



The Messianic “Stone” Cries Out!

Psalm 118 (Part Two: Verses 22-28, 29)

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Review: The study so far ... (Psalm 118:1-22): In Part 1 of this final article in the present series “Messiah in the Psalms”, the point was made that, just as Marc Chagall’s contemporary “tapestry” masterpieces adorning the foyer walls of Israel’s Knesset have been shown to contain three inter-related “stages” in his depiction of Israel’s ancient history, so this one, last, messianic Psalm in the “Five Books” of the Psalter, contains three inherent, prophetic “threads” that combine to provide one “final, climactic picture of Israel’s promised Messiah”. David depicted Him *prophetically* in terms of the “rejected” messianic “Stone” that the LORD has made to become the “chief Cornerstone”. As LORD, He cries out to *all* to trust Him and to thank Him in worthy praise. Furthermore, these three prophetic “threads” reveal three theological truths that (from a literary view-point) “correspond” to Chagall’s acclaimed artistic production.

First, like Chagall’s original ‘canvas’ concept, David spoke of the messianic “Day” of the LORD in terms of its **“proclaiming God’s love (that) endures forever!”** (vss. 1-4). Believers, therefore, are to remember this continually and **PRaise** Him! Second, again with striking correspondence to Chagall’s “tapestry” threads, the major section of Psalm 118 evidenced various theological “threads” dealing with the messianic “Day” of the LORD - this time in terms of **“pre-empting our response to God’s Love!”** (vss. 5-21). God’s people (Israel), as well as all other believers, are therefore exhorted to respond appropriately and **TRUST** Him! Third, just as Chagall’s grand “tapestry” climaxes in giving the “Big Picture”, so the last section of Psalm 118 concludes David’s theologically prophetic presentation in a corresponding way. He described this in terms of the messianic “Day” of the LORD **providing salvation because of God’s Love!** (vss. 21-28, 29). The “redeemed” (including restored Israel, as implied in this context),

should therefore rejoice exceedingly, and **THANK** Him! Now let’s continue to study the details of the text further ...

Part 1 of this article concluded with a question: “Have you, dear friend, forgotten to ‘go and thank the LORD’, privately (or publicly) for His merciful ‘deliverances’ in your life”? The point was made that it is easy to act like the “nine cleansed lepers” who, for whatever reasons, forgot to go back to Jesus and say “Thank You!” for their miraculous cleansing as they hastened to the Temple to show themselves to the Priests (Lk. 17:17)!



Acknowledgement of Image Source: Hand out Brochure at Israel’s Knesset - Israel Government Print.

By way of application, this present writer then suggested that the first two sections of this Psalm (vss. 1-4; 5-22), prompted **five practical instructions for “all”** to appropriate.

First: **Cultivate a continuous spirit of “Thankfulness”!** Because God’s “mercy endures forever”, *we should give thanks to Him at all times, for everything!* (vss. 1-4; cf. Dt. 7:7-9). One of the overt evidences of “The Spirit-Controlled” life is “always giving thanks to God for all things” (1 Thess. 5:18).

This has yet to happen for Israel as a nation, but will certainly occur when “the (surviving) remnant” one third of that generation in

the Last Days “repents” (Zech. 13:1, 9), acknowledges the Messianic “Stone” that has “(cried) out” to Israel over the centuries and a nation shall be “born (spiritually) in a day” (Is. 66:8). Thus, “all Israel will be saved” (Rom. 11:25-26a) and “the house of David (will be) rebuilt” (Acts 15:16ff).

Second: **Consider carefully and accept the fact that God is “good” – all the time!** We should *always remember that God is “good”* and what He does sovereignly in our lives and circumstances, is for our present good, and ultimately for His eternal glory (Ps. 34:8; Nah. 1:7).

This has been (and continues to be), a hard lesson for the physical descendants of Abraham to accept (cf. Jeremiah’s heartfelt messages to them (1-29ff); Hab. 1-3). The same is true for gentiles (cf. Ps. 2:1-3). From a human view-point, all pain and suffering seems unjust and wrong! However, the Messiah’s finished work on the Cross changes the believer’s perspective for God is “good – all the time, His “ways are perfect” and “He makes (his) way perfect” just as David said in Psalm 18:30, 32.

