

Introduction: Much of Scripture is poetry. Many books have some poetry (including portions of hymns in The New Testament), and seven books are almost exclusively poetry: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Lamentations and Psalms. The benefit of poetry is that it works through our heart to reach our mind and will in a way narrative prose does not. *** Poetry uses (among other things) word pictures, metaphors, sound (alliteration and assonance), repetition and synonyms, comparisons and contrasts, and patterns to help us to memorize and meditate on truths about God. *** Today's Psalm about God's LOVE and Faithfulness to strengthen His humble people in trouble who cry out to Him, uses many of these tools in the poet's toolkit SO we can come to know The Covenant God and have more faith in Him, especially when life is hard. *** This is Father's (or Men's) Day, but the truths in this Psalm are for ALL God's people. *** With this introduction, let's go deep into this poetic song from the Psalms; and, may The Holy Spirit change us through The Word He inspired.

I. God is to be thanked and praised for His Strong LOVE and faithful TRUTH to answer prayers for strength.

(Verses 1-5)

- A. Give thanksgiving, praise and worship to The Covenant God in His Holy Temple for His love and truth, and for answering prayers to give strength. *(Verses 1-3)*
1. I will confess praise to Thee with all my heart; before the 'gods' I will sing praise to Thee. *(Verse 1)*
Confess: Taking personal responsibility, David says he will confess as thanksgiving that he is sinful and of flawed character; but, God's character is perfect and His deeds are wonderful, especially as He acts to cover over the sins of those with humble faith.
Sing: Singing is a joyful expression, with instruments, of praise to God.
 2. I will bow down toward Thy Holy Temple, and confess praise for Thy Strong LOVE and Thy Faithful Truth. *(Verses 2a-2b)*
Worship: True worship is best expressed by the physical image of a person on his or her knees with the forehead touching the ground before the holy presence of God in His house.
Two things: Repeating the same word, I will confess to Thee with thanksgiving because of two (of many) wonderful aspects of Thy character: Strong LOVE, which can change repentant sinners into saints; and, Faithful Truth, God always keeps His Word of blessing to people of humble faith AND cursing to people with self-centered pride.
 3. Because Thou hast exalted Thy Word above all Thy Name. *(Verse 2c)*
Word: His Name expresses His wonderful perfection. Yet He has made His Word to be great above His Name! Therefore we must know His Word and order our lives by it.
 4. On the day I called, then Thou did answer me; and, Thou will strengthen me in my soul with strength. *(Verse 3)*
Petitionary prayer: Let us always remember to talk to God in prayer, and not be afraid to call out in our weakness for His strength. I called out, then Thou answered. Remember the inspired words of James: 'You do not have because you do not ask' *(James 4:2, NAS)*.
Answered: David has confident faith that his prayer 'to be strengthened with strength' (what a beautiful phrase) will be answered, as his first prayer was.

The faithful God says 'yes' to prayers for strength

- B. When all the kings of earth hear His words, they sing of His glorious ways. *(Verses 4-5)*
1. All the kings of the earth will confess praise to Thee, Yahweh (Covenant God), because they have heard the words of Thy mouth. *(Verse 4)*
Kings confess: This is the third time this word has been used. In addition to 'all my heart' and for 'LOVE and Truth', every king (of all the nations on earth) will also confess praise to Israel's God.
Heard God's Words: The reason they will confess is because they heard God's words – plural. It seems somehow they have read the whole Torah. Let us pray for every nation on earth to know God.
 2. They will sing of the ways of Yahweh because great is the glory of Yahweh. *(Verse 5)*
Kings sing: This is a synonym of the first word used for singing praise. Here the emphasis is on the person of the kings and their voices.
Glory: Glory is often used figuratively with the meaning of heavy or weighty. It was used in the Torah for His physical presence at the Tabernacle in fire and cloud *(Exodus 16:10)*, and in Ezekiel's vision of the Babylonian exile and restoration *(Ezekiel 10-11, 43)*. And the whole earth will be filled with the glory of Yahweh *(Habakkuk 2:14)*, supremely in His Son, The Branch, *(Isaiah 4:2; John 1:14)*. David amplifies God's glory by proclaiming it is great and magnified, as is His Word *(verse 2c)*.

