

Psalm 9
God delivers!

Sermon introduction:

Twenty years ago, the United States overthrew the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Why? They were sheltering Osama bin Laden and training Al-Qaeda terrorists.

Tragically, the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan in the last few weeks.

As a result, there are Christians trapped in Afghanistan this morning. They can't escape and they are living under brutal Muslim control. A convert from Islam to Christianity recently said,

“The Taliban will kill the known Christians and want to spread fear. There are already posters appearing that if you have single girls, 15 years old, you have to marry them to Taliban soldiers. They will be sent to madrasas to brainwash them. The parents may or may not be killed. . . . One man received a letter that his house now belongs to the Taliban . . . The Taliban will take the property and assets of the Christians and all their women will be taken.” (TGC blog- Joe Carter)

These Christians are in desperate need of deliverance from their enemies. What should they do??? What would you do if you were in their situation?

Maybe you don't need deliverance from the Taliban, but you probably need deliverance from something.

Some need deliverance from a health crisis.

Others need deliverance from a work crisis.

Others need deliverance from difficult family members and coworkers.

I now a pastor in another city who needs to be delivered from vicious slander.

This brings us to Psalm 9. In Psalm 9, King David was acutely aware of his need for deliverance.

What does he do??? He prays confidently for deliverance. How can he pray confidently?

Because he knows that God has delivered him in the past. In light of past deliverance, he prays confidently for future deliverance.

Because God delivered us in the past, we too can pray with confidence for God to deliver us in the future...

We will look at our text under two headings-

David praises God for past deliverance.

David prays to God for future deliverance.

First, David praises God for past deliverance

What was David delivered from?

David was delivered from his enemies!

Psalm 9:1–2 (ESV) — 1 I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. **2** I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

David looks around at his current situation and he is deeply distressed. So how does he respond? The first thing he does in verses 1-2 is give thanks to God for all the times that God delivered him in the past. I wonder, is this how we respond to distress???

Recalling God's past deliverance instill confidence in David to pray for God's future deliverance. How did God specifically deliver David in the past?

Psalm 9:3–8 (ESV) — 3 When my enemies turn back, they stumble and perish before your presence. **4** For you have maintained my just cause; you have sat on the throne, giving righteous judgment. **5** You have rebuked the nations; you have made the wicked perish; you have blotted out their name forever and ever. **6** The enemy came to an end in everlasting ruins; their cities you rooted out; the very memory of them has perished. **7** But the LORD sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice, **8** and he judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with uprightness.

It is very difficult to date this psalm to a particular period of David's life. Nonetheless, the books of First and Second Samuel contain numerous examples of God deliverance of David.

David was delivered from lions and bears.

David was delivered from Goliath (the giant)

David was delivered from Nabal (the fool)

David was delivered from King Saul (a man driven to insanity by jealousy)

David was delivered from the treachery of his own son...

According to verses 3-7, God caused David's enemies to stumble, perish, and come to everlasting ruin....

At this point a word of caution is in order. Unlike David, you and I are not the king of Israel. We have not been charged with defending the promise land from Israel's enemies. We are not God's anointed King called to lead God's people. David lived under a very different covenant in a very different historical context.

We are called to follow Christ's example of loving and serving our enemies (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27–36).

With that said, we do have something in common with David. Not only did God deliver David from his greatest enemies, God also delivers us from our greatest enemies.

God has delivered us from the power of sin.

God has delivered us from the power of death.

God has delivered us from the power of the devil.

Jesus Christ defeated our greatest enemies by dying on the cross... .

Hebrews 2:14–15 (ESV) — 14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

See also Col. 2:13-15

Although Satan is active, he is a defeated foe.

Application:

If God delivered you from the gravest danger- death...
If God delivered you from the greatest enemy- the devil...
If God delivered you from the greatest power- sin...

Then surely God can deliver you from all your other enemies!!!

What was David delivered from?

David was Delivered from his enemies! In addition....

David was delivered from trouble!

Psalm 9:9–10 (ESV) — 9 The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.
10 And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.

The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed and a stronghold in times of trouble. What was a stronghold?

This word is often translated as a refuge, high place, or a large rock.

