

Blessed are Those Who Bless Yahweh

Psalm 144

June 16, 2024

Today we are going to be in Psalm 144, if you would like to turn there in your Bibles, now. I thought I would do something complementary to what Josh has been going through in James, and I don't know about you, but I've been pretty convicted the last few weeks. A with a great concern for being careful about the words that come out of my mouth. A James the book in and of itself, James kind of just as you read it hits you between the eyes, and so it's even more so when somebody's preaching it to you, a just hits you right between the eyes.

And I don't know about you as well, but sometimes when we're faced with conviction like that, a when sin is exposed that we need to work on, I know for myself, sometimes I can feel a bit paralyzed or discouraged, maybe overwhelmed to the degree of growth that is needed. And this is why I wanted to go to Psalm 144, because I think it encourages us to turn to the Lord

for help. It reminds us of who he is, that gives us at the end positive results, the blessing of the one who does the hard work of fighting this battle. I think this Psalm is instructive for whatever battle we are fighting, and sometimes as we read the Psalms where David is being pursued by an enemy, he feels in despair and he cries out for deliverance.

A we don't as safe Americans, we don't necessarily identify with David as he's crying out for deliverance from enemies just because we live in a relatively safe environment. We have never been on the run from enemies, really, most of us. But if we think of our greatest enemy as being sin, sinful desires, we can really identify with David when he cries out these things. David had a physical enemy, a but we often don't as New Testament Christians in the church, our battle is a spiritual one.

This Psalm itself is not about fighting sin, but that happens to be our greatest foe that we can apply it to. And so, coming out of the sermon from the last few weeks, I'm thinking about this in light of putting to death the sin, the sinful use

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of my mouth. But as we set that in that context, let's go ahead and read Psalm 144, and we'll just read it in its entirety.

Psalm 144, beginning in verse one, "Blessed be Yahweh my rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle, my loving kindness and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and He in whom I take refuge, who subdues my people under me. O Yahweh, what is man that you know Him? Or the Son of Man that you think of Him? Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow. O Yahweh, bow your heavens and come down; touch the mountains, and that they may smoke. Flash forth lightning and scatter them; send out your arrows and confuse them. Send forth your hand from on high; set me free and deliver me out of many waters, out of the hand of foreigners whose mouth speaks worthlessness, and whose right hand is a right hand of lying.

"O God, I will sing a new song to you upon a harp of ten strings. I will sing praises to you who give salvation to kings, who sets David his servant free from the evil sword. Set me free and deliver me out of the hand of the sons of a foreigner whose

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mouth speaks worthlessness, and whose right hand is a right hand of lying. That our sons would be as grown up plants in their youth, and our daughters as corner pillars fashioned As for a palace. That our granaries would be full, furnished every kind of produce; and our flocks would bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our field outside; that our cattle would bear without mishap and without loss and without outcry in the streets. How blessed are the people for whom this is so; how blessed are the people for whom God is Yahweh!"

I have titled this message Blessed are those who bless Yahweh, or to put it in different words, happy are those who praise Yahweh. And for our outline, we will tie all that together by starting out our four outline points, four point outline with we are blessed or we are happy when we point number one, know our place before Yahweh in verses 1 to 4. Happy are we when we seek our help from Yahweh in verses 5 to 8. Happy are we when we sing of our salvation to Yahweh, point number three in verses 9 to 11. And then happy are we when we entrust our future to Yahweh in verses 12 to 15.

I'll repeat those as we go, but David writes this Psalm, He's the author of this Psalm, and we don't know at what point in his life that he writes this or is reflecting on or anticipating. But what every commentator agrees on is that David is presently, as he is praying this prayer, he is facing an enemy, and he writes in need of the Lord to go before him and fight this battle. The first 11 verses are found in a number of other Psalms, you've probably recognized some of them from other psalms. And David, I think takes he writes this Psalm here with this familiar content to instruct his own heart and Israel and by extension us regarding how to approach a battle.