II. He is exalted, yet sees the humble over the haughty; and, He revives from trouble to save His people to do His end by His eternal strong LOVE. *(Verses 6-8)*

- A. Though Yahweh is exalted, He sees the humble and is distant to the haughty; He revives those in trouble, saving them from their enemies. *(Verses 6-7)*
1. For, though Yahweh is high and exalted, and He sees the lowly. *(Verses 6a-b)*
Exalted: The word used to describe Yahweh's Word is now applied to Yahweh Himself!
Sees lowly: He sees and He has concern for the lowly, a synonym of humble from the Psalms *(9:12; 10:16-17; 34:1-4)*. They know their place: on their face before God confessing His LOVE and Truth.

2. And the haughty, proud one He knows from a distance. (*Verse 6c*)
Proud: God is far from haughty and proud people. Most of us know this proverb: ‘Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall’, (*16:18*, RSV). This does say pride goes before a fall!
3. If I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou will keep me alive. (*Verse 7a*)
Distress: Here trouble can be expressed with the figure of speech, ‘squeezed by a tight place’.
 It is a picture of deep distress.
Life: However, even when being tightly squeezed by circumstances, God is working in the lives of humble people to bring them back to fullness of life IN Him.

God revives the humble in trouble

4. Against the anger of my enemies Thou will stretch forth Thy (right) hand and save me. (*Verses 7b-c*)
Enemies: God’s enemies hate God’s people too; but, God will doubly save His people by stretching out His hand so the hateful enemies experience ‘the wrath of God’; and, save them by His right hand.
- B. He will accomplish His end for His people by His eternal Strong LOVE, and answer their petition that He not forsake them. (*Verse 8*)
1. Yahweh will bring about His end in me. (*Verse 8a*)
Yahweh brings end: The assertion is The Covenant God’s end or purpose will come in our lives, NOT necessarily our desired end or purpose. So, we must all pray with confidence that God has a good end in mind for us, and He will bring it about for us.
 2. Yahweh, Thy Strong LOVE is to eternity. (*Verse 8b*)
Eternal Strong LOVE: His praise for God’s Strong LOVE has now led to a confession that His Strong LOVE is also eternal. Here is an example of repetition with addition.
 3. May Thou not forsake the work of Thy hands. (*Verse 8c*)
Petition: The first time he called out to God, his hands were strengthened. He now petitions The Covenant God not to forsake him using a figure of speech to remind God (and himself) that he was knit together in his mother’s womb by God (*Psalms 139:13-16*) calling himself ‘the work of Thy hands’. So, may we all be encouraged to always call on God out of our needs. He will give us all we need, including strength for our day.

The faithful God says ‘yes’ to prayers for strength

- C. Strength from God in poetic books.
1. Proverbs.
By knowledge and counsel: Power and strength come from wisdom and knowledge; because, in good advice war is made and salvation (is) in much advice (*24:5-6*). Strength and deliverance come from God’s wisdom discerned by God’s people consulting together.
 2. Psalms.
Yahweh is strength: When someone voices his supplications to Him, Yahweh is his strength, and his trusting heart brings him joy, and Yahweh is the strength of His people (repeated, with addition); and, the saving strength of His Anointed (*28:6-8*). So, again we have prayer to The Faithfully True God resulting in strength to all who pray. But, notice saving strength is only to The Messiah, so we get strength by praying through faith in The Messiah-Savior, Jesus Christ.
All the earth must praise God for giving strength: All kingdoms are to sing praises to The Lord God, to Him riding in the highest heavens of antiquity, behold He gives forth His mighty voice; attribute strength to God (majestic over Israel), His strength is in the clouds; God is to be reverently feared from His Holy Place, He who is continually giving strength and might to Israel, His people (*68:32-35*). With many synonyms and word pictures the portion of this Psalm presents the same truth as the opening stanza of our praise Psalm. Let us continually ask our Faithful God for strength and join in the eternal praise of His people that:

The faithful God says ‘yes’ to prayers for strength

Conclusion: God is to be praised and acknowledged for His Strong LOVE and Faithful TRUTH to answer prayers for strength. Though He is exalted, He sees the humble over the haughty; and, revives His people out of trouble to save them, and to accomplish His end by His eternal Strong LOVE.

The faithful God says ‘yes’ to prayers for strength