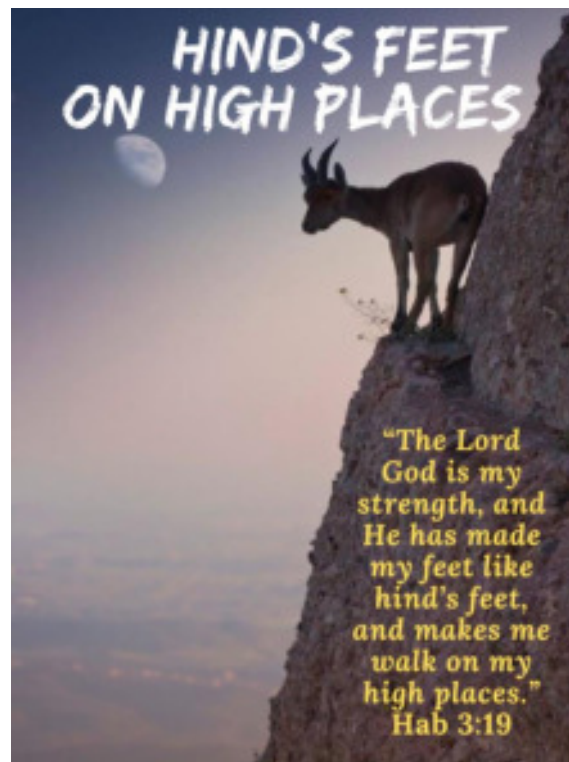


Basic Training Bible Ministries
presents

“Hinds Feet on High Places”
Finding Secure Footing in Unstable Times
Songs of Deliverance in Seasons of Darkness



*“He makes my feet like hinds feet, and sets me on my high places. You enlarged my path under me; so that my feet did not slip.”
Psalm 18:33, 36 (2 Sam. 22:34; Hab. 3:19)*

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Introduction

We are living in times of unprecedented instability. The “end times” of prophecy are upon us. The whole world is aflame with tyrannical demands on the part of governments and world leaders, and the growing backlash and resistance of the people against a creeping and sinister enslavement by gradual degrees.

Yet it is possible, and crucial, to live lives of stability and purpose in the midst of this chaos. Those who are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ have all the resources necessary to live bold and heroic lives, by faith. The Psalms of David identify with our fears and our weaknesses, yet demonstrate the ways to rise above this present oppressive and sinister world. This is possible only by a life of faith and fellowship with the Living God. We who live in this present Church Age have spiritual resources and provisions that even David never had. His instructions take on even greater power when channeled through our understanding of what it means to be “In Christ”, and of the spiritual dynamic of the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit.

Let us take the examples set forth by David, the “man after God’s own heart”, and make them live in us by the power of the Spirit of God, so that our age may also produce spiritual heroes who defy the growing darkness, by shining the light and truth of God’s word in a world adrift in a sea of lies. True heroics is not always found in the man victorious in battle. It is far more demonstrated by the unsung and unnoticed souls, who in the hour of testing, do what is right and just, even though it is personally costly to do so. Let us learn from King David how to overcome fear with faith, and to leave the ranks of the cowardly, and to stand among the heroes of the faith.

“In the world’s broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife.”
- Longfellow

PART ONE:

A Song of Salvation–Psalms 22–24 (Amen)

I Can Stand Firm in Life Because the Lord is My Shepherd

Whether the Lord is your shepherd or not is a personal decision. We cannot claim Him as shepherd unless we first receive Him as Savior. That is why it is crucial to understand this Psalm is part of a trilogy (Psalm 22–24), which, taken together, reveal the full scope of our Shepherds work.

In **Psalm 22** we see the Shepherd **crucified** (v. 1, Matt. 27:46). *“I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered”* (Zec. 13:7; Matt. 26:31). Psalm 22 prophetically anticipated the Lord Jesus as **the good shepherd**, who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11). It is worth noting that in Psalm 22 we can find the source of each of the seven last sayings of Jesus on the Cross!

Then, in **Psalm 23** we see Jesus as our **resurrected** Shepherd, who supplies all our needs *“according to His riches in glory”* (Phil. 4:19). Here Jesus is revealed as *“that great Shepherd of the sheep”* (Heb. 13:20–21), who is now providing and guiding us to the fulfillment of the Father’s plan.

Finally, in **Psalm 24**, we see our Lord **coming again** to establish His eternal kingdom. Peter refers to this phase of the salvation work as the return of the **“Chief Shepherd”** in 1 Peter 5:4, who comes bringing eternal reward for faithful those who have rendered faithful service (Rev. 22:12). Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd, and the Chief Shepherd.

Seven Hebrew Verb Stems (conjugations, *binyan* “to build”)

- **Qal** (Simple Active)
- **Nif'al** (Simple Passive or Reflexive)
- **Pi'el** (Intensive Active or Causative)
- **Pu'al** (Intensive Passive)
- **Hitpa'el** (Reflexive)
- **Hif'il** (Causative Active)
- **Hof'al** (Causative Passive)

The Lord My Savior/Shepherd, Psalm 23:1–4

David was intimately familiar with the life and duties of the shepherd. Here he summarizes the care of the sheep in five critical areas.

