

Treasure Hunt

- What was probably the occasion for Ps 118?
- Why might this Psalm have been on our Savior's mind during his passion?
- What little drama does the Psalm set forth?
- How has Isaiah influenced the wording of vv. 5-18?
- What three time periods do vv. 5-18 repeatedly reference?
- To what do these correspond in our Savior's life?
- How was the persecution by all nations, described in vv. 10-12, fulfilled?
- How does v. 18 differ from vv. 5-17, and what is the significance of this change?

Setting: Dedication of the Second Temple, Ezra 6

The Fifth Book (Pss 107-150) is largely post-exilic, looking back on the exile.

Ps 118 presumes existence of the (restored) temple:

19 Open to me **the gates of righteousness**: I will go into them, *and* I will praise the LORD. 20 **This [is the] gate of the LORD**, into which the righteous shall enter.

History of the restored temple:

Ezr 6:15 And this house was finished on the third day of **the month Adar [month 12]**, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

16 And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, 17 And offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which *is* at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses. 19 And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth *day* of **the first month**.

Textual Links

Compare Ezra 6:16 and Ps 118:2-4:

Ezra 6:16

And the **children of Israel**,
the **priests**, and the **Levites**,
and the rest of the **children
of the captivity**,
kept the dedication of this
house of God with joy,

Psa 118:

2 Let **Israel** now say ...
3 Let the **house of Aaron** now say ...
4 Let them now **that fear the Lord** say ...
...that his mercy endureth for
ever

Ps 118 is the conclusion of the Hallel (Pss 113-118), sung at the close of every passover:

Mat 26:30 And when they had **sung an hymn**, they went out into the mount of Olives.

The Structure of Psa 118

Psa 118

1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.*

2 Let Israel now say, that *his mercy endureth for ever.*

3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that *his mercy endureth for ever.*

4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that *his mercy endureth for ever.*

5-18 Israel confesses God's mercy

Israel: 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, *and* I will praise the LORD:
House of Aaron: 20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.
Israel: 21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

22-27 The House of Aaron confesses God's mercy

28 Israel confesses God's mercy

29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.*

Israel's Oppression, Deliverance, and Victory

Past Oppression	Deliverance	Future Victory
5 I called upon the LORD in distress:	the LORD answered me, <i>and set me</i> in a large place.	
	6 The LORD <i>is</i> on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? 7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me:	therefore shall I see <i>my desire</i> upon them that hate me.
8 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. 9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.		
10 All nations compassed me about: 11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: 12 They compassed me about like bees;	they are quenched as the fire of thorns:	but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them. but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall:	but the LORD helped me.	
	14 The LORD <i>is</i> my strength and song, and is become my salvation. 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation <i>is</i> in the tabernacles of the righteous:	
	the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. 16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.	
17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.		
18 The LORD hath chastened me sore:	but he hath not given me over unto death.	

Israel's Oppression, Deliverance, and Victory

Past Oppression	Deliverance	Future Victory
5 I called upon the LORD in distress:	the LORD answered me, <i>and set me</i> in a large place.	
	6 The LORD <i>is</i> on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? 7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me:	therefore shall I see <i>my desire</i> upon them that hate me.
8 <i>It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.</i> 9 <i>It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.</i>		
10 All nations compassed me about: 11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: 12 They compassed me about like bees;	they are quenched as the fire of thorns:	but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them. but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

The Parallelism of vv. 6, 7

6 The LORD *is* on my side = יהוה לי

7 The LORD *taketh* my part = יהוה לי

Compare Joshua's question ...

Jos 5:13 Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us לנו, or for our adversaries לצראנו ? v.14 And he said, Nay; but *as* captain of the host of the LORD am I now come.

... and Paul's encouragement,

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

vv. 10-12, “all nations compassed me about”

Act 4:25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the **heathen** rage, and the **people[s]** imagine vain things? 26 The **kings** of the earth stood up, and the **rulers** were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, **both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people[s] of Israel**, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Israel's Oppression, Deliverance, and Victory

Past Oppression	Deliverance	Future Victory
13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall:	but the LORD helped me.	
	14 The LORD <i>is</i> my strength and song, and is become my salvation. 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation <i>is</i> in the tabernacles of the righteous:	
	the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. 16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.	
17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.		

v. 18 “The Lord hath chastened me sore”

Past Oppression	Deliverance	Future Victory
18 The LORD hath chastened me sore:	but he hath not given me over unto death.	

Isa 53:5 But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the **chastisement** of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Heb 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;