Illustration:

During the Cold War people were terrified of a nuclear holocaust. It is hard to blame them. In preparation for a nuclear holocaust the US government built several strong holds. These spaces were designed to protect our government agencies from death and destruction.

One of my favorites was called the Greenbrier. It was located 250 miles SW of Washington DC on a mountain top in West Virginia. In 1958, the Greenbrier resort built a massive conference center on this rocky mountain. Simultaneously, the US Government covertly dug some massive holes in the rock to erect a 112,000 sq. foot bunker, right underneath the resort. The bunker had everything from a dentist office to a 400-seat cafeteria.

The West Tunnel door alone weighed 25 tons. (show image) It is hard to imagine a safer place to be in the event of a nuclear war.

This stronghold remained top secret until the Washington Post exposed its location in 1992. This bunker was built for one simple reason. In the case of an all-out nuclear war, this strong hold would preserve lives.

David says that YHWH is a stronghold for the oppressed, and a stronghold in times of trouble. YHWH can provide way more security and safety than a massive hole in the side of a mountain. He created mountains, and solar systems, and galaxies.

He is the stronghold of strongholds.

Application:

How many of you are in times of trouble? Notice the word times in verse 9 is plural.
Financial trouble...
Marital trouble...
Job trouble...

Parenting trouble..
Health trouble..
Sleep troubles...
Covid-19 troubles...

Are you feeling oppressed are you feeling troubled? God is a stronghold for the troubled and the oppressed.

I want us to pause for a moment and consider the glories of God. Not only is he a righteous judge who inflicts vengeance on David's enemies (9:3-8). He is also a stronghold for the oppressed (3:9).

He is infinite and finite.
He is supremely powerful (2 Thess. 1:7-10) and supremely gentle (Matt. 11:29).
Infinitely great and wonderful gentle...
He is holy and helpful.
He is incredibly strong and incredibly tender.
We see all these attributes come together perfectly in Jesus.

Revelation 5:5–6 (ESV) — **5** And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.” **6** And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Jesus Christ is both the lion and the lamb (Rev. 5:5-6). Only Jesus can deliver us from our enemies and our troubles.

*David was delivered from his enemies.
David was delivered from his troubles.*

When David thinks about God's past deliverance, he can't help but sing God's praises!!!

Psalm 9:1–2 (ESV) — **1** I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. **2** I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

Psalm 9:11–12 (ESV) — **11** Sing praises to the LORD, who sits enthroned in Zion! Tell among the peoples his deeds! **12** For he who avenges blood is mindful of them; he does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

David is deeply moved in the core of his being to sing God's praises when he thinks about God past deliverance.

You can hear the emotion bursting through verses 1-2 and verses 11-12. I'm not saying we need to cry when we sing, but if your emotions are never moved during corporate singing, you have to wonder if you really understand the nature of God's past deliverance.

How much more should we be excited about singing God's praises for past deliverance.

We can look back to the cross and see all that God has done for us...

Expand....

I don't get the impression that David is mumbling these praise songs or just going through the motions...

He is really excited about singing God's praises...

GCF does well in this regard.

Objection:

Isn't it arrogant or narcissistic for God to demand that we praise him??? How would you respond to an athlete, rapper, or author who constantly says, "praise me, praise me, praise me"? Or someone who is always fishing for complements or bragging?

These people sound incredibly insecure and vain, don't they? Isn't God insecure and vain for asking us to praise him?

Why does God command us to praise him? Because praise completes our joy.

We all find great joy in praising things, don't we?

We look at an infant's smile and say, "she is adorable."

We walk by a lilac bush in Manito Park and say to our significant other, "wow, that smells amazing."

The Mariners win a play-off game, and we say, "Did you see that double play in the top of the ninth?"

We instinctively praise the things we enjoy. Imagine how much less joy we would experience if we could not praise the things we love. Try to go to a football game and keep your mouth closed the whole game.

God commands us to praise him, not because he needs our praise, but because he wants us to find supreme pleasure and delight in him. Demanding our praise, is the kindest thing God could do to us. When we make much of him, our souls are happy.

First, David praises God for past deliverance...

Second, David prays to God for future deliverance

Deliverance from what???

David prays for deliverance from enemies!

Psalm 9:13–14 (ESV) — 13 Be gracious to me, O LORD! See my affliction from those who hate me, O you who lift me up from the gates of death, 14 that I may recount all your praises, that in the gates of the daughter of Zion I may rejoice in your salvation.

