

SBC – Aug. 23, 2026
Psalm 116:1-19 (NKJV)
“A Thank You Psalm”

We don't know who wrote Psalm 116, and neither do we know the exact occasion. Obviously, the writer was on the brink of death, but then God delivered him, for which he is very thankful.

Hence, it is called “A Thank You Psalm.”

Psalms 113-118 are called the “Hallel Psalms,” of which Psalm 116 is one of them. Most of these songs either begin or conclude, or begin and conclude, with the high praise word “Hallelujah”, the exceptions being Psalm 114 and 118.

The word Hallelujah is translated as “Praise the LORD” or more literally “Praise YHWH.”

Slide # 1

Structure of the Hallel (Psalms 113–118)

- **Psalm 113:** Begins and ends with "Hallelujah".
- **Psalm 114:** Does not begin or end with "Hallelujah".
- **Psalm 115:** Ends with "Hallelujah" (verse 18).
- **Psalm 116:** Ends with "Hallelujah" (verse 19).
- **Psalm 117:** Ends with "Hallelujah" (verse 2).
- **Psalm 118:** Does not begin or end with "Hallelujah".

These Hallel Psalms were sung in conjunction with Passover. Psalms 113-114 were sung prior to the meal and right before the second cup of wine.

Psalms 115, 116, 117, and 118 were sung after the meal following the fourth cup of wine.

Because of this, most commentators believe that Jesus probably sang this Psalm with His disciples the night before His crucifixion (cf. Mt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26).

Therefore, many consider Psalm 116 to be a Messianic Psalm with deliverance from death ultimately portraying the resurrection of Christ.

With this in mind, we could call this “The Resurrection Psalm.”

Slide # 2

Psalm 116

“A Thank You Psalm”

- vv. 1-2 The Psalmist's Love for the LORD
- vv. 3-4 Calling on God on the Brink of Death
- vv. 5-7 Praise God for Deliverance
- vv. 8-11 A Testimony of Deliverance
- vv. 12-14 Affirmation to Pay Vows
- vv. 15-17 A Life Pledged to God
- vv. 18-19 Affirmation to Pay Vows

Psalm 116 (NKJV)

1 I love the LORD, because He has heard My voice and my supplications.

“I love the LORD” is said to be a statement of pure worship. It is an expression of grateful love.

Some might think this comes off as self-serving, only thinking about self, because of what God has done for him. But in truth, all of our worship is responsive in some way to what God has done for us on some level.

Slide # 3

1 John 4:10 (NKJV)

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV)

19 We love Him because He first loved us.

In this case, the Psalmist expresses His love in response to answered prayer. Supplications are deep, heartfelt prayers for very specific needs.

2 Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live.

Because God has answered, he declares that he will be a true worshiper who calls on God for his whole life. He has determined that this will characterize his life. He will be a man of prayer.

3 The pains of death surrounded me, And the pangs of Sheol laid hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow.

This shows us why his heart is filled with love and gratitude. He was on the brink of death. Sheol was the realm of departed spirits in the OT. Trouble and sorrow were his lot, and death was at the door. He was facing a death crisis.

Many centuries later, Peter borrowed the language of this Psalm in reference to Christ to describe how God the Father delivered Jesus from death through the resurrection.

Slide # 4

Acts 2:24 (NKJV)

24 whom God raised up, having loosed **the pains of death**, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

Again and again we see echoes of Christ's experience brought out in this Psalm.

The response of the Psalmist was to call on the name of the LORD!

4 Then I called upon the name of the LORD: "O LORD, I implore You, deliver my soul!"

"This form of petition is short, comprehensive, to the point, humble, and earnest. It were well if all our prayers were moulded upon this model; perhaps they would be if we were in similar circumstances to those of the Psalmist, for real trouble produces real prayer."

- Charles Spurgeon

5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; Yes, our God is merciful.

The Psalmist saw his deliverance through the lens of God's character, which is gracious, righteous, and merciful (compassionate).