David knows, and he says this when he goes to fight Goliath that victory belongs to Yahweh. It wouldn't be a bad idea for all of us to start every day with this kind of prayer. I know I try to start each of my days with a similar prayer, though much less polished and proper, but we are blessed, we are in an enviable state of divine favor. We are happy when we, point one know our place before Yahweh. Let's look at the first two verses again, "Blessed be Yahweh, my rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle, my loving kindness, my fortress, my stronghold, my deliverer, my shield, and he and whom I take

refuge, who subdues my people under me." This word in, this word blessed or blessed in verse one is not the same word as the word blessed at the end of the chapter.

Two different words, this word, the one at the end of that, the end of the chapter. Blessed are those for whom this is so that can be translated as happy one who is in an enviable state of divine favor. But this one at the beginning, when it refers to God, when God is the subject, it means praise or adoration. This is a statement about who God is, that he is worthy of all praise, he is blessed. David declares that God is worthy of praise of all praise, and then he proceeds to give a host of reasons why he is worthy to be praised or why he is blessed.

And in two verses, just these two verses, there are nine pictures or descriptions or terms regarding why Yahweh is blessed. In the first one of those, David says I'll list them, I'm not going to make it cumbersome by sub points, but I will list them first. David says, "my rock," and throughout the first person pronoun my, my, my is, is prolific, making this section intimately personal for David. Yahweh is not just a rock, David

says, "He is my rock, my stronghold, my fortress," and for the believer as well, for those who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we also cry, "He is my rock." This word for rock is just this term is a metaphor for strength, and depending on the context, it can have defensive connotations or offensive connotations, and this word is really just setting the tone for the rest of the text, which has defensive and offensive connotations in David's battle, that he is about to face.

David here is recognizing that Yahweh is his strength to defend against his enemy, but also to go on the offense. And it's vital for us as Christians to know what David knows here, that Yahweh is his only strength to fight against his enemy. If we hope, if we have any hope in victory, we need to know that our only source of strength is God and God alone. When we look to ourselves for strength, for victory now, we will only fail. So that's the first thing David says, you are my rock. Next, David says that Yahweh is his trainer, you who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle. One commentator says this, David acknowledges that God is his personal trainer who prepares him for battle.

If David's arrows land in the enemy's side, it is because the Lord has trained him and enabled him to strike a direct blow. He finds in the Lord not only his protection in battle but also his preparation for battle. God is the one who maximizes his skills and enlarges his strength in battle. If David, who was a mighty warrior, looked to the Lord for preparation in battling physical enemies, how much more so do we need to look to the Lord to prepare us for spiritual battles? How do you fight an enemy you cannot see? How do you fight an enemy that is not physical? Will you fight them with spiritual sight, with spiritual weapons?

As we read in Ephesians, Paul tells us the spiritual weapon that we have is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The Lord trains us for battle as we know our Scriptures more thoroughly, as we study, as we search, we find defensive tactics, offensive tactics to war against the world, the flesh and the devil, the sinful, the sin that still remains within us. As we do that, the Lord will train us for battle, as he did for David. But woe to those who seek fleshly tactics in this spiritual war, woe more so to those who fail to see that they're

in a war at all. Woe to those who do not care to train for the battle that they are in.

We must understand our place before the Lord, come to him to be trained for battle, not look to our own devices. So, Yahweh is worthy to be blessed, worthy to be praised, because he is our rock, because he trains us for battle. Third, David declares Yahweh to be my loving kindness. This is the Hebrew word *hesed*, it's a word that refers to covenant love, loyal love. It is a special love that the Lord has for those who are in a covenant with Him rather than the general love he has for his creation. But this term, my loving kindness, it denotes an intimacy of relationship, a special relationship that David has with God.

And this loyal love, this covenant love, is the cause or the basis of Yahweh then being declared, fourthly and fifthly, "my fortress and my stronghold." Fortress is a word that can refer to a mountain, stronghold, Masada, or a walled city, but the word in and of itself stresses the idea of a strong or impenetrable palace of safety. Jerusalem is described with this

word; you remember David's enemies mocked him. They weren't even worried about David's army getting in, they were laughing at them, mocking them from the walls. And David snuck in, defeated the inhabitants, they weren't worried because it was a fortress.

