

**GOD'S MESSAGES
BIBLE
COMMENTARY
SERIES**

VOLUME 11

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading.
(Nehemiah 8:8).

**COMMENTARY
ON
THE BOOK
OF
PSALMS 1-75**

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**The Book Of
PSALMS**



Introduction To Psalms

The Nature of the Book of Psalms;

We are about to begin the study of the longest book of the Bible. The book of Psalms contains 150 chapters. The basic character of the book is revealed in the very name of the book. The English word “psalm” is from an original Hebrew word having to do with singing of praises. From the time of David the sweet singer of Israel, until the beginning of the twenty-first century some three thousand years later, these wondrous words of praise have been loved by multiplied millions of God’s people. They have been responsible for deepening the love of men and women for their Creator and Sustainer.

The book of Psalms has a unique style. One does not study it as one does Romans. It is not a logical unit which flows from Psalm number one to Psalm number one hundred fifty. It is much more like our hymnals which state the same thoughts over and over. The truths which are presented in this book appeal more to the emotional nature of man than to his logical reasoning ability. The reader is urged to feel the truths embedded in these inspired chapters instead of focusing upon analytical mental skills.

The Psalms have been classified in many different ways. The classification in the Bible itself divides them into five groups.

Psalms 1 ————through 41.

Psalms 42 ————through 72.



Psalms 73———through 89
Psalms 90———through 106
Psalms 107———through 150

Some have seen comparisons between the five books of the law and the five divisions mentioned above.

They have also been classified as follows:

1. Psalms of moral contrast.
2. Psalms of Messianic prophecy.
3. Psalms of lamentation.
4. Psalms of penitence.
5. Psalms of praise and adoration.
6. Psalms invoking curses upon the wicked.

Very often elderly persons take great comfort in the study of these chapters of the Word of God. They see in them a picture of life from the cradle to the grave. Older members of the faculty in Christian schools are many times assigned to teach this material to the students moving through the institution. There are rich treasures which they have mined from this book which can be made to glisten before the eyes and in the minds of those who seek the truth.

The Authors of the Psalms:

The first name which comes to mind when the writer of the book of Psalms is mentioned is that of David. When Charles Spurgeon wrote his monumental work on Psalms, he called it the “Treasury of David.” David did write over half of them, but there were also several other writers, including the sons of Asaph, Moses, Solomon, Heman and Ethan.



Date of Composition:

Critics of the Bible would like to date many of the Psalms later than the time of David. Yet when the translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls was being done, the translators came across language forms and archaic words indicating dates far earlier than the period of the Maccabees to which the critics would like to date them. The truth is that they do range over a wide time range, but that many of them are also correctly assigned to the time of David.

The Value of Studying the Psalms;

Perhaps the value of meditating on the Psalms can best be introduced by thinking about the one most cherished by generations of Bible students. How many men and women can look back to childhood days when they were asked to memorize and recite the twenty-third psalm? Once memorized, this incomparable set of verses is usually implanted in the mind to the point where it can be recalled and pondered decades later.

In the psalms one finds the glory of God, the wisdom and power of God, as well as a host of other characteristics which calm the mind in times of stress and inspire it in times of opportunity.

Our present day hymnals contain many songs of praise to God which are echoes of those written by the sweet shepherd who became King of Israel. Who has not thrilled to join others and lift combined voices toward heaven as they sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd?"

How many youngsters discovered the 117th Psalm with great glee when they found they could complete their assignment for the next Lord's Day by memorizing only

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two verses, and then later on began to realize the power which is packed into those two verses.

### **A Word of Challenge:**

There are one hundred-fifty chapters in the book of Psalms. If one were to average studying one of these chapters each day for one hundred-fifty days, the book could be covered in approximately five months. By studying a chapter every other day for one year the same could be true. May we take the liberty of placing a challenge before the reader. Why not set a goal of studying the entire book of Psalms within the next year. This is certainly not an impossible task. The strength of soul and spirit which would result from accomplishing such a goal would be immeasurable. We are not talking about bragging rights. We are talking about the spiritual riches which can be yours and the increased usefulness you could have in the Kingdom of God.



## *Chapter 1*

This first psalm makes a very good introduction to the entire collection. It urges all men to sit, stand and walk in the paths of righteousness. It also warns the ungodly to avoid keeping company with those who would lead them in the footsteps of Satan.

**Psa 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.**

The word “blessed” has more than one thought behind it. At times it means “happy.” At other times it means favored by the Lord. The book of Psalms could have started with no finer word. It creates a picture which most men and women would desire to have as their own. God has provided a multitude of blessings for those who seek His company. Those blessings, when accepted with humility and gratitude are capable of bringing happiness which can be found in no other way.

The verse is progressive. One is wise who refuses to “sit” in the seat of the scornful. Those who mock at the goodness and mercy of Jehovah are inviting Satan to enter the door of their heart. He will not fail to do so. Along with him will come mourning and sadness.

The next step in the progression is to “stand” in the way of sinners. Such a stance reminds us of the antics of an immature child who defies his parents rules, juts out his chin and challenges parental authority. Stiffening the back toward the commands of Jehovah guarantees the disappearance of joy and the appearance of grief.

The third phase is “walking” in the way of the ungodly. At this point the rebellious man decides the way of the



Lord is a restriction of his freedom. He determines that he will follow in the footsteps of those such as Judas, even though the end is the way of death.

Dear reader, do not reject the One who loves you as you should love Him. Blessedness lies in the opposite direction.

**Psa 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.**

The faithful servant of God does not find walking in the way of the Lord distasteful. He does not walk there because he is forced to. To him, it is a joyous experience. Does a young man or a young lady find holding hands and walking down a flower lined path something to be avoided. Indeed not! They will think about doing so with great anticipation. Even so will the child of Jehovah look forward to the company of his Maker.

When he wakes in the dawn of the day, he will thank God for a night of peace and rest. Morning, noon and evening he will lift grateful eyes to the heavens and praise the Source of every blessing. The last thing he does before closing his eyes in dreamland is to express his need for God, and his thanks for the blessings of the day just past.

**Psa 1:3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.**

Willow trees, planted by a stream of fresh water, are a beautiful sight. The sweeping boughs lined with green leaves are reminders of the wondrous care of their Designer. The apple tree which has access to a supply



of pure water produces rich red fruit which is a delight both to the eye and to the tongue.

The child of God is the same. The abundance of life which has been absorbed can be seen in the heath of his body, the purity of his thought, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit of his Lord.

**Psa 1:4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.**

Those who have been raised as children on a farm where wheat and oats were grown can appreciate the truth expressed in this verse. When the threshing machine separates the wheat from the chaff, the grain will be caught as it falls into the burlap sack and is taken to the barn.

The chaff blows away from the exit chute and is considered much less valuable. The workers sometimes look forward to the end of the day when they can go to a lake and wash the dust and grime from their skin.

**Psa 1:5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.**

God is very much aware of the difference between spiritual wheat and spiritual chaff. When He sends the reapers forth to gather the grain into the garner of heaven, He will rejoice along with them in their having been far sighted enough to walk the narrow way that leads to life.

The ungodly will be cast away into the fires of hell where the fire is not quenched and the worm dieth not. Is the congregation of the righteous the local congregation of God's people on earth, or is it the congregation of the

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saints who are invited to enter into the joy of the Lord at the time of the judgment? Whichever is true, the sinner will not be comfortable there, nor will he continue there.

Psa 1:6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

In the sense of being aware of the condition of the righteous and of the ungodly, the Lord knows perfectly just how beautiful are the righteous and how ugly are the ungodly. To say God knows the way of the righteous is to state that He approves of their manner of life and will take them home to be with Him eternally.

For the ungodly, there is a fate worse than passes. Spiritual death is the separation from all the is holy and good for ever and ever. It is truly *everlasting death!*



Chapter 2

The thrust of this psalm is the rebellion of wicked rulers against the authority of the Messiah whom God the Father has set up over all of the nations. Though the rulers lead their subjects in ignoring the reign of the Son of God, they shall be defeated and punished for their insolence.

Psa 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

This is a very valid question. It is nearly unthinkable that men would fight against the will of Him who brought them into being. They first set their minds against Him, and then place their foolhardiness into action by rejecting both His commandments and His Son. Truly such thoughts and actions are empty and vain.

This verse describes all those of every age who look with disdain upon the True King of the universe. God is not a man. He is all-wise, all-powerful and omnipresent. No greater folly can be practiced than to set Him at naught.

Psa 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

Some believe that since King David of the Old Testament is referred to as God's anointed in some passages, this psalm is talking about the son of Jesse. The second psalm has a wider view than that. It describes the condition which arises when earthly rulers of many nations in several ages make clear decisions to oppose the plan of redemption which God presents through

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the Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the anointed High Priest of the Christian age.

**Psa 2:3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.**

These bigoted rulers have been deceived by their positions among men. They feel that they are the givers and appliers of law, not the subjects of law. They see the moral principles of Jehovah as restrictions to their freedom. They wish to ignore those commands of God and cast them aside as if they were non-existent. Since they are obeyed by men, they refuse to honor any authority higher than themselves. To such men, Christ is but an obstacle to their own glory.

**Psa 2:4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.**

Who is it that sitteth in the heavens and laughs at their mighty mice? It is God the Father. He is not laughing because he is amused. He is ridiculing the attitude of the ignorant rulers who fight against Him. Compared to the wisdom of God, earthly rulers are uneducated. They have but fifty or seventy-five years of experience. God has from everlasting to everlasting. The power of the greatest of earthly rulers is impossible to compare with that of the Almighty.

Earthly rulers often lead their subjects into ways that lead to eternal condemnation. Jehovah leads those who will hear Him into life everlasting.

**Psa 2:5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.**

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When is it that God speaks to those rulers who set themselves up against Him? He has done so many times. He did it in the time of Moses when Pharaoh was fighting Him. He did it in the time of Daniel when Nebuchadnezzar ruled Babylon. He has done it in the Christian age as Christ stood up against the rulers of Rome.

The conclusion of the matter will come when God calls all men before the throne in heaven to answer for every evil thought and deed.

Psa 2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

This verse does not speak of an earthly king. This is the King God has set upon the heavenly throne. The Son of God came into the city of Jerusalem and took issue with the scribes and the Pharisees during His life in the physical body. After His death, he ascended to be seated at the right hand of the Father on the throne of the New Jerusalem. He is the Anointed of God in the present time.

Psa 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

God the Father did not beget David in the sense this verse presents. These are the words of Christ as He talks of His relationship with Jehovah. Jesus was born of Mary in the long ago. But Joseph was not the Father of the Christ. The Lord was! As the Only Begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ is the Anointed of God, and has a supreme place of authority even when time shall be no more.

Psa 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

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The Father knows that the Son will ask for an inheritance. He has made arrangements for that inheritance to be honored. Those who oppose the Son and His rule shall overcome; they shall be overcome. It will not be just the land of Palestine which will be subject to the Son. It will be every part of this globe called earth. That is why the great commission commanded that the ministers of Christ go unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

**Psa 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.**

Earthly rulers sometimes used a scepter of wood. Shepherds used a rod of wood. The scepter of Christ is strong enough to bring about the destruction of the enemies of God and shatter them into bits and pieces. Caesars, Emperors and Dictators will pale into insignificance when they match their power and wisdom with that of the Father and the Son.

**Psa 2:10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.**

Here is true wisdom. Earthly Kings and Judges are to take instruction and commands from the Great Lawgiver. Failure to do this will result in destruction, both of their kingdom and of themselves.

We have ample evidence of the truth of this statement when we review the remains of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Hitler's Germany and Stalin's USSR. Let us pray that the leading figures of the United Nations will show more wisdom than those just mentioned.

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Psa 2:11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Every ruler is also a servant. Any trend toward independence from the Lord is utter foolishness. The commands of Jehovah should not be cast aside. It is the temptation to defy Him that should be cast aside. We are told at another point to “Fear not.” But that admonition applies to those who love God and keep His commandments, not to those who spit in His face.

Psa 2:12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Kisses are signs of approval. Every man, including the rulers of the earth, should make friends with all three members of the Godhead. The Son of God gave His very life for those who will hear and obey Him. He will see that their souls will be delivered into heaven.

It will not be so with those who make Him angry!

Chapter 3

The third psalm is an expression on the part of David, King of Israel, that God would give him victory over those who sought to destroy him. It is particularly import as a Messianic type, foreshadowing the plea of the Christ for His Father to hear him in the face of the attack of His enemies of the cross.

Psa 3:1 LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

One might think the safety of God's own anointed one over His people Israel would assured. David was such a one. Yet he found himself driven out of the city of Jerusalem by his own son Absalom and those who had sided with him.

David had found it advisable to quietly pass over the brook Kidron and evade those who were intent upon killing him.

Psa 3:2 Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

Can any greater damage be done to a man than to convince him that God has forsaken him? David's foes were bent on persuading him there would be no help from the Divine hand. They were wrong. Jehovah had not forsaken the sweet singer of Israel. Ultimately David was to become the ancestor of the Saviour of the world. Just as David was to be protected and sheltered

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from the wrath of his antagonists, Jesus was raised from the grave to be victorious over those who felt their human power was sufficient to win a victory over the Godhead.