1. **Rest** – *“He makes me to lie down”* (Hiph. Imperf. *Rabat* – to rest securely). This rest comes in the midst of “green pastures.” Spiritual rest is the result of being well-fed in the word of God.

“Come to Me ... I will give you rest. Take My yoke ... learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart ... you will find rest for your souls.” – Matthew 11:28–29

“There is no rest for the wicked ...” Isaiah 57:21

2. **Refreshment** – “*He leads me*” (Piel Imperf. *Nahal* – to lead gently). Still waters speaks of refreshment and tranquility. Water is critical in a desert land. “*He leads me*” reminds us of the need to follow His guidance, which always leads to peace.

“He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.” – Isaiah 40:11 (Isa. 49:10).

3. **Restoration** – “*He restores my soul.*” (Piel Imperf. *Shub* – to turn back/repent). All sheep stray, and so do all believers. We all need restoration and recovery. The intensive may imply discipline!

“For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives ... it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” – Hebrews 12:6, 11

“Restore to me the joy of Your salvation ...” – Psalm 51:12

4. **Guidance** – “*He leads me*” (Hiph. Imperf. *Nachah* – to conduct, guide). The “*paths of righteousness*” lead to fellowship/communion.

“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” – John 8:12

“If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” – 1 John 1:7

Three Spiritual Cleansings

- The washing of salvation (faith in Christ)

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” – Titus. 3:5

- The washing of confession

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” – 1 John 1:9

- The washing of fellowship

This is the cleansing spoken of in 1 John 1:7 above. In John 13:8–10 Jesus anticipates all three of these washings.

“If I do not wash you (confession) you have no part with Me (fellowship) ... He who is bathed (salvation) needs only to wash his feet (confession) ...”

5. **Security** – *“Yea, though I walk ... I fear not ... Your rod and staff, they comfort me.”* (Piel Imperf. *Naham* – comfort, consolation from sympathy, compassion.) The rod implies protection, and even discipline, and the staff suggests guidance (Prov. 3:5–6).

“But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.” – Matt. 9:36

Point: Three points that show that death has no fear for believers.

- We walk – not running nor crawling. We take death in stride.
- It is a valley, not a chasm. We descend gently, then rise up.
- It is but a shadow – Jesus said we shall never taste death (John 8:52).

Note: When Moses knew he could not lead the children of Israel into the land he prayed, *“Let the Lord ... set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd.”* (Num. 27:16–17). That man was Joshua (Jesus).

The Lord My Host, Psalm 23:5–6

The essence of the Christian life, the life of faith, is to live on this earth as a guest of God. As our host on this earth God supplies us with five things.

1. A Banquet Table – We feast while our enemies look on, unfulfilled. *“You prepare”* (Qal Imperf. *Arad*, to set in order). Perfect supply.
2. Anointing – It was customary for a host to welcome a guest into his house by anointing his head with olive oil (Luke 7:46). Shepherds used oil to treat wounds. For us, this anointing is the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16–18; 1 Cor. 12:13).
3. An Overflowing Cup – The host keeps filling the cup as fast as the guest can drink it. The more we appropriate *“all spiritual blessings in Christ”* (Eph. 1:3), the more deeply we will drink of His supply. This is the *“abundant life”* Jesus promised (John 10:10).
4. A Promise – *“Shall follow me ...”* (Qal Imper. *Radaph* – to pursue!). The word is used of Saul persecuting David, but God’s grace was always ahead of him.
5. His Presence – *“I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”* Here he speaks of the fellowship of abiding which Jesus builds on in John 15:3–8. This intimate fellowship was David’s greatest desire (Psalm 27:4) and is echoed by Paul in Philippians 3:8–14.

Conclusion: The idea of God as our Host on this earth is picked up also in Psalm 16:5–6:

*“You, O Lord, are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot (allotment).
The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance.”*

Summary: The Divine Genius of Imputation

1. Of Adam’s sin to all men – Romans 5:12; 11:32. By this action, all men are condemned and in need of eternal salvation.
2. Of all sins to Jesus Christ – 2 Corinthians 5:21. By this act God made salvation possible to all men, on the condition of faith in Christ.
3. Of the righteousness of Jesus Christ to all who believe – Romans 4:3, 22–25. Those who trust in Christ as Savior receive His righteousness as a free gift of grace (Rom. 6:23).

PART TWO:

A Song of Sanctification—Psalms 1 and 15

I Can Stand Firm in Life Because I Possess Christ’s Righteousness

The thought here follows on from Psalm 23, what does it mean to “dwell in the house of the Lord”? Who is able to maintain fellowship with God?

Although we often apply these Psalms to believers, as a goal for faithful and righteous living, they can only be truly applied to Jesus Christ, who alone perfectly fulfilled them.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness ...” Matthew 5:6

In this world, God recognizes only two kinds of people; Those who are in Christ by faith, and therefore righteous, and those who are in Adam due to unbelief, and therefore are under the wrath of God (1 Cor. 15:22; John 3:36).

