

## **Passover Song**

### **Psalm 118**

The Gospels mark out several times in the life of Jesus when he came to Jerusalem for the eight day celebration of the Passover. Two accounts interest us the most. The first is the celebration of the Passover with his family when he was twelve years old (Luke 2.42). Most significant, of course, is the *last* time our Savior celebrated the Passover.

A significant component of the week was the Passover Meal. Without question, the Passover was celebrated "in order" – the meaning of the Hebrew word *seder*. We know that in the Passover, Seder, a number of psalms were sung. Psalms 113-114 were sung before the festive meal; Psalms 115-118 afterward, with the Great Hallel, and Psalm 136 at the climax.

The New Testament tells us of their singing that night:

*"When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."*  
Matthew 26.30

Perhaps the most remarkable song of all that night was the singing of Psalm 118. This is the quintessential Passover song. Psalm 118, like Psalm 116, is an anonymous poem. Whoever wrote it must have been profoundly moved by the Spirit of God. The words the poet used to describe his own distress became the special words of the Savior. If ever there were a mark of the inspiration of the Bible, it is in prophetic psalms such as Psalm 118.

The psalm begins and concludes with the central thesis of the book of Psalms:

*"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his love endures forever."* Psalm 118.1-4, 28-29

#### **The LORD Is for Me, Psalm 118.5-9**

Exodus 3.12-15; 6.2-9

#### **The Surprise of God, Psalm 118.10-14**

#### **Miriam's Song, Psalm 118.10-14**

*"The LORD is my strength and my song;  
he has become my salvation.  
He is my God, and I will praise him,  
my father's God, and I will exalt him."* Exodus 15.1-3; Psalm 118.14

#### **At the Table of Jesus, Psalm 118.15-18**

#### **The Cornerstone, Psalm 118.22-24**

Matthew 21.42; Mark 12.10-11; Luke 20.17; Acts 4.11; Ephesians 2.20; 1 Peter 2.7

#### **Hosanna, Psalm 118.25-27**

*"The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,  
'Hosanna to the Son of David!'  
'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'  
'Hosanna in the highest!'"* Matthew 21.6-9

*"O LORD, save us;  
O LORD, grant us success.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD.  
From the house of the LORD we bless you."* Psalm 118.25-26

*"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!'  
'Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!'  
Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples!'  
'I tell you,' he replied, 'if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.'"* Luke 19.38-40