The word “Selah” is used repeatedly at the end of a large number of the psalms. It is used somewhat like the word “Amen” in the prayers of Christians. It was a call for the Lord to approve of that which had been said, and for men to pause and listen to the truths included.

**Psa 3:3 But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.**

The book of Ephesians calls for men to put on the armor of God, which includes the shield of faith. The one who places his confidence in the protection of God has chosen wisely.

This verse and the one following give the answer to the question David raised as to what he should do in the presence of vast numbers of enemies. That answer was that through the placing of his faith in the wise and powerful Master of heaven and earth, he could be assured of final security and victory.

**Psa 3:4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.**

God hears the cry of the righteous. His ear is turned toward their pleas. To say God hears is to say the prayer of the righteous will be answered. God will turn a deaf ear to the wicked, but He will hear and heed what His

faithful children request. If they will hear Him, He will hear them.

The holy hill of Zion was the area of the temple in Jerusalem. The holy hill of Zion in the Christian age is the throne of the Lord in heaven.

Here again is that meaningful word “Selah.”

**Psa 3:5 I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.**

David’s sleep could be secure. When he laid his head on his pillow, he knew the God of heaven would shield his soul from every enemy. His body might be bruised and his blood might be shed, but his soul would rest comfortably in the hand of the Lord of the universe.

Though he passed through the valley of the shadow of death, he would fear no evil, for God was with him.

**Psa 3:6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.**

David was very much aware that one against ten thousand is very poor odds of victory. He was being pursued by far more men than he could personally overcome. That was not the primary reason for his ability to lie down and sleep without fear. The reason was that he could call upon One who has more power than all those men who have lived from Eden onward. God and one righteous man make a majority over tens of thousands.

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Psa 3:7 Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

Broken cheekbones must have been a common effect in the vicious battles which were fought in David's day with spears and other hand to hand weapons. When a professional heavyweight boxer strikes his opponent on the cheekbone, the teeth are sometimes loosened and even knocked out of their sockets.

The application of this verse to faithful Christians is in the knowledge that the bite of the followers of Satan will be rendered ineffective. The man of God will be victoriously delivered, even if it requires resurrection from the grave in the great and final day of judgment.

Psa 3:8 Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. Man cannot save himself. He cannot earn a spot in heaven. Still, when man lives in harmony with the will of God, that man may rest assured that God will bless him in the end.

His enemies may surround him on every side, as did those of David. But, if he is faithful unto the end, he will hear those precious words, "Enter into the joy of thy Lord."

Jesus himself cried out from the cross, "My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken me?" Later, he was raised from the grave to sit upon the right hand of the Father

in heaven. If we follow in his steps, we too will reign victoriously over those who would rejoice to see us join them in the fires of hell.



Chapter 4

Chapters three and four of Psalms should be considered together. Chapter three was a prayer that was appropriate for starting out the day. It was an appeal to god for guidance and protection through the day. Many a man or woman has prayed just such a prayer when faced with serious difficulties in the upcoming daylight hours. Chapter four reflects upon God's help through the past day and expresses confidence that the coming night will bring relief and renewed strength to face the future.

Psa 4:1 Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

Almost all of us have friends whom we can call upon in time of need. We are confident they will listen to our problems and do whatever they can to help us overcome them. The difficulty lies in the fact that human friends are limited in what they can say or do to assist us.

It is not so with the Lord our God. He is first of all a God of righteousness. He will do us not evil. He will strengthen us in that which is right and help us to avoid that which is wrong. He will offer a listening ear to every plea for help in doing that which is righteous. We may pray with divine assurance that our prayer will be heard and will be answered. The person who is attempting to become more holy, as the Father is holy, may be confident of forgiveness of past sins and also of God's help in the upcoming day.

Psa 4:2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.

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There is a vast difference in the way God looks at the one who walks in his or her own way, when compared with those who strive to overcome sin and walk in the way of righteousness.

The psalmist calls for all who will listen to turn from the selfish and independent ways of Satan, to the loving and dependable ways of the Father and the Son. The word “leaving” is an old English word for falsehood. The call is for men to cease lying and deceit, and begin stepping in the light of truth.

Again we encounter the word “Selah” which means “Pause and hear.”

**Psa 4:3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.**

This verse is not talking about predestination. God has not determined the eternal destiny of any individual human from before their birth. Man is a creature free will. All those who follow godly ways will find God receptive to their prayers for assistance. Those who defy Him will find He allows them to walk in their deadly paths.

There are vast multitudes of persons who will find out too late that their defiance of the revealed will of the Creator has brought about their eternal separation from Him as they suffer in fire and brimstone.

**Psa 4:4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.**

Anyone who fears God will find he has chosen the way of wisdom. One should reflect upon their bed when the day has closed over the blessings which have been



theirs throughout that day. In the first daylight hours, He should also ponder the need to walk in righteousness that God may order his steps.

**Psa 4:5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.**

We are commanded to lay by in store upon the first day of the week. Large numbers of us reach into our billfold or our purse and take out either a few bills or a previously written check and place it in the collection plate as it is passed. That is certainly pleasing to God, if we do it willingly and cheerfully. But God also commands that our lives be living sacrifices. The true Christian will constantly be seeking out the will of God and doing his best to offer his entire life as a sacrifice.

**Psa 4:6 There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.**

The first part of this verse is referring to the sceptics who doubt that obedience to God makes any difference in what men seek for in life. Their philosophy is "Take care of yourself. No one else is going to!" This is a deadly path.

The psalmist declares God will take care of us. But, He will only do so if the individual is determined to call for His help. If we turn our ear away from Him, He will withhold his hand from us.

**Psa 4:7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.**

Which is more important to a man? Is it granaries filled with wheat and corn, or wine vats filled to overflowing with the juice of the grapes? Or is it in the gladness which comes through knowing God is pleased with us and that he will never leave or forsake us?

Nor is it always a one or the other proposition. Very often the man whose heart is glad as a result of the promises of God also has wheat in the granary and juice in the vat.

**Psa 4:8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.**

All those of us who have had a godly mother sit beside our bed and teach us the simple prayer,

Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.  
If I should die before I wake,  
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

That godly mother may be long gone and resting in the grave. The little child may have grown to be an adult, both physically and spiritually. But the everlasting truth seen in that child's prayer is just as precious in the strength of manhood as it was in the sharing of those thoughts with God and with mother.



## *Chapter 5*

Psalm number three was labeled as a morning prayer. Psalm number five falls in the same class. We can almost see King David lifting his eyes toward the sun as it rose at the beginning of a new day and seeking spiritual strength to meet the difficulties of life. Or, for that matter, we might well visualize the Christ Himself slipping out into the Garden of Gethsemene to commune with His Father concerning the courage which would be needed to face the coming sacrifice upon the cross at Calvary.

**Psa 5:1 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.**

Your present commentator sometimes becomes concerned that he injects more personal matters into the notes he writes on the Bible books. The author of the book of Psalms used the word “my” over and over in this one chapter. He considered prayer to be a personal plea for God to care for his needs.

We understand that the idea here is something similar to a human holding his hand cupped to his ear in order to hear everything which is being spoken. But it is more than the spoken word which is being considered here. It goes deep into the heart and asks that God read the inner thoughts which find their place first in the heart and are then uttered sometimes spoken, or sometimes kept between the thinker and his Maker.

**Psa 5:2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.**

Genuine prayer calls for a proper relationship between the one who prays and the One who hears. Jehovah is

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our God, who has created us and seeks our welfare at all times. He is also our King, who has every right to direct our ways in accordance with His goals.

Psa 5:3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

We have the word “morning” used twice in this single verse. The New Testament speaks of “praying without ceasing.” Morning, noon or night are all proper times for prayer. Most of us are more apt to pray at the end of the day when we have slipped into bed. That is certainly proper. Thanksgiving for the blessings of the day are in order. But prayer in the morning, at the beginning of the day is just as important. There is a need to call upon God for support in meeting the challenges of each new day.

Which way is “up?” The word, as it is used here has nothing to do with down in the ground, or up in the sky. It speaks of the wisdom, power and glory of God, as compared with the foolishness, weakness and dependence of man. When men pray, they acknowledge their dependency upon the Lord for His providential oversight.

Psa 5:4 For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

But to whom will God listen? Does he hear the prayers of all men? God will not hear when men do not call upon him. If we are to self centered to even recognize our need, we will not pray. In that case there is nothing to which he can give ear.

The soul of every man and woman is a precious thing. God has made it quite evident that he considers those souls worth giving His Son Jesus Christ to redeem from



sin. At the same time, God abominates sin. When a man or woman so corrupts their soul with sin that it become spiritually rotten God considers it an abomination. He will not hear the prayer of the deliberate sinner, even if that person pretends to be one of His faithful children.

Psa 5:5 The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

The one who lives as if there were no God is a fool. God does not tolerate that man in His presence as far as prayer is concerned. The man who works iniquity need not approach God in prayer unless that prayer is for the forgiveness of his sins. Is it possible to love the sinner, yet hate the sin? This verse seems to say God actually turns a deaf ear to those who rebel against Him.

Psa 5:6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

Leasing is lying or falsehood. Those who practice the spreading of lies will ultimately wish he had the assistance of the Christ who said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He will have no mediator to plead his case.

Psa 5:7 But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

The writer of this psalm desired with all his heart that he might not be guilty of the sins just described. He wished to enter into the presence of God and find mercy for such sins as he had committed. He would try not to

fall before the temptations of life, and when he did, he would call upon the mercy of the Lord to forgive those trespasses. With that attitude, he felt he could come to the throne of grace and have his prayer heard.

Psa 5:8 Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

This verse sounds like David. He had enemies who would have taken his life without the blink of an eye. Even his son Absalom was counted among these foes. It was exceedingly important to David that he maintain a righteous pattern of behavior. To do that, he needed God to lead him in paths of righteousness for His names sake. He begged God to help him see the way.

David prayed such a prayer. Christ prayed such a prayer. And you and I need to pray the same type of prayer. We face gigantic spiritual foes. The only way we can escape destruction is to seek out the way of the Lord and then follow it without departing.

Psa 5:9 For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

What a horrible condition is described in this verse! The heart is wicked. The mouth is unfaithful. The throat swallows up corrupt things like an open grave. The tongue is used to gain advantage by flattering others and deceiving them.

It is no wonder that God turns away from any prayer they might utter. A barnyard would smell far better than such rottenness.

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**Psa 5:10 Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.**

The psalmist called for God to destroy this kind of filth. As long as they have rejected Him, He is to reject them. The sin in which they have bathed themselves must separate them from God unless they repent and mend their ways. God does not wish to cast any soul into everlasting torment, but He has created man with the possibility of choice, and when that choice is separation from all that is righteous the verdict may be predicted. "Depart from Me ye workers of iniquity."

**Psa 5:11 But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.**

The contrast between the destiny of the rebellious and the faithful is sharp and certain. The torment of the damned is too awful to contemplate. The joy and comfort of the faithful will be beyond our present ability to perceive. The crown of life which the faithful will receive if their faith continues until death is far more than simple existence. It is life as God intended it to be when he placed the first couple in Eden.

**Psa 5:12 For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.**

The latter part of the eighth chapter of Romans should be compared with the last verse of this present chapter. We have placed it just below.

*Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*Rom 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

*Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*



## Chapter 6

The heading of this psalm indicates it was to be sung along with an eight stringed instrument.

It is known as one of seven “deprecatory psalms.” This means they were apologetic. David was humbling himself and pleading for mercy. He knew there was no hope for relief from his suffering unless the Lord accepted his pleas.

**Psa 6:1 O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.**

Every child knows the difference between being punished by a stern parent rather than an angry one. David was crying out to the Lord that he not be punished in heated anger, but from a need for correction.

**Psa 6:2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.**

In the midst of his misery, David did not ask for justice. He had committed very serious sin. He wanted mercy. If he had received justice, he had no hope of an end to the horror he was enduring. If God would show mercy, he could see a ray of hope.

The statement that his bones were vexed tells of the pain throughout his entire body. There was no part of him that did not share in the sickness.

**Psa 6:3 My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?**

It made it even worse that his soul was undergoing similar vexation. His conscience told him he deserved all

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he was suffering. But, just how long would it be before the Lord would hear his cries and respond?

God has often cried out to His people saying, “How long will you continue in sin?” There comes a time when those who continue in their defiance will join their voices with that of David in asking, How long O Lord shall I be chastised?

Psa 6:4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

The word “return” implies that the Lord had departed from him. All too often men do not care that there is a separation between themselves and the Father in heaven. It is very possible that the time will come when they curse their own stupidity for failing to see the increasing distance they place between their God and themselves. God has promised to return to man, if man turns from sin and returns to Him.

The mercy of God is one of His most wonderful characteristics. David presented God with the fact that God’s mercy would be exalted if He were to pardon his offenses. In this, David was correct. From that day to our own, we have been reminded of God’s willingness to forgive David’s sins and allow him future service in the promotion of righteousness.

