

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

First Quarter 2024: *The Book of Psalms*

Lesson 4 “The Lord Hears *and* Delivers”

Read for this week’s study

Psalm 139:1–18; Psalm 121; Psalm 17:8; Matthew 23:37; 1 Corinthians 10:1–4; Hebrews 4:15, 16.

Memory Text

“The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles” (Psalm 34:17, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. My Frame Was Not Hidden From You
- III. Assurance of God’s Care
- IV. The Lord Is a Refuge in Adversity
- V. Defender and Deliverer
- VI. Help From the Sanctuary
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. One could call the theme for this week the Psalms of Rescue or Deliverance. Praying for deliverance operates on the assumption that prayer makes a difference in one’s life and the lives of others (the opposite of Deism). What is the role of prayer in the balance between God’s sovereignty and human freedom? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Read Psalm 139:1-18. In poetic language, what does this Psalm tell us about God? What difference can that understanding make in our everyday lives? Is God’s complete and intimate knowledge of us a source of encouragement or fear? (Sunday’s Lesson)
3. Read Psalm 121. How is God involved in our daily affairs? (Monday’s Lesson)

4. Read Psalm 91:2-7. What does the Psalmist do in times of trouble? How do you integrate the message of this passage with life's greatest tragedies? Read Matthew 23:37. What does this text reveal about God? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-4. How does Paul describe the Exodus story? What does he do to make that story come alive for those in Corinth who would read his letter? Read Psalm 114. How is this Exodus story similar or different from the core story in the book of Exodus? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Read Psalm 20:1-3, 6. Where does help come from in this text? Read Hebrews 4:15-16. What special twist does Hebrews add to the Old Testament concept of the Sanctuary? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. Read Matthew 4:5-7. How can the Psalms be misused in very practical situations? What do we do when what the Psalms promise doesn't match with the reality you are experiencing? What are some other ways that the Psalms can be misused? (Friday's Lesson)
8. Read Psalm 145:18-20. How can we develop trust in God in all circumstances? How does learning to trust God in the good times help us learn how to trust him in the difficult times? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

In the introduction to his letter to the believers in Rome, Paul states his conviction that he had been specially commissioned to bring about a new kind of obedience. It was to be different from the kind of obedience he himself had offered before he met Jesus on the Damascus road. It was to be what he calls literally "obedience of faith," "obedience of trust."

"Law-obedience" is what Paul used to practice with such zeal, and he was not at all pleased with the results. It had made him intolerant toward other people, even cruel. "Law-obedience" had actually led him to violate the whole spirit of God's law, the law of love.

By now urging "faith-obedience" or "trust-obedience," is Paul doing away with the law? "By no means!" Paul exclaims. "On the contrary, we uphold the law." (Romans 3:31, NSRV) Phillips interprets, "We put the Law in its proper place."

One proper place for the law has been to serve as "our attendant on the way to Christ." But the ultimate place is the one Jeremiah described. Paul agrees with the prophet. What the law requires may be written on the heart—the place, Paul explains to the Romans, where the conscience is active and people do their thinking. (See Romans 2:15)

"Trust-obedience" is the kind that results from "knowing" God, in the full meaning of that word. It comes from learning the truth about him and his use of law. It is the result of being won back to trust him as a Friend, to admire him for his wise and gracious ways.

This means that the Spirit of Truth has succeeded in writing the law “on our hearts.” Now we freely do what the law requires, not because we’ve been ordered to, but because we’re convinced in our own minds that what the law requires is right. {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends? Another Look at God*, 103-104. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.}

<http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter8.html>

But whatever you are able to read into the details, the picture remains the same. Jesus did not expose them before the crowd. That’s clear. He didn’t expose them, until they were all gone. And He could have readily done so. Now, why didn’t He? Well, why didn’t He expose Simon in that other story? Why didn’t He expose Judas? Well, if we’re His children, what father enjoys humiliating his children? You see, unfortunately, we so often make just the good people His children. The others are not, you see. So He could expose them; they’re not His children. Is not God the father of bad children as well as good children? And I think it’s so crucial to realize that.