David says, "Yahweh is my strong fortress and impenetrable place of safety." Fifth he says my stronghold, stronghold is a Hebrew word that refers to a very high point of refuge, the idea is you are so high you are out of harm's way. Like if you had an enemy and you are standing up on the edge of the Grand Canyon and your enemy is down a mile down below in the valley, are you going to be fearful? They have no chance of getting to you, that is what this word stronghold refers to, a high place of safety. You are tucked up far away from any danger, Yahweh is David's fortress, David's stronghold. The basis of this, the cause of this, is his loving kindness, and the effect or the result of this is that Yahweh is my deliverer.

The word here used has the basic meaning of to escape, to slip away, to get away, but in the intensified form that it is here in the Hebrew, it changes from escaping yourself to

removing someone else from harm's way. It is a verb in the text, if we're to remove the verbal idea, we might think of this as David saying Yahweh is my escape, but David puts it in a participle form because he wants the verbal idea there, emphasizing Yahweh's action. Yahweh actively provides escape for David, Yahweh is continually David's deliverer from the enemy, providing a way of escape.

And Paul makes this same point in 1 Corinthians 10:13, when he says, "No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide a way of escape." So, that you will be able to endure it, not endure standing up under it, holding all the weight, but so you can escape and flee the temptation. So, it is on the basis of Yahweh's loyal love that He is our fortress, He is our stronghold, and the result of Him being our fortress and our stronghold it is that He is our ever present deliverer, who provides escape from our enemy.

David understood that he had no hope of escape from his enemy, that he had no stronghold, no fortress apart from Yahweh, apart from God. Now, it is important that we think of who this man is. This is King David, the man who lived in the most secure city around, an impenetrable city, and yet he did not like those whom he took the city from stand on the wall and laugh and scoff. He did not look to the physical comforts and protections, though He had the greatest of them in his city and in his army. He looked to Yahweh alone, to provide protection for him, to provide escape from his enemies. And we must understand our place in this world before the Lord as well.

We must understand that Yahweh is our only protection and deliverer in this battle with sin, the world, and the devil. For when we become proud and we look to ourselves, we think we have strength within ourselves. Well, Solomon tells us in Proverbs, "Pride comes before destruction." As soon as you stand on the walls and you think you stand in a place of protection, destruction comes. If the most powerful king of his day recognized total dependence upon the Lord, how much more so do we need to think this way?

Moving on to number seven David says Yahweh is my shield. The Hebrew word here is *magen*, and it refers to the smaller round shield that Light infantry would carry. This is in contrast to the *Zona*, which was the full body rectangular shield.

But one lexicographer notes that this word for shield, *magon*, is also figuratively used to refer to protectors of the realm, people who protected entire realms. The king of Israel is referred to this way twice, Psalm 47:9, and 89:18. And so if this is a metaphor for a protector of the realm, David sees Yahweh as the protector of the realm. This would be tantamount to Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine, or Benjamin Netanyahu referring to the United States or the allies as a shield, because they are a superpower providing protection, aid.

David declares Yahweh here to put it in modern terms, David declares Yahweh as his Iron Dome, so to speak. He was David's superpower protector, worthy of all praise and honor. And for us as Christians, it is the same. He is our superpower, divine Protector when we, like David number eight, take refuge in him.

Yahweh is a refuge, but it should be noted that David chooses a verb here over another similar one that he could have used because this one emphasizes action versus just being in a secure place. Take refuge, it is the first action of David described in the Psalm. He actively takes refuge in the Lord, one commentator notes says, "To seek refuge stresses the insecurity and self helplessness of even the strongest of men." We must understand, like David again, we are utterly helpless in and of ourselves.

No matter how big you are, no matter how strong you are, you are helpless before a spiritual enemy apart from God. If there was anyone throughout history who had reason to look to himself or strength, it was David. Look what he did with Goliath, many other great battles, killing lions and bears by himself in the wilderness. Are you more of a man than David? So, we must also not think much of ourselves when it comes to any battle with any trial or sin or person. We are hopeless to find victory if we do not take refuge in God, if we do not see our utter dependence upon Him.