Psa 6:5 For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

David had another reason why it would be better if God did not kill him. If he was to be killed, he could not praise God or give Him thanks for His blessings.

As a proof of the sincerity of the man, these psalms of praise speak far more than just their words. The thanks

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and praise which David gave to God after the time of this psalm have been read and lifted up by; the lives of millions who have studied them.

**Psa 6:6 I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.**

We very often use the same exaggerations when we have deep feelings. David was weeping until there were no more tears which could be shed. When he was sitting up during the day, he wept. When he was lying down in bed, he wept.

God can be reached through tears of repentance. In that characteristic He is like the father who child has tears running down it's cheeks and begs daddy or mother not to spank any longer. It is not easy to ignore such promises to reform.

**Psa 6:7 Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.**

Let us be careful not to limit David's enemies to humans who were telling him he must have been an atrocious sinner to be faced with such punishment. Our enemies are sometimes the pride and lust which mocks us from within. With enemies both without and within, David had become so grief stricken his bodily organs were no longer functioning properly.

**Psa 6:8 Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.**

Both the inner temptations and the outer evil companions were to be sent away. They had already

been responsible for far too many tears of sorrow. There was a promise to abhor all of that which led to sinful and wicked actions. God had heard his penitent voice. He was convinced there would be a favorable answer.

**Psa 6:9 The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.**

What relief is seen in these last two verses. God had not turned away and rejected him forever. He had heard, and He would help. He was not willing that any should perish. His love for His own had prevailed.

**Psa 6:10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.**

David prayed that those who wished that he continue in his suffering would see that wish denied. His confidence that Jehovah would offer His mercy and accept his willingness to do better, led him to believe the victory over sin would send them away in shame for their vicious attitudes.



## Chapter 7

This psalm is thought by the majority of commentators to deal with David's thoughts during the time he was being pursued by Saul. This is not a foregone conclusion. It is based on a few words or phrases, such as the word "lion" in the second verse. The lion is the king of the beasts. Saul was the king of Israel.

The psalm, as a number of others are, is divided into two parts. The first has David asking the Lord to deliver him from his persecutors. The second looks to the time when God will reward the righteous and cause the wicked to cease from their evil ways.

**Psa 7:1 O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:**

This verse tells of David's very strong statement of trust in Jehovah. He could have said, O Lord. He could have said, My God. He combined the two and thus placed a major emphasis upon the thought.

The Lord has the ability to deliver men. He has an interest in those who have proven their dedication. David wishes for Him to release him from all of those who are placing his life in constant danger. Note that it is not just Saul who is mentioned. It is **all** of those who pursue him.

**Psa 7:2 Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.**

The "he" here is inclusive of the all in the previous verse. David had good reason to know what took place



when a lion captured it's prey. The first thing that happened was that it sunk it's sharp teeth into the prey and shook it to pieces.

There appeared to David to be no man available who was able to deliver him from those who sought to kill him and tear him to pieces. The only possible remedy was the power of the Divine Hand.

**Psa 7:3 O LORD my God, If I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;**

What was it that David was supposed to have done? Some call this psalm "a song of slander." It is thought that Cush, who is mentioned in the caption of the psalm, had reported to king Saul that David was plotting against Saul's life and seek to take over the kingdom from him.

Slander is vicious. When a person is accused of that of which he or she is not guilty, a scar is left which can mar the life of the person forever. The Devil even slandered the All Righteous God of creation. It is unwise to keep company with such as he is.

The "if" David used does not show indecision on his part. He knows he has not done that of which he is accused. In a sense, he is placing his case before God and saying he has sufficient trust that he has no fear of punishment.

**Psa 7:4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)**

**Psa 7:5 Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.**

From this seventh verse it appears that David had been accused of disturbing the peace by doing damage

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to someone who had never harmed him. He denies this sharply. Rather than doing damage to Saul, he had. Refrained from killing him when Saul was asleep in the same cave with David and did not know of his presence. See I Samuel 24:1-22 and 25:1-25.

The psalmist adds that he was willing to be punished if he had treated someone who was a friend as if he was an enemy. He was willing to suffer death at the hands of the claimed victim and be stripped of his own honor. The word “Selah” means “Be it so.”

Psa 7:6 Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded.

Surely the Lord would be angry with those who hated David to the point that they would slander him and try to murder him. He calls upon God to rise up against those enemies and pass judgment upon them.

There is a judgment ahead. Men who mistreat others have their deeds recorded in the book. When those books are opened at the time of the final judgment, the wicked will find the testimony against them.

Psa 7:7 So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

We speak of large congregations today. We are talking about over a thousand persons assembled on the first day of the week for worship. The congregation of which David speaks is composed of all who have lived from the beginning until the end of time. When God takes his seat

at the final judgment, all will be dealt with according to the records. There will be no partiality. There will be no bribes.

Psa 7:8 The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.

David is ready to face the records. God is just and merciful, but there is an end to His mercy. For those who have deliberately chosen to fight against his people, and have never repented, there is to be no hope. He will judge righteously!

Psa 7:9 Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

In both old and new testament times the people of God have longed for the cessation of wickedness. Like God, they are not willing that any should perish, but it will be necessary for some to perish if heaven is to be a place of no tears.

Psa 7:10 My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

There is no reason for the psalmist to fear God's siding with his enemies. The pure in heart will find the Judge of all the earth defending their right to enter into the joys of the Lord.

Psa 7:11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

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Not so with the wicked. They oppose God and separate themselves from Him every day. They can hardly expect that His anger will be dissolved and that He will welcome them with open arms at the judgment.

The translation of this verse has been disputed. Some have seen a “not” in the original document. In that case the verse would state that God does not intend to do battle with them every day, but that He will demonstrate his anger with them on that final day.

**Psa 7:12 If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.**

God may not shoot His arrows at the wicked continuously. Nevertheless, He has His sword sharp and His bow bent. The weapons are ready and will be used at the proper time.

**Psa 7:13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.**

The wicked, such as those who had slandered David, need to know the Lord has been preparing throughout all time to destroy the evil workers who persecute others without reason.

**Psa 7:14 Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.**

Now, in these final verses, we turn to the destiny of the wicked. He works at bringing evil into existences much as a woman labors in bringing an infant into the world. He builds a relationship with sin. He conceives

mischief. Then the newborn child of falsehood is born. His birthpains will come soon enough.

**Psa 7:15 He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.**

The evil workers take careful pains to dig a pit for the destruction of their victims. The trap is concealed in order that the victim may fall into it before he even knows of it's existence.

The difficulty is that in the end, the wicked man will fall into the very pit which he has dug for another.

**Psa 7:16 His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.**

Every goodly man can recall just such happenings. One reads nearly every day in the newspaper of those who have attended parties of reveling being stabbed or shot to death. Their wicked minds have led them straight into the jaws of death.

The psalmist is convinced that will be the case with those who have brought so many sorrows and tears to his own life. The pate is the scalp. The difficulties planned for others, will fall upon themselves.

**Psa 7:17 I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.**

In spite of the present tribulations, the righteous may well open their mouths in praise to God. He is testing them to determine whether they truly wish to be with Him eternally. If so, He will pass a judgment of "innocent."

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Chapter 8

This psalm is a pleasant change of scene from those in which David is pleading for rest from his enemies. It is a psalm of pure praise to the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. It tells of God's wisdom, glory and power in the realm of nature.

Psa 8:1 O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Two different names are used in this first verse to refer to God. One is *Jehovah*. The other is *Adonai*. One tells of God's self sufficiency. He was here before all else. The other has to do with His sustaining and ruling power over the universe. When the two are combined as they are in this verse, we have a powerful picture of the Godhead.

The glory of God can be seen both in and beyond nature. The word "heavens" is in the plural. God's glory can be seen in the heaven where the birds fly. It can be seen on a clear night in the splendor of the heaven where the sun, moon, stars and planets exist. We do not know how far these heavens exist beyond that which we can explore with our telescopes. Whatever that distance is, God glory extends beyond them!

The name of the Lord has been made known to nearly every person on earth; perhaps every person. Jesus called upon his apostles to go preach the gospel to all nations and to every creature. No matter where one goes, the glory and power of the Lord is observable in one manner or another.

Psa 8:2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine

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**enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.**

There are at least two applications of the babes and sucklings thought. Probably the one primarily referred to is discovered in Matthew 21:16.

*Mat 21:16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?*

When the Jewish children were crying in praise of Christ, the scribes and Pharisees were mocking him. Often the high and mighty reject the Divine hand, while those who are less prominent and are weak see the greatness of God more clearly.

We were also told that unless we become as little children, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God. If men will only be honest with themselves, they will observe God's glory in the heights, the depths and the workings of the universe.

The second possible lesson in the verse is related to the wonder of a newborn child. Adam Clarke points out that as soon as a newborn infant is able to breathe it is also able to suck. He adds that no one had to teach that child to either breathe or suck. Is this not one of the ways by which a babe and suckling demonstrates God's wisdom?

**Psa 8:3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;**

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This present writer has been a teacher of physical science for many years. It is beyond his power of imagination to understand how any scientist can deny the existence of a supernatural mind which has brought the universe into being.

The moon hangs in space some 240 thousand miles from earth. It moves around the earth in periodic motion. It reflects the light of the sun and bathes the surface of the earth with that light, allowing men to see and admire that which surrounds them.

The sun is some 93 million miles from earth. Yet this blazing ball of fire produces enough energy to produce our food and operate our machinery. The amount of energy is such that men find much of this globe called earth to be neither too cold nor too hot to maintain life. Was this only happenstance?

Far, far beyond our local sun, other suns which are much larger than our own float in space performing their own duties as assigned by the wisdom of the Creator. Yes, most certain the heavens declare the glory of God.

The verse uses the word “fingers” of God. It did not require the “mighty hand” or the “outstretched arm” of God. Even His fingers were sufficient.

Psa 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

The psalmist asks one of the most thought provoking question human beings can possibly consider. What is there about man which causes God to pay such devoted attention to him. Why has God visited man with His instructions through both His Son and the Holy Scriptures?

After all man appears to be very insignificant when

compared with the vastness of space. He is no more than a grain of sand in comparison with the whole of creation. Yet God must have a reason for seeking him out and providing for him.

Psa 8:5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

The answer to the question lies in the spiritual realm. Man was created in the image of God. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Angels are created beings which are not subject to death. They do not have fleshly bodies. Man has a fleshly body and is a combination of flesh and spirit. When the spirit leaves the body, the human is dead.

An important point here is that God has appointed angels as watchers over men. They have special responsibilities in the workings of God's providence.

We must now observe that this is another Messianic psalm. Man was created a little lower than the angels. Jesus Christ was one of the three members of the Godhead, who thought it no robbery to be called equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Even so, for a time Christ was made a little lower than the angels by being born into a fleshly body which was subject to death. This was because the Godhead had such love for man that a sacrifice for sin was made available in the death of the Son of God. It was also because God wished to show an example of what man was intended to be from the beginning.

Psa 8:6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:



Man is the ruler of the mineral, the vegetable and the animal realms. For a moment he may be overwhelmed by the heat of the desert or the icebergs of the polar regions. He may temporarily be frightened or even devoured by the lions and the beasts of the field. He may be poisoned by certain plants. But in the long run, man is in control.

Again we must point the reader to our Saviour. It is true that for a brief period of a few years, He walked this earth and suffered much. Over the long run, Jesus Christ will overcome every foe. He sits today at the right hand of the Father in heaven and someday every foe will be conquered.

Psa 8:7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

Psa 8:8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

The psalmist includes the land, the sea and the air in his description of man's dominion. The wild beasts of the land are defeated. The fish of the sea are eaten. The fowls of the air adorn our dining tables. Man is the capstone of creation.

Psa 8:9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

The last verse of this psalm is an echo of the first verse. The statement of God's excellence was presented in verse one. The evidence of that excellence was given through the next seven verses. Then this last verse demands that the evidence be accepted and applied to men's lives!

Chapter 9

Gratitude is expressed for all God has done in the past. This is followed by confidence that ultimately all evil doers will be removed from among the righteous.

Psa 9:1 I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

Praise is ever due to the Lord. When men pause to consider that which they have received every day of their lives, as well as the promises of such blessings in the future, the only reasonable response is to glorify the Giver of such gifts. He is Provider, Protector and Guide. Our thanksgiving can never be overdone.

The praise can not be half hearted. Half hearted praise is little better than none. Our prayers, our songs and our manner of life must all show forth the perfections of Jehovah. (See Deut. 6:15 and Matt. 22:37.)

Deu 6:5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Mat 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Psa 9:2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

Gladness is an internal condition. How interesting that even when David was contending with enemies, and sometimes fleeing for his life, that he could still be

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glad. Rejoicing is more closely connected with outward demonstrations of the gladness within. Singing praise to the Lord is one form of rejoicing. Singing which is done half heartedly is a poor way to praise God. In contrast, singing which is done for personal prestige, personal satisfaction, or entertainment of others may very well be done without any praise whatsoever. We are commanded to sing with the spirit and with the understanding. When that is done, God is pleased.