To illustrate the point, permit this writer share a colleague’s personal experience in ministry. In a conversing with a visibly emotional Jewish protagonist who asked him with “understandable” rancour: “Where was God in the Holocaust?”, he proffered this sincerely motivated response in a quiet, empathetic way: “My friend, I’ll answer your question with two others: “Where was HaShem (Hebrew: literally, “The Name”/i.e., “God”) when the First Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E.?” Silence! “And where was He when the Second Temple was destroyed by the Roman Legions in 70 C.E., when 1 million Jews were murdered, and the survivors scattered in the Diaspora?”. Silence again - plus a vacant stare!

Tenderly, this “lover of Israel and her people” explained that God “disciplines those whom



He loves" (Ps. 118:18; Heb. 12:8-11). Why? Because He does what He sovereignly ordains *always* for our own good, but more importantly, for His final glory. Puritan "God fearing" believers explained Jesus' words about Israel in John 15:1-8ff

in these terms: "The LORD purposes a (spiritual) crop". They believed, rightly (as all of us do at The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry), that this can only happen through the Messiah, Jesus. He is the "True Vine" sent by "(His) Father, the husbandman", the vinedresser, who "prunes" the fruitless "branches" so that the remaining stock will bear "fruit", "more fruit", "much fruit".

Spiritual truth began to dawn on the now pensive Jewish enquirer but there was no further response from him. The two departed with a handshake, the Jewish gentleman pondering deeply about what he'd heard, the believer silently praying for the spoken word to "take root downward and bear fruit upward" (Is. 37:31) in God's good time!

Third: **Count it a privilege to "suffer for His sake"!** We are to trust Him in all our trials, for He is bigger and greater than them all. David emphasised this in Psalm 118:15-18. He stated clearly that "(severe)" chastening had taken place, but "life" came out of such "death" experiences (vs. 18; cf. 17b).

Our times are in His hands (vss. 5-14; Jer. 17:5-8), and He promises to "reward" those who faithfully endure times of suffering (Jas. 1:12). Paul wrote to the believers in Rome and Philippi about this (Rom. 8:17-39; Phil. 3:10) and later, to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:3-4, 11-13). Peter also echoed the same truth (1 Pt. 2:20; 3:14 and 4:16).

Messiah's sufferings and atoning death for Israel and the world (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 2:2) made it possible for Israel to be saved, as indeed, any and *all* who "believe" in Him (Jn. 1:12; Acts 16:30-31; Rom 10:9-10, 13).

Fourth: **Confidently commit yourself to the Messiah, the only Saviour from sin!** David showed us in this Psalm that believers' lives and ministries are safe and secure in the LORD's "Anointed" One, the Messiah (vss. 15-20ff). David found this to be so personally (vss. 14, 22), for he also testified of this in Psalms 31:15 and 16:7-11.

Are we prayerfully passionate about the salvation of precious souls? Paul was! (Rom. 10:1). For *all* who receive Him – whether Jewish or gentile - the same testimony pertains: *nothing (or no-one) shall ever "separate (them) from the love of God in Christ Jesus"* (Rom. 8:37-39). David's Messianic "Stone" still cries out to everyone today with God's message of forgiveness, security and hope!

Fifth: **Confess that God has "made this Jesus, both "LORD and (Messiah)"!** David spoke of this, prophetically, in Psalm 118. He referred to his "LORD" eighteen times in the first twenty one verses; He gave the LORD his rightful place in his life. He acknowledged Him as the "LORD of (his) salvation" (vs. 21).

Peter later proclaimed this same truth on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-39, especially verse 36) and later when he wrote to "the sojourners of the Dispersion" throughout Asia Minor as to "coming to (Christ, the Messiah) as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious" (1 Pet. 2:4-6).

The challenge to *all* believers today is to be actively involved in "mission" to the Jewish people, for how can they "confess Him" if they've never "heard" of Him. Someone must "go tell" them and show them God's love in Messiah, Jesus (Rom. 10:14-17; Mt. 28:20f). Will you?

The text of Psalm 118:23-28, 29.

David has testified that, despite his (and Israel's) experiences of being surrounded by enemies who threatened to exterminate him, "(he) would not die, but live and declare the works of the LORD" (vss. 16-17). God, in His faithfulness to His promise, answered and He "became his salvation" (vs. 21). This picture of divine salvation was then elaborated further in verses 22-28, followed by a final acclamation of praise and thanksgiving as the Psalm concluded (vs 29).