Nineth and finally, Yahweh is worthy of praise and blessing, because it is "He who subdues my people under me," David says. David knows as a leader that there is a to put it in the terms of James and world of unrighteousness in the hearts of all his people, that at any moment they could rise up and throw him out. That there is as well as an enemy outside, there is an enemy just waiting to creep up within to destroy him, to overthrow him. That there are those within Israel who at any time could threaten to do the same. David knows that it is Yahweh who subdues the internal threat in Israel as well. Yahweh has brought peace among God's people, and he subdues anything or any person who would threaten that peace.

So, as we come to the end of these two verses, with all of these terms that David has heaped up, many of them similar, what should we think about this? And I think John Calvin helps us with this, he says, "The accumulation of terms one upon another which follows, which is in this text, may appear unnecessary, yet it tends greatly to strengthen faith. We know how unstable men's minds are, and especially how soon faith wavers, and when we are assailed by some trials of more than usual severity, it is not enough, if God would sustain us under such weakness, to

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promise us His help in individual or single expressions, and even however many aid he supplies us with, we are subject to very great vacillations, and a forgetfulness of his mercy creeps in upon us, which almost overwhelms our mind."

He goes on, and he says, "We are to remember that it is not merely in token of his gratitude that David heaps together so many terms in declaring the goodness of God, but David heaps up so many images." Calvin tells us, "to fortify God's people against all attacks of the world and of the evil one." This is so true, is it not, that we are so feeble and so frail that just one of those is not enough for our weak minds? We need so many of them heaped up upon one another so that they might encourage us in the variety of trials and sins that we face.

When we are in the midst of a struggle, how comforting so many pictures are to us, how each one ministers to us differently when we are fearful. It is so helpful to know that he is our fortress, that he tucks us away high in a stronghold, away from the enemy. When we feel unloved or unlovable, we are reminded of Yahweh's covenant love, his loyal love for us. When

we feel that we have no strength, we are reminded that he is our rock. So many pictures heaped up together are so necessary because we are so frail, we are so easily driven to despair and forgetfulness, and we might put it this way with our, our battle with sin.

Why are so many pictures necessary? Well, we might also ask, why are so many missiles necessary to make the Iron Dome work? It works because there are missile um fortifications everywhere to shoot down enemy missiles. Essentially David here he is filling our arsenal with missiles to defend against the enemy's attacks from every side. This is the Lord training our mind for battle as He trained David with some defensive spiritual tactics to remind ourselves of who God is when we feel overwhelmed by the enemy, when we are fearful, anxious. You might label this section in your Bible, just these couple verses as the spiritual Iron Dome of the believer, to protect our minds, defend against the onslaught of sin.

When we know this, it is a great defense against sin. So happy is the one who knows his place before Yahweh, who takes

refuge in him as his superpower protector, armed with these missiles for defense. And while some divide the next couple versus 3 and 4 up, I've just kept them with this because I think it helps understand they continue the point of knowing our place before Yahweh, but look at verses 3 and 4 again, "Oh Yahweh, what is man that you know him or the Son of Man that you think of Him? Man is like a breath in his days or like a passing shadow." It is at this point in the text that David absolutely marvels that Yahweh knows him and thinks of him at all. David thinks, who am I, that Yahweh would be my strength, my deliverer, my fortress.

David understands his place before Yahweh is so insignificant, David marvels that God even knows him, this word refers to a relational knowledge, he knows everything about him. What is it that God of the mass of creation, all of humanity, the billions and billions of stars, what are we that God knows us? But with verse 4, David, there's that term in verse 3, "know him," but also, "think of him" or the "Son of man that you think of him." David is also with this, marveling at the fact that not only does God know him, but that he takes him into account at all, the Lord makes plans for each and every one of us.

Plans, imagine meeting the president or some world leader and coming to find out they know you. Not only that, but they've made plans for you, plans to prosper you, give you a future and a hope. Imagine if you met a world leader, much less the Lord of the universe, stooping down to care for each of us in this way. But David in verse 4 helps us understand this to an even greater degree when he says, "Man is like a breath and a passing shadow." Let me ask you this, how much thought did you give to the last breath you took? When you are planning your days and your schedule, how much do you take into account breathing?