**Psa 9:3 When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.**

Some versions use the word “if” rather than “when.” The translation before us indicates confidence that the enemies **will** someday be turned back. The psalmist himself may not be capable of turning them back, but the Lord has promised that when this present heaven and earth have come to an end, all enemies of righteousness will be removed.

**Psa 9:4 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.**

The Lord had defended David from persecution. He had preserved his life and had placed the once shepherd boy upon the throne of Israel. He was confident that every action God had made was right and proper. It might not seem so at the time. It would prove to be so before time ceased.

**Psa 9:5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.**

Men take satisfaction in thinking that their names and their contributions will live on after them. This was particularly true with the Jews. When one's name was snuffed out, he saw it as a tragedy of major proportions. God had punished the wicked by either erasing their name from the history books, or causing their name to be remembered with hatred or abomination. It is useless to attempt identification of those whose names were put out. They are gone!

**Psa 9:6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.**

These words are addressed to those who would have eliminated David if they could. Their destructive ways would not continue for ever. They would come to a complete and everlasting end. We are speaking of eternity here. Their destruction of men and of the places where they lived would cease, and the righteous were to have no memory of them when the final rewards and punishments are awarded.

**Psa 9:7 But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.**

That fate cannot be suffered by the Lord. He is self sufficient and eternal. He will outlast all the enemies of His cause. He will be there as the Judge of all the earth. Evil men may escape the justice of men. They will not escape the judgment of Jehovah.

**Psa 9:8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.**



Human judges may be partial or greedy for bribes. It is not so with the Lord. His final pronouncements will be made in consideration of every piece of evidence. The rich and the powerful will have no more influence than the poor and the weak.

**Psa 9:9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.**

At time there appears to be no place for the oppressed to hide from the enemy. We may not be able to see it from our position on this earth, but there is a place of refuge. Sometimes it is here on earth without us being aware of it. Sometimes it will only be found in heaven when the evil have been removed.

**Psa 9:10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.**

It is not enough to know the names which are used for God. Many of the wicked can call the names such as Yahweh, Adonai, etc. To know the name of the Lord as mentioned in this verse is to recognize His nature and be ready to walk in accordance with His will. If one reaches up for the hand of God, and clings tightly, it will never be withdrawn.

**Psa 9:11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.**

In the time of David, Zion was the title given to the city of Jerusalem. The ark with it's cherubim was the

place of communication with Jehovah. The name Zion is associated with the church in this Christian age. God lives in the hearts of members of the church. He is worthy of praise in every age. By singing His praises we enjoy fellowship with other godly persons, and demonstrate the need for others to adore Him with us.

**Psa 9:12 When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.**

Inquisition examines the conditions surrounding violent crimes. God will know exactly how to deal with both the murderers and the victims. He will punish the one and exalt the other. The tables will be completely turned for both the oppressors and the oppressed.

**Psa 9:13 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:**

The last enemy is death. Jesus conquered death at the time of His resurrection and ascension. God had rescued David from the very gates of death time and time again. Still, we must look farther than the separation of the spirit from the body. God will unlock the graves and meet the righteous in the air, where they shall be with Him where sorrow, pain and death will be found no more.

**Psa 9:14 That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.**

The gates of Jerusalem were to location where the important announcements were made. It was at the



gates of the city that cases were heard and men were pronounced guilty or innocent. David promised to praise the Lord at those gates.

Today the godly man or woman will praise God in this lifetime as a follower of Jesus Christ, and will look forward to praising the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit at the gates of heaven.

**Psa 9:15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.**

The pit and the snare are the devices of the ungodly. They constantly watch for ways in which they can take advantage of the faithful. By doing this they prove their nearsightedness. They cannot see the end of their actions. Over and over again the wicked are caught in the backfire of their own plans. Judas hanged himself. Pharoah's men drowned in the depths of the Red Sea. David himself lost the child which Bathsheba bore to him.

**Psa 9:16 The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.**

The word "higgaion" is a musical term meaning "pause." The lesson of this verse seems to be that the wicked need to pause and reflect upon the end of the way they are traveling. God will not be deceived.

**Psa 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.**

Both individuals and nations are destined for eternal torment when they insist on ignoring the commands and

laws of the Lord. One cannot live as if Jehovah did not exist and expect Him to disappear at the time of judgment.

**Psa 9:18 For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.**

This forgetting can work in two separate ways. Those who forget God will be separated from Him in eternity. Those who have remembered will insure that He will remember and reward them.

**Psa 9:19 Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.**

David made a plea for God to subject the unholy and judge them according to His perfect knowledge of their cases. The heathen are those who are strangers to the Lord. They only seem to prevail. This will not last.

**Psa 9:20 Put them in fear, O LORD: that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah.**

The greatest teacher of all time is able and willing to place fear in the hearts of the rebellious. He has done so with the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians and the Romans. Others should learn from those previous lessons that sinners cannot stand before an angry God.

Men must not deceive themselves by thinking they are the rulers of the earth. They need only to reflect upon the systems of their own bodies to come to the conclusion that there is far more than man will ever comprehend. The Divine mind, the Divine power and the thoughts of life and death should put them in fear of hell.

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Chapter 10

This psalm is thought by some to have originally been a part of psalm number 9. Most of the psalms have a title. This one does not have.

The content finds the psalmist pondering the reasons why the Lord does not take immediate action against those who defy him and who visit cruelty on His faithful. Some of the characteristics of the wicked are then pictured. In the latter part of the psalm the surety of the final punishment of the evil doers is discussed.

Psa 10:1 Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?

There is probably no man on earth, in any age, who has not asked this meaningful question. If God is omnipotent, omniscient and hates evil with great passion, it seems difficult to understand why rank sinners continue to live on. Why does God seem to have turned His face away from the scene and allowed the cruelty which these enemies bring about?

The righteous suffer at the hands of these arrogant foes. It would seem that the Lord would bring these sufferings to a quick end.

It is wise for us to consider one very strong possibility as to the answers to these questions. God calls Himself a Father. From this fact, we can reason that He desires a family whom He can love and care for in eternity. But he is not willing that this family be made up of those who do not wish to be a part of it. Therefore, He allows men to enter into this present world that they may be tested as to their desires. If they wish to live with Him as their Father, and with the rest of His children in love

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and harmony, He can discover that.

When time comes to an end His family will have reached the number He has planned for. What joy will be the fate of those who have prepared themselves! What misery awaits those who have chosen to go the way of Satan!

**Psa 10:2 The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.**

There are three temptations which Satan holds up before us. The lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. The emphasis in this verse is pride. The wicked sees the poor only as objects of persecution. Self is his only interest. He is always ready to take; never ready to give.

The psalmist expresses his desire that the Lord return the evil plans of these pride filled persons upon their own heads. They have conceived all sorts of ways to terrify the poor. Let them feel the pain they have planned for others.

**Psa 10:3 For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.**

The wicked man does not hesitate to make his desires plain. In fact, he is boastful about what he wants, and how he expects to get it. He loves evil companionship. He walks with them in carrying out his vicious ends.

The Lord has stated that He hates this kind of behavior. Yet He continues to allow it to continue. Surely this cannot go on forever.

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Psa 10:4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

Because of his pride, the wicked man sees himself as absolutely independent of any need for God. Why should he ask God for anything? He believes he can provide anything and everything he has need of.

The word “all” should not be overlooked. This may not mean God is never in his thoughts. The problem is that when he does entertain the idea of God, it is hatred of Him. God is the one who has tried to control him. He will not have that!

There are at least two kinds of atheists. There are the absolute atheists who flatly deny the possibility of the existence of God. Then there are those who admit the possibility of God’s existence, but then live as if He did not exist.

Psa 10:5 His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.

This evil man goes on his defiant way without ever focusing his eyes on the consequences of his sins. If God does exist, he has never seen Him. He is convinced that there is no enemy powerful enough to punish him. The word “puffeth” is more commonly replaced by the words “sniffed at” in our own age. The covetous sinner sniffs at the possibility that any force can successfully oppose him.

Psa 10:6 He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.

He sees no reason to fear either the natural or the supernatural. He says to himself, "I shall never be overwhelmed by famine, disease, earthquake, war, thieves, or a devil's hell. I am comfortable, and what can change that?"

Psa 10:7 His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.

This cursing is not blasphemy. It is the wish for disaster to fall upon the object of the curse. He does not hesitate to lie and deceive others. He is double tongued. His words lead to nothingness for those around him.

Psa 10:8 He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor.

What are the lurking places of the villages? They are those places where men prepare to pounce upon the unsuspecting. There are plenty of these places. They can be found in broken contracts. They can be found in overpriced goods. They can be found anywhere that such evil persons can delude or physically harm those who are unable to defend themselves.

Psa 10:9 He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

Psa 10:10 He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.

The lion is known for hiding out of sight until his prey comes within range of his claws. He then pounces upon



that prey and rips it to shreds. In verse ten we see him crouched down and ready to spring. He does not humble himself in terms of true humility. He does so in order that he may not be seen until he is ready to attack.

The wicked are the same. They hide their evil plans until the time is ripe to execute them. Then they commit every crime known to man. They do not know the meaning of the word “conscience.”

Psa 10:11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.

The scriptures tell us it is the fool who has said in his heart, there is no God. This man does not quite go that far. He only convinces himself God is limited and has either not seen his sin, or has forgotten to punish it.

Psa 10:12 Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.

If David is the writer of this psalm, he is reaching out beyond his own private concerns. It is all of the weak and humble for whom God is called upon to give His assistance. God has the ability. Let Him oppose such abuses.

Psa 10:13 Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it.

The word “contemn” is related to the word “contempt.” These workers of evil have only contempt for the Lord of the universe. They have not been punished in the past. They do not believe it possible in the future.

Psa 10:14 Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

The psalmist knows God must have seen the sin. He is called upon to lift up His powerful hand against the sinners and help those who cannot help themselves. The only aid they have must come from the heavenly places.

Psa 10:15 Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none.

In the time during which the psalms were written, the sword was a major weapon. A strong arm and a sharp two edged sword were difficult to oppose. God, however, is strong enough to break the arm of the one wielding the sword. The prayer here is that He will bring His own power into the fray and punish wickedness until it no longer exists.

Psa 10:16 The LORD is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.

God and His kingdom will ultimately win the battle between good and evil. The heathen are those who have been pictured in the words above. There will be a great separation of the sheep from the goats. The sheep will find everlasting pasture. The goats will be cast into everlasting fire.

Psa 10:17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

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**Psa 10:18 To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.**

God has heard the cries of the helpless in the past. He will forever hear those cries. If they truly seek His help, He will teach them patience as they await the promised reward. He will also pronounce sentence upon the ones who have oppressed others.

He has seen. He has heard. He has not, and will not forget!

## Chapter 11

It is difficult to pinpoint a time in the life of the psalmist at which thoughts such as presented in the chapter before us could have risen. It is obvious that it was a time of persecution when he entertained the possibility of fleeing from the pursuer and simply disappearing from the scene. This could have been from Saul. It could have been from Absalom. It could have been from the Philistines, etc.

Any faithful child of God can relate to David's feelings. At times every man fights the temptation to retire from the spiritual battlefield. Knowing this would be the wrong course of action, the dedicated Christian refuses to run.

**Psa 11:1 In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?**

The Lord is the ultimate refuge. He knows. He cares. He may be depended upon to walk with His faithful through the most fearful times.

One or more voices called out to David, "Why do you not fly away into a hiding place where he who would destroy you cannot follow? It would be no more difficult than for the bird who has been flushed from a place of danger to wing his way to security.

**Psa 11:2 For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.**

Danger most certainly did exist. Neither David nor his advisors could overlook it. His life was in peril. In a sense the same condition holds true for all of the

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righteous. There are those who would relish seeing the faith of a Christian broken and battered until it was no longer able to be seen.

They take joy in mockery. They not only shoot at the upright in heart. They attempt to shoot them in the heart.

Psa 11:3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Such enemies of righteousness are convinced that if they can place sufficient difficulties in the path of God's child, he will trip over them and fall. The foundations are such beliefs as the existence of God, the reliability of the gospel accounts of the life of Christ, and the truthfulness of the Bible. If the Christian is caused to believe these foundation facts are unreliable, what is left?

Psa 11:4 The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

The antidote to such poisonous doubts is counteracted by the confidence that this wondrous universe did not come about separate and apart from a tremendous intellect which was, and is, supported with unlimited power. That, my friend, is a description of God. His existence cannot be successfully denied. He surveys His creation from heaven itself. Men might have to squint to see that which is far smaller than themselves. God has no difficulty in not only seeing every man, but in seeing the very heart of every man..

Psa 11:5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

When the Lord tries the righteous, He is allowing them to face difficulties which will result in removing the dross from them and leaving the pure gold. They will not flee like a bird to the nearest hiding place. They will stand true. God will cherish them as a human might cherish the most valuable of possessions.

Psa 11:6 Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

While Jehovah tries the righteous and counts them as precious and worth protecting, He abhors the wicked. Those are the very type that the psalmist is being advised to flee from because of the danger of violence on their part.