The Psalm thus comes to a climax in terms of the messianic "Stone" crying out to God's people in their need of "deliverance". The text in the NKJV reads:

- (22) *The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.*
- (23) *This is the LORD's doing; It is marvellous in our eyes.*
- (24) *This is the day that the LORD has made; We will be glad and rejoice in it.*
- (25) *Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.*
- (26) *Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD.*

We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

(27) God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.

(28) You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You.

(29) Oh, give thanks to the LORD, For He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

The terminology David used here is striking! His descriptions revealed graphic word pictures about the coming Messiah.

Just as in archaeological contexts,

"(exposed) stones cry out" evidencing certain *past historical facts*, so in Psalm 118:22-28, the prophesied, messianic, "rejected" Stone "cries out" with an unrivalled, unmistakable, clarion call: The LORD has sovereignly "restored" (Me) to become the **"chief Cornerstone"**!

(vss. 22-24, emphases added)!

With His divine appointment, *this promised "Messiah" has thus become the sole criterion by which all dimensions of man's eternal salvation are "measured"*! Is it any wonder that David went on to state so joyously: "This is LORD's doing and marvellous in our eyes" (vs. 23)? Indeed, "this is the **'day'** that the LORD has made and we will be glad and rejoice in it" (vs. 24, emphasis added)! Just as for David, Israel, or for anyone else, the fact remains: *In this God, the Messiah, and in Him alone, there is salvation* (Ps. 118:14, 21; cf. Ps 3:8; Acts 4:12; Rom. 10:9-10).

This leads us, then, to the final major point of this concluding study in this present series:

III. REJOICE EXCEEDINGLY! -- The messianic "Day" of the LORD Provides Salvation because of God's Enduring, Eternal "Hesed" Love! Therefore: THANK Him! (Psalm 118: 22-28, 29).

David's arresting statement that the Messiah, though once "rejected", but now made the **"chief Cornerstone"**,

underscored one salient prophetic, messianic truth:

As builders reject a stone because it doesn't seem to fit their building plan, so the LORD would be rejected by Israel's religious leaders and His own people because He did not fit in place with their preconceived, but misinterpreted and wrong, building plans for the nation. But when the coming Messiah (Jesus, as prophesied in more than 300 passages in the Hebrew Scriptures (including Psalm 118) is personally acknowledged as God's only way of salvation, His promised, eternal, spiritual, deliverance becomes a reality!

This is an offer to *all* today, and will ultimately be Israel's experience when they finally turn to the Messiah and received Him (Is. 66:8; Zech. 13:9; Rom. 11:25-26a).

This captivating prophetic passage of Scripture encompassed at least three spiritual truths:

A. Messiah's Salvation: Provided & Observed!

When God sent His incarnate Son into this world, He "provided salvation" for all who would accept Him (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Titus 2:11).

Jesus lived and ministered among His people, being *observed* by the religious leaders and the public, alike. Yet they did not recognise Him for who He was. He was "Immanuel, God with us", but the failed to see Him as the Son of God or God the Son. His miracles were "signs" and declared not only His deity, but even more so, His **"Messiahship"** (Jn. 20:30-31), yet this reality remained a mystery to them. They were "blind" as to this Redeemer "King" was among them and who was also the Ruler "King", based on His redemptive work on the Cross (cf. Jn. 1:11-12, 2 Cor. 5:21). That there was a "suffering" King and a "sovereign" King in this One Person was totally oblivious to their way of thinking.

It is clear from the New Testament (Hebrew: *B'rit Hadashah*) Gospel narratives that Psalm 118 was much on Jesus' mind

throughout His "Passion week". Significantly, it was also on the crowd's mind during this time as well. The reader will recall that as He rode into Jerusalem as the acclaimed "king" on the back of the donkey (Zech. 9:9-10), the crowds shouted "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mt. 21:9; 23:39). These words were directly quoted from this Psalm (vss. 25 and 26).

Later in that week, we read that Jesus quoted verses 22 and 23 as he taught the people and as He debated with the Jewish leaders, referring to Himself as the "stone which the builders rejected, (which becomes) the chief corner stone" (Mt. 21:42). He also quoted verse 26, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" (Mk. 11:9).

It must also be remembered that at the annual Jewish Passover celebrations, the "Egyptian Hallel" Psalms (Pss. 113-118) were sung, Psalms 113 and 114 before the main meal and the remainder after it. Thus, Psalm 118 was the last song that Jesus and his disciples sang together as they completed the Last Supper in the Upper Room. Matthew told us that, "When they had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives" (Mt 26:30).