6 The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me.

"Simple" here is the idea of sincere in combination with commoner. God preserves the simple, lowly commoner who has faith in Him. He was brought low, but God delivered Him.

“Not only is God gracious, He is also gracious to the little people, to the plain, to commoners, to the everyday person on the bus or in the shop – to people like the psalmist. That is one of the great glories of our God. When Jesus called his disciples, he called fishermen and tax collectors. When the angels announced the birth of Jesus, they appeared to shepherds.” - **James Montgomery Boice**

7 Return to your rest, O my soul, For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

The writer now gives himself a little exhortation to rest in the LORD who has dealt so bountifully with him. You can rest in how God deals with His people.

For a season, he had dealt with a death-like crisis. It had troubled his soul. But now he has come through it, and he reflects that he can again rest in the Lord.

Each time you come through something like this you learn more and more that you can rest in the LORD. God proves Himself over and over in graciously dealing for and with His people.

8 For You have delivered my soul from death, My eyes from tears, And my feet from falling.

The crisis was severe, even to the point of facing death. But as severe as the threat was, so also great was the deliverance, bringing comfort and restoring his foothold of strength.

9 I will walk before the LORD In the land of the living.

To walk before God is to live your life before the LORD as a way of life. Some people only live in the sight of their fellow men. They live as if God is not watching. The godly walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

Again, it is thought this may be an echo of Christ's coming resurrection.

They were also the confident words, sung in faith, by Jesus before every agony of the coming cross. He could go to the cross with full confidence that having been rescued from falling feet, He would once again walk **in the land of the living.** – **David Guzik**

10 I believed, therefore I spoke, “I am greatly afflicted.”

Even in the depth of distress, the writer “believed” and therefore he “spoke.” He confidently affirmed that God would bring him through and that he would live, as just affirmed in verse 9.

Paul took this principle, “I believed, therefore I spoke” and applied it to the nature of a true saving faith in 2 Cor. 4:13-14.

Slide # 5

2 Corinthians 4:13–14 (NKJV)

13 And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke,” we also believe and therefore speak,

14 knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.

This is the pattern in the NT. As Jesus said out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matt. 12:34). If we have faith in our hearts we confess it with our mouth. The mouth tells on the heart.

Slide # 6

Romans 10:10 (NKJV)

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Jesus repeatedly said that He would arise from the dead on the third day. He believed it, and therefore He spoke (cf. Mt. 16:21; 20:18-19; Lk. 9:22; Jn. 2:19-12). Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:1-2).

11 I said in my haste, “All men are liars.”

Although the Psalmist believed he would live and continue on in the land of the living, there were evidently detractors who didn’t believe it and sought to discourage him with this faith.

In haste, he said all men are liars, which was an overstatement! In the throngs of despair, we can be tempted to overreact.

“Speaking in haste is generally followed by bitter repentance. It is much better to be quiet when our spirit is disturbed and hasty, for it is so much easier to say than to unsay; we may repent of our words, but we cannot so recall them as to undo the mischief they have done.”

– **Charles Spurgeon**

Yet, in spite of personal failure in the mix, the writer was so very grateful for the LORD’s deliverance and therefore asks...

12 What shall I render to the LORD For all His benefits toward me?

The Psalmist is saying: “How can I properly express my gratitude? How can I properly thank God for all He has done for me?”

And so he says...

13 I will take up the cup of salvation, And call upon the name of the LORD.

The cup of salvation speaks of God’s provision of salvation, which is received by His people. And calling upon the name of the LORD is worship expressed in appreciation. He gladly received God’s provision of deliverance, and now, as a way of life, he is determined to call on the LORD for his needs.

In conjunction with the Passover meal the Jews drank four cups of wine.

The first cup was called “The Cup of Sanctification.”

The second cup was called “The Cup of Deliverance.”

The third cup was called “The Cup of Redemption” or “The Cup of Salvation.” It was based on Exodus 6:6-7, where God says, “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.”