The Lord will see that they are dealt with for their rebellion. The illustration He uses to picture their destiny is that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Fire and brimstone were rained down upon those evil cities. Those who fight against God in every age will face similar tragedy.

Psa 11:7 For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

The psalmist need not fear his final fate. He may suffer at the hands of unbelievers during this life. He will not suffer eternally. God is righteous and He loves the righteous. "His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me."



Chapter 12

In every generation there are those who can relate to the author of this psalm. Sometimes it seems that the whole world is moving toward corruption. This is not so. God always has His faithful. Sometimes there are more. Sometimes there are less, but the child of God must always be encouraged with the thought that in the end the kingdom of God will prevail.

Psa 12:1 Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

Even if there are few godly persons to be seen, God is still there. Moreover, He has promised to remember those who love Him and keep His commandments. The writer of this psalm noted that the number of the faithful was decreasing in comparison with those who lived ungodly lives.

Psa 12:2 They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.

Vanity is worthlessness. Those who flatter others in order to gain advantage are following emptiness. to have a double heart is to have a heart devoted to God at one time, and then demonstrate a heart devoted to evil at another time. If there is some gain to be made by living the good life, they will do so. If there is gain to be made by companionship with the wicked, they will follow that path.

Psa 12:3 The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:

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Men may be deceived by flattery and encouragement of pride in others. God will see through every thought, word and action. All is transparent in His eye. Not only will He be aware of the deceit, He will separate Himself from the deceived.

**Psa 12:4 Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?**

Those described here do not concern themselves with truth. They do not worry over what effect they may have upon the eternal destiny of others. If they desire to lie, they will. If they desire to blaspheme, they will. Their attitude is that they have freedom of speech to voice any thought they may choose to utter. Neither God nor man can tell them what they are to speak or not to speak.

**Psa 12:5 For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.**

People such as those mentioned in the previous verses, who take advantage of others will find that God has taken note of their behavior. The sighs and groans of the poor and needy rise up to the throne of Jehovah. He will see that the oppressed are rewarded for their steadfastness in living the pure life.

**Psa 12:6 The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.**

Silver and gold a purified by being heated in an oven. The impurities are driven out of the pure metal. For



thousands of years God's Word has gone through the fire of persecution by the wicked. It still stands just as proudly as in the beginning. The truth is that it glistens even more brightly when it is polished by the evil speakers. They do not realize that they are causing it to stand out even more clearly by placing their lies beside it.

**Psa 12:7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.**

God's followers are promised that they shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free. Let the lover of truth cling tightly to that truth. They shall come forth from the fire and be God's cherished treasure.

**Psa 12:8 The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.**

It is a sad fact that when the leaders of men are evil, the wicked will strut about confidently. There are men who should be hailed as honorable. There are others who are hailed as honorable while they trod on the helpless. We must strive to select leaders who respect truth. If we do not, we will be surrounded by the greedy worshippers of the power mongers.

## Chapter 13

There are three parts of this psalm.

1. The psalmist is in despair at God's delay.
2. He utters a fervent prayer for divine help.
3. He rejoices in the hope of God's salvation.

**Psa 13:1 How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?**

The psalms are not ordinarily logical in nature, however they are usually packed with emotional appeal. The psalmist here expresses the same concerns most of God's people have felt at one time or another. Why does the Lord not act to relieve me of this horrible distress?

**Psa 13:2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?**

There are three considerations in this one verse. How long must I ponder what my path should be? How long will this present sorrow which I live with on a daily basis continue? How long will God allow my enemy to persecute me?

The questions above imply that he is almost at the point of giving up hope that God knows and cares about his plight.

**Psa 13:3 Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;**

His eyes are filled with sorrow. It is as if God had overlooked him. He is persuaded that unless help comes soon death will overcome him.

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Psa 13:4 Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

It is not for his own comfort alone that he prays. If his enemy succeeds in bringing about his death, He feels that if the foe does succeed, it will cause rejoicing that God's own efforts have been thwarted.

Psa 13:5 But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

In spite of all the difficulties, the psalmist has thus far been able to maintain his hope and trust in Jehovah. He still feels that he will be rescued through the power of the Almighty. Even though it may take even longer, he will continue to place his trust in God's promises of assistance for His children.

Psa 13:6 I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

The psalm closes with a statement of joyful thanksgiving for the help which he has already received from above. Since God had dealt with him in grace and mercy yesterday, surely He will do the same in the days to come.

The reader must never give up his confidence in the love of God for the faithful. Every man or woman of God will be tested. Those who prevail in spite of the attacks of Satan and his allies will find rewards many times over when compared with the torments of a few years in this land below.

Chapter 14

It would be wise for the dedicated student of the Word of God to make a comparison between this fourteenth psalm and the fifty-third. There is very little difference in the two.

We are also reminded of the teachings of Solomon who declared the beginning of wisdom is in the fear of the Lord. This psalm agrees in stating that the attitude of the atheist is folly, and his philosophy is incredible.

Psa 14:1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

It is more understandable that a man might say he does not know whether God exists, or does not exist, than to make the outright statement that God does not exist. Agnosticism (which denies certainty) is less ridiculous than atheism (which claims to be certain) there is no God.

In order to flatly deny the existence of God one must have the very characteristics which he denies in God. He must know everything, for the one thing he does not know may be the proof that God exists. He must be able to see every corner of heaven and earth, for the one place he cannot see may be the place where God is. He must also be eternal, for the one time which he has not experienced may be the time in which God existed.

As God looks down from the heavenly places, He sees such persons as being evil to the core, and accomplishing nothing profitable.

Psa 14:2 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

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Only one man in all of history was sinless. That was Jesus Christ, the Son of God and son of man. Under the all seeing eye of the Creator every man, other than the Messiah has stained with sin.

**Psa 14:3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

The newborn babe is innocent for a time. However, some time after birth each child falls into the snare of Satan. At that point every person is dead in sin, for the wages of sin is death. There is but one way to remove the penalty of sin. That is to have the sin washed away through faith, repentance, confession of Christ as the Son of God, and baptism by immersion in water. The blood of Christ can then continually cleans the one who calls upon the mercy and grace of the Lord.

Man is so completely surrounded by the filth of sin that the stench has been reduced to but an unpleasantness. This writer once visited a rendering plant. To the visitor the odor was nearly suffocating. To those who regularly worked in the plant, it was no serious matter.

**Psa 14:4 Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.**

The workers of iniquity are those who deny the existence of God. They are fools. We realize that in another passage of scripture we are told to call no man a fool. Nevertheless, when God calls a man a fool, we can agree.

Those who deny God sometimes do so in thought. Sometimes they do so with their voices. Sometimes they

do it by their deeds. One of these conditions is no better than the other two.

This type of person has no appetite for true knowledge. But, he does have an appetite for feeding upon those who are humble and godly. They are quite willing to profit materially at the expense of those who follow in the footsteps of Jesus, who went to the cross that others might have hope. Dictators who oppress their subjects, and business men who cheat their customers fall into this category.

**Psa 14:5 There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.**

The consuming of God's precious family may temporarily appear to be the height of prosperity. That will not last. God has not forgotten His own. He will snatch them from the pit of hell and reward them with life everlasting. The word "generation" is not talking about those who look back to the parents and forward to the children. It is used here to speak of those to were dead in sin, but whom God has given spiritual life.

**Psa 14:6 Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD is his refuge.**

What is the "counsel of the poor?" God is that counsel. The poor and lowly go to Him for refuge. The high and mighty feel no need of such counsel. The ones who have done the shaming are those who have labeled the wisdom of God as foolishness. Those who deny the wisdom of the Lord will some day find that they are the shamed rather than those who walk in the way of life eternal.

**Psa 14:7 Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back**



**the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.**

This last verse in power packed! It was written before Christ was born. Does this mean it must refer to the return of Israel from Babylonian captivity? Not in the view of the present writer. There have been two “Israels.” The first was fleshly Israel as seen in the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The second is spiritual Israel and who are brethren with Jesus Christ. Both fleshly and spiritual Israel came out of Zion, or Jerusalem.

It may be that before the end of the Christian age there will be a large movement of the fleshly Jews toward faith in Christ. That would certainly be a welcome condition. But, this verse can also refer to the spiritual Jews who have escaped the bondage of sin and who both have and look forward to true gladness and rejoicing.

## Chapter 15

This psalm asks a very important question in the first verse and then answers that question in the remaining four verses. It is a question which every honest man or woman ought to consider honestly and earnestly. It has eternal consequences.

**Psa 15:1 LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?  
who shall dwell in thy holy hill?**

The tabernacle was a movable tent which could be carried from one location to another as the people of Israel moved through the wilderness from the Red Sea to Canaan; that wondrous promised land

The Christian today lives in a temporary place of worship. When Israel arrived in the promised land Mount Zion in Jerusalem became the permanent center of worship. One day this temporary earth will be replaced by the new heaven and earth which will be a permanent place of worship.

The question asked in the verse is “Who will be counted among God’s faithful here on earth, and who will be included in heaven when eternity replaces time? There is no greater question which can be proposed to humanity.

**Psa 15:2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh  
righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his  
heart.**

Do not all men walk uprightly upon two feet? Most do, but this verse is talking about holiness, not physical posture. Some humans walk downright wickedly. They will not abide in God’s tabernacle on earth, nor dwell in His temple in heaven when life is past. Righteousness and

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wrong doing are opposites. Right and wrong are defined by Jehovah and not by the appetites of men. Truth and lies are also opposites. The one who dwells in approval in the presence of God is one who loves and lives according to divine truth. “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”

The man or woman of God walks, works and speaks in ways pleasing to his Maker.

Psa 15:3 He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

The reader would do well to consider the entire second chapter of the New Testament book of James in comparison with this verse. The one who backbites is he who waits until his neighbor is not looking or listening, and who then either speaks in a way that damages him, or acts to his disadvantage.

If men would do or say nothing when his neighbor’s back is turned that he would not say or do if that neighbor was aware of his speech or action, there would be far less back stabbing and much more cooperation upon this earth.

Psa 15:4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

The wise person will seek the company of those who separate themselves from the will of God. He will just as earnestly avoid the company of those who mock God with tongue or act.

The person who expects to live in the immediate presence of the Lord eternally must be willing to stand up

for his promises, even if the keeping of the promise causes discomfort to himself. If one advertises a product, that product ought to be as it is advertised. If one promises to pay for an item within a specified period of time, that payment ought to be made promptly, according to the promise.

Psa 15:5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

We come now to the last verse of this short chapter. We also come to a truth which should be more carefully observed. Should a person charge interest for the use of his money? At first glance it seems God has spoken sharply against usury in any sense of the word.

Mose commentators soften the words to mean that unfair collection of interest in the loaning of money is the sin here. If the rich take advantage of the poor by providing money for the poor man's use, but charge exorbitant interest rates for the loan, God condemns it.

But is it sinful to charge interest at all. Should the one who has money withhold it from one who needs it unless the needy will agree to pay it back with usury? The second part of the present verse may shed light upon the meaning of the first part. The loan of money for usury as condemned in this verse appears to be done with the intention of taking advantage of one who borrows the money. The guiding principle seems to be that if the loan of the money does damage to the borrower, it is wrong. If the borrowing of the money works to the advantage of the borrower, it would not be condemned.

God's people are to be known for their love of God and man. Those are the kind of persons whom God declares will worship in His eternal temple for ever and ever.

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## *Chapter 16*

We have here a statement of confidence in the providential care of God for those who love Him, and a warning of great sorrow for those who reject Him.

As with a number of others the psalm has a dual application. Much of what is said can be applied to David while he was enduring the persecution which he suffered at the hands of Saul. But, far more important is the application to the suffering and resurrection of the Saviour as he came to earth to made the supreme sacrifice for the sins of men.

The words of this psalm are extensively quoted by both Peter and Paul as they wrote of the Son of God.

**Psa 16:1 Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.**

The psalmist calls upon Jehovah to guide, guard and direct him during the difficult times of this present life. He expressive his confidence that he has not misplaced his trust.

All men and women who have existed upon this earth are destined for great suffering and sorrow as they walk this path of life, unless they give themselves to the service of the One who can walk with them through the valley of the shadow of death and into the joy of heaven.

**Psa 16:2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee**

The words here are probably those of David. He gladly confesses that he is absolutely dependent upon the God

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of heaven and earth. He knows this from the very depths of his heart.

In addition, he makes it clear that God is not dependent upon him. There is nothing he can do to improve upon God's well being. The blessings flow from God to him, not from him to God.

Psa 16:3 But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.

Any goodness which he has done must add to the well being of the saints of God on earth. He takes much pleasure in serving the children of righteousness. This must be true of David rather than of Christ. Both David and Christ took pleasure in serving those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness. David's service was limited. Chris's was not.

Psa 16:4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

Those who place false gods side by side with the True God, or even place them above the True One, will see sorrow beyond description, unless they turn from their evil way.

Some false gods are made of metal, wood or stone. Others are such as fame, riches and power. The lives of infant children were offered upon the altar of Molech. The blood of humans was actually poured out upon such altars. It is a lethal sin to even mention the names of false gods as rivals or superiors to the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

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**Psa 16:5 The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.**

Immense fortunes in gold and land have been passed from one generation to the next. None of these great fortunes are in any way comparable to the value of having Jehovah as one's inheritance. He is capable of enriching life in both this world and also in the next.