When Jesus watches the wicked die, He is watching members of His family die. When we say, “Have you joined the family of God?” we mean, “Have you joined the saints?” Well, that’s not really true. We are all members of the family. He’s going to lose part of His family. When you count your own children, from day to day, say you have six, how many do you have tonight? Three perhaps? The good ones. You don’t have the others. Hopefully tomorrow you’ll have four, maybe five. Have you ever had a day when you’d own up to all six of your children? I’m glad my folks didn’t do this. And some day my father might say, “I don’t have any children tonight. They all were bad.” That would make no sense. You know Lucifer is a child of God? The worst one He’s got. And some day He’ll watch him die. And isn’t it safe to say that that brilliant child of His will leave an eternal void in the infinite memory of God. He’ll always remember His most brilliant son, and He lost him. And He’ll miss us if we’re lost. That pain will last forever. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – John*, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/57MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/58MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

“When you get back to the disciples, tell the disciples and especially tell Peter, that the Lord has arisen and will be back tonight.” Now this is the way the Lord treats people who’ve done terrible things. That was a terrible thing Peter did. And what a sin Mary committed over and over again. But they’re the ones who needed the most encouragement. They were sensitive people, people of strong feeling but doing wrong, and terribly depressed over what they had

done. They needed encouragement. The one who is our heavenly Father and doesn't want to lose one of us, instead of condemning them, He sought to revive their self-respect. He treated them with dignity. Now if we imitate Christ as Paul did that's the way we'll treat other people. It seems to suggest that the worse a person's predicament, the more we'll go out of our way to help him recover his dignity and self-respect. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 14, recorded January 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/27MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/28MMROMANS66> (Part 2)

The controversy is about God. Likewise, the good news is not about us. The good news is about God; that He has won His case. And the universe has conceded that He has won His case. And only here on this little planet way out in space are there any people foolish enough, and ungrateful enough, or blind enough, Paul would even say stupid enough, to turn from this good news and believe Satan's lies about God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 3, recorded October 1977, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/5MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/6MMROMANS66> (Part 2)

Years ago, we had a fire that came right up to a house we lived in formerly. And it was so hot as it swept up the bank, it burned the leaves on trees the other side of our house. But there were six houses in a row on a ridge, none of them damaged, although we were bombed with borate. I spent twenty-four hours hosing down that red gummy fluid. But it was a pleasure to hose all night long and all the next day, since no real damage had been done. But all of the homeowners in those six homes met for a while to think how grateful we were that the fire had not reached us. But I couldn't help raising the question: Supposing the fire had reached one of the six homes. What would we be saying? Would five of us be thanking the Lord for His protection, and we don't know about this other person? Perhaps he had not been faithful with his tithes. And we're right into the book of Job. That explanation doesn't work all the time. Job was a perfect and an upright man, and the fire came right through his premises, didn't it? So, the book of Job helps at such times. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Numbers, recorded October 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/7MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/8MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Well, why wouldn't God just leave them? I mean, isn't that the message we have: If you don't behave, God won't look after you? We tell about the little boy who goes where he shouldn't and we have sometimes suggested that the angels stay on the sidewalk outside the building until the little boy comes out. In other words, you're only protected when you're good. Well, like as not that isn't when we need it. How about the lost sheep? Did the shepherd look after the ninety and nine and wait for the lost one to come home? No, he left the ninety and nine, and he went after the lost sheep. That's a consistent picture in scripture, not to encourage us in sinning, but it surely says something about God. He went after the wandering, lost sheep. I think that's a very cruel thing we sometimes tell our children. Now, Ellen White does say that if they persist and persist in rejecting God's protection, He will not force it upon them. But don't you like the thought when you let your children go in the morning, that should they misbehave during the day, God will not abandon them? Or are we only protected when we are good? Are we only under grace when we are good? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Esther & Job, recorded January 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/25MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/26MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

Never feel that Christ is far away. He is always near. His loving presence surrounds you. {FLB 62.8}

The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is a continual evidence of the power of an ever-present God. {8T 260.2}

Do not be troubled. Jesus loves you, and will care for you and bless you. The active, aggressive battle you can no more fight, but you can let Jesus fight it for you. He says to you, "Give your case entirely into My hands. Be still, and know that I am God." {UL 335.6}

Our God has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need. We can see only a little way before us; "but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Hebrews 4:13. Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best. {8T 272.1}

It was taught by the Jews that before God's love is extended to the sinner, he must first repent. In their view, repentance is a work by which men earn the favor of Heaven. And it was this thought that led the Pharisees to exclaim in astonishment and anger. "This man receiveth sinners." According to their ideas He should permit none to approach Him but those who had repented. But in the parable of the lost sheep, Christ teaches that salvation does not come through our seeking after God but through God's seeking after us. "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way." Romans 3:11, 12. We do not repent in order that God may love us, but He reveals to us His love in order that we may repent. {COL 189.1}

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. "The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son. {SC 100.1}

