejected stone who has become the cornerstone, but also as the author of salvation. Again, Jesus' name demonstrates what he is: salvation, Yeshua.

V 24 - We worship him today with hearts that are rejoicing and lives full of gladness because He has saved us from our sins and rescued us for himself. Because he lives today, we can face tomorrow and move forward from all our pain and regrets of yesterday. Because of his shed blood on the cross and his glorious resurrection over death, we can approach God and worship him in spirit and in truth. Peter reminds us of this in 1 Peter 2:1-10.

Friends, this is the day that the Lord has made; Rejoice and be glad in it. Because He is risen; He is risen, indeed.