The faithful child of God is rich beyond description. Solomon's wealth pales into insignificance when one has the Giver of all good and perfect gifts as his benefactor.

**Psa 16:6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.**

Both David and Jesus the Christ could very well make the above statement. Both became great kings who are recognized for their prestige and for their authority over men. In fact, these words might well come from the lips of every true Christian. We are most fortunate in having been recognized as God's children and heirs of treasures uncountable.

**Psa 16:7 I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.**

The reins are the kidneys. Just as we presently speak of feelings deep within our heart, those of Biblical times thought of the kidneys as being located in the inner man. The psalmist was thankful for the guidance of God both day and night. He offered praise to the Lord for that instruction which had fed the soul and spoke to him

continually, urging him on to love and obey his source of strength and wisdom.

**Psa 16:8 I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.**

Although much of what has already been said has some bearing on Christ as well as on David, these last four verses are more directly applicable to the Saviour. They are quoted by the apostles as reference to God's Son.

(See Acts 2:23-31; Acts 2:36-37)

*Act 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:*

*Act 2:24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*

*Act 2:25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:*

*Act 2:26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:*

*Act 2:27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

*Act 2:28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.*

*Act 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.*

*Act 2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of*

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his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

Act 2:31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Act 13:36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

Act 13:37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

Psa 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

Psa 16:10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Since Christ defeated death, hell and the grave, God's children in every age may look forward in hope that they will do the same. Except for those who are raised at His second coming, the bodies of all men will see corruption. Christ's body remained only three days in the grave. It requires four days for corruption to be observable.

Even though the bodies of most men will see corruption, the souls of the godly will rest in hope.

Psa 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

What a beautiful conclusion to this chapter which is called the "golden psalm of David." Christ has made it possible for the godly to join Him at the right hand of

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God. There they will praise and glorify His name forever. There they will bask in the light of His love in a far brighter and happier day than they have known in this earthly journey.



## Chapter 17

There is very little doubt that the writer of this psalm is David. If so, it seems to have been written while he was being persecuted by King Saul, and was in constant flight in order to preserve his own life.

The entire psalm is a prayer for divine oversight of his life. He closes the psalm with words of confidence that one day his present difficulties will be ended and he will be in the more direct presence of the Lord forever.

**Psa 17:1 Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.**

This first verse is a plea for God to closely examine both his own life and that of those who persecute him. He calls upon God to evaluate his life and judge whether it is righteous.

His cry comes piteously to the ears of Jehovah. The Lord has promised to hear the prayer of His faithful and needy. David lays his case before the impartial Judge of all the earth.

David makes the claim that his prayer comes from a heart and lips which are sincere. He expresses his confidence that his case will be handled in a fair manner.

**Psa 17:2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.**

He is willing to accept whatever judgment God places upon him. But he does not want the sentence to come from God and not from those who desire to take his life from him. The sentence should be equal to his behavior.

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Psa 17:3 Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

The Lord had tested him, as He does all men. Both night and day the psalmist's life had been placed under God's all seeing eye. He was convinced the verdict would be "innocent." He was not thinking, speaking or acting in a manner that would justify the horror he was going through at the hands of his enemies.

Psa 17:4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.

The destroyer is, of course, Satan and his aides. David was quite willing that Jehovah should evaluate his life. He believed his works would prove him to be walking in righteous paths and not in the footsteps of the Devil.

It might be wise to point out here that if we are correct in our view that this was during the time of David's persecution by Saul, he had not as yet committed adultery with Bathsheba and had not caused her husband to be murdered.

Psa 17:5 Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Every man and woman on earth, through all time, would be in hideous danger if they were denied the help of God in resisting the temptations of Satan. Even with the help of the Lord, all of us slip from time to time. David knew this and begged God to direct him into paths of right.



Psa 17:6 I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech.

He placed great confidence in the willingness of God to hear his prayer. God is not a man that he should neglect to keep His promises. He had promised to hear His faithful when they cry out to him. He could be depended upon to honor that promise.

Psa 17:7 Shew thy marvellous loving kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.

Not only had God promised to hear the prayer of those who raised their voices in cries for help. He had promised to love them and see that all things worked together for their good. No enemy should be able to utterly destroy the righteous. Their persecutors might prevail for a time. This would come to an end, and be followed by peace.

Psa 17:8 Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

From David's time until these many centuries later, the apple of one's eye is that which one holds dear. It is protected carefully from damage. The figure of speech very likely comes from the fact that the pupil in the center of the eye is protected in numerous ways from external dangers. It is surrounded by bony structure of the skull. It has thin fleshy lids which can blink shut when objects move toward it. It even has a screen of eyelashes which aid in keeping out dust which might enter and do damage. David asks that God protect his life in a similar way.

Birds, particularly eagles are very protective of their young. If an enemy comes near the wings of the mother bird are spread out to cover the young. Thus, in two fine analogies, David made his case for Jehovah to protect him from those who sought his life.

Psa 17:9 From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about.

The enemies of whom he spoke were not just playing games. They were deadly. They would not be satisfied until he had been slaughtered. They had surrounded him much as hunters might drive a deer into an enclosure where they would slit it's throat and cut off it's head.

Psa 17:10 They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.

To be enclosed in their own fat was to be rolling in luxury. His foes had food, clothing and all else they needed, plus that which made their lives abundant. This resulted in their pride which produced great swelling words of self exaltation and threats to any who crossed them.

Psa 17:11 They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

These enemies were hunting him down in much the same fashion that game hunters would use every device for trapping their prey. They looked for every sign of his presence. Like deer hunters might bend over and examine the ground for the hoofprints of the deer, these foes were combing the earth to seek David out and kill him.



Psa 17:12 Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.

David knew the habits of lions. It is recorded that at one time he killed a lion who was a threat to the sheep which he kept. The lion, like many other of the cat family, crouches down and waits until the prey comes close; then leaps upon it and devours it.

Psa 17:13 Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword:

It appeared that thus far the Lord had not laid His hand upon those who were intent upon the destruction of David. He desired that this change. He asked that God foil the plans of the enemy. He watched for God to intervene and bring the plans of his enemies to naught. God has a sword which is capable of halting men's actions. That sword is His Word. God spoke the entire heavens and earth into existence. He can most certainly exert His will and see that evil does not destroy the faithful.

Psa 17:14 From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.

There are many in this world who amass great power and wealth. These men are to find that they have obtained all the pleasures they will every enjoy while they live in this present life. They have only God's wrath to experience in the eternal realm.

Not only do such persons heap up riches for themselves. They proceed to leave earthly fortunes to their children and scar their children's spiritual health. Neither they nor their children will see the eternal city of God in the heavenly places.

Psa 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

David expresses his confidence in the righteousness of God, and also of his own righteousness. He looks beyond the present distress and sees a time in which he will sleep the sleep of death. When he awakens from that sleep in the land of endless day, he will be found in the image of his God; the condition of man in which God created him in the beginning.



Chapter 18

This eighteenth psalm and the twenty-second chapter of Second Samuel are very near being duplicates. There are some variations, but in all they are similar enough that the reader should make close comparison between the two while studying either of them.

There has been much study concerning the amount of Messianic prophecy included in the two. Obviously much of what is said has to do with the life of David. Yet, there is also material which cannot possibly be true of David, and must have reference to Jesus Christ, the son of David, and also the Son of God.

There are at least four thoughts which are repeated in one way or another, and much emphasized.

1. The Nature of the God David magnifies.
2. The Fact that God will hear his prayer.
3. The Manner in which God responds.
4. The Gratitude David has for that response.

Psa 18:1 I will love thee, O LORD, my strength.

The Lord is the source and the sustainer of human strength. Without Him, life would be impossible. With Him, we can accomplish spiritual wonders.

The love spoken of here is no shallow emotion which wavers and may be quickly quenched by trials and difficulties. It is maintained in the face of every enemy, including pestilence, famine and death.

Psa 18:2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

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The rock spoken of in this verse was very familiar to David. He found safety in the caves while fleeing from Saul and other foes. In addition, rock is solid and provides a solid foundation for building. God is both a cave of safety for life and a foundation for building life.

God is a fortress in that no foe can break down the protecting wall which is erected by the faith the God fearing man incorporates into his life.

The buckler held the garments together and in place. It also provided support for the sword which the soldier carried. Surely the informed reader will recognize the similarity between the gospel armor of the book of Ephesians and the words of this verse.

The horn is representative of power. The horns of a bull are used in striking fear into the heart of those who are the target of his onrushing.

The high tower allowed the watchman to see and evaluate the strength of any approaching army. The Word of God does the same in that it defines the dangers and the enemies which lie everywhere about the man or woman of God.

**Psa 18:3 I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.**

What a wonderful thing it is to be able to call upon the Lord when our own strength is insufficient to meet the difficulties which loom before us. He is most certainly worthy of praise for his continuing love for His Children. As a concerned parent reaches out and pulls her careless child from in front of an onrushing automobile, so God is prepared to rescue His precious little ones.

**Psa 18:4 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.**

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David had been at the door of death a number of times. He had seen much death and dying among both friends and foes. There were many tears and fears in his heart. He saw wave after wave of the ungodly coming upon him. If he had been forced to depend upon his own strength, survival would have been quite impossible.

Psa 18:5 The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

Death and hell surrounded him on every side. Hell here is the abode of the dead. He feared both the act of dying and the transition from life to the realms beyond. The word “prevented” would be currently translated as “came before me.”

Psa 18:6 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.

Since David knew of the unlimited capabilities of the Lord, he called out to Him in prayer and was grateful beyond words to know his prayers had been heard.

Let me illustrate a present day case of such gratitude. I recently assisted a preacher who had undergone an operation in which over ninety percent of his stomach had been removed. He was suffering from a severe case of diabetes. After the operation, he had been placed on a diet of four hundred calories of nutrition per day. Within a matter of days after the operation, two members of the congregation for which he preached died and were to be buried on the same day. He hardly had strength enough to walk, yet he preached both of the funerals. I did go to the grave and finish the services for one of the two.

A few days after these two funerals, I was teaching a class for him. We were studying this very material. In the course of the discussion, he made a comment which I will long remember. He challenged the congregation to realize just how important it is that God hears the personal prayer of every faithful child and promises to act for the best interests of all concerned. This Lord we worship is both able and interested in hearing our prayers and in answering them.

Psa 18:7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

When God does answer prayer, He can cause whatever is necessary to happen. Earthquakes can take place both physically and spiritually, in the defense of His own. David had seen the most convincing evidence that God was taking up the defense when David was unable.

Psa 18:8 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

We are getting into material here which is highly figurative and which reaches beyond the everyday natural occurrences to the very end of time and the final judgment. This is Messianic prophecy and deals with the defeat of the enemies of the Son of God when the heavens are rolled away and the elements are melted with fervent heat.

When men become angry their nostrils widen and fiery words come forth from the mouth. When God becomes angry, much more serious damage is to be expected.

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**Psa 18:9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet.**

**Psa 18:10 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.**

There are three heavens, the one where the birds fly, the one where the storms and stars are found, and finally the one where God resides. The picture here is of God making His presence known by sending His power through the second heaven in the form of wind and thunderstorms. The wind reminds us of the speed of an oncoming storm. God's arrival is as swift as the angels riding upon the clouds.

Sometimes God's answers to prayer seem delayed. When this is true, there is a reason for that delay. He knows far better than the one who asks for His help, what type of help is needed, how it should be given, and when.

**Psa 18:11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.**

The darkness of the storm provides a covering for his glory. He can accomplish His wonders without being seen. The flood of troubles and the winds of disaster may be replaced by hope and security.

**Psa 18:12 At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire.**

Through the impressive darkness He can send the lightning and the hail. Even meteorites sometimes fall from the sky in flaming heat.

**Psa 18:13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.**

We first see the lightning. Then we hear the clap of the thunder. God speaks and all stand in awe. Is He punishing the faithful, or is He venting His wrath upon the wicked? We need not fear. When the sky clears, the faithful will be in His protecting arms.

**Psa 18:14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.**

We begin to see the answer. He will not be shooting his arrows at the saints. Nor will He be causing discomfort to the righteous. Ultimately He will scatter the evil ones and they will be uncomfortable beyond description.

**Psa 18:15 Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.**

When earthquakes occur it sometimes happens that the underground water systems are exposed and the water overflows the earth for acres and acres. The composition of the deep regions of the rock may be seen. And all of this again shows the wondrous magnitude of the power of the Almighty.

**Psa 18:16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.**

**Psa 18:17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.**





The above may apply to either David or our Saviour. Both were in danger of being overwhelmed by their enemies. David hid in caves. Christ prayed in the garden. Both of them appeared to be beyond help. The Father raised Jesus from the grave. He sent. The son of Zeruah to the rescue when David was about to be slain by the sword of a Philistine. No enemy can completely destroy the man of God.

