

# Christmas Psalms

## Psalm 9:1-20

“Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men” – December 16, 2018



### Introduction

“Peace on earth” was the announcement the angels gave after they told the shepherds Jesus had come as the Christ in Luke 2. But God’s promise peace on earth is not what we *presently* see in our hearts or our world, which can lead to hopelessness. Out of his own frustration with the dissonance between God’s promise and his personal grief, poet Henry Longfellow wrote, “I heard the bells on Christmas Day; their old, familiar carols play; and wild and sweet, the words repeat, of peace on earth, good-will to men!...And in despair I bowed my head, “There is no peace on earth,” I said, “For hate is strong, and mocks the song, of peace on earth, good-will to men!” What are we to do? How can we find hope as we wait for God’s promise? David shows us how in Psalm 9.

### Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

### Sermon Outline

- I. Praise God for His deliverance we *can* see (9:1-12)
- II. Pray to God for His deliverance we *can't* see (9:13-20)

### Read & Discuss

1. Read [Psalm 9:1-12](#)

Here David *commits* to praising God [vv1-2] (despite facing ‘trouble’ or being ‘oppressed’), *recounts* God’s past deliverance [vv3-6], *realizes* God’s eternal rule [vv7-10] and *calls us* to join him in the praise of God [vv11-12]. Suffering makes it easy to miss the good God is doing in and around us such that the *only* thing we see is the problem. Because discouragement makes gratitude difficult, we must strive to praise God and be thankful – we must lean on other Christians to bring to mind the ‘wonderful deeds’ of a God who is ‘enthroned forever’ and a ‘stronghold for the oppressed.’

Whether you’re in a time of peace or turmoil, take some time to remember: call to mind, make a list, and praise God for the ways He has cared for you over the past month. It could be the most important ‘wonderful deed’ of God sending His Son to rescue us from sin, Satan, and death (to help you meditate on this consider passages like [Colossians 2:13-15](#), [Ephesians 2:1-10](#), or [Romans 3:23-26](#)). But recounting God’s goodness may be remembering the smaller things we take for granted or overlook: the concern of a friend, a warm meal and prayer, a song God used to encourage us about Himself, or a book that God used to encourage you. Who has God used in your life to strengthen,

encourage, and point to the truth of God who is our stronghold? What evidences of grace can you see in the lives of those around you that you can publicly thank God for as an encouragement to them and praise to God? If you're a member of FBCUM, are you making attendance at our Sunday gatherings a priority? This is a gift of God where we gather to remember as we sing God's word, pray God's word, read God's word, preach God's word to build us up. It's not just what we get out of it, but what we give: praise to God and reminders to others who are hurting ([Hebrews 10:23-25](#)).

Additional Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:10; 2 Peter 1:12-15

## 2. Read [Psalm 9:13-20](#)

Though God is gracious to help us see things we can praise Him for, there are times, when it gets so dark and difficult we *can't* see. Currently, we walk by faith and not by sight, which means our courage is not tied to what we can see, but what God has promised ([2 Cor. 5:6-7](#)). In those moments, fighting for faith looks like praying God's word that reminds us who He is and what He's promised. As we pray, God works the truths we struggle to believe deep into our hearts so once again, we rest in Him. In vv15-16, David envisions a sure future when God will come and judge the world, judge the wicked and vindicate the righteous.

Longfellow ended his poem (that began with hopelessness), with great hope: "Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The Wrong shall fail, The Right prevail, With peace on earth, good-will to men." This world of perfect justice and justice (envisioned in [Revelation 21:1-8](#)) is coming because Christ, who rose from the dead, promised to come again as that judge. How should this truth shape the way we live today? How does this truth help us have hope when we can't see today?

Additional Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, Romans 8:18-25

### **Prayer of Response**

- 1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?
- 2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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