When you're thinking about all the important things in life, how significant is just one breath that you take? It doesn't even enter into our thinking, does it? David says, "That is what each one of our lives are like before Yahweh." One breath and it's gone, that's our life before the Lord. And yet God purposed, he planned, he thought carefully about that one breath that was your life, that is your life. Think about that when you are in your struggle with sin, how intimately the Lord cares for you. That even though individual breaths passing shadows, we consider them not, that is how insignificant we are

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before God, and yet he plans and thinks carefully about each one of us. What an encouragement that among the billions of stars in the mass of humanity, in the huge universe that the Lord created, that he cares for each of us.

He has plans to deliver each of us from our temptation, he has provided a way out if we will just take refuge in Him. He has not left us to our own devices, though he is the King of the universe who sits on His throne. He is also our personal rock in whom we can take refuge. It is vital in our Christian life that we understand our place before Yahweh and oh how happy are those who know their place before Yahweh, who look to him for their defense, who find their refuge in him, for it is a peaceful and safe place under the divine Iron Dome of Yahweh himself.

That brings us to point two, happy are we who seek our help from Yahweh. If you've been involved in sports at all, you have probably heard the saying that the best offense is a good defense, and there is some truth to that. That's why we have spent so much time on this previous section, which is really the defense. But David knew that the best offense was Yahweh, who

could obliterate his enemy with lightning. And so, he calls on Yahweh in verse 5, "O Yahweh, bow your heavens and come down. Touch the mountains that they may smoke, flash forth lightning and scatter them." That's referring to his enemies, "Send out your arrows and confuse them, put them in a panic." David is preparing to go out to battle and before he goes out to battle, he remembers his place before Yahweh. But he also seeks and petitions Yahweh to defeat his enemies, to bring victory.

Here he uses language that was familiar from other historical events. The dissension on the mountain and the smoking is reminiscent of Mount Sinai. The Lord coming down, being present with his people. David is asking the Lord to descend, draw near to him, but not for revelation, but to fight for him, to send forth what only God could do and strike his enemies with lightning to send them into a panic. And this is language also, putting his enemies in Israel's enemies in a panic throughout the Old Testament, most notable the Philistine army in 1 Samuel 7:10, where God did send forth lightning to do just this. David understood that the battle is Yahweh's, and we must understand the same thing.

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We must come before him to seek his help, happy are we when we seek our help from Yahweh to win the battle. We must ask him to spare no power but come with the greatest degree of might against our enemy, to blast our enemy with lightning bolts if necessary. This is how David approached battle, this is how we must approach our own battle with sin, asking the Lord to spare no power blasted far from us. We must be intentional to be specific, asking the Lord to do this in our own life. But then David then shifts from asking the Lord to go on the offense, but then he seems as if this is also a rescue mission to snatch David from the midst of great waters.

The word for deliverer is not the same word used above, it means to tear from it is more forceful. It isn't just providing a way of escape, it is reaching down, grabbing one and pulling them out, extracting them. He petitions Yahweh that after sending forth lightning to attack his enemy, to confuse them, to put them into a panic, he asks the Lord to send forth his hands. The Hebrew is actually plural there, to send forth his hands and scoop him out of the waters, to reach down, to pluck him out of the ocean of unrighteousness that he finds himself in. And the situation that David finds himself in, in need of extraction

from, as he is among foreigners whose mouths are full of worthlessness or deception or vanity, and they also lie with their hands.

This word worthlessness, it's translated many different ways and different translations, but the essential elements of this word consist of injustice and deception, triviality and lying. But the phrase we find here speaks worthlessness, particularly refers to unrestrained speech, it is worthless speech, nothing good in it. It's like an unrestrained flamethrower as to use the analogy of James lighting a world on fire, David petitions the Lord to deliver him from this specific enemy.

And this is in part what drew me to this Psalm this last week as I was thinking about it, going through James being more careful with our words, that all of us are engaged in a battle to bridle our tongues. We aren't up against another physical enemy like David was, who lies and cheats and tricks and uses their mouth for all kinds of worthlessness. But we are fighting a spiritual battle to control our tongues so that we do not

resemble this very same enemy of David. Our enemy is within, as James says, within each of us, our tongues are a world of unrighteousness.

