

- 2 *I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.*
- 3 *When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.*
- 4 *For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right. (Psalm 9)*

David, ancient king of Israel, portrays the many aspects of those who trust God in Christ Jesus. As the psalmist, he is the believer worshipping; as he mourns and complains, he is the faithful, suffering trials and oppression; as king, he is the believer identified with Christ the King. But most prominently, David the man of war speaks of the Christian in spiritual warfare.

Those who are friends of God are ever at war with the powers of darkness. The believer has enemies. He cannot avoid it. When one identifies himself with God, he takes on, not only the love and friendship of all who love God, but also the hatred and malignance of all who hate God.

However, we who love God must not suppose that all with whom we have trouble are God's enemies. We are perfectly able to provoke the hostilities of men by our own perverseness and meanness. We must therefore be slow to judge all who dislike us, as disliking us on account of our righteousness. We have quite enough of raw contrariness about us to create enemies. But when someone becomes our enemy because of Christ or our obedience to Him, we may be sure that that person is primarily the enemy of God, and our enemy only by association.

If God's enemies attack us, victory can always be expected, for God will surely fight His children's battles. David sees this: "When mine enemies are turned back . . ." not *if* they are turned back.

Victory always has God as its cause. It is never because we have been strong enough, outsmarted the enemy, or have learned how to successfully wage the warfare. If there is victory, then God is on the scene. The enemy flees only because of Him. "They shall fall and perish at thy presence."

If God is on the scene, there is occasion of rejoicing and praise, not just because of the victory, but because it is God's victory. We may rejoice for a moment or a few days in a victory won by man, but who knows when the next conflict will come with a stronger man than the last, and then we will be defeated. But if we know that God is undertaking our battles, then we can be assured that they will all be won. That is cause for praise and worship.

One reason we find so much praise and worship in the Psalms is that David the man of war is continually experiencing the deliverance of God, so he is ever praising Him. Perhaps if we were a bit more courageous in provoking the enemies of God by Christ's righteousness, we might also find more occasion to praise and worship our Mighty Victor.

-C.M.