



GOOD FRIDAY 2008

Mark 14:22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them and said, "**Take, eat; this is My body.**"

Mark 14:23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it.

Mark 14:24 And He said to them, "**This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.**"

Mark 14:25 **Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.**"

Mark 14:26 **And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.**

The word rendered **sung a hymn** means *hymning* - not confined to a single hymn, but many.

If the Lord and His disciples were following centuries of Jewish custom they were hymning what are called the Hallel psalms.

Hallel is derived from the Hebrew word for praise. We use the word Hallelujah. There are different groups of Hallel psalms:

1. In the worship of the synagogue Psalms 135, 136 and 146-150 were used in the daily morning service.
2. Psalms 113-118 were called the Egyptian Hallel. They were sung at the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, and Dedication.

According to one source, Psalms 113-115 were sung at the Temple during the slaying of the lambs. Psalms 116-117 were sung during the meal. Psalm 118 was sung after the meal.

While we shouldn't be dogmatic about the exact order it is likely that these were the psalms Jesus and His disciples were hymning as they celebrated Passover and headed out to the Garden of Gethsemane.

What is fascinating is that Jesus was singing about Himself.

We're going to take a look at passages from two of the Hallel psalms:

1. In Psalm 116:1-7 He was singing about His trust in His Father to resurrect Him after His suffering and death and burial.
2. In Psalm 118:19-29 He was singing about His return in the Second Coming when the Jews would receive Him as Messiah.

Just prior to His Friday filled with sorrow, suffering and sacrifice Jesus would have had these reminders of the joy set before Him.

Without in any way minimizing Christ's passion we want to concentrate on the joy that was set before Him for which He endured the Cross, despising its shame, to be raised and seated at the right hand of His Father in Heaven.



Psalms 118:19 Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, *And* I will praise the LORD.

Psalms 118:20 This is the gate of the LORD, Through which the righteous shall enter.

Psalms 118:21 I will praise You, For You have answered me, And have become my salvation.

Psalms 118:22 The stone *which* the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

Psalms 118:23 This was the LORD's doing; It *is* marvelous in our eyes.

Psalms 118:24 This *is* the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalms 118:25 Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.

Psalms 118:26 Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Psalms 118:27 God *is* the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.

Psalms 118:28 You *are* my God, and I will praise You; *You are* my God, I will exalt You.

Psalms 118:29 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever.

Carly Simon sang, *You're so vain, I bet you think this song is about you*. In the more than thirty years since she has never revealed who she had in mind when she wrote the song.

We might title Psalm 118, *You're So Victorious*. I can only wonder if, after Jesus sang it, one or more of His disciples said, "I think this psalm is about you!"

It is not a psalm of David's. We are not sure of its authorship. It is believed to have been written at the time Nehemiah completed rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem in 444BC. A month later the Feast of Tabernacles was observed with exceptional rejoicing. It may have been written for that occasion.

The psalm is what is called *antiphonal*, meaning it is sung by different individuals or choirs in alternating parts.

How can we be sure it's about Jesus? One key is found in verses twenty-two and twenty-three. There you read about **the stone the builders rejected** becoming **the chief cornerstone**. It's a description

that Jesus applied to Himself in the Gospels (e.g., Matthew 21:42). The apostle Peter also applied it to Jesus (Acts 4:11).

Besides, we are **always** looking for Jesus in Scripture! The volume of the book speaks of Him.

Where else do we find Jesus in this psalm? With hindsight to help us we can 'find' Him at several locations on the last day of His life on earth.

For example: We know Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane. Can't you see Him there in verse five?

Psalms 118:5 I called on the LORD in distress; The LORD answered me *and set me* in a broad place.

We can follow Jesus further in this psalm to Gabbatha in verses eight and nine. Gabbatha is the name of the place identified in the Gospel of John where Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate (John 19:13). Think of the Lord before Pilate as you read,

Psalms 118:8 *It is* better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man.
Psalms 118:9 *It is* better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in princes.

After Gethsemane and Gabbatha came Golgotha. It is the Aramaic word that means *place of the skull* and translates into Latin then to English as Calvary. In verses ten through thirteen you read,

Psalms 118:10 All nations surrounded me, But in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
Psalms 118:11 They surrounded me, Yes, they surrounded me; But in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
Psalms 118:12 They surrounded me like bees; They were quenched like a fire of thorns; For in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
Psalms 118:13 You pushed me violently, that I might fall, But the LORD helped me.

In Psalm twenty-two the Lord is described as **surrounded** by enemies while on the Cross. The same idea is captured in these verses. Jesus is on the Cross.

In verses fourteen through eighteen you see Jesus resurrected to glory:

Psalms 118:14 The LORD *is* my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.

Psalms 118:15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation *is* in the tents of the righteous; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.

Psalms 118:16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.

Psalms 118:17 I shall not die, but live, And declare the works of the LORD.

Psalms 118:18 The LORD has chastened me severely, But He has not given me over to death.

I shall not die but live. It's a claim of resurrection.

The right hand of the Lord is exalted. We know that forty days after His resurrection Jesus ascended to Heaven and is seated at the right hand of God.

