

August 24–30: Psalms 49–51; 61–66; 69–72; 77–78; 85–86, “I Will Declare What He Hath Done for My Soul”

The Lord Is Our Protection and Refuge

Pss 61:1-4

1 Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

4 I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings.

In what ways is the Lord our rock and our shelter?

Ps 62:5-8

5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

6 He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.

7 In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

In what ways is the Lord our defense, strength, and refuge?

Allan M. Walburger

"the scriptures teach us that when we trust in the Savior, He can protect or shelter us. Listen to these comforting words of the Psalmist, 'From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.'

"These comforting words remind us of the love that our Savior has for each of his flock. He desires to protect us. But we must come unto him to find the refuge we seek.

"In what way does He protect us or provide us refuge? Perhaps the most obvious is with respect to temporal storms and physical harm....

"Of course, the greatest protection that the Rock provides us is protection from temptation and sin. He promises that we will not be 'tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it' (1 Corinthians 10:13). This protection is absolutely real." (BYUI Devotional, May 27, 2014)

Not only does the Lord provide us with spiritual refuge, but we are also promised the physical blessings we need.

Pss 65:9-13

9 Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

11 Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

12 They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

13 The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

What blessings does the Lord promise in this passage, and in what ways have they been fulfilled?

Orson Pratt

[This place] was once considered the most dreary, desolate, barren place on the face of all North America, a land where it was supposed that no human being could subsist.... But what was formerly a desert.... has become a fruitful land, and the Lord has fulfilled many and many a prophecy recorded in Isaiah and the Psalms of David in relation to making the desert blossom as the rose and making it like the garden of the Lord. It is thus prophesied, and that it has been fulfilled no one can dispute.” (JD, 17:289)

The psalmist asks the Lord to provide spiritual refuge by changing his carnal nature.

Pss 51:7-12

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

What transformative changes does the psalmist ask the Lord to make within him?

(Purge me... and I shall be whiter than snow

Make me to hear joy

Hide thy face from my sins

Create in me a clean heart

uphold me with thy free spirit)

Charles A. Callis

“Pray with David, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right

spirit within me.' When a man repents of his sins and brings forth fruits meet for repentance, is he not another man? Does not God give him another heart, a new heart?... My brethren and sisters, if the people will put all manner of evil beneath their feet; if they will turn wholly to God: if they will set their faces as flint against those evils which are vexing mankind, God will give them new hearts, and by obeying the gospel, they will become better and stronger.” (CR, April 1917)

Recognizing God’s Mercy and Guidance

The gospel fills us with joy and praise. We are invited to share our testimony with others.

Pss 66:1-4,16

1 Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.

16 Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

How does a testimony of the Lord's goodness inspire us to worship Him and share our testimony with others?

D. Todd Christofferson

“Truly, when you think about it, we have in the restored gospel what people, deep down, really want. So the warning voice is generally not only civil, but in the Psalmist’s phrase, it is a ‘joyful noise.’” (CR, April 2017)

The psalmist recognizes the importance of trials.

Pss 66:8-12

8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

9 Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

Why does the psalmist praise God for allowing affliction and testing?

James E. Faust

"Here then is a great truth. In the pain, the agony, and the heroic endeavors of life, we pass through a refiner’s fire, and the insignificant and the

unimportant in our lives can melt away like dross and make our faith bright, intact, and strong.... In the agonies of life, we seem to listen better to the faint, godly whisperings of the Divine Shepherd.

"There seems to be a full measure of anguish, sorrow, and often heartbreak for everyone, including those who earnestly seek to do right and be faithful.... In this way the soul can become like soft clay in the hands of the Master in building lives of faith, usefulness, beauty, and strength. For some, the refiner's fire causes a loss of belief and faith in God, but those with eternal perspective understand that such refining is part of the perfection process." (CR, April 1979)

The psalmist teaches that remembering God's past faithfulness strengthens our faith in times of need.

Pss 77:1,9-14

1 I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.

11 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

13 Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?

14 Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

Why is remembering God's faithfulness an important response during times of discouragement?

Howard W. Hunter

"I wish to speak briefly of some of those divine moments in our lives when the Savior reaches out to redeem and make whole and strengthen us.

"The Psalmist has written:

'I cried unto God with my voice,... and he gave ear unto me....'

'And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High....'

'Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.'

"Among the signs of the true church, and included in the evidences of God's work in the world, are the manifestations of his power which we are helpless to explain or to fully understand. In the scriptures these divine acts

and special blessings are variously referred to as miracles or signs or wonders or marvels.” (CR, April 1989)

The psalmist humbly calls upon the Lord for mercy, trusting in His goodness, forgiveness, and willingness to answer prayer.

Pss 86:1-7,12-13

1 Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy.

2 Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.

3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

12 I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.

How does the psalmist demonstrate humility in his prayers and daily living?

The Second Coming

The psalmist speaks of the punishment that awaits the wicked at Christ's Second Coming, while the righteous will rejoice.

Pss 50:2-3

2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

Pss 68:1-3

1 Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.

2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

3 But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

What do these verses teach us about the contrast between the fate of the wicked and the joy of the righteous at the Lord's coming?

Orson Pratt

“This is the work of God. It is God that causes these kingdoms to vanish

away. It is our God that will cleanse the earth from wickedness. ‘A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him’. He it is that will speak and the wicked shall melt away.” (JD, 21:272)

He speaks of the gathering of Israel in the last days.

Pss 85:1,6-13

1 LORD, thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

6 Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

9 Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yea, the LORD shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps.

What prophecies of the Restoration and the gathering of Israel do you find in these verses?

Orson Pratt

“David says, in the 85th Psalm, when enquiring about the long captivity of Jacob—‘Lord, wilt thou not bring back the captivity of Jacob’, ‘that Israel may rejoice, and that thy people may be glad.’ The Lord, in answering this prayer of David, tells him how he will do it. Says he—‘I will cause truth to spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven’, ‘and they shall go before us; to set us in the way of his steps.’ Yes, by bringing forth this work out of the earth, and by raising up his church, by the divine authority which he restored again, and by pouring out the Holy Ghost... the Lord has set us again in the way of his steps. And Israel will truly be made glad, and the house of Jacob, when this work shall go forth to them, will no longer be made ashamed.” (JD, 17:278)