

# The God Who Saves

---

*Psalm 25:1-10*

## INTRODUCTION

- A. Daniel Webster was dining with several authors in Boston.
  - 1. A preacher who had written many books was sitting across from Webster and said, “Mr. Webster, can you comprehend how Jesus Christ can be both God and man?”
  - 2. Mr. Webster, with one of those looks that no man can imitate, fixed his eyes upon him, and said, “No, sir, I cannot comprehend it. If I could comprehend it, he would be no greater than I. I need a superhuman Savior.”
- B. In Psalm 25, David needs a “superhuman Savior.”
  - 1. He says:
    - a. “O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me” (v 2).
    - b. “Consider how many are my foes, and with what violent hatred they hate me. Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me! Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you” (vv 19-20).
  - 2. We have no idea when David wrote this Psalm, but at many times David had a host of enemies.
    - a. Saul often tried to kill David.
    - b. After Saul’s death, “there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David” (2 Sm 3:1).
    - c. “When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David” (2 Sm 5:17).
    - d. Of course, we could go on & on, for David was a man of war. In fact, God refused to allow him to build the temple because he was a man of war (1 Chr 28:3).
  - 3. It’s likely a good thing that we don’t know the exact setting of this Psalm, for we are able to apply it far more generally.
- C. This morning, we wish to take a close look at Psalm 25 that we, like David, might see “*The God Who Saves*.”
  - 1. READ TEXT.
  - 2. We need that “superhuman Savior” that both Webster & David needed. We need a SHAMELESS SAVIOR, a SHEPHERDING SAVIOR, & a SHEDDING SAVIOR.

## A SHAMELESS SAVIOR, vv 1-3

- A. “To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me. Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.”
- B. David asks the LORD to be “*A Shameless Savior*”—to come to his aid & not allow him to suffer shame at the hands of his enemies.
- C. To the LORD David lifts up his soul.
  - 1. The Hebrew idiom to “lift up one’s soul” means to direct one’s desire toward something.
    - a. The idiom is used to mean “greedy”: “They feed on the sin of my people; they are greedy for their iniquity” (Hos 4:8).
    - b. The idiom is used to mean “to long for”: “None of the remnant of Judah who have come to live in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive or return to the land of Judah, to which they desire to return to dwell there” (Jer 44:14).
  - 2. David is, thus, longing for God.
    - a. He longs for God to come & help him. David longs for God to come & vanquish his enemies.
    - b. Why would David long for God to come to his aid?
      - 1) David understands that only God can save him from shame.
        - a) It is conceivable that David is suffering at the hands of his enemies because of sin; he says, “Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions” (v 7).
        - b) Even if David is not suffering because of sin, David understands that it is God & only God who has the power to come to his help.
      - 2) It is only God who has the power to conquer enemies: After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, they looked back & saw the Egyptians coming furiously toward them and the people were greatly

afraid. Moses says, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent” (Ex 14:13-14).

- D. David asks God to save him from shame.
  - 1. “Shame” here refers to the public humiliation of false trust.
  - 2. David trusted in God to help him; if his enemies triumphed over him, David would be terribly shamed for hoping in a God who did nothing.
- E. David assures us, however, that our superhuman Savior is “*A Shameless Savior*” & allows no one who trusts in him to be put to shame. Rather, it is those “who are wantonly treacherous” who will suffer shame.
- F. How can we look at this ancient prayer for vindication rather than shame in our time?
  - 1. There are great enemies of God in this age.
    - a. There are physicians throughout this nation who perform abortions day in & day out; there are many who publicly advocate a homosexual lifestyle.
    - b. There are many who teach error in this world. Many teach that Jesus isn’t the Son of God, that one can receive salvation some way other than how Jesus taught.
    - c. When we stand up for the truth, we are often ridiculed & belittled.
  - 2. But, our “*Shameless Savior*” will save us from shame!
    - a. “The Lord declares, the LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: ‘Ah, I will get relief from my enemies and avenge myself on my foes’” (Is 1:24).
    - b. In the Parable of the Weeds, weeds grow among the wheat and the master says to his servants, “Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn” (Mt 13:30). No shame for God’s people, but shame for his enemies.
- G. Where do you stand this morning? Do you have a “*Shameless Savior*”—One who will save you from shame? Or, will the Lord bring his shame & fury upon you?

## **A SHEPHERDING SAVIOR, vv 4-5, 8-9**

- A. David asks the Lord to be his “*Shepherding Savior*”—to lead him in the right paths. “Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long” (vv 4-5).
- B. David asks the Lord to lead him in his truth and to teach him, for he is the God of his salvation.
  - 1. The fact that David asks God to teach him his paths & lead him in his truth greatly implies that David understood he didn’t have all the answers.
    - a. David left to his own wisdom did not have nearly the wisdom to know what was right.
    - b. In our society, that’s a difficult realization.
      - 1) We have put man on the moon, eradicated polio & other diseases—man has a great deal of wisdom.
      - 2) Today, man doesn’t need someone to tell him what’s right—Right is whatever feels good to me; I can define “right” any way I please.
    - c. The idea that man instinctively knows what’s right or that I can decide for myself what’s right doesn’t hold water with God.
      - 1) Human ways are evil, not good: “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one” (Rom 3:10-12).
      - 2) Human wisdom cannot even rightfully be compared to God’s wisdom: When pagans began to make for themselves idols, Paul says, “Claiming to be wise, they became fools” (Rom 1:22).
    - d. Man greatly needs the wisdom of God!
  - 2. David wants shepherded by God, for he is the God of his salvation.
    - a. The salvation of which David speaks here is not salvation from sin & hell; rather, it is salvation from his enemies.
      - 1) If God would teach David the proper way to go, he would be saved from his enemies.
      - 2) How would David be saved from his enemies by knowing God’s way?
        - a) Simply put: God has always saved those who did right & vanquished those who did wrong.
        - b) Remember Ai? When the Israelites first went up against the city, they were turned away because Achan had taken spoil from Jericho. But, when Achan was properly punished, God gave the people of Ai over to his people.
    - b. Because the “*Shepherding God*” is “The God Who Saves,” we would do well to pay attention to his words.

