

Series: Psalms
Title: Suffering with Christ
Text: Psalm 18: 4-19
Date: May 1, 2014
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Psalm 18 are prophetic words:

- 1) The words spoken by Christ Jesus
- 2) He is speaking to Jehovah God
- 3) He is speaking from the cross—this was the day God delivered him from all his enemies.

The requirement necessary to fulfill the righteousness of the law is:

- 1) One, to justify us from our sins, Christ had to bear our sins and die to the justice of God.
- 2) Two, Christ's obedience unto the death of the cross, is the fulfillment of the positive side of the law—loving God and your neighbor as yourself.

So to fulfill the righteousness of the law for his people, Christ Jesus, who is God, humbled himself, so as to make himself totally dependent upon God to deliver him. He did so even unto the death of the cross. This humility and dependence upon God, is how the apostle Paul wanted to know more of Christ.

Philippian 3:10: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death

Do you want to know Christ this way, to be conformable unto Christ's death, to humble yourself under the hand of God, trusting Christ our God to deliver you from your sin and suffering?

Title: Suffering with Christ

Proposition: Christ is here using himself and his suffering, to exemplify the faithfulness of God to teach his child through suffering.

I. FIRST, WE MUST SUFFER, NOTICE HOW GREATLY CHRIST'S SUFFERED

He said **Psalm 18: 4: The sorrows of death compassed me,...**

Christ is Life. Christ is the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. But just as the high priest presented the spotless lamb to have the sins of a particular people laid on that lamb, so in the garden of Gethsemane, Christ our High Priest presented himself—the true spotless Lamb of God—to have the sin of his people laid on him to die the just for the unjust.

Mark 14: 37:...he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

Matthew 26:38: Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

Luke 22:44: And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

We cannot even imagine what it must have been like for he who is Life, him who knew no sin, to suffer the sorrows of death, the result of the sins of his people. Sin brings forth death and is full of sorrows of every kind. Everything Christ endured was a death of sorts—all was full of sorrows of death: sorrows of total injustice in that man-made, kangaroo court, before whom he stood; sorrows of sinner's, dead in sins, many of which were too blind to see, Christ was actually suffering to put away their sins—that is a sorrow of death; the sins of his people laid on him were sorrows of death, the justice of God—the wrath of God—were the greatest sorrows of death which compassed Christ about. On the cross, for his people—he suffered the sorrows of that death that never dies.

Psalm 22:14: I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. 15: My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; [here is the worst sorrow of death] and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

Note: The Hebrew word for "sorrows" signifies the pains and birth throes of a woman in travail—it fitly describes the sufferings and death of Christ because by the travail of his soul he brought forth many children from the curse of the law--“he shall see of the travail of his soul”—he shall see all those he redeemed brought to life and faith in Christ—“and shall be satisfied.”

Then he said, **Psalm 18: 4: and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.**

Could Christ be afraid?

Hebrews 4:15: we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

The word “floods” signify the multitudes of ungodly men.

Psalm 22: 16:...dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. 17: I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

Christ promises us, who believe, there will be times when we shall bear the reproach of ungodly men. But usually it is only the reproach of one or two or three at a time. But Christ bore unimaginable pain and shame at the hands of a multitude of wicked men and unseen spirits: stately Kings—Herod and Pontius Pilate, the host of Roman soldiers, Jews and Gentiles, unseen powers and principalities and rulers of the darkness. It was an entire "company of wicked men" and spirits.

Also, the word “floods” signifies the variety of sufferings he endured at the hands of the ungodly. In our day, they usually do not touch us, anymore. They gnash upon us with their teeth—grinding their teeth as they rage. But they not only gnashed upon Christ: they spit upon him, buffeted him with their fist, scourged him with a whip of bones, snatched his hair out by the handfuls.

Furthermore, these “floods of ungodly men” signify the floods of our sins, which Christ bore for us ungodly rebels for whom Christ died.

John Gill sad, “The Septuagint renders the word, "the torrents of iniquity troubled me"; which was true of Christ, when all the sins of his people came flowing in upon him, like mighty torrents, from all quarters; when God laid on him the iniquity of them all, and he was made sin for them; Christ said,

Psalm 69:1: Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. 2: I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

Furthermore, these “floods” also signify the just wrath of God, which Christ bore when he stood as our substitute.

Psalm 88: 6: Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. 7: Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.

It brings us to this third thing...He said, **Psalm 18: 5: The sorrows of hell compassed me about.** His people deserved the wages of sin which is death.

Mark 9: 44: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

On the cross, this is what Christ bore—the sorrows of hell compassed me about. God forsook him on the cross!

He said, **Psalm 18: 5: the snares of death prevented me.** [came before me to block me]. According to the four metaphors used here: Christ was bound like a malefactor for execution; flooded like a shipwrecked mariner; surrounded and bayed by dogs of the infernal kennel like a hunted animal; captured in a net like a trembling bird.

We see why we are told to “consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we become weary and faint in our minds; we have not resisted unto blood.” “Our affliction is light and for a moment” compared to Christ’s.

II. NEXT, WE SEE OUR STRENGTH AND HOPE: GOD HEARS CHRIST OUR MEDIATOR—Psalm 18: 6: In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.

