

OUR UPLIFTING GOD
Psalm 28

Intro: We do not know when this Psalm was written, but Delitzsch, in his work on the Psalms, said that he believed that Psalms 26, 27, and 28 belong to the time when David was having trouble with Absalom. The language is certainly appropriate for those times, but we cannot be absolutely certain about the time.

It is certain that the Psalm was David's Psalm. He may have even written it at two times since verses 1-5 give us his supplication, and verses 6 and 7 give us David's praise for God's help in answering his prayer plus his prayer for the people of God in the last two verses (8, 9). Rarely does the Lord answer immediately. Sometimes He does, but it is more usual for some time to elapse between the prayer and the answer, especially a prayer like the one we find in this Psalm. However, the Psalm is a testimony that God does hear and answer prayer. And, therefore, it ought to be an encouragement to us to seek the Lord in our times of need.

One thing we should note about the Psalm is that it begins with David praying about his own personal problems, but it ends with several, short petitions for his people. The shortness of the requests would tend to emphasize that they were, like his requests for himself, urgent! But it is instructive for us to see how he moved from his own needs to the needs of his people.

Spurgeon has made an interesting observation. He said that "the Lord Jesus may be seen here pleading as the representative of his people" (The Treasury of David, Vol. I, p. 20). It might even be considered as a pastoral prayer. The pastor is under attack; he prays for his own deliverance, but he cannot overlook the fact that his people need help.

Two things are certain: David and his people had the same need. They both needed lifting up. We can see David's need in verses 1 and 2. We can see the need of his people especially in verse 9. His last petition is, praying for his people, "And lift them up for ever."

"Lift them up" is translated in the NASB, "And carry them forever." The NIV uses the same words. The NKJV and the original ASV translate this expression, "And bear them up forever." What David wanted the Lord to do was to pick up His people, and carry them in his arms. Perhaps David was thinking about what the Lord did according to Deut. 1:31 where we read,

And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen

how that the Lord thy God bare thee,
as a man doth his son, in all the way that ye went,
until ye came unto this place.

In Exodus 19:4, when the children of Israel had arrived
safely at Sinai, the Lord said,

Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians,
and how I bare you on eagles' wings,
and brought you unto myself.

And so David was not asking the Lord to do some new thing; he was asking the Lord to do what He had done many times before. A father will pick up his child when his child is too weary to walk, or he will pick up his child in discipline when his child wants to do something that he should not do. It seems in the case before us that weariness was the problem of the people, weariness with the trials of their lives, and so what they needed was to be lifted up, carried. And actually this was what David needed, too.

In the light of all of this, let us look at:

I. DAVID'S FIRST PETITIONS (Psa. 28:1-5).

His first petition was for himself in vv. 1-3; his second was against his enemies in verses 4, 5.

A. David's petition for himself (vv. 1-3).

I can tell something about David's prayer life from his words which we have in verses 1 and 2. He would only speak to the Lord in this way if there had been other times when he prayed and it had seemed as though the Lord had not heard him. He was not only trying to get the Lord's attention with his words, but with his hands as well.

I am the oldest of seven children. Two are in heaven now, but originally we were seven. When my youngest brother was very small my mother used to tell me to go outside and call him in for dinner, or to go to bed, as the case might be. I would stand on the back porch and call his name. When he heard me, instead of coming into the house, he would go where I was looking, start waving his hands, and saying, "Here me are; here me are!"

That is a picture of what David was doing. His mouth was in motion, and so were his hands. He was speaking and, at the same time, he was holding his hands up to the Lord. He needed to get the Lord's attention. The need was urgent, and so all of his powers were put into his prayer. He wanted to make sure that God saw him and heard him.

But his main petition is in verse 3. And what a testimony this was to the sovereignty of God. David knew that if the enemy got to him, it was only because the Lord had done it. But he did not want that to happen, and we can understand why. He knew that they talked peace, but they actually had treachery in their hearts. And so he confessed his utter dependence upon the Lord to keep him safely.