Psalm 1: The Godly vs. the Ungodly

The Blessed Man, vv. 1–3

“Blessed is the man...” Asher – to be happy, to go straight, to prosper.

“I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed. So she named him Asher.” – Genesis 30:13 (Leah)

This is the word Jesus would have used in teaching the beatitudes.

1. His **separation** from the world, v. 1.

To depart from the ways of evil is the first step to blessedness.

“He who would love life and see good days ... let him turn away from evil and do good, let him seek peace and pursue it.” – 1 Peter 3:10–11

- Avoid the gradual descent into evil: *“walk, stand, sit.”*
- Recognize the enemies of grace: *“ungodly, sinners, scornful.”*
- Reverse the process, as in Ephesians: *“Sit (in Christ, Ch.1-3), walk (by faith, 4:1-6:9), stand (fully armed, 6:10-18).*

2. His **saturation** in God’s word, v. 2.

“But his delight” Kayphets: “Desire, treasure, what is valued.”

“Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.”
– Psalm 37:4

“He meditates” Hagah, to murmur, utter, ponder. The picture is of a cow chewing its cud, squeezing the last benefit from it.

3. His **satisfaction** in stability and fruitfulness, v.3.

- He is like a tree “transplanted” – *Shathal*, to remove to another, better place (Rom. 11:17), planted there securely. This is spiritual regeneration. The *“rivers of water”* is echoed by Jesus in John 7:37:

“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

- He brings forth fruit *“In its season.”* God has a time and place for every good work. He is in step with the plan of God.

*“Blessed is the man who trusts (Batach: Qal. Imperf.) in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and **will not fear** when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, **nor will cease from yielding fruit.**” – Jeremiah 17:7–8*

- His work will neither fade nor be hindered. *“Prosper” (Tsalach, Hiphil Imperf. - caused by God to thrive, break forth, flourish. Note that the description of the righteous man begins with the Word “blessed” and ends with the word “prosper.”* In Genesis 39:3 *“The Lord made all that he (Joseph) did to prosper.”*

The Ungodly Man, vv. 4–6

Ungodly is used here in the sense of being without God. He is the fool of Psalm 14:1.

1. His **instability**, v. 4.

Instead of being “rooted and grounded” spiritually (Eph. 3:16–17), he is, like chaff, worthless and wind-blown, quickly carried away.

“The wicked ... are like straw before the wind, and like chaff that a storm carries away.” – Job 21:17–18

2. His looming **judgment**, v. 5.

“The ungodly shall not stand.” (Qum: Qal. Imperf.) To remain.

3. His final **doom**, v. 6.

“Perish” is *Abad*, to suffer utter and final eternal destruction.

“The hope of the righteous will be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked will perish.” – Proverbs 10:28

“Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate that leads to destruction, and there are many who go by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” – Matthew 7:13-14

Why is the way into life so narrow?

Because Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” – John 14:6*

Summary (Note the contrasts):

1. One is blessed by the Lord, the other is not.
2. One is a fruitful tree planted, the other windblown chaff.
3. One is known by the Lord, the other will utterly perish.

Psalm 15: Abiding with the Lord

The thought, introduced to us in Psalm 23, of dwelling in the house of the Lord, is continued here. “This psalm declares the terms of friendship between man and Jehovah. The opening questions describe the privileges of friendship.

1. The all-important **question**, v. 1.

Lord, who may abide?” Guhr:Qal Imperf. – to sojourn, to live as a pilgrim/wayfarer. This is how Abraham lived.

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” – Hebrews 11:9–10

*“Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the valley of Baca (weeping) they make it a spring ... **they go from strength to strength**; every one of them appears (is seen – Niph. Imperf.) before God in Zion.”*

– Psalm 84:5–7

Point: This is the “Abiding” Jesus taught the disciples about in John 15:4–10. *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.”* (John 15:7).

Why is this so important?

Because we are called to live life in the imitation of Jesus Christ.

“O the Hope of Israel, his Savior in time of trouble, why should You be like a stranger in the land, and like a wayfaring man who turns aside to tarry for a night.” – Jeremiah 14:8

2. The many-sided **answer**, vv. 2–4.

- He **walks** by faith (2 Cor. 5:7; 4:1).
- He **works** what is righteous (Gal. 5:6b; Eph. 2:10).
- He **speaks** the truth (Eph. 4:15; James 3:1–12).
- He **discerns** the worthy from the worthless. How crucial?

“If you take out (separate) the precious from the vile (worthless), you shall be as My mouth (My spokesman).” – Jeremiah 15:19

3. The **conclusion**: *He who does these things shall never be moved.*”
Mowt: Niph. Imperf. – To be shaken, carried off course, toppled.