But when we are seeking the Lord's help from the Lord in prayer, David here, he's very specific with the enemy that he wants deliverance from, and we ought to take note of that and imitate that as well. Be very specific with our prayers to the Lord of the enemy that we want deliverance from the struggle that we have, the enemy that we are up against.

Not just generalities for help, but Lord, deliver me from this specific sin, this specific enemy. As James tells us, no man can tame the tongue, but the spirit of God in us can. And just as David asks God to send forth lightning bolts for a divine victory, so he can supply divine power to us to any struggle we have with sin to deal a blow to our sins. And when we fail to seek the Lord in prayer, ask him to win the victory for us. When we fail to do this, we're being self-reliant and we have no hope of victory, so blessed or happy are we who know our place before Yahweh. We hide in Him, we find our refuge in Him,

and happy are we who seek our help from Yahweh, the battle is His.

We must seek His help in it, but that brings us to point three, Blessed are we who sing of our salvation to Yahweh. Blessed are we who sing of our salvation to Yahweh. This is in 9 through 11. "O God, I will sing a new song to you upon a harp of ten strings. I will sing praises to you who gives salvation to kings, and who sets David his servant free from the evil sword." Whereas David's enemies are marked by falsehood, worthless speech, deceiving hands, David commits his members to be used for righteousness. Instead of speaking worthlessness, he commits to singing praises to Yahweh. Instead of using his hands to deceive, he's using his hands to play an instrument in worship to the Lord, a harp. David commits his members to righteousness, and more than that, he keeps his eyes fixed on Yahweh. He doesn't get overwhelmed by the enemy, by the situation, by his current struggle, but he commits to keeping his eyes fixed on the Lord to use his members for righteousness.

He keeps his eyes fixed on Yahweh and how he is worthy to be praised, he's not overcome as he looks to his enemy. He's not fearing what they could do to him, growing in anxiety, forecasting doom and grief about what tomorrow might bring. And to aid him in this, he reminds himself of God's pattern of delivering him. Yahweh has been faithful in the past to deliver kings, and him in particular. And so, David puts his trust in the Lord. He even anticipates singing a new song of a future deliverance when Yahweh delivers him again. The battle is still ahead of David, ahead of him. But because of past deliverances, David anticipates singing a new song when God delivers him again on the other side of the battle he's got coming up.

So, the way to remain joyful in the midst of a great battle is to remember the Lord's provision in saving our souls to begin with, and the many deliverances from that point to the present. That gives us great confidence, great hope that the Lord will continue to deliver us and give us victory and strength to fight the battles that we face, we are blessed. We are happy when we rehearse what the Lord has done in our lives, when we think back to the times in our life when the Lord has been faithful to bring us through thus far, whether trials or temptations.

Whatever battle we face, happy are those who sing of their salvation to Yahweh. Regardless of what we're going through today, the battle we face tomorrow, rehearsing specifically how the Lord delivered you in the past will only bring you hope for the future.

David was delivered from many enemies. He could be referring to any number of events, but David is specifically praising God for delivering him and most likely he has a specific event in mind. And then there is this repeated refrain in verse 11, where David reiterates his dependence on the Lord, beseeching him to deliver him from his enemies. Once again, the same enemies set me free and deliver me out of the hand of the sons of a foreigner whose mouth speaks worthlessness and whose right hand are a right hand of lying. We can have similar blessings when we remind ourselves of Yahweh's faithfulness to us. We can be blessed and happy when we remind ourselves of such things and that's exactly where David goes. Happy are we who know our place before Yahweh, who seek our help from Yahweh, who sing of our salvation to Yahweh. And finally, happy are we who entrust our future to Yahweh.

David knows that physically speaking, the sons of Israel, the peace and the prosperity described in these verses. Let's just read it again briefly, our "that our sons would be as grown-up plants and their youth, and our daughters as corner pillars fashioned as for a palace. That our granaries would be full, furnishing every kind of produce, and our flocks would bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our fields outside. That our cattle would bear without mishap and without loss and without outcry in our streets. How blessed are the people for whom this is so? How blessed are the people for whom God is Yahweh!"

