

“Never An Orphan” Psalm 138

Treasury of David: CHS

TITLE. A Psalm of David. This Psalm is wisely placed. Whoever edited and arranged these sacred poems, he had an eye to apposition and contrast; for if in Ps 137:1-9 we see the need of silence before revilers, here we see the excellence of a brave confession. There is a time to be silent, lest we cast pearls before swine; and there is a time to speak openly, lest we be found guilty of cowardly not confessing. The Psalm is evidently of a Davidic character, exhibiting all the fidelity, courage, and decision of that King of Israel and Prince of Psalmists. Of course the critics have tried to rend the authorship from David on account of the mention of the temple, though it so happens that in one of the Psalms which is allowed to be David's the same word occurs. **Many modern critics are to the word of God what blowflies are to the food of men: they cannot do any good, and unless relentlessly driven away they do great harm.**

DIVISION. In full confidence David is prepared to own his God before the gods of the heathen, or before angels or rulers (Ps 138:1-3); he declares that he will instruct and convert kings and nations, till on very highway men shall sing the praises of the Lord (Ps 138:4-5). Having thus spoken, he utters his personal confidence in Jehovah, who will help his lowly servant, and preserve him from all the malice of wrathful foes.

This is the first of a group of eight psalms that are ascribed to David in the superscriptions, and this writer demands something more reliable than the speculations and guesses of critics as a reason for denying their accuracy.

We agree with Leupold that, "Up to this point, we have found the inscriptions in the Hebrew text to be at least defensible."**[1]** There are some writers who take the word "temple" ([Psalms 138:2](#)) as a reference to that of Solomon. However, as Barnes declared, "In this passage it undoubtedly refers to the tabernacle."**[2]**

Dahood has removed all doubt of the psalm being Davidic. He first recounted the critical judgment of the psalm as being post-exilic, that it could not have been written by a king, and that it reflects the message of the (so-called) Second Isaiah. Then he wrote, "Results just the contrary emerge when we take cognizance of epigraphic discoveries of the past forty years. These reveal that the psalm is a royal song; and the words of it find their closest counterparts in the Ugaritic tablets of the tenth century B.C.. So, a date in the Davidic period seems reasonable."**[3] (Coffman Commentaries studylight.org)**

Expositors: The supporters of the Davidic authorship, on the other hand, point to the promise to David by Nathan of the perpetuity of the kingdom in his line, as the occasion of the psalmist's triumph. I agree!

Barnes: The occasion on which this psalm was composed cannot now be determined. It was evidently written in view of trouble [Psalms 138:3](#), [Psalms 138:7](#), and it expresses confidence that God would interpose in the future in behalf of the author, as he had

done in the past; and it is, therefore, adapted to inspire confidence and hope in all who are called to pass through scenes of trial. The psalm does not admit of any particular analysis.

Grey's Context and Outline:

Spurgeon is so correct in that the contrast and placement of this psalm in the psaltery is perfect. Psalm 137 left us on the banks of captivity crying out because of those who taunted God's people. This psalm of David is a breath of fresh air and reminds the reader of all the Davidic psalms that have gone before us. This psalm is characteristic of the great king and is placed as the first of 8 Davidic psalms. Then we shall come to the end of the book with five psalms of praise. David will look back with praise at the faithfulness of God in all situations; David will rest in the glory of God as he witnesses to the nations; David will rejoice in the preservation of God.

Verses 1-3 The faithfulness of God

Verses 4-5 The Glory of God

Verses 6-8 The Preservation of God

I will send you another comforter. I will not leave you as orphans.

John 14:15-21

15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

NIV