How to Go From Strength to Strength

1. Do not love the world – 1 John 2:15–17.
2. Lay up treasures in heaven – Matthew 6:19–20.
3. Keep pressing on in spiritual growth/fruitfulness.
 - From grace to grace
 - From faith to faith
 - From strength to strength

PART THREE:

A Song Songs of Confession – Psalms 51; 32; 6

I can stand firm in life because God is able to forgive my sins.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just ...” (1 John 1:9).

What happens when we, like the prodigal, stray from fellowship? Note that Psalm 32 begins (a maschil - instruction) where Psalm 51:13 says, "Then I will instruct sinners in the way ..."

Psalm 51

Note the superscription. The background to this Psalm is found in 2 Samuel 12. David committed adultery and murder and covered it up for nine months. Nathan unmasked David, "*You are the man!*" (2 Sam. 12:7).

1. **The cry** for mercy, pardon, and cleansing, vv. 1–2. Note **3 the three** designations: "transgressions ... iniquity ... sin." "*Blot out*" *Machah*, to wash away, to erase, to hide from sight.
2. **The condition** for pardon identified in confession, vv. 3–4. This is because it "justifies" or vindicates the word of God (**Read Rom. 3:3–4, 21–26**). While sin always injures others, all sin is travesty against the holiness of God.
3. **The confession** acknowledges both the source and the solution for sin, v.5-6. Imputed sin, inherent sin, personal sin.

Note: The only solution for sin is when God's truth is received in the inner man. "*Search me, O God, and know my heart*" (Psalm 139:23).

4. **The power** to cleanse, and restore, belongs to God alone, vv. 7–10. "*Purge ... wash ... renew*" – all Piel Imper, intensive action by God.
5. **The restoration**, vv. 11–13 (Psalm 23:3, "*He restores my soul ...*") results in 4 things.
 - The renewal of a steadfast spirit, v. 10. "*Create in me*" *Bara*: Qal Imper. To create something out of nothing, to bring into being.
 - The restoration of Spiritual power (the Church Age believer can never lose the indwelling Spirit (John 14:17; Heb. 13:5).
 - The restoration of the joy of salvation. "*The joy of the Lord is your strength.*" (Neh. 8:10b).
 - Restored power to win the lost and teach the saved, v. 13. "*I will teach ... Your ways.*" *Lamad*: Piel Cohortative – "Let me teach ..." This is where Psalm 32 picks up, a *maskil*, psalm of instruction.
6. The result of cleansing and correction is greater cause for praise, vv. 14–19. "*My tongue shall sin aloud of Your righteousness ...*" This is fulfilled in Psalm 32.

Psalm 32

Here we find the instruction, as well as the song of praise, David spoke of in Psalm 51. We will isolate these into lessons for when a believer falls into sin.

1. **The blessedness of forgiveness, vv. 1–2.** The blessing of God is not reserved only for the “righteous” (Psalm 1:1), but also for those who claim His forgiveness and cleansing, (see Rom. 4:6–7).

Note: God is able to forgive confessed sin because all sins were imputed to Christ on the cross, not to the sinner (2 Cor. 5:19, 21).

2. **Conviction, discipline, and confession, vv. 3–5.** Failure to confess our sin only increases the inner conviction and discipline. Confession brings forgiveness and peace (consider the story of the prodigal son, Luke 15).
3. **The godly sinner, vv. 6–7.** The only “godly” thing a believer who has sinned can do is to confess their sin honestly to God. He is a “hiding place”, a refuge, from the guilt, shame, and discipline of our sins. *“In a time when You may be found ...”*

*“Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way ... let him return to The Lord, and He will
have mercy on him.” – Isaiah 55:6–7.*

Point: Persistent hardness of heart can take us beyond the point of no return. *“But he (Samson) did not know that the Lord had departed from Him.”* (Jude 16:20). Our salvation is secure, but our deliverance from self-imposed disaster has divine limits.

4. **The blessings of restoration, vv. 8–11.** Confession restores us to the **instruction, guidance, and joy** of the Holy Spirit, and the **peace** and **power** of fellowship with God, vv. 8–11. When we are unwilling to confess our sins, God deals with us as an unruly horse or a stubborn mule. He has a 2X4 to get our attention!

Conclusion: In Psalm 6 we see another “repentance” Psalm that is worthy of studying. In vv. 1–7 David cries for mercy from the misery of his guilt. In vv. 8–10 he proclaims his certainty of the Lord’s forgiveness.

PART FOUR:

A Song of Growth – Psalm 27 (Or 16, 19?)

I am able to stand firm because every day is a new day of growth

*“This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope ... His compassions fail not.
They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.” – Lamentations 3:21-23*

Here we see the prosperity and blessing spoken of in Psalm 32:1. When we sin, confession and correction are the only way to keep growing.