David knows, physically speaking, that the peace and prosperity of Israel hangs on the army of Israel, defeating their enemies, this dependent on him and his army. But in this prayer, David is entrusting himself to Yahweh, entrusting all these future blessings to Yahweh. Humanly speaking, it rests on the physical army, but David knows the Lord is his strength. The victory belongs to the Lord, and he is entrusting it to the Lord, he's entrusting his future to the Lord. How many of us want our sons to grow up and mature even at a young age, be fruitful? How many of us want our daughters to grow up and be

beautiful on the inside, and the out, fit for a palace, as he describes here.

How many of us want to be prosperous with every kind of provision in our homes? How many of us want our wealth to only multiply, that we might continue to be even more gracious and steward what God has given us? How many of us want to be able to do more and accomplish more with our lives? How many of us want peace in our homes and in our streets? We all do, do we not? That sounds like a pretty enviable life, doesn't it? It's a life everybody wants, is it not? David knew the real threat to these blessings were the enemies of God.

As New Testament Christians, we don't have, and particularly as Americans, we don't have physical enemies knocking at our doors, threatening these blessings in our life. But the world, the flesh, the sin that remains within us, and the devil threaten these every day. Does our own sin not threaten our relationships? Does our own sin not threaten our fruitfulness, our prosperity every day? So, what do we do? Well, David says, "How happy, or how blessed, are the people for whom

this is so" and as you read this in the English, it sounds as if happy is the person who have all these blessings. But the Hebrew literally reads, "Blessed are the people who are thusly to him," making it not about these things that David lists here, but about God. "Happy are the people who are thusly to God."

What this is saying is exactly what our outline says. Happy are those who know their place before Yahweh. Happy are those who seek their help from Yahweh. Happy are those who sing of their salvation to Yahweh. Because when you act thusly toward God, these are the kind of blessings you will have. The one who battles his enemy like this by relying on the strength of Yahweh, not relying on our own strength, but relying on the strength of Yahweh, by calling Yahweh to destroy our enemies, seeking our help in Him, keeping our eyes fixed on Him. He is the one who receives these blessings.

And then he ends the Psalm simply by saying, "happy are the people whose God is Yahweh." That could sum up this whole section, "Happy is the one who Yahweh is his God." And I, as we close, I want to close with one final point, and you can make

this a fifth point in your notes if you want, happy are we when we fight our enemy with Yahweh. And this isn't in the text and so I didn't put the outline point earlier, but this is implied. Do you know what David did after preparing for battle like this? Reminding himself of his dependence upon the Lord, beseeching the Lord to go before him into battle, keeping his eyes fixed on the Lord, you know what he did next? He put on his armor, he picked up his sword and he went, and he slaughtered his enemy.

You cannot hope to have these blessings if you aren't willing to pick up the sword and fight and mortify your own sin. So, I would just encourage you with that this morning beloved, we must know our place before the Lord, he is our only refuge, he is the King of the universe who has stooped down, who gives us every way of escape to defends against our sin. We must understand that we are totally dependent on him. We must seek Him in prayer to obliterate our enemy by divine power. We must entrust ourselves to him wholly, keeping our eyes fixed on him. But we also have to pick up the sword and fight to mortify our own sin, pick it up, study it, use the sword of the Spirit that the Lord has given you to train you for battle.

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

Pray for strength and help but get up and fight. Beloved, do you want all these blessings? Who doesn't? This is a life to be envied, the life everybody wants. Let us act thusly to him, to God, and then go out and fight for them.

Let's pray. Father, again we rejoice that we have not been left to our own devices, that we are fighting a spiritual battle, that we need Your Spirit's help in that no matter what our enemy is, what struggle we face. Lord, help us to approach every battle, every struggle like this, reminding ourselves of who you are, seeking your help, looking to you and trusting ourselves to you. Putting the hope of our future in your hands, but not turning and, and sitting and doing nothing but searching your Scriptures, seeing it as a a manual for training in battle. That if we want victory, we have to come to it often to receive your grace which has power to fight sin, to live righteously before you. We pray, Lord, that you would remind us of this every day, that we would approach every day like this. We pray all of this in your blessed Son's name, Amen.