Now seated in glory, Jesus is not done with His journey. We know that He will return to earth in His Second Coming. He will return at the end of the seven year Great Tribulation to save His people, Israel. He will establish a kingdom on the earth that lasts for one thousand years.

In the remaining verses we can thus find Jesus back on the earth after His Second Coming leading His people in worship at the Temple in Jerusalem.

Psalms 118:19 Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, *And* I will praise the LORD.

Psalms 118:20 This is the gate of the LORD, Through which the righteous shall enter.

Psalms 118:21 I will praise You, For You have answered me, And have become my salvation.

Righteousness is right standing with God. It is received when a person accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior. When the Lord returns all Israel will be saved. Every Jew will say, **I will praise You, For You have... become my salvation.**

We sing a song based on these verses. Imagine singing it with Jesus as our worship leader approaching the Temple during the kingdom of Heaven on the earth!

There will be a Temple and the Lord will lead Israel and the nations through its gates to worship. They are literal gates but spiritually they are the **gates of righteousness... through which the righteous shall enter.**

The Lord is going to rule. We will rule with Him. Righteousness will be His platform. What a time that will be!

Why is the world so degraded, so vile today? The kingdom was delayed. Verses twenty-two and twenty-three remind us why the kingdom was delayed.

Psalms 118:22 The stone *which* the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

Psalms 118:23 This was the LORD's doing; It *is* marvelous in our eyes.

In His first coming Jesus offered to establish Israel in the kingdom of God on earth. But instead of receiving Jesus they **rejected** Him. It was as if everything was ready but when the final capstone was about to be set it was rejected.

It was **the Lord's doing**. In other words, God had a contingency in place. He postponed the literal kingdom. We live in the time of that postponement.

Jesus instead became the foundation of the church. His church is being built a spiritual house until the day we are resurrected and raptured to Heaven.

After we are safe in Heaven the Lord will unleash upon the earth the Great Tribulation. It is intended to prepare the hearts of the Jews to receive Him when He returns.

It does! In His Second Coming Jesus will be recognized and received by the Jews. He will establish the kingdom on earth with Jerusalem as His capital city.

You see the rejoicing in that future day in verses twenty-four through twenty-six.

Psalms 118:24 This *is* the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalms 118:25 Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.

Psalms 118:26 Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Save now is Hosanna! This is reminiscent of the *Hosanna!* that the people initially shouted on Palm Sunday when Jesus entered Jerusalem. They will shout it again in the future **day the Lord has made** – in the day He reigns to **send... prosperity** throughout the earth.

Psalms 118:27 God *is* the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.

The prophet Ezekiel indicates there will be sacrifices again in the Temple in the future kingdom after Jesus has returned.

Why? Wasn't Jesus the final, once-for-all sacrifice? Yes. If in fact there are future sacrifices they will be memorial and reminiscent of His once-for-all sacrifice on the Cross.

Speaking of the Cross... This was the last of the Hallel psalms. It was sung after the Passover meal. Jesus was arriving at Gethsemane. Gabbatha and Golgotha lie ahead.

But so did the resurrection and glory! The last lyrics Jesus sung were

Psalms 118:28 You *are* my God, and I will praise You; *You are* my God, I will exalt You.

Psalms 118:29 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever.

It does not minimize the impact of the Cross to speak of the joy in Christ's heart. In fact, it maximizes it. In Hebrews you read,

Hebrews 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

It was to finish – to *complete* – our salvation that Jesus **endured the Cross**. I am that joy that was set before Him. You are that joy.

His last lyrics can be ours and sung antiphonally:

1. First each of us could sing individually **You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You.**
2. Then all of us could sing together **Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.**

* * * * *

An allegory is the representation of abstract ideas or principles by characters, figures, or events in narrative, dramatic, or pictorial form.

The Apostle Paul uses the word allegory in Galatians 4:24 of the King James Bible when he writes concerning the two covenants, and the first two sons of Abraham. He writes **which things are an allegory** meaning that Ishmael and Hagar were illustrating the Old Covenant while Isaac and Sarah were illustrating the New Covenant.

The most famous allegory is John Bunyon's classic, *Pilgrim's Progress*. Concepts like hope and mercy become real-life characters in his saga of a man (named Christian) searching for salvation.

Beloved Christian author C.S. Lewis's first book written after his Christian conversion was *The Pilgrim's Regress*, a Bunyan-like allegory that describes his road to the Christian faith.

Lewis' most famous writings, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, seem allegorical. To be accurate, Lewis himself denied that they were an allegory because not every detail has a corresponding meaning. He called Narnia a *supposal*.

In a December 1959 letter to a young girl named Sophia Storr he explains the difference:

I don't say 'Let us represent Christ as Aslan.' I say, 'Supposing there was a world like Narnia, and supposing, like ours, it needed redemption, let us imagine what sort of Incarnation and Passion and Resurrection Christ would have there.'

Lewis' supposal was given form in the recent film, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. In it there is a very moving, albeit graphic, depiction of the sacrifice of Aslan as the 'supposal' savior. In it we can capture something of the death of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Remember: It was for you that He offered Himself as a lamb (or in this case a lion) to the slaughter.