Introduction: Six Hebrew Words for Faith

1. Amen – to lean on for support (Gen. 15:6).
2. Batach – to confide in; trust, be secure (Jer. 17:7–8). Usually translated in the LXX by the word “hope” (*elpizo*), in the sense of assurance.
3. Galal (Psalm 22:8, of Christ’s trust on the cross) to roll away, as in “*casting all your cares on Him*” (1 Pet. 5:7). Related to “Gilgal” (Josh. 5:9), where God “*rolled away the reproach of Egypt*” from Israel (Josh. 5:9).
4. Chasah – to take refuge (Psalm 2:12 “*kiss the Son ... trust in Him,*” Psalm 31:1). The rabbit hiding from the fox in the cleft of the rock.
5. Yaqal – to apply a field dressing to a wound (Job 13:15).
6. Qawah – To wait, to weave threads into a rope, (Psalm 27:14; Isa. 40:31). Note the end of Psalm 27:14 “*Wait on the Lord ... Wait, I say, on the Lord!*”

Point: Psalm 27 shows five stages of growth, which ultimately lead to the strongest faith (Qawah) in v. 14. This is another “Abiding” Psalm.

1. **Salvation, vv. 1–3.** “*The Lord is my light and my salvation ... the Lord is the strength of my life.*” Without this, life will devour you. “*In this I will be confident.*” Batach: Qal ptc. To **trust, entrust** oneself.
2. **Fellowship, vv. 4–6.** “*One thing I have **desired** of the Lord, that will I seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord ...*” Sound familiar? It takes us all the way back to Psalm 23:6. Again, this is the “*Abide in Me, and I in you,*” of John 15:4.
3. **Prayer, vv. 7–10.** “*Hear, O Lord, when I cry ... have mercy,*” the answer to which is found by those who “*Seek My face.*” Baqash: Piel Imper., followed by Piel Imperf. “*I will keep on seeking.*” “*My father and my mother forsake me ...*” Remember that David was considered of negligible importance in the family (1 Sam. 16:11).
4. **Study, v. 11.** “*Teach me Your way ... lead me ...*” Yarah: Hiph. Imper. To shoot an arrow at a mark, to aim for the goal. The hiphil is causative and requires our cooperation.
5. **Faith-rest, vv. 12–14.** “*Unless I had believed (Amen) ... wait on the Lord (Qawah: Piel, then Qal Imper.)*”

Point: There are no shortcuts to spiritual maturity. It takes time, and this is why Paul exhorts us to “*redeem the time*” (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5).

Summary: Stability in the spiritual life comes from maturity, and maturity comes from steady, persistent, daily growth.

“Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge ... grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” – 2 Peter 1:5–7; 3:18).

PART FIVE:

A Song In Time of Betrayal – Psalm 57; 3; 41:9

I am able to stand firm because the Lord will never betray me.

“He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you,’ so that we may boldly say, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear.’” – Hebrews 13:5–6

Everyone suffers betrayal sometime in life, to a greater or lesser degree. Not only that, but we all betray others somewhere along the line. How can we cope with betrayal? David, who both betrayed, and was betrayed, teaches us how.

Note that in these Psalms Saul, Absalom, and Ahithophel are each in view, as those who betrayed David.

Psalm 57: David’s flight from Saul

The background of this Psalm is in 1 Samuel 24, where David fled to *“the wilderness of En Gedi ... on the Rocks of the Wild Goats”* (1 Sam. 24:1–2).

1. David’s firm reliance on God, vv. 1–3.

“My soul trusts ... I will take refuge (Chasah 2x), first Qal Perf. “I have taken refuge”, then Qal Imperf. “I will keep on taking refuge”.

“In the shadow of Your wings” no longer seeking the futile fleeting wings of the dove (Psalm 55:6) but resting in the wings of the Father eagle (Deut. 32:10–11; Psalm 91:1). The lament of Jesus in Matthew 23:37 shows that through the whole history of Israel, He had called them to take shelter under His wings, but they would not.

“The one who would swallow me up,” that is, King Saul.

2. The peril of his situation, vv. 4–6.

Note *“Lions ... fire ... spears ... arrows ... swords ... a net ... a pit”*, but ultimately, *“Into the midst of it they themselves have fallen.”*

3. David celebrates the victory in advance, vv. 7–11.

“My heart is steadfast” Kuhn: Niph. Ptc. Established, secured, stable. The passive speaks of what God has done in the soul of David. “I will praise You, O Lord ... I will sing ... be exalted, O God.”

Point: In dark and difficult times the mature believer is able to see and celebrate the ultimate victory from afar. **Take heart, troubled soul, faith is the victory that overcomes the world!**

Psalm 3: David's flight from Absalom (A morning prayer of faith-rest)

As J. Vernon McGee points out, Psalms 3–7 form a bridge or link between Psalms 2 and 8, which speak of the rejection of Jesus as Messiah and His ultimate victory. In between, David's severe trials foretell the afflictions of believing Israel in the tribulation period, which is near.

"When he fled from Absalom his son." The background is in 2 Samuel 5–18. This was no doubt the most sorrowful time of David's life. Not only does his own son want to take his life, but David knows he can trace it all back to his sin with Bathsheba.

"The sword shall never depart from your house ... Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house..." – 2 Samuel 12:10–11

Point: God will always forgive our sins, but He does not remove their consequences from our life.