**Psa 18:18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.**

**Psa 18:19 He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.**

After David had been in the narrow straits of persecution, The Lord brought him forth and caused him to live and rule in safety. David contends here that this was as result of God's delight in his general manner of behavior. Right here we must pause and consider this problem which arises more than once in the story of David's life. David at one time committed at least two sins which God declared to be worthy of death. He committed adultery and then caused the husband of the woman to be murdered to conceal his sin. How can a man be delightful to God after having acted in this manner?

May I suggest that we have a contrast here between David and the Christ. Christ was the perfect and sinless Son of God. David was the typical man who falls to the temptations of Satan. I presume the reader considers himself or herself to be a person in whom God find's delight. Now let me ask that your entire life be scanned from beginning to the present. Have you lived in such way that God would always have been pleased if He had knocked on the door of your heart and entered in? I think not!

We have a tendency to say, “David’s sins should have been remembered and never forgiven. Our own are so insignificant that surely the Lord will forgive them and consider us as washed in the blood of Christ and made perfect. After all, does the Bible not teach that the blood continuously cleanses the person who is trying to walk in the light?”

God is ready to forgive when man demonstrates his sorrow over having sinned and his determination to cling more tightly to the hand of the Father in the future. For the major part of his life, David lived in a manner pleasing to God. He sinned terribly. So have each of us. He turned back to live faithfully. Have you?

**Psa 18:20 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.**

This verse does not teach that David earned his way to heaven. No one does that. Death is the wages of sin. Sin separates one from God. David did claim he had abandoned his fleshly views and had cleaned up his life such that the Lord had blessed him.

**Psa 18:21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.**

He did not mean that he had not on occasion departed. He was stating that he had not permanently defied the way of righteousness and gone his own way.

**Psa 18:22 For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.**

For the major portions of his life he had kept the Word of the Lord where he could consult it and had used it as



a map for his choices of direction. Statutes tell men right from wrong. Judgments are the warnings God places before men to cause them to avoid the consequences they face for defiance.

**Psa 18:23 I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.**

Some writers understand this verse to mean David had to fight certain types of sin; that perhaps he had some difficulty in keeping his eyes and his mind from dwelling on lust. David could certainly not say he had lived his complete life without ever having fallen to sin.

**Psa 18:24 Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.**

This man knew he had lived a commendable way of life. He knew the Lord had promised more than once that He would reward the righteous and would punish the wicked. God had looked upon him and had seen him as one who was trying to live in purity. He had rewarded him in kind.

**Psa 18:25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;**

In what men call the “Lord’s prayer,” Jesus taught us to pray that God forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us. If we do this, we are living in the image of God.

God will be merciful to the one who is merciful. He will lift up the upright.

**Psa 18:26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.**

With the pure in heart, God will show help and cleansing. With the deliberately evil man, God will visit evil upon him. Do not turn your back on the Lord if you do not wish for Him to turn His own back on you!

**Psa 18:27 For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.**

The humble and lowly shall be raised up. The proud and arrogant will be brought down. This may not happen in this world. It most certainly will happen in the next.

**Psa 18:28 For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.**

David knew without the Lord he would be walking in spiritual darkness. The Lord does not wish for that to happen. He offers a candlestick which will lighten the way. God is light. They who walk with Him need never fear the darkness which Satan would love to see confuse every man.

**Psa 18:29 For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.**

Neither of these two actions is literal. Men do not run through a complete garrison of soldiers. Men do not leap over a wall intended to protect a city. We are being told that with God's help all things are possible. We are to do our best and then have confidence that all will work together for good to those who are His servants.

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Psa 18:30 As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.

There are enough examples of God's help for the downtrodden that there is no excuse for failing to trust Him. Just as that girdle which holds the clothing of the soldier in place and protects him from the arrows and the sword of the foe, God's arm will hold up the one who trusts Him.

Psa 18:31 For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?

Psa 18:32 It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

There is no true God but Jehovah. Man need look no other direction for perfect wisdom and strength. Man can not save himself. Man can not depend upon the images and idols made with their own hands. Only the Lord can provide a foundation which will not shift underfoot.

Psa 18:33 He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.

The wild goat can leap from crag to crag and escape from those who would capture him. God can cause the righteous to escape from danger in much the same general picture. There are high places where the enemy can not reach the one who stands upon those places.

Psa 18:34 He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

The word "steel" in this verse should probably have been translated from the Hebrew as "brass." Brass was known in David's time. Steel was not.

The point is that David could compare his strength when God was by his side to that of one who could use a bow which otherwise could never have been used. He was a strong warrior because God had made him that way.

Psa 18:35 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.

Salvation is a shield which is able to ward off the fiery darts of the wicked one. The one who would otherwise have fallen was able to stand when held up by the right arm of Jehovah. Even the weakness of God is stronger the strongest of men.

Psa 18:36 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.

David was very likely an old man when this psalm was written. Those of us who have reached the three score and ten mark can appreciate his statement about his feet slipping. Going up and down stairs and climbing in and out of a bathtub can be slippery experiences. One finds himself tipping over sideways without even realizing it has happened.

God can make the spiritual steps of his servants so sure and certain that their walk will always be steady. He will smooth the path and widen it for the security of His beloved children.

Psa 18:37 I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

Psa 18:38 I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

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The psalmist had defeated every enemy. Surely there were temporary setbacks. But there were no permanent surrenders. The truth of the above statements is so well evidenced that God told David he must not build the temple because his hands were stained with blood. This was David's lot. The sword was a large part of his life. He did use it efficiently, and used it against God's enemies and not in their support.

**Psa 18:39 For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.**

**Psa 18:40 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.**

What a contrast there is between the peaceful and humble spirited Son of God who used the sword of the Spirit, and the warlike life of this forerunner of Christ. Those who rose up against David were defeated by the sword of metal. Those who rose up against the Christ will be defeated by the sword of the Word.

**Psa 18:41 They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.**

At times the enemies of David resorted to crying out for help from God. It did not good. They fought against God. David fought with God. When they cried out for help against David, there was not answer.

The same will be true of the Christian. As long as he is on the side of the God of heaven, He will hear and answer. We cannot afford to neglect our fidelity to Him.

**Psa 18:42 Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.**

The enemies of the Lord were ground into such small powder they could offer no resistance whatsoever. It was like sweeping the dust in the house out into the gutters.

**Psa 18:43 Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me.**

This verse contains another strong indication of reference to the Messiah. David may have had rulership over certain small groups of heathen in his day. He may have struck such fear into their hearts that they were quick to offer their services to him.

Christ will reign over the entire world when all of his enemies have been subdued. His servants will come from every Gentile nation.

**Psa 18:44 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.**

**Psa 18:45 The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.**

David had already tasted of the submission of those who had heard and surrendered without him having to raise a hand against them. His reputation had preceded him. Those who might have fought decided it was much wiser to bow before his face and humbly serve him.

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Their close places were the places where they had been hiding.

Psa 18:46 The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

God is not dead! He lives! His name must be held high. His name and His kingdom must stand above every name.

Psa 18:47 It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me.

Psa 18:48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

Christians have been mocked. They have been beaten with whips. They have been fed to the lions. As David overcame all God's enemies, so will Christians be ever grateful that God allowed them to serve Him and hear those words, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joys of thy Lord."

Psa 18:49 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.

David had good reason to offer his thanks unto God. He had been able to sing the praises of God among the gentiles. Just so will the Christian one day sing the victory song of Moses and the Lamb.

Psa 18:50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

Who is being spoken of here as this eighteenth psalm comes to a close. Is it only king David? Not by any means! He did give deliverance to David. But He also gave deliverance to His Son when He raised him from the grave and lifted Him up to sit upon His right hand. Let us not stop there. Every true Christian has been baptized into the body of Christ. Every Christian is a king and reigns with the Christ. No faithful Christian will ever be permanently defeated by the forces of Satan.



Chapter 19

This nineteenth psalm is a highlight of the entire Bible. Like David, this present commentator spent years of his boyhood out in the country. When one is far from the city lights, the sky is a wondrous picture. It would take a special effort to avoid the conclusion that an intellect infinitely greater than that of all the men on earth combined to have created such a marvel.

One can almost see the young man gazing up at the stars at night and saying just such things as are expressed in the passage of scripture before us. To some readers many of the other psalms which deal with persecution by enemies show evidence of David as the writer. To the present writer this one is even stronger evidence of Davidian composition.

The psalm is about equally divided in it's content. The first seven verses tell of the wisdom, power and glory of God, as shown by the heavens above. The second half of the psalm concentrates on the wonders of the written Word of God and the applications that written Word has for men of all the ages.

Psa 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

God has manifested Himself in two great books. The first is the book of nature. It was not written on stones, parchment or paper. It was written in the sky. Let us note a very important scripture as we consider these first seven verses. (See John 1:1-2.)

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

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*Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.*

*Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

*Joh 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

The relationship of the Word of God and the created universe is strong and undeniable. Words are a means of expression. When the three parties of the Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit worked together to bring this universe into being, God the Son was also God the Word. When God the Father said, "Let there be light." God the Word and God the Spirit were co-partners in bringing all into being.

Could any stronger explanatory statement be made than that the "heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handywork? Surely not!!

**Psa 19:2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.**

As long as the sun rises in the morning and the stars appear at night, they will continue to tell of the Master of heaven and earth. Every day tells a little more of His magnificence. Every night demands a divine explanation for the existence of the millions of heavenly bodies and the laws which govern them.

**Psa 19:3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.**

No person in the world can ignore their voice. One does not have to know English, French, Greek, Hebrew or Russian to receive the message preached by the heavens. Honest

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minds and open ears and hearts will understand what God hath spoken. He is great. He is good. He is everlasting.

Psa 19:4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

Their line refers to the message the heavenly bodies cry out for all to see and hear. From the north and south poles to the equator their lessons may be learned just by gazing into the sky.

The sun is a wonder within itself. The earth maintains a distance of approximately 93 million miles from that ball of blazing fire which emits energy to warm and sustain earth's life. It dwarfs the earth in size, and yet there are other suns which dwarf it.

The sun has a place and a specific type of motion. It moves through space along with the planets which accompany it. It rotates on it's axis. A tabernacle is a temporary dwelling, and so it is true to say it wanders rather than being in a fixed position.

Psa 19:5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

In the morning the sun appears above the horizon much as a newly wedded man arises to begin each day of his life. The sun then makes it's journey as if it were a competitor in a race. It does not tire. It is always ready the next day to run another race.

Psa 19:6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

As the sun passes from dawn until setting, it provides heat and energy for the existence of life. If that energy were to be withheld for an extended period of time, the temperature of the earth would drop to absolute zero, which is 273 degrees below zero on the centigrade scale. Even the gases would freeze solid at such a temperature.

It is complete impossible for your present commentator to comprehend how an astronomer could be an atheist; nor a geologist, a chemist, a physicist, or any other person with an open and honest mind.

Psa 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

The psalmist now turns to an investigation of the Written Word, as contained in the Holy Scriptures. While the heavens and the earth declare the majesty and glory of God, the written Word reveals His relationship with man whom He created in His own image. What has God done for man in the past? What is He doing at present? What will He do for and to man in the future? What does He expect of man, and *why*.

We are now told of the usefulness of the Written Word. It is described in several variations.

First, it is presented as law. Law, as referred to here, is regulatory. It is intended to declare God's will for men's actions as they seek to please Him. Conversion is a change of behavior. The law, if heeded will cause those who are in spiritual danger to redirect their way of life such that it will be pleasing to the Creator.

Second, the testimony of the Lord is sure. In a court of law witnesses give testimony. That testimony may

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be true, or it may be false. The testimony of the Lord is never false. It is absolutely dependable. The simple are those who will hear instruction. These are not what we would call simpletons. These are the ones who know they do not know, and are ready to hear and obey. They may demonstrate their wisdom by hearing the testimony and they may become even wiser by attending to the law.

**Psa 19:8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.**

**Third**, the statutes of the Lord are capable of lifting men and women to higher spiritual levels. A statute is more specific than what was described as law in verse seven. Statutes are individual statements of the type of behavior God expects of His people. If they are obeyed, they will bring joy and happiness to the inner man.

**Fourth**, the commandments of the Lord are pure. They never lead His people astray. When a human decides to direct his own pathway, he will soon find sin and sorrow. If that human chooses to follow the commands of God, he will comprehend spiritual truths which can be found nowhere else but through the written Word. Why walk in darkness when the glorious light of God's Word can allow one to catch a vision of heaven which could lay just ahead?

**Psa 19:9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.**

**Fifth**, the fear of the Lord is not something to be avoided. It is not cowardice. It is not a paralyzing factor

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in one's life. It is the emotion which causes men to follow the will of the Supreme Being. We are told that the prime purpose of man is to "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Such a fear will not depart if and when one arrives in heaven. It will continue to make life happy as a result of loving Him.

Sixth, the judgments of the Lord are always fair and impartial. God is no respecter of persons. He will not ultimately punish the righteous nor reward the wicked. Temporarily, here in time, the wicked may prosper. When time has turned into eternity, we may rest assured that all will receive according to their works. The righteous will be crowned in heaven. The wicked will be cast into the fire of hell.