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, can carry forward His great work harmoniously. That which appears to finite minds entangled and complicated, the Lord's hand can keep in perfect order. He can devise ways and means to thwart the purposes of wicked men, and He will bring to confusion the counsels of them that plot mischief against His people. {5T 754.2}

We can see only a little way before us; "but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." He never becomes confused. He sits above the confusion and distractions of the earth, and all things are opened to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He can order that which His providence sees is best. {ML 10.4}

The Holy Spirit is His representative in our world, to execute the divine purpose of bringing to fallen man power from above, that he may be an overcomer. All who enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ become by adoption the children of God. They are cleansed by the regenerating power of the Word, and angels are commissioned to minister unto them (MS 57, 1907). {7BC 922.1}

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan (MS 17, 1893). {7BC 922.5}

Holy, ministering agencies of heaven are cooperating with human agencies to lead into safe paths all who love truth and righteousness. It is the greatest joy of the angels of heaven to spread the shield of their tender love over souls who turn to God; . . . {7BC 922.9}

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

Look constantly to Jesus. Take all your troubles to Him. He will never misunderstand you. He is the refuge of His people. Under the shadow of His protection they can pass unharmed. Believe in Him and trust in Him. He will not give you up to the spoiler. {HP 176.3}

Every weak, doubting, struggling soul who yields fully to the Lord is placed in direct touch with agencies that enable him to overcome. Heaven is near to him, and he has the support and help of angels of mercy in every time of trial and need. {AA 299.1}

The path where God leads the way may lie through the desert or the sea, but it is a safe path. {PP 290.3}

A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one. . . . The angels appointed to minister to the children of God have at all times access to His presence. {GC 512.2}

Thus God's people, exposed to the deceptive power and unsleeping malice of the prince of darkness, and in conflict with all the forces of evil, are assured of the unceasing guardianship of heavenly angels. {GC 513.1}

Angels of God are watching over us. Upon this earth there are thousands and tens of thousands of heavenly messengers commissioned by the Father to prevent Satan from obtaining any advantage over those who refuse to walk in the path of evil. And these angels who guard God's children on earth are in communication with the Father in heaven.—HP 99. {TA 16.4}

The angels are with us every day, to guard and protect us from the assaults of the enemy. {TA 19.1}

But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will. . . . {CC 250.3}

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy

Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. {8T 19.1}

In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ. {COL 157.3}

To human beings, striving for conformity to the divine image, there is imparted an outlay of heaven's treasure, an excellency of power that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen. {HP 148.5}

Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings. {PP 33.2}

These things were not written merely that we might read and wonder, but that the same faith which wrought in God's servants of old might work in us. In no less marked a manner than He wrought then will He work now wherever there are hearts of faith to be channels of His power. {CG 43.1}

The glory of heaven is in lifting up the fallen, comforting the distressed. And wherever Christ abides in human hearts, He will be revealed in the same way. Wherever it acts, the religion of Christ will bless. Wherever it works, there is brightness. {COL 386.1}

Through the gospel, souls that are degraded and enslaved by Satan are to be redeemed to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. God's purpose is not merely to deliver from the suffering that is the inevitable result of sin, but to save from sin itself. The soul, corrupted and deformed, is to be purified, transformed, that it may be clothed in "the beauty of the Lord our God," "conformed to the image of His Son." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Psalm 90:17; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 2:9. Eternity alone can reveal the glorious destiny to which man, restored to God's image, may attain. {MB 60.3}

Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and results of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated. Satan had declared that the law of God was faulty, and that the good of the universe demanded a change in its requirement. In attacking the law, he thought to overthrow the authority of its Author, and gain for himself the supreme allegiance. But through the plan of salvation the precepts of the law were to be proved perfect and immutable, that at last one glory and love might rise to God throughout the universe, ascribing glory and honor and praise to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. {ST, February 13, 1893 par. 12}

The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created and endowed with power to do the divine will. The fall of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent. Redemption was not an after thought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam, but an eternal purpose, suffered to be wrought out for the blessing, not only of this atom of a world, but for the good of all the worlds that God had created. {ST, February 13, 1893 par. 3}

The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity. . . . {AG 130.2}

The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906). {6BC 1074.2}

In Christ is gathered all the glory of the Father. In Him is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God are expressed in His character. {7BC 907.3}

If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy. {MH 249.1}

With the trusting faith of a little child, we are to come to our heavenly Father, telling Him of all our needs. He is always ready to pardon and help. The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. {SD 121.3}

We may have the same help that Christ had, we may have strength for every emergency; for God will be our front guard and our rearward. He will shut us in on every side. {AG 259.5}