David has some real enemies. His enemies are causing so many problems in his life that he feels like he is on death's door (i.e., "the gates of death" in verse 13c). Maybe that is how you feel this morning. Your enemies are making your life so miserable that you want to die.

As a result, David cries out to God for deliverance. But not because he is worthy. Notice, he says, "**Be gracious to me, O LORD!**" He is not insisting that he deserves to be delivered or that he has somehow earned the right to be delivered. Rather, he is appealing to God's grace for deliverance.

None of us deserve to be delivered. God delivers us because he is gracious!!!

Part of God’s deliverance, as I mentioned in Psalm 7, is God causing our enemies to reap what they sow.

Psalm 9:15–18 (ESV) — **15** The nations have sunk in the pit that they made; in the net that they hid, their own foot has been caught. **16** The LORD has made himself known; he has executed judgment; the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands. Higgaiion. Selah **17** The wicked shall return to Sheol, all the nations that forget God. **18** For the needy shall not always be forgotten, and the hope of the poor shall not perish forever.

One scholar notes,

“God is not mocked: sin carries its own punishment. Violent men tend to die by violence. The greedy suffer the discontent that comes with their greed. Those who view pornography ruin their own sex life. Gossips tear down their own character—as they spread stories, others think less of them.” (PTW)

Psalm 9:19–20 (ESV) — **19** Arise, O LORD! Let not man prevail; let the nations be judged before you! **20** Put them in fear, O LORD! Let the nations know that they are but men! Selah

David prayed for deliverance from his enemies...

Illustration:

In 701 B.C., 300 years after David, during the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah, Sennacherib of Assyria attacked the cities along the western edge of Judah. Over time, his massive army inched its way closer and closer to the city of Jerusalem.

At this point in history, Assyria is the biggest, baddest, brutalist nation on the planet. Their army is massive, very effective, and very blood thirsty.

Eventually, Assyria gathers outside the walls of Jerusalem with 185,000 soldiers.

Imagine being a resident of Jerusalem at this point. Just outside the relatively thin city walls is the biggest army on the planet. You are vastly outnumbered. There is nowhere to go. A siege is inevitable. What will happen to your children, your wife, and your relatives??? Sieges meant starvation, a horrible way to die!!!

At this point, according to 2 kings 18:28ff, the leader of the Assyrian army addresses the residents of Jerusalem from just outside the city walls.

He says,

“We have wiped out every city that resisted us! Why do you think you are any different? You are vastly outnumbered and out resourced. Surrender, or die a slow and painful death. Why are you trusting in your God? He will not save you. None of the other nations were saved by their Gods, why is your God any different?”

The residents of Jerusalem were terrified. You would be too. They needed supernatural deliverance from their enemies.

Led by king Hezekiah, Jerusalem prays for YHWH to deliver them. And then we read....

2 Kings 19:35–37 (ESV) — **35** And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. **36** Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went home and lived at Nineveh. **37** And as he was

worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword and escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Application:

Is God able to deliver you from your enemies? Yes, God is more than able!

God delivered David from Lions and bears.

God delivered David from Goliath.

God delivered David from King Saul.

God supernaturally delivered the Jews from the Assyrians.

God can deliver you. He is able! But will he???

That depends. God will deliver you from your enemies in the present, if he thinks deliverance from your enemies is what you need to help you become more like Jesus.

Sometimes God decides not to deliver us from our enemies, because he knows that not delivering us will make us more dependent, humble, and desperate for him. Furthermore, persecution from our enemies means increased rewards in heaven.

God always does what is best for his children.

Conclusion:

Let's go back to where we started this morning.

There are Christians in Afghanistan who need desperately to be delivered. What should they do?

They should cry out to God with confidence to deliver them. What should they base their confidence on? God has delivered all of us from our greatest enemies. He has delivered us from the power of sin, death, and the devil through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

If God delivered us in the past, we must pray with confidence for God to deliver us in the future. God may not supernaturally deliver the Christians in Afghanistan, but he will supernaturally deliver every Christian who has ever lived when he returns and gives all of us glorified resurrection bodies. Until that day, we watch and pray. Lets pray...