1. The proclamation of the plotters, vv. 1–2.
We see that the "many" who were against David "increased" in number daily. Their united cry was, *"There is no help for him in God."* They were convinced that God had finally turned His back on David. This would include also Shimei, who cursed him and cast stones at him (2 Sam. 16:5–8, *"The Lord has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son."*).
2. David proclaims his trust, vv. 3–6.
"But you, O Lord, are a shield for me ... the One who lifts up my head." Note that when David *"cried to the Lord"* he was certain *"He heard my voice."* David is able to lay down and **sleep**, in the midst of his darkest day, knowing he will **awake** in the care of his Lord.
3. The assurance that God will prevail, vv. 7–8.
"Arise ... save me ... For you have struck ... You have broken..." David is able to live in assurance. All his life had taught him the faithfulness of God.

Point: David understood the difference between the **consequences** of his sins, and the **judgment** of God. The judgment was removed with his confession (2 Sam. 12:13), but the consequences would continue for the duration of his life.

Psalm 41: David's Betrayal By His Trusted Friend

The background here is from 2 Samuel 15:31.

"Then someone told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

Why was David so concerned. Because, *“The advise of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God.”* (2 Sam. 16:23).

1. Past **compassion** gives present confidence, vv. 1–3.

Those who show compassion to the poor and needy will be *“blessed ... delivered ... preserved ... strengthened ... sustained.”* One of the great instances of David’s compassion is seen in his treatment of **Mephibosheth** (2 Sam. 9), the crippled son of Jonathan, grandson of Saul. This act of compassion occurred just before David’s sin with Bathsheba.

2. The **faithless friend**, vv. 4–9.

David acknowledges his situation is due to his own sin. No doubt this refers to the sin of adultery with **Bathsheba**. Because of it, his enemies, especially a once trusted friend delight in his sickness, hoping for his death.

“Even my familiar friend in whom I trusted.” **Ahithophel** was David’s wise and trusted counselor (2 Sam. 16:23; 1 Cor. 27:33). Why Ahithophel? In 2 Samuel 23:34 he is the father of Eliam, who was the father of Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:3). *“Has lifted up his heel against me.”* As did Judas to Jesus (John 13:18). Peter referred to this in Acts 1:16, when he said, *“the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.”*

3. **Assurance** in the face of affliction, vv. 10–13.

“But You, O Lord ... raise me up.” David trusts God to restore him to health. Ultimately, this anticipates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“You uphold me in my integrity,” Hebrew *Tome*: simplicity, uprightness. How can David confess his sin, and then speak of his integrity? Though his life was very checkered, his Psalms show us that he truly was *“a man after God’s own heart”* (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).

“As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.” – Psalm 42:1–2

Conclusion: Note that the Psalm ends *“From everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.”* Thus, the Psalm encompasses from eternity past to eternity future. The double “Amen” confirms that *“It is finished.”* When God raised up the Lord Jesus, He assured that full justice would be done, *“that I may repay (recompense) them”* (v.10). Both those who believe, and those who reject, Jesus Christ, will receive their just reward!

PART SIX:

A Song of Deliverance and Security – Psalms 34; 37; 56.

Because of the length of these Psalms, we will select some specific sections to provide instruction and comfort for these dark days.

Psalm 34: The Security of the Saints of God

We must always remember that the word “**saint**” is used primarily to speak of our standing, not always of our state. Paul addresses the Corinthians as “*those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (1 Cor. 1:2). Our calling as saints comes first, due to the sacrifice of our Lord. Our **conduct** is to conform to this **calling**, as we grow in our faith (Eph. 4:1).

Note: Psalm 34 reveals to us the providence of God in the lives of His children. We see here the various aspects of the will of God.

1. His perfect will is revealed in His word.
2. His permissive will allows us to make choices, even wrong ones.
3. His over-ruling will accomplishes His plan, in the midst of, and in spite of, the chaos and evil of this world.

Point: Like David we need to learn to live our lives in the light of the end of the story!

Psalm 34: Five Lessons of Deliverance for Life

David wrote this Psalm after his mid-adventure in Gath (1 Sam. 21).

1. God desires that the victory of each believer be a source of strength and praise to all believers, vv. 1–6. We are one body, “*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep*” (Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26).

David praises God because his deliverance becomes a source of ministry to other believers.

2. We all need to be reminded that “*The angel of the **Lord encamps** around those who fear Him, and **delivers** them*” (vv. 7–10). The fact that those who “*trust in Him ... shall not lack any good thing*” (vv. 8, 10) takes us back to the first verse of Psalm 23, “*I shall not lack.*”

Note: the use of “trust” (*Chasah*, **in** v. 8). David is writing from Adullam (the superscription of the psalm with 1 Samuel 21:10–22:1).

3. Life’s lessons are especially valuable for those younger in the faith, vv. 11–16. Peter quotes this (1 Peter 3:10–12), and his first epistle is all about dealing with suffering and persecution.
4. While the deliverance of God doesn’t always happen the way we might want, it is sure and certain to all who entrust themselves to His care, vv. 17–22.

