



**OUR GOD IS WORTHY OF PRAISE.**

**Psalm 138:**

<sup>1</sup> I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart;  
before the “gods” I will sing your praise.

<sup>2</sup> I will bow down toward your holy temple  
and will praise your name  
for your unfailing love and your faithfulness,  
for you have so exalted your solemn decree  
that it surpasses your fame.

<sup>3</sup> When I called, you answered me;  
you greatly emboldened me.

<sup>4</sup> May all the kings of the earth praise you, LORD,  
when they hear what you have decreed.

<sup>5</sup> May they sing of the ways of the LORD,  
for the glory of the LORD is great.

<sup>6</sup> Though the LORD is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly;  
though lofty, he sees them from afar.

<sup>7</sup> Though I walk in the midst of trouble,

you preserve my life.

You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes;  
with your right hand you save me.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD will vindicate me;  
your love, LORD, endures forever—  
do not abandon the works of your hands.

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This is one of the wisdom psalms, the Lord is presented as the God of gods. He rescues His people and has a perfect plan for everyone as individuals.

Today you may be feeling like life has come crashing down. It happens to every one of us at some point in our lives – not always through pandemics or natural disasters. It can come through car accidents, loss through deaths or injury, failed marriages, illness, financial burdens.

Whatever may be making us feel like life is out of control – we are never prepared. That's the essence of the pain and sometimes you may feel like it is not worth going on.

For the first time you may lack the strength to get out of bed in the morning or perform simple tasks or even to talk to someone.

You know the other day I accidentally dropped one of my favourite bowls smashing it into many pieces and the very next

day I dropped the lid from my tea caddy and it broke apart. Sadly, I could not repair either of them.

**Maybe you feel like your heart has been smashed into pieces and there is no way it can be repaired.**

But we are different – because when we are feeling broken apart – we can be assured that we can run into the arms of a Father who loves us and weeps with us. What an incredible moment to know that healing is possible.

David says - though I walk in the midst of trouble, the Lord preserves my life.

The book of Psalms reveals to us that we not only have a Lord God and a Saviour when we face tragedy, but we have a wonderful Friend in the bargain. And we see David and the people break out in song over the news that the high and holy God of creation is our Friend. He knows our every need and every experience. He is an always-present Father who is totally immersed in the smallest details of our lives.

Just like David and the people, thanksgiving should be an integral part of our praise to God. As we praise and thank God for material and spiritual blessings, we should also thank Him for answering prayer.

David is giving thanks through his worship to God even though he is in the middle of trouble. He has remembered when he

asked God for protection, strength, comfort, patience, love or other special needs, and God supplied them. David never took God's provision and answered prayer for granted.

It takes a certain degree of wisdom and maturity for you and I to reach such a level. When difficulties burden us, we sometimes struggle to remember our reasons for gratitude to God.

See how David often starts his Psalms.

***Psalms – 95:2 – “come before His presence with thanksgiving.”***

***Psalm 100:4 “enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name.”***

***Psalm 113:3 “from the rising of the sun to its going down, the Lord's name is to be praised.”***

**When was the last time you told God how grateful you were? If you cannot recall – then today is the day to change that.**

Have you ever watched a concrete truck back into a driveway to dump its load of concrete? I was watching one the other day and it reminded me on how often we back up to God, pull the level and unload everything we've been carrying. Just like this truck, the men spreading the concrete had to keep calling out –

stop – enough. Give us time to spread and smooth it over – basically to deal with it.

It could be our tears, resentment or self-pity or preoccupation with all that we feel is wrong in our lives.

There is certainly a time for casting all our burdens upon the Lord but Psalms is challenging us to first come into His presence with thanksgiving and a grateful heart in times of our pain and crisis.

The Lord God Almighty became one of us and then He gave up His life out of love for us. He gave Himself wholeheartedly for us and He allows us to enter into His very presence.

Sometimes though we turn away from allowing our worship and praise to be witnessed by others. We chain it up into thoughts of what will others think of me.

And when that becomes part of our concern, we are not giving ourselves wholeheartedly to the worship of the Lord God.

It is worth stopping to examine which owns the greater portion of our heart – God or our public image?

When we approach God we must do so with an undivided heart.

**How do you come to the Lord with your worship?**

## **How do you approach Him in times of trouble?**

### **In times of blessings?**

We often find it easier to go to God during our storms than when things are going smoothly.

There are often two words that go together through the Psalms – unfailing love and faithfulness. Other translations use the words mercy and truth. There are many times you find these two words used together in the Old Testament

***Psalm 25:10 says: “all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.***

***Psalm 57:3: “God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.”***

***Psalm 85:10: “Mercy and truth have met together.”***

### **Why would these 2 qualities be consistently paired together in Scripture?**

Because the Lord perfectly balances mercy and truth. His mercy is poured out in the light of absolute truth and His truth is saturated by infinite mercy.

### **I wonder if any of you watched the film – Groundhog Day?**

It was about a weatherman, played by Bill Murray, who found himself living the same day over and over again. It drives him to

distraction until he sees a way of turning the situation to his advantage.

You may be feeling a lot like Bill in the movie – feeling like you are living the same day over and over again during this pandemic. But we can learn from this story as Bill finally learns the key to his life – **it is not what happens to you, but how you react to it.**

As Christians we are assured that the Lord continues to protect us – even if we do feel like each day is the same at the moment. He is the one to turn to, to help us change our thinking and learn ways to manage the situation.

***Isaiah 43:2-3 says: when you pass through the waters, I will be with you.***

***And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.***

***When you walk through the fire you shall not be burned.***

***Nor shall the flame scorch you.***

***For I AM the Lord your God.***

***The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.***

What a beautiful passage to hold onto.

If you are walking through the valley of tears today – hold onto the fact that God is walking beside you.

God is close to us in everything we experience, surrounding us with His presence. He promised us He would do that and our Lord is always as good as His Word.

***Psalm 34:1: I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth.***

In times of trouble, in times of triumph, in times of uncertainty – let us all praise the Lord.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Lord God, I pray for Your protection as I continue through this day. You are my hiding place, and under Your wings I can always find refuge. Protect me from trouble wherever I go and keep evil far from me. No matter where I am, I will look to You as my Protector, the One Who fights for me every day. Your love and faithfulness, along with Your goodness and mercy, surround me daily, so I will not fear whatever might come against me. My trust is in You, God, and I give thanks to You for Your love and protection. In Jesus' name, Amen.