Salvation was "provided" by God, and His people "observed" the Person of Jesus and the works which He did, but they missed "(their) Day of visitation" (Lk. 19:44) in this God-sent Messiah, and rejected Him. Yet God has made this messianic "rejected" Stone the "chief Cornerstone"!

Praise God that today there are considerable numbers of Jewish people enquiring – some secretly – as to whether "Yeshua" is the Messiah, and some who are actually accepting Him as their Saviour!

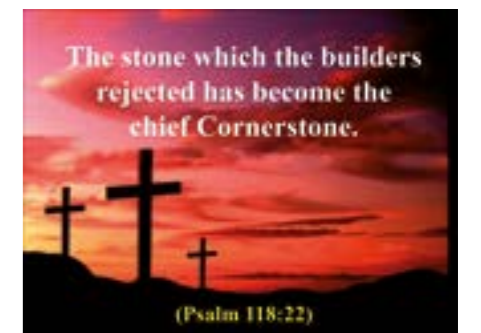
B. Messiah's Salvation: Prophesied and Offered!

The "prophesied salvation" which Messiah Jesus offered to all in Psalm 118:21-28, was based on the LORD's everlasting, eternal ("*hesed*") love. David explicitly and so exquisitely revealed this in the opening four verses of this Psalm.

This was yet another reminder to Israel of His covenant love for them as "His people". They were also described elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures as being "the apple of His eye" (Dt. 32:10; Zech. 2:8). Furthermore, Israel had been "loved with and everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3) and He "delivered" His people from Exile in Babylon after 70 years (cf. Is. 40-66), just as He will do in the Last Days when Jesus returns to regather Israel from the Diaspora and set up His Kingdom

(Mt. 24:30-31). That prophesied, historically proven, love still holds true. God's offer of salvation remains available in Messiah Jesus and is offered freely to *all* who hear, believe and receive Him (2 Cor. 6:2; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:19-26; 10:9-10, 13).

Will this "offer" be available in the future? Yes, but only while this "Day of grace" pertains. God sovereignly controls the "times and the seasons" according to His prophetic calendar. The next prophetic event on His calendar is the "Trumpet Call" – the Rapture of the Church, Christ's Body (1 Thess. 5:17; cf. Rev. 4:1ff). Meanwhile, "Today" is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). However, when the (righteous) "love of God" is repudiated, He must inevitably action His (righteous) "judgement" (Hebrews 9:28-29) for the attributes of this Self Existent, incomparable LORD are eternally consistent and compatible.



What will happen to that (yet future?) terminal generation of Israel in the Last Days at the end of the Tribulation? Scripture revealed that He will yet deal with His people because of His "*chesed*" love. One third will respond; two thirds will not survive (Zech. 13:8-9; cf. Rev. 6:8 and 9:18 where the same fractions are used concerning the whole world!). God will reconcile the surviving "remnant" and "(bring them to Himself) to be (their) God" (Lev. 26: 33-45; Rom. 11:25-26, 27-29ff). Messiah Jesus will establish His Kingdom and rule from Jerusalem, thus fulfilling His promises to Israel (Acts 15:16ff ; cf. 3:18-22; note Mt. 6:10; 21:43; Rev. 11:15).

Since God will do this for His covenant people, Israel (Ps. 89; Ps. 105:7-9), what about those who are gentiles? Again Scripture provides a definite answer: He "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (Jesus), that *whosoever* believes on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16; cf. Rom. 10:13). The gospel is for *all*! No wonder both Jewish *and* gentile believers can "Rejoice Exceedingly", just as David exhorted his people to do in these latter verses of Psalm 118.

So Messiah Jesus' salvation is "prophesied" and "offered" to everyone! In this fact, all believers can rejoice!

C. Messiah's Salvation: Perfected and Obtained!

The last section of Psalm 118 prophesied the messianic "Day" of the LORD. It is the "Day" of salvation, now. It also includes all the various aspects of God's culminating prophetic programme, in the future. Two nuances are thus involved: First, the term connotes a "Day" of grace and hope. It is a positively blessed "Day" for all who now respond to His offer of salvation in the gospel and receive Him. These born again believers (Jn. 1:12; 3:3-5ff) become "adopted" into God's spiritual family (Eph. 1:5; cf. Rom. 8:14; Gal. 4:6). Thus, believing Jews and believing Gentiles are those on whom the "light of the gospel has shone" (2 Cor. 4:6) and are "all one in Christ Jesus" in this Church Age of grace (Gal. 3:28).