Note: “*the Lord hears and delivers ... delivers ... guards ... redeems.*” The verbs here indicate that this is the continual work of God. He never stops.

5. God does not keep us from sorrow, suffering, and affliction, v. 19. He tells us straight out, “**Many are the afflictions of the righteous. But the Lord delivers him out of (a few of them?) them all.**”

Psalm 37: Lessons From a Seasoned Saint

Here David speaks from a lifetime of rich experience, v. 25. “*I have been young, but now am old ...*”

1. How to **practice** redeeming your time, vv. 1–8.
 - Trust in the Lord, v. 3 (*Batach*: Qal Imper., 1 Peter 5:7).
 - Delight in the Lord, v. 4 (*Agag*, Hith. Imper. – to find joy, pleasure in). “*He will give you the desires of your heart.*”
 - Commit to the Lord, v. 5. The practice of Proverbs 3:5–6. “*trust in Him*” is *galal*, to “roll away” your problems on Him.
 - Rest in the Lord, v. 7. This is the daily practice of faith-rest.
 - Wait on the Lord, v. 7 (*Chuhl*: Hith. Imper. – to whirl, dance, rest.)
2. The eternal **prospect** of those who redeem their time, vv. 9–34.

This is easily seen in repeated reference in this section to **inheritance**, vv. 9, 11, 18, 22, 29, 34 (6x)???. We need to always bear in mind that God will **reward** each of us according to our work. (6 times)
3. The certain **providence** of God over the faithful, vv. 23–24.

These verses remind us that God has a plan for each of our lives, He will direct us in it, if we follow Him in faith. We will falter and fall, but He is always faithful to lift us up and carry us on.

Psalm 56: Faith will Always Conquer Fear!

This Psalm, like Psalm 34, was written in the aftermath of David’s fear-driven retreat into Gath, and his subsequent capture (1 Sam. 21:10–15).

PART SEVEN:

A Song Sings of victory in dark and dangerous days – Psalms 2, 8, 110

I can stand firm because I know the end of the story of history.

In Psalm 41 we saw two events in the life of David that anticipate the greater fulfillment in the life of the Lord Jesus. The first was his betrayal by a former close friend (Psalm 41:9; John 13:8). The second was the assurance of being raised up by the Lord, an anticipation of the resurrection of Jesus (Psalm 41:10;

Acts 2:30). It is fitting that we end our conference with the resurrection of our Lord, His future certain reign in glory and power.

Just as David knew betrayal and persecution, even more so did the Lord Jesus Christ. And the hatred of this world for Him is even today reaching its culmination.

Yet, because of His resurrection, His ultimate victory is assured. These three Psalms anticipate the connection between the resurrection and the final victory and reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 2: The King and His Kingdom

In this Psalm we have four proclamations: that of the nations, that of God the Father, that of the Son, and that of the Spirit. J. Vernon McGee called this Psalm “the drama of the ages.”

1. The nations, vv. 1–3. **The King challenged.**

“Rage” Qal Perf. *Ragash*, to be in turmoil, create a tumult. Note that God in control always means order and peace. Satan’s plan is always disorder, chaos, and confusion. “Against the Lord ... His anointed,” i.e., His Messiah. In Psalm 110 we will see that the Messiah is the God-Man. “Let us break ... and cast away” *Nachash*: Piel Coh. (tear apart), + *Shalack*: Hiph. Coh. (Throw out, cast away). “Bands” *Mocer*, from *Yacer*, restraints, cause for chastisement when violated. Used in Psalm 116:16 for the curse of sin. “Cords” is *Aboth*, a rope or chain. The commands of God in His word.

Point: Jesus summarized the attitude of the leaders of the nations in the parable in **Luke 19:14**, “*But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’*” Everything we are seeing today is the expression of this rage against Jesus Christ.

After quoting Psalm 2, the apostles prayed thus ...

*“For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Pontius Pilate,
with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together.”*
– Acts 4:27 (Peter and John)

2. The Father, vv. 4–6. **The King enthroned.**

“Laugh” *Shachaq*, to laugh in scorn and contempt. Qal Imperf. “To keep on laughing.”

3. The Son, vv. 7–9. **The King empowered.** (Quoted in Heb. 1:5; 5:5).

“The Lord has said to Me.” The Father speaks to the Son. “Today I have begotten You.” *Yalad*: Qal Perf. (completed action). “To bring forth as a Father. Used of spiritual birth in Psalm 22:31. **Question:** When does “Today” refer to? **Read Acts 13:28–33.**

Point: In the incarnation (virgin birth) Jesus was begotten as a man, but in the resurrection, He was begotten as, “*the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have preeminence.*” (Col. 1:18).

“You shall break them with a rod of iron.” This is the judgment of all those who reject Him as Redeemer, Savior, and King.

4. The Spirit, vv. 10–12. **The King embraced.**

“Be instructed” *Yasar*: Niph. Imper. To receive correction. “Serve the Lord (YHWH) ... kiss the Son.” As a sign of union, remember Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss.