In verses 4 and 5 we have:

B. David's prayer against his enemies (vv. 4, 5).

David knew that his own life was in danger, but you can see that he was more concerned about the Lord's glory than he was even for his own safety.

Often we see the severity of David in his prayers as he prayed against his enemies. But the glory of God was always uppermost in his mind and heart.

As I mentioned to begin with, we do not know how long David had to wait for the answer to his prayer. It may not have been long because of the emergency which he was facing, but there was some time between the prayer of verses 1-5 and the answer which David acknowledged in verses 6 and 7. But God did hear.

David may have written this all at once after God answered his prayer, but in your mind put a space between verses 5 and 6. But in verses 6 and 7 we see that:

II. GOD ANSWERED DAVID'S PRAYER (Psa. 28:6, 7).

That is clear in these verses. The fear and gloom of the first part of the Psalm was changed into praise and even singing because of the evidence that the Lord had heard David when he prayed. When the Lord hears, He answers. The Apostle John confirmed that in 1 John 5:14, 15. (Quote.)

How often it is that we forget to praise the Lord when He does answer our prayers. And so while we see evidence in this Psalm that God does hear us and that He sees us and then answers us, let us not overlook what David did in praising the Lord. David cried to the Lord in his weakness, and the Lord strengthened him and defended him. He was helped, greatly helped, and his heart was full of joy and praise at this new evidence of the Lord's love and care. It is when we realize how weak we are in ourselves that we become strong in the Lord.

We need these encouragements in seeing our prayers answered.

And this Psalm would teach us that those times of answered prayer are times when the Lord is gathering us in His arms, lifting us up, carrying us, delivering us from whatever dangers we might be facing. He is the God who lifts up His people.

But now we come to the last two verses of the Psalm. And here we have:

III. DAVID'S INTERCESSION FOR HIS PEOPLE (Psa. 28:8, 9).

When we see how God answers prayer in our lives, this should encourage us to pray for others. In fact, this will probably be the result even when we do not intend to pray for others. It seems that the Lord works this way in our hearts.

Notice that in verse 7 David had said, "The Lord is **my** strength and **my** shield." In verse 9 he said something that is equally true about his people, who were the Lord's people. He said, "The Lord is **their** strength, and he is the saving strength of **his anointed.**"

David knew that he had no corner, so to speak, on the blessing of the Lord. He knew that the Lord loves all of His people equally; He has no favorites. And so David knew that the Lord had answered prayer for him; the Lord would also answer prayer for His people.

Notice David spoke of the people of the Lord as:

- 1) "His anointed" (v. 8).
- 2) "Thy people" (v. 9a).
- 3) "Thine inheritance" (v. 9b).

What a blessing it is to think of each one of these as applying even to us today!

Then David asked the Lord to do four things for His anointed, His people, His inheritance. He asked the Lord:

- 1) To save them.
- 2) To bless them.
- 3) To feed them.
- 4) To lift them up, to pick them up in his arms and carry them.

He did not tell the Lord from what they needed to be saved, not how they needed His blessing, nor how he should feed, or shepherd them except that He wanted the Lord to feed them and to protect them and to pick them up in His arms and carry them.

Remember that we do not need to know the details of people's

needs in order to pray for them. The Lord knows their needs, and it is enough that we bring them to the Lord for Him to save and bless them according to His infinite wisdom.

The other thing that is apparent here is that we do not know how the Lord answered David's prayer for his people. That is often the case with us. We may never know in this life. But let the Lord's dealings with us help us to believe that our prayers for His people will not go unnoticed nor unanswered.

Concl: David lifted up his voice to God, praying that he would be lifted up in the trials that he was facing. The Lord answered. We are not told that the troubles were over, but we are told that the Lord helped him, and so his heart was full of joy and praise.

And so his own experience became the pattern for his requests for his people.

May the Lord enable us to learn from this prayer so that we may daily experience the lifting up of the Lord in our lives. And as we experience His blessing, let us remember to do two things:

- 1) Let us praise Him.
- 2) Let us remember to pray for others who need to be lifted up, too.