Here is Christ our Righteousness, even unto the death of the cross, as the representative and substitute of his people, he faithfully looked nowhere else but God; faithfully calling upon his faithful LORD and God. Here is our assurance of God’s faithfulness to us in Christ, our assurance that Christ is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption--“**and he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.**”

In that day, when Christ cried it is finished, God removed the foundations that could be removed—**Psalm 18: 7: Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.**

The earth literally shook that day. But a great deal more took place. Christ took away the first—the Mosaic law—and established the second—the everlasting covenant of grace, the perfect law of liberty for his people. God shook and broke up civil, political Israel with all its pictures and types—but the spiritual Israel which it pictured remains.

Also, God raised his Sechinah glory—Christ Jesus—to his secret place, leaving the house of his enemies desolate, scattering his enemies to the four winds—**Psalm 18: 11: He made darkness his secret place;...14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.**

Furthermore, God made known his true foundations: Christ our Foundation who dried up sin and death, his gospel of grace and his ministers of grace who he began using to lay the foundation of his church—**Psalm**

18: 15: Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

God did all this when he raised Christ from the grave, from all his suffering and set him on his throne of glory—**Psalm 18: 16: He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters. 17: He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.** [not too strong to conquer, but it shows Christ depended upon God to deliver him] **18: They prevented me in the day of my calamity:** [tried to prevent Christ from being faithful to God, tried to keep his word from coming into God] **but the LORD was my stay. 19: He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.**

The Hebrew writer put all that this way:

Hebrews 12: 26: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. [in the last day both heaven and earth shall be dissolved] 27: And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28: Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

III. NOW, LET'S TRY TO LEARN A FEW THINGS FROM WHAT WE HAVE SEEN HERE.

Christ Jesus is the only One who ever prayed and was heard by God—without the need of a Mediator. It is because Christ is Righteousness.

Hebrews 5:7: Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8: Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9: And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

He accomplished the Father's will by his death on the cross. He put away the sin of his particular, elect people, obtained eternal redemption for us, brought in everlasting righteousness for us. Doing so he declared God just and the Justifier of him which believe in Jesus.

Secondly, understand we are sinners. Therefore, we need a Mediator to represent us to God, we need a Righteousness and Holiness to approach God. All for who Christ died have all in Christ Jesus. Christ is the only Faithful One who intercedes for his people to the Faithful God. God hears Christ and delivers Christ's redeemed for the sake of Christ.

Since Christ was heard it means if we come in Christ we shall surely be heard of God. God will hear you sinner if you come to God by faith in Christ Jesus.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

One reason Christ cried and was heard and delivered, and recorded it for us in scripture, is to teach his people that God sent Christ and hears Christ and God will hear us if we come to him in Christ Jesus.

Example: Christ told us that very thing when Lazarus came forth from the grave:

John 11:41:...And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42: And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

The best example is in our text: Christ shows us that God is faithful to hear Christ by showing us that when Christ cried from the cross, God delivered Christ himself from his suffering, even from the grave.

Sinner, has God showed you something of your sinfulness. Are you afraid that God will not hear you because of your sins? Notice no blockade by Satan, not even the hosts of wickedness, could stop Christ's prayer from entering in to God. So it is for every sinner that casts our care upon Christ.

If you mourn over your sin and can call upon Christ to save you—in true faith—it is because the Holy Spirit has given you life and faith in Christ—because God chose you and Christ redeemed you. If that is the case then this is too

Romans 8: 34: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

The same is true for every believer here—Jew or Gentile—anywhere in the world—for John said,

1 John 2: 1: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

Fourthly, why must we be brought to suffer? In the beginning, why must God make us see our sinfulness and suffer? Why do we suffer the rejection and reproach of our loved ones for the sake of Christ? Why must believers suffer in great trials throughout this life?

Notice Christ called then cried: Psalm 18: 6: In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: Note also that he first invokes God under the name LORD, then advances to a more familiar name, “my God!” God brings us to the end of self so that our prayer grows from a call to a cry. God uses our distresses to bring us to cast all our care on Christ, crying out to Christ as “MY” Mediator and “MY” Savior. He increases our faith by exercise, by practical instruction in all God's acts of providence, to make us entirely dependent upon Christ alone.

For instance, we hear Christ declare the carnal mind is enmity against God—then we experience it from a loved one who gnashes on us with their teeth. What does that make you see? It makes you see what you are in your flesh. It makes you see what God has saved you from, makes you cry out to Christ to save you now! It is to draw us to Christ!

Hebrews 4: 15: For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

When God has used the trial to bring his child to cry and cast all care upon him, then Christ does in a smaller measure in our hearts, what God did when he raised Christ from the dead. Christ takes away the first and establishes the second—the everlasting covenant of grace, the perfect law of liberty. He turns us from the fleshly, to the spiritual, scattering our enemies, by making us behold his Sechinah glory in his secret place. He makes us know his true foundations: Christ our Foundation, his gospel of grace—**Psalm 18: 15 Then the channels of waters [are] seen, and the foundations of the world [are] discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.** Then he delivers us so that we praise him alone, saying--

Psalm 18: 16: He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters. 17: He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. 18: They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay. 19: He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me. [for Christ's sake!]

Amen!