“Perish” Used here of eternal condemnation.

“Blessed” *Asher*, to share the happiness of God.

“Trust” *Chasah*, to take refuge, seek shelter from harm.

Psalm 8: The Pearl of Great Price

“*On an instrument of Gath, Gittith*,” related to “Gethsemane,” the olive press.

This Psalm brings to mind the parable Jesus told in Matthew 13:45–46 of the merchant who sold all that he had to purchase the pearl of great price. This is precisely what our Lord did in order to purchase our so-great salvation (Phil. 2:5–9).

1. First, take note, “*O Lord, our Lord.*” The Hebrew is “O Jehovah, our Adonai.” That this is an address to the God-man will become clear in Psalm 110. His glory is above the heavens! “Your glory” Hode: “Beauty, excellence, majesty.” The visible reflection of His divine attributes.
2. Then see how He stoops to use the babes of this earth to ordain strength and silence His enemies in v. 2. You will remember that Jesus quoted this to the Pharisees in the temple in Matthew 21:16 as the children cried out, “*Hosanna to the Son of David.*” This reminds us that only as we come in the humility of little children can we enter into His kingdom (Matt. 18:3; Mark 10:15).
3. Then comes the comparison of all of creation to the insignificance of mankind, vv. 3–4. “*The work of Your fingers.*” The heavens are the work of His fingers, He measured the universe by the span of His hand (Isa. 40:12), but it took the might of His arm to save us (Isa. 53:1).

The **question**: Why would God even be mindful of man, much less step down from heaven to visit him? Remember that Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, “*prophesied, saying; Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has **visited** and **redeemed** His people*” (Luke 1:67–68). How important is mankind to God? Jesus said, “*the very hairs of your head are numbered.*” (Matt. 10:30).

4. Finally, the plan of original creation, which man was to have dominion over, is fulfilled in Jesus Christ through His resurrection, vv. 5–9 (see Heb. 2:5–9). “Dominion” *Mashal*: “power, authority, rulership.” **Note** how Paul applies this in 1 Corinthians 15:25–28:

“For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For He (the Father) has put all things under His feet (the Son) ... now when all things are made subject to Him (the Son) then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him (the Father) who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”

Point: Adam lost due to sin, Christ reclaimed by His resurrection. And not just for Himself, but for us all.

“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection... they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” – Revelations 20:6

“They shall see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads ... And they shall reign forever and ever.” – Revelations 22:4–5

Conclusion: The ultimate victory of our Lord over Satan, sin, and death, required that He “visit” us, as the humble Savior, the Lamb of God, go to the cross and die for our sins, and be raised again. Paul summarizes these momentous events in Phil.2:5-11, concluding with ...

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Psalm 110: The King Enthroned

The conversation contained in this Psalm followed Jesus’ resurrection and ascension into heaven.

1. How does David, the author, call his descendant “Lord,” v. 1?

The first “LORD” is Jehovah, the second is “Adonai,” which the Jews always said in place of “Jehovah” (YHWH), because they believed that the name was too holy to pronounce. Thus, David is declaring the deity of the Messiah. Jesus asked the Pharisees this question in Matthew 22:42–45.

“Sit at My right hand,” **has** three great truths:

- a. The posture of sitting indicates **finished work**.

“And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.” – Hebrews 10:11–

12

“It is finished.” (Teleo: perf. pass. ind.) – John 19:30

- b. Paul says that all who believe in Christ are seated with now spiritually (Eph. 2:4–7; Note three great salvation works here; also Col. 3:1–4).

c. The right hand is the position of honor and power.

“Till I make Your enemies ...” This operation footstool takes us up to the great white throne judgment at the end of the Millennium.

2. The rule of Christ after the resurrection, vv. 2–3. (1 Cor. 15:25).

Jesus Christ is now ruling, in and through the Church, but also in Sovereign power over all the earth. His will progresses through human history by ...

a. His **perfect will** (revealed in His word, and done by those who obey Him). “*Your people will be volunteers ...*”

b. His **permissive will** (He allows evil to run its course to final judgment).

c. His **overruling will** (He will reward those who obey, and judge all who reject Him, to the degree of their evil).

3. He reigns as a King-Priest, v. 4.

“*The order of Melchizedek.*” Literally, “My King is righteous,” or “The King of righteousness.” See Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:10; 7:17, 21.

Note: He is King, both over believers and unbelievers, but He is high Priest only to those who believe.

4. The day of His judgment, and of our victory, is inescapable, vv. 5–7.

This refers to the great white throne judgment, at the end of the millennium, **Read Revelations 20:11–15.**

Conclusion

In these Psalms, we have learned how, and why, we are enabled to stand firm, to maintain stability, in an increasingly unstable world. It is called walking by faith, walking in the Spirit.

“You have given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up. Your gentleness has made me great. You enlarged my path under me, so that my feet did not slip.” – Psalm 18:35–36

If you want to find stability in these unstable times, you will only find it in Jesus Christ and through His word!