

Steadfast Love And Sovereign Power

Introduction

Psalm 33 as a summary of Psalms 23-32: Provision and Protection, Praying for Vindication, Problems and Proximity, On Death Row, The Pit and the Glory of God, Praying Through Problems.

** Interesting song book*

*• utopian
• pie-in-the-sky
• rose-coloured glasses*

The order of the Psalms is divinely inspired, so let's read and consider Psalm 33 in light of what came before it.

Psalm 33 ESV

*¹ Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous!
Praise befits the upright.*

*² Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!*

*³ Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.*

*⁴ For the word of the Lord is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.*

*⁵ He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.*

*⁶ By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
and by the breath of his mouth all their host.*

*⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap;
he puts the deeps in storehouses.*

*⁸ Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!*

*⁹ For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.*

*¹⁰ The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.*

*¹¹ The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
the plans of his heart to all generations.*

*¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!*

*¹³ The Lord looks down from heaven;
he sees all the children of man;*

*¹⁴ from where he sits enthroned he looks out
on all the inhabitants of the earth,*

*¹⁵ he who fashions the hearts of them all
and observes all their deeds.*

*¹⁶ The king is not saved by his great army;
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.*

*¹⁷ The war horse is a false hope for salvation,
and by its great might it cannot rescue.*

*¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,*

*¹⁹ that he may deliver their soul from death
and keep them alive in famine.*

*²⁰ Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.*

*²¹ For our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.*

*²² Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.*

GOD IS STEADFAST IN LOVE AND SOVEREIGN IN POWER. FOR THIS, WE SHOULD—EVEN IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULTIES—GRATEFULLY PRAISE AND PATIENTLY TRUST HIM.

The Sovereign Power of God (6-17)

God's sovereign power is his ability to do anything and everything he wills over, in, and through creation.

God is sovereignly powerful in the creating of creation. 6-9

***⁶By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
and by the breath of his mouth all their host.***

***⁷He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap;
he puts the deeps in storehouses.***

***⁸Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!***

***⁹For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.***

God powerfully spoke into existence the heavens and the earth, and the heavenly host:

Genesis 1:1-8 ESV In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

...

And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

All creation—the heavens and the earth—came about because of the sovereignly powerful word of God. And he did this effortlessly.

God is sovereignly powerful through the history of ^{the} creation. 10-12

***¹⁰ The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.***

***¹¹ The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
the plans of his heart to all generations.***

***¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!***

The focus is on God’s sovereign plan which thwarts and annuls the plans of humanity and cannot itself be thwarted or annulled by anyone or anything:

Proverbs 21:30 ESV No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the Lord.

Proverbs 19:21 ESV Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.

God is sovereign in election: in choosing Israel in the OT or choosing his saints in the NT.

God is sovereignly powerful over beings of creation. 13-17

13 The Lord looks down from heaven;

he sees all the children of man;

14 from where he sits enthroned he looks out

on all the inhabitants of the earth,

15 he who fashions the hearts of them all

and observes all their deeds.

16 The king is not saved by his great army;

a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.

17 The war horse is a false hope for salvation,

and by its great might it cannot rescue.

God sovereignly evaluates and judges humanity; he “sits enthroned in a lofty position, lofty in its supremacy and lofty in its perspective.

Not just humanity’s actions are scrutinized and judges, but their very thoughts and motives for he has “fashioned their hearts.”

Psalm 33 portrays God as a magnificently powerful in his sovereignty over creation; *in the creating act itself, in the history of creation, over the creatures!*

The Steadfast Love of God (4-5, 18-19)

[SIMPLE]

Psalm 33 also portrays God as a loving and loyal covenant partner: sovereign power = skeleton and loyal love = flesh.

HUGS, SHAKES, HELPS YOU UP, POINTS YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

4 For the word of the Lord is upright,

and all his work is done in faithfulness.

5 He loves righteousness and justice;

the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

The Words and the works of God are upright, faithful, righteous and just.

All of these ideas are summarized by the statement “the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.”

Steadfast love is a phrase used to describe God's posture towards his covenant people. It is a posture of faithful, trustworthy, dependable, unbreakable love.

***18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,
19 that he may deliver their soul from death
and keep them alive in famine.***

This steadfast love ensures that his favourable gaze is upon his people. He will deliver them; he will save them. They wisely have hope in his steadfast love.

Psalm 33 portrays God as a magnificently powerful in his sovereignty over creation. Psalm 33 portrays God as extravagantly steadfast is his love over his people.

*There is a GREAT tension here: don't let go!
But to help you... let's consider God's love and sovereignty in the gospel*

Love and Power in the Gospel

The steadfast love and sovereign power of God is portrayed most clearly and compellingly in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:22-38 ESV

POWER
LOVE

22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with **mighty works and wonders and signs** that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— **23** this Jesus, delivered up according to the **definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.** **24** God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

...

32 **This Jesus God raised up**, and of that we all are witnesses. **33** Being therefore **exalted at the right hand of God**, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

...

³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸ And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

God is powerful - we owe him our loyalty
" " loving - he provided the means
for this to happen

Posture and Perspective (1-3, 20-22)

God is loving and God is sovereign therefore we ^{should} ~~will be~~ gratefully praise (1-3) and patiently trust (20-22).

In the opening and closing verses we see the posture and the perspective that God’s love and God’s sovereignty are to elicit from us...even in, or particularly in, our times of trouble, trials, and tribulation.

Our posture is one of praise and trust. Our perspective is one of gratefulness and patience.

Grateful praise:

¹ **Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous!**

Praise befits the upright.

² **Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre;**

make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!

³ **Sing to him a new song;**

play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

Six different words for praise:

1. Shout for joy = a loud sound of rejoicing
2. Praise = spontaneous declaring of something praiseworthy
3. Give thanks = public praise, a public acknowledgement
4. Make melody = making music to the Lord
5. Sing = sing together, in unison
6. Play skillfully = play an instrument competently

Patient trust:

**²⁰ Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.**

**²¹ For our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.**

**²² Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.**

While waiting = in the midst of the mess

He is a help and a shield – protection, deliverance, safety, salvation

In the midst of the mess we trust while we wait; this brings gladness to the heart

We are called to gratefully praise and patiently trust our God as we live our lives - even through times of great difficulty. We are called to this because God is our powerfully sovereign ruler and our steadfastly loving covenant partner. If this isn't clear enough from Psalm 33, we see it convincingly clear in the GOSPEL.