Second, for those who repudiate His "hesed" love and reject His offer of eternal life in the Messiah, the "Day" of the LORD will be a *dark* "Day", not one of "light" (Amos 5:18). If one wants to see what is involved in such a calamitous "Day", he need go no further than Revelation 6-18. This "Day of the LORD" referred to the coming Tribulation and the culminating "Day of the LORD" with its "Two Phases". One "phase" commences with the Rapture of the Church to be with Christ in heaven, followed soon after by the rise of the Antichrist here on earth and the beginning of the Tribulation. The second "phase" concludes after seven years of divinely ordained, universal and cosmic judgements, with the Second Coming of Christ "with His saints" (1 Thess. 3:13). At that time the "chief Cornerstone" (God's sent Messiah) will establish His prophesied Millennial Kingdom.

As fellow servants working together with the FRIENDS OF ISRAEL Gospel Ministry, we therefore count it a privilege to show God's love to the Jewish people, and share His gospel message in culturally sensitive ways with them, at every opportunity He gives. Ours is the privilege (along with others, of course), to proclaim to Jew and Gentile alike that salvation is "perfected" and "obtained" in Messiah Jesus, now (Heb. 10:14), and yet to be also fully realized "in that day" at the end of the Tribulation, when the messianic King rules in His promised Kingdom on earth (Mt. 6:10; Heb. 12:28).

Conclusion:

So, whether it be in Chagall's "tapestry" Masterpiece in art form in Israel's Knesset, or in David's majestic, literary, Masterpiece

in Psalm 118 in the Scriptures, it is possible for the discerning reader to "step back" and gaze at the inherent "Big Picture" both sources severally reveal. Though divergent as to "subject, medium and content", they uniquely correspond as to three inter-related "stages" of production that combine to give the overall presentation. For Chagall, the "Big Picture" was his exposure of Israel's biblical history; for David in Psalm 118, it was a climactic, concluding biblical exposition of Israel's promised Messiah.

David presented the "(Day) which the LORD has made" in terms of the messianic "Stone" that the builders rejected, but whom God made the "chief Cornerstone". He spoke of the messianic "Stone" crying out and "**proclaiming (that) God's love endures forever!**" (vss. 1-4). All who believe, therefore, should "remember this continually" and **PRAISE** Him! To put this in a summarised devotional phrase, we may say that he highlighted **the wonder of God's eternal Love in the Messiah!**

In the second and major section of Psalm 118 (verses 5-21), David revealed this messianic "Day" in terms of its **pre-empting a response to God's Love!**

All believers, are therefore exhorted to "respond appropriately" to the messianic "Stone's" clarion call and **TRUST** Him! In a devotional maxim, David's presentation could be expressed as **the wealth of God's endless Life in the Messiah!**

David then concluded the "Big Picture" in Psalm 118:22-28, 29. There, he described the climactic, messianic "Day" as **providing salvation because of God's Love!** All His "redeemed", should therefore "rejoice exceedingly", and **THANK** Him! To express it in succinct, devotional terms, we may say that David underscored the **wisdom of God's enriching Light in the Messiah!**



That Messiah is Jesus, in whom "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9; cf. 1:19), and through whom all who "believe in Him will be saved" (Acts 16:30-31).

*(29) Oh, give thanks to the LORD,
for He is good!
For His mercy endures forever.*

The series of "Messiah in the Psalms" is now concluded with one simple, searching, question – a question from which this climactic, messianic Psalm evokes an answer from every Jewish or gentile reader:

"How do I "measure up" to Jesus, the "chief Cornerstone", by which all aspects of one's eternal salvation are measured?"

Suggested Prayer:

*O God, Maker of the heavens and the earth,
... (the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) ...*

I know that I have sinned against You.

Thanks that You loved me so much that You sent Jesus, the Messiah, into the world to die in my place on the Cross for my sins.

I believe that in putting my trust in Him, ... (I will not cease being Jewish)... I will be forgiven because You have accepted His death for me, and that You proved this by raising Him from the dead.

By Your grace, I therefore repent of my sins, trust Him as my Saviour, and now ask Him into my heart!

Help me to be the person you want me to be as I now start walking with Him.

*Thank You for answering my prayer.
In Jesus' Name. Amen!*

At the first opportunity, and get in touch with another believer and confess Him openly. Alternatively, we invite you to write to us at The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, so that we might help you grow spiritually by sending you some free and post-paid literature.

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