- 1) God has not promised us victory over every fleshly attack as he did the Jews.
- 2) But, by paying attention to the “*Shepherding God*,” we can have a far greater salvation—salvation from sin & hell.
  - a) “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Mt 7:21).
  - b) Paul tells Timothy, “From childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Tm 3:15).
- c. An influential man who made his rejection of the Gospel quite public was invited to a worship service by his wife.
  - 1) Reluctantly, the man went. When it was time for the invitation hymn, he marched right up to the front of the building & requested baptism.
  - 2) The preacher was overjoyed. In fact, the preacher asked him what in his sermon had converted him to Jesus.
  - 3) The new convert quickly said, “It wasn’t your sermon; IT WAS YOUR TEXT!”
  - 4) Have you been brought to Jesus by the Word of God?
- C. What makes God qualified to be “*A Shepherding Savior*”?
  1. David tells us in vv 8-9: “Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.”
  2. Because God is “good and upright”—i.e., morally perfect—he is able to instruct sinners in his way.
    - a. We have already made the point that left to his own imagination, man wanders helplessly in the darkness.
    - b. God, however, is absolutely holy, pure, & morally upright.
      - 1) When Isaiah saw God high & lifted up, the seraphim called to one another, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” (Is 6:3).
      - 2) “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 Jn 1:5).
    - c. Because of his moral perfection, God can point the way to a life that is far greater than anything we can think or imagine.
    - d. Are you allowing God to be your “*Shepherding Savior*” & to lead you in his paths?

## **A SHEDDING SAVIOR, vv 6-7, 10**

- A. David asks the Lord to be a “*Shedding Savior*” & to remove David’s sins: “Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!” (vv 6-7).
- B. We remember well that David asks the Lord to forget the sins of his youth, but we seldom recall that David first asks God to remember his mercy & his steadfast love.
  1. That David asks the Lord to remember his mercy & steadfast love implies that the Israelites knew God possessed those qualities.
    - a. God had revealed himself as such a God: “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (Ex 34:6-7).
    - b. David now asks the LORD not to forget that mercy & steadfast love but to apply it to him.
  2. God’s mercy refers to that part of his character that desires to help man, to assist the one who is suffering.
  3. God’s steadfast love refers to that part of his character that gives man kindness he does not deserve.
  4. Why would David asks God to remember his mercy & steadfast love in shedding his sin?
    - a. God had promised to use those qualities for the benefit of his people. God always does what God has promised.
    - b. Notice what John writes about the confession of our sin: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn 1:9).
      - 1) At first glance, we might expect a God who is “faithful and just” to condemn us rather than to forgive us.
      - 2) But, God has promised to forgive the penitent confessor; therefore, God’s faithfulness & justice come together to forgive just as God has declared.
- C. David asks the Lord not to remember the sins of his youth.
  1. I am positive we are all acutely aware of David’s words here, for we can all easily recall the sins of our youth.
  2. Because of the immaturity of youth, many transgressions are generally committed in one’s youth. Solomon says, “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God

## The God Who Saves

will bring you into judgment” (Eccl 11:9).

- D. I’m afraid some of us sitting here might be tempted to think, “I’m no longer a youth. God has indeed forgiven me for the sins of my youth. I don’t need to worry about a thing.”
  - 1. David doesn’t just asks for the shedding of the sins of his youth; he also asks for the shedding of his transgressions.
  - 2. David doesn’t put a time frame on those transgressions, does he?
    - a. It seems to me that in our youth there is a great tendency to disobey the Lord out of ignorance, but as we mature we are more prone to rebel.
    - b. We know what God says, we know what’s right, but we have our own desires & we give in to them.
- E. How can “The God Who Saves” be “A *Shedding God*”? David says, “All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.”
  - 1. The Lord’s paths—the way he walks, his manner of life—are “steadfast love and faithfulness.”
    - a. The Lord is so full of grace & mercy.
      - 1) “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8).
      - 2) “God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved” (Eph 2:4-5).
    - b. Because God is so full of mercy, he can forgive my every sin.
  - 2. But, God’s paths are “steadfast love and faithfulness” only to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.
    - a. In other words, God will forgive me if I obey him.
      - 1) When the Romans obeyed God, they were shed of their sins: “Thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness” (Rom 6:17-18).
      - 2) Those to whom Peter wrote had “purified [their] souls by [their] obedience to the truth” (1 Pt 1:22).
      - 3) Jesus has become “the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him” (Heb 5:9).
    - b. Is it the case this morning that you need to be shed of your sins? Do you need to obey God in baptism this day to have your sins removed? Do you need to obey the Lord by confession of your sins & allow God to shed your sins?