

Psalms 118:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me,
and set me in a large place.

Analysis

"I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place." The Hebrew *min hametsar karati Yah* (from the narrow/distressing place I called to Yah) uses *metsar*, indicating tight place, distress, straits—both physical confinement and emotional anguish. The shortened divine name *Yah* (יְהוָה) appears in moments of urgent, intimate address. "The LORD answered me" (*anani Yah*) affirms divine response—God hears and acts. "Set me in a large place" (*b'merchav Yah*) pictures movement from confinement to spaciousness, restriction to freedom, danger to safety. *Merchav* (broad/wide place) connotes relief, deliverance, room to breathe and move. This pattern—cry from distress, divine deliverance to spaciousness—recurs throughout Psalms (Psalm 4:1, 18:19, 31:8). God specializes in bringing His people from narrow straits to broad pastures.

Historical Context

David's life exemplified this pattern: pursued by Saul through wilderness caves (narrow places), delivered to kingship over all Israel (broad place); Israel enslaved in Egypt (narrow place), delivered to Canaan (broad land); Judah exiled to Babylon (confined), restored to Jerusalem (spacious). The Exodus narrative uses similar spatial imagery—from Egyptian bondage to Promised Land "flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3:8). Jesus later promised abundant life (John 10:10) in contrast to thief's destruction. Paul testified to similar deliverance: "delivered us from so great a death" (2 Corinthians 1:10).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What "narrow places" of distress have you experienced, and how did God answer your cries?
2. How does remembering past deliverances from distress strengthen faith for current trials?
3. In what ways does God provide "large places" of spiritual freedom beyond mere physical deliverance?

Interlinear Text

מָן	הַ מַּצָּר	קָרָאתִי	יְהוָה:	עָנָה לִי	בְּמָרוֹם בַּ
H4480	in distress	I called	the LORD	answered	me and set me in a large place
	H4712	H7121	H3050	H6030	H4800

יְהוָה:
the LORD
H3050

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 18:19 (Parallel theme): He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

Psalms 18:6 (References Lord): In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.

Psalms 120:1 (References Lord): In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

Psalms 107:19 (References Lord): Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

Psalms 31:8 (Parallel theme): And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.

Psalms 107:13 (References Lord): Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.

Psalms 77:2 (References Lord): In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

Genesis 32:7 (Parallel theme): Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;