

PSALM 31:19-24

DELIVER US FROM OUR FOES!

**Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You,
Which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men!**

**You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the plots of man;
You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.**

Blessed be the LORD, for He has shown me His marvelous kindness in a strong city!

**For I said in my haste, "I am cut off from before Your eyes";
Nevertheless, You heard the voice of my supplications when I cried out to You.**

**Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints. for the LORD preserves the faithful!
and fully repays the proud person.**

Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

There is a common thread that runs through many Psalms, particularly the Psalms of David. (He wrote 73 of the 150.) The common thread: "Deliver me from my adversary. Praise the Lord for His deliverance!" David's adversaries included King Saul his predecessor, supporters of King Saul, leaders of neighboring countries, his own sons particularly Absalom, the devil, sin, and death. In his psalms he regularly prays the Lord for help and deliverance from those seeking him. In this psalm, prior to the verses of our text, he prayed: *Deliver me in Your righteousness; bow down Your ear to me (vv. 1-2). Have mercy on me, for I am in trouble (v. 9). I am forgotten like a dead man (v. 12). My times are in Your hand, O Lord; deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me (v. 15). Let the wicked be ashamed (v. 17).*

Then in our text, vv. 19-24, David thanks God for His rescue. **Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men!** What is God's "goodness"? His blessings, kindness, love, forgiveness, patience, generosity, grace, wisdom, and more! God's goodness was demonstrated in Genesis 1, "God saw everything that He had made, and it was very good" (v. 31). His goodness is "great"—magnificent and magnified! God has "laid up" blessings for those who "fear" Him—not who dread Him, but who respect Him in love and trust. "Laid up" means has set aside, stored-up for the future. Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust corrupt and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:19-20). Here David is saying, God has laid up treasures for us—forgiveness, life, heaven, salvation in Christ. He has "pre-pared" all—gotten them ready ahead of time, not just a knee-jerk reaction on the spur of the moment. He has known you, sent His Son to rescue you, for your sin, called you His own, long before you were here. How great is the goodness of God! You stand at peace even in the presence of the sons of men. "Sons of men" are the unbelievers—sons of men are adversaries of sons of God. Fear not! God hears your prayer and delivers you from every foe, even Satan himself!

You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the plots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. God "hide you": from the eyes and hands of wicked enemies. Sometimes in books or movies, when intruders break into a house, the parents hide the children in a safe place, a secret place where they will not be found or harmed. The Lord conceals you in the secret place "of His presence." The place where God harbors you is not some dark spot where fears still lurk. God hides you in the "secret place of His presence." In Jesus' arms of love, you are safe from the "plots," schemes, and intentions of all evil workers. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies" (Psalm 23:5). No harm will come to you; nothing will endanger your salvation and your future in heaven. "Fear not them which kill the body" (Matthew 10:28)—that's all that sons of men and Satan can do. Your soul is safe in Jesus. "[My sheep] shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:27). God keeps you in a "pavilion"—originally, the open wings of someone's tent, an inviting place of hospitality, and protection! God does not just put you in some stuffy closet, but in a pavilion. There, David says, You are safe even from biting and hurtful "strife of the tongue." The tongue can ruin as much if not more than the hands. Words of anger, biting ridicule, and lies cause harm. Have you been hurt by the tongue of others? or done the same to someone else? In either case, Jesus has healing and forgiveness. He Himself was tongue-whipped and lash-whipped for you at His suffering and death. In Jesus, you are kept safe even from Satan.

Blessed be the LORD, for He has shown me His marvelous kindness in a strong city! “Blessed”—praises—be to God. May great and nice things be said about the “LORD,” who is that is, the great I AM, the HE IS, who takes second seat to no one, who makes a promise and sticks by it, because He wants to, not because He has to. He has shown “marvelous” kindness. Marvelous—awesome, wonderful, wondrous, beyond our wildest dreams. His love and kindness to you is shown in a “strong city,” not in some little crossroads hamlet or burg, but in big-city, on the main stage, before the eyes of all. This kindness is not a reward for merit. It is sheer kindness. Bless the Lord!

For I said in my haste, “I am cut off from before Your eyes.” Nevertheless, You heard the voice of my supplications when I cried out to You. Indeed, David says, frail sinful man is apt to act “in haste,” without truly considering what the Lord in His Word has to say, without honestly considering the direction the Lord is leading, without prayer. Then faulty human logic or, worse yet, faulty human emotions lead the way. David admits, I “said” in my haste. All too often the mouth goes into gear without the brain. That happens when people deal with people, but here David is talking about people dealing with God. David had said, “I am cut off before Your eyes!” In other words, Lord, You don’t know what You’re doing. You treat me like branches cut off from a tree, life “drop-off” at the chop saw, to be discarded. David admits he had spoken against God in haste, “Nevertheless, You heard the voice of my supplications when I cried out to You.” “Lord, forgiven me, You knew my need all along. You knew and heard my pleading all along. Lord, I am sorry for questioning and verbally attacking You.” Be assured, God acts for you when the time is right and best—not necessarily when you think so. Consider Daniel in the lions’ den, the three men in the fiery furnace, the ten plagues against Egypt to free the Children of Israel. God waited until the time seemed too late, but then provided miraculous rescues. Do you know of the account in 2 Kings 3 of the water-ditches? The kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom had joined forces to attack the rebellious king of Moab; these three armies found themselves without water. The king of Israel, a wicked man, was distraught against the Lord, much like David in our text: **I said in my haste, “I am cut off from before Your eyes.”** However, the king of Judah, a believer, said, Let us consult with the Lord’s prophet Elisha. Then, in deference to the king of Judah’s faith and trust in the Lord, not the king of Israel’s contempt for the Lord, Elisha said God would provide plenty of water without rain, and victory against the Moabites as well! He told them to dig ditches throughout their camp and throughout dry valley in which they were. It was done. Early the next morning, water miraculously began to flow in the ditches. Water for all! When the army of Moab approached the valley in the early morning sun, the water in the ditches reflected red. The Moabites said, “It’s blood; they have killed each other.” They ran to the camp to take the plunder. The soldiers of Judah, Israel, and Edom easily won the victory. David said it well in our text, “You heard the voice of my supplications when I cried out to You!” God hears.

Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints. for the LORD preserves the faithful! and fully repays the proud person. Indeed, “love” the Lord your God, see His love for you, and be filled with faith and trust. How can you not love such a Lord! In Jesus He grants you water, not just in ditches but the water of life, the washing in baptism. He grants you the blood of salvation, not just the appearance of blood which fools the enemy, but the blood of Jesus shed at His death on the cross, to be the full atonement price, the ransom price, for your guilt and bondage under sin and death. In Jesus you have the victory, not just against earthly Moabites or other foes, but against all evil and Satan himself! You are sons and daughters of the loving King! Love Him in return. In all that you say and do, let love for Him penetrate your life so that from the inside you act as He commands. The Spirit of God works in the heart through the Scriptures to lead you and assist you. Be confident. **He fully repays the proud person.** “Vengeance is Mine, says the Lord, I will repay” (Romans 12:19). The Lord will deal with the proud. Do not fret over them. Pride was the sin of the devil, and pride instilled by the devil is still the root of all sin—“I do what I want.” The proud are not protected by the Lord, but are “repaid” and destroyed,

Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD. Against all evil, go forward in the Lord this week. Do not trust your own hands, arms, feet, legs, or mouth. The Lord has and will continue to deliver you in Jesus!

Amen! So be it!

Pastor Kanzenbach---