The fourth cup was called “The Cup of Praise.”

We continue to marvel at how significant it is that Jesus sang *these words* on the night of His betrayal and arrest, having instituted the **cup of salvation** under the New Covenant with His apostles ([Luke 22:20](#)). Jesus *received* that **cup of salvation** from His Father and gave it unto His people. – **David Guzik**

The Lord fills the cup of every believer’s life with the blessing of salvation. That cup is free to humanity, but it cost Jesus everything.

– **David Jeremiah**

14 I will pay my vows to the LORD Now in the presence of all His people.

Often in great crisis God's people would make certain vows – vowing that if God delivered them, they would do this or that. Often it involved public worship in one form or another.

It may have been a certain type of sacrifice. Something of this nature would seem to be in view here.

15 Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His saints.

This verse has ministered to the saints through the ages.

“Precious” is the idea of being valuable. It matters to God what we go through, and the death of all His people is precious in His sight.

It is no trivial thing! It is of great concern to the Lord. He does not take this lightly. It matters to Him!

Slide # 7

Matthew 10:29–31 (NKJV)

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Do not fear therefore; **you are of more value** than many sparrows.

The death of a saint is not something the Lord considers as cheap; He does not let His people die for no reason. Here the deliverance of a saint from the brink of death (vv. 3, 8) resounded to God's praise and the edification of saints for ages to come.

– ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

“God is particularly close to his people when they stand at death's door. God watches over his people when they are sick or dying, coming close to them and making his presence known so that they have comfort in death's hour. He also frequently intervenes and does not allow them to perish. In either case, the Lord does what is best.”

– ***James Montgomery Boice***

16 O LORD, truly I am Your servant; I am Your servant, the son of Your maidservant; You have loosed my bonds.

The Psalmist affirms that he is the servant of the LORD and that he serves the Lord just as his mother did. This emphasizes his godly heritage. Those who have godly parents are truly blessed.

And then he affirms again that it is God who has freed him from the threat of death – he has loosed his bond from this reality. And so he says...

17 I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, And will call upon the name of the LORD.

In response, he will worship with thanksgiving – with the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Again, calling on the name of the LORD is the act of worship.

This is the proper response for God's deliverance, - thanksgiving and worship.

Slide # 8

Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV)

15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

The deliverance of the Psalmist was great but how much greater our deliverance from hell through our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ. What should our response be? The NT is emphatic that our lives should constantly reverberate with thanksgiving to the Lord.

Slide # 9

Ephesians 5:20 (NKJV)

20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Slide # 10

Colossians 3:17 (NKJV)

17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)

18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

18 I will pay my vows to the LORD Now in the presence of all His people,

How easy it is to forget to properly THANK God after He has answered prayer in a big way. Often people send out desperate prayer requests and then sometime later we wonder what happened, as they forget to follow up with how God has answered.

Jonah in the belly of the fish was making vows and what kind of vows was he making... (cf. Jonah 2:6-9).

Slide # 11**Jonah 2:9 (NKJV)**

9 But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD."

No sooner did Jonah make this vow of thanksgiving than the very next verse says the LORD caused the fish to vomit Jonah out on dry land.

Let's not forget to THANK God sacrificially, worshipfully for what He does in answer to prayer!

This the Psalmist affirms that he will do. And he will do so publicly "in the presence of all His people." God is honored as we publicly offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. This is the stuff of God-honoring worship.

19 In the courts of the LORD's house, In the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD!

His worship of thanksgiving and praise will happen at the worship center – in the courts of the LORD's house – in the midst of Jerusalem.

In desperation, we pray!

God answers!

And the proper response is to publicly thank and worship God for it.

Great deliverance calls for great thanks!

The Psalm ends with Hallelujah – Praise the LORD!

Indeed, God is to be greatly praised for the deliverance of His people!

Let us be among the true worshipers who worship in spirit and truth with a heart full of gratitude!

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised for His salvation (cf. Ps. 48:1; 96:4; 145:3).