Psa 19:10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

The word "they" is not limited to the judgments which were last mentioned. It includes all six of the items above. Men have devoted their lives to the search for gold. They most certainly should consider the Word of God to be even more precious. This is not just ordinary gold. The Word of God is more desirable than the purest and finest gold in existence. Worldly fortunes will be but temporary. Spiritual fortunes will last after time has been completed.

It is an unusual person who does not like the taste of sweet food. Honey is one of the sweetest of all. While honey is still in the comb we are told that it is even sweeter than when it has been removed from the comb for a period of time. The Word of God is sweeter to the

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soul than the very finest of honey which has just been extracted from the honeycomb is to the tongue.

**Psa 19:11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.**

The Word of God is not meant to oppress man. It is presented to him for the purpose of spiritual growth. That spiritual growth can lead to entrance through the gates of the New Jerusalem where Christ sits at the right hand of the Father. No earthly reward can even faintly compare with existence in that Holy place.

**Psa 19:12 Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.**

There are at least two kinds of sin. There are those sins which only God can count. A man does not even know he has committed this type of sin. It is still necessary to inform God of our desire to keep His will. He has promised that repentance and prayer will be recognized. Those sins which are hidden even to the eyes of a godly person, can be forgiven.

**Psa 19:13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.**

Secondly, there are sins which are committed with full knowledge that God has defined them and we know very well our actions, words, or thoughts, were condemned when we allowed them to have dominion over us.

Such sin, which is intentionally defiant to that which God had forewarned us, it called “great transgression.” If we can call for forgiveness for the sins we commit without knowing them, and we can with the help of God avoid those which are defiant, we may be found innocent in the time of judgment.

**Psa 19:14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.**

If the meditations of the heart are focused on truth and righteousness, the heart will be a fountain of glory to God. If the heart is right and the tongue is bridled, the stream which comes from the mouth will be spiritually pure.

But why does the psalmist not include righteous deeds along with holy thoughts and pure words? It is very likely that he recognized a heart and a tongue that are right will be accompanied by deeds of righteousness.



## *Chapter 20*

Psalms 20 and 21 fit together well. Psalm 20 is a prayer for divine assistance in battle. Psalm 21 is a prayer of thanksgiving for victory in battle. Bible students express some difficulty in interpretation because of the changes of person. Many of these difficulties dissolve if we are willing to apply the prayer to King David and also to the King of Kings, Jesus Christ. David faced fearsome odds against the horses and chariots of the Syrian army. Jesus Christ faced a significant foe in Satan and his angels. The way to victory in both cases lies in placing faith in Jehovah.

**Psa 20:1 The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;**

This portion of the psalm is obviously a plea for someone to be heard by the Lord, and also defended by that same Lord. But who is praying and who is he praying for? It is this writer's contention that the people of God are praying and that they are praying for David in his time, and that the prayer is also applicable to the Christ as He faced the battle of the cross.

**Psa 20:2 Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion;**

God's sanctuary was the holy place in the tabernacle and the tabernacle. His throne was between the wings of the cherubim on the cover of the mercy seat. Today God is seated on His throne in heaven, with Jesus at His right hand. In David's day Zion was a mount in the city of

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Jerusalem. Today the church is at type of the New Jerusalem which will descend from heaven at the time of the end.

David needed help from the throne of the Heavenly Father. Jesus trusted in His Father even while he hung on the cross.

Psa 20:3 Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

The prayer continues with a request for God to remember all of the offerings and sacrifices which both David and Jesus offered. David offered various types of offerings, particularly burnt offerings. Jesus offered His own life at the hands of sinners.

Psa 20:4 Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

The prayer is not intended to be a command for God to do that which would conflict with His own will. It is a request for Him to fulfil the promises He has made that He will hear and protect His faithful children, especially His anointed ones. The reader will remember that both David and Christ are referred to as God's anointed.

Psa 20:5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

The persons doing the praying are confident that God will save them from their enemies. They promise to hold His name high. We have a song which talks of a royal banner which the saints will hold high in the name of the Lord. Armies of all the ages took great pride in the

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banner of their military companies. The prayer promises that God's people will set up their banners and rejoice in His name if He will be with their King. It would have meant some type of cloth banner in David's time. Today it might very well mean the banner of the cross.

**Psa 20:6 Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.**

Now the "we" of the previous verses changed to "I." This is no serious difficulty. We is made up of a great many individuals. Every individual "I" could join in the request for the Father to hear from his throne of grace. The important point of the verse is to express confidence that the divine power will be applied to the battle on the side of the anointed leaders, David in his time, and Christ in His time.

**Psa 20:7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.**

Solomon was told there were three things he was to avoid multiplying. The three were riches, women and chariots with horses. He disregarded God in all three commands. It did not work to his advantage.

The horses and chariots of the Egyptians did not give them the victory over the Israelites, who were moving on foot. Nor will modern arms prevail against the soldiers of the Lord. When compared with the power in the right hand of the Living God, nuclear weapons are no more than toys. Let those who worship the Lord have faith that He will give them victory.,

**Psa 20:8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.**

Whether it be the Syrian army which Israel faced under David, or the spiritual foes of God's people who would destroy them today, Those who place their trust in the right arm of the Lord will be the ultimate victors!

**Psa 20:9 Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.**

Oh Lord, hear us when we pray! We need strength from thy throne as we face the foe. We are not strong enough by ourselves to overcome the world. Just as David needed providential assistance against the chariots and horses of the opposing armies, we call for the entire Godhead to cooperate in rescuing us in our combat against the evil one.



## *Chapter 21*

As pointed out in the previous psalm, the twentieth and the twenty-first psalms make a pair. The twentieth requests the help of Jehovah in overcoming the foes of the king. The twenty-first is one of thanksgiving for the victory.

The first portion of this psalm is devoted to the expression of thanks. The second looks forward to even greater victories to come. This writer agrees with the majority of the commentators that this psalm has strong messianic overtones. There is no doubt that it does deal with king David's triumphs over the enemies of God's people, but at the same time there are verses which cannot be properly explained unless they are applied to the Son of David, Jesus Christ.

**Psa 21:1 The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!**

It was not through the human strength of king David that he was able to subdue certain enemies. It was possible only through the power of the Lord. It was proper that he write a psalm praising God for the victory.

However, in this very first verse we find the word salvation. It was salvation which came through Jehovah that enabled the victory. That salvation had dual application. It certainly was true that David's salvation from the foes was from the Lord. It was also true that a far greater salvation was to come through the sacrifice of the Son of David. The salvation of God's people through David typified and foreshadowed that by the Christ.

**Psa 21:2 Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.**

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The king had prayed fervently that he be endued with sufficient power to defeat the enemy. His desire had been granted. He was now doing exactly what would be expected of one who had been blessed in answer to prayer. He was wording another prayer of gratitude.

At the same time, Jesus the King of kings prayed for victory in the Garden of Gethsemene as he approached the crucifixion. Some were ignorant of the enormity of what they were about to do. For them he prayed, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Others were acting from rebellious pride and greed. Judas and the scribes and Pharisees should have known and cared not.

Those who fought against God must be punished. Those who supported the King must be told to enter into the Kingdom which was about to be established.

Psa 21:3 For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

The word "prevent", as used in the King James Version of the Bible, had quite an opposite meaning from that which it has today. It meant to "go before." The verse thanks the Lord for sending blessings ahead of the king to prepare the way for the triumph.

A crown of gold was the sign of authority. David at one time took the gold crown of a king which his soldiers had defeated and placed it upon his own head.

While Christ was still writhing in agony upon the cross, a sign was written above His head. "The king of the Jews." After his death and resurrection he was taken to the right hand of the Father and enthroned along with the Father.



Psa 21:4 He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.

David asked for his life to be protected that he might lead the people of God. He was granted that protection. He did not die in battle.

Even after His death, Christ was raised from the grave. He lives eternally. It cannot be said of David that he was granted eternal life. David is still in the grave. But, the Son of David was given length of days for ever and ever!

Psa 21:5 His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

David has been glorified through the pages of Holy Scripture. He has been called “a man after God’s own heart.” His sins have been pointed out, but without fear of contradiction we can say that he had received much honor from the Father.

On a far greater scale, Christ is glorious in the salvation which He made possible through the shedding of His blood that men’s sins might be removed. The honor and majesty which He has been given exceed that of king David by more than the glory of the sun exceeds that of the stars.

Psa 21:6 For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

The Most Blessed is God. The verse cannot in fulness be applied to David. David was blessed, but not to the degree suggested here.

God looked with approval upon both David and

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Christ. Both were made glad when the Father showed His approval through the triumphs which each was allotted.

**Psa 21:7 For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.**

If David had depended upon his own leadership ability, all would have been lost. He did not do that. He placed his life and that of his subjects in the hand of Jehovah. As a result he and those he led succeeded in fending off the enemy.

In the case of Christ, who allowed Himself to be made little lower than the angels, and even allowed himself to be beaten, spit upon and humiliated on the cross, He was to be placed in a position which would be secure forever more.

**Psa 21:8 Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.**

In the final day no enemy of Christ will elude the wrath of the Father. Each of them will be found. No hiding place will be sufficient. The hand of God will reach into the remotest places in order that justice be executed.

**Psa 21:9 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.**

The enemies of God will become fuel for the fire of God's wrath. The verse does not say they will be thrown

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into a fiery furnace. It says they will be as a fiery furnace. Each will provide fuel for the destruction of the other.

Psa 21:10 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

Whereas Christ's brethren will continue in eternity. The offspring of sinners will be eliminated. This does not infer that a wicked man may not have offspring who despise his ways and seek to do that which is righteous. The fruit and the seed of the wicked are the sins which they commit and the sinning children who follow in their evil footsteps.

Psa 21:11 For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.

Those who plot against the Lord will not succeed in the long run. They will be defeated because they have neither the wisdom nor the power to carry out their evil visions. David's enemies saw defeat. Christ's enemies will face an even more inglorious end.

Psa 21:12 Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.

Such enemies of righteousness may prepare to attack. They may place their arrows in the bow and make ready to shoot them. The time will come when they will be forced to turn and run when they realize they are facing an infinitely greater power in the God of heaven.

Psa 21:13 Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.

The psalm ends with a promise to sing praises to and about the Lord. It was his power which protected David and his forces. It will be His power which assures the final victory for Christ and His brethren.



Chapter 22

The present psalm is one of the most beloved of all the one hundred and fifty. It is quoted several times in the New Testament with reference to the suffering of the Saviour. As with many of the other psalms, it can be applied to the distresses which came upon David, and also upon those of the Christ.

Those who are interested in evidences for the divine inspiration of the Bible can find much here that verifies their confidence. No human could have produced written material predicting as accurately as this psalm does the details of the crucifixion centuries before the event actually took place.

No believer in the Holy Scriptures can deny the inspiration of this psalm. We shall include a number of quotes from the New Testament which Jesus, or the apostles themselves made application to the Son of God.

Psa 22:1 My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

Compare Matt. 27:46.

Mat 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Notice the personal touch in this first verse. The speaker does not even say "Oh God." He says "My God." Jehovah is aware of the experiences of every man and woman on earth. The righteous can with confidence cry

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out for help when help is needed. That which is right for that individual will be given. It may not be exactly what the person believes is needed, but it will be that which is most appropriate at the time. Even though it may appear that his or her God has forsaken them, such will be temporary.

David spent years attempting to preserve his life as he was pursued by those who hated him. He felt he had been completely abandoned by the Lord. This was not the case. He was later to become king of Israel and the Saviour would come from his seed.

When Jesus was upon the cross, he expressed the same agony. Why had His Father in heaven left him to face the cross alone? He was in greater need than had been the case since He came into this world. He had given Himself completely to the will of the Father. Now he was at the mercy of those who would do everything in their power to prevent the gospel from being preached to the lost. His cries were accompanied by tears and exhaustion. Was there no other way?

**Psa 22:2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.**

Compare Matt. 26:39:40.

*Mat 26:39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

*Mat 26:40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?*



Christians are told to pray without ceasing. We often pray at meals, when we arise in the morning and when we come to the close of the day and rest in our bed. Most of our troubles are small when compared with those of our Lord. He prayed through the entire night in the Garden of Gethsemane just before he went to the cross. No doubt He prayed again and again both night and day for the plan of salvation to be presented to and accepted by the lost.

**Psa 22:3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.**

Christ's cry was based upon the very nature of His Father. He felt that His cries must be reaching the ears of the Almighty. It was not just that He was powerful enough to help. It was that His holiness would be expected to respond to the cries of the oppressed. There was reason to believe His pleas for help would be answered. Why had this not already taken place?

What does it mean to say God inhabited the praises of Israel? To this present writer it means that God was near enough that He could and would hear and respond to their prayers.

**Psa 22:4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.**

Over and over in the past, God had responded to the cries of his people. He had delivered them from Pharaoh. He had been with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace. They had needed Him and He had attended to their needs.

**Psa 22:5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.**

In case after case, those who had trusted in God's power and concern for His own had resulted in His assistance. He had not forsaken them. They were not left bewildered. Their cries were answered with relief.

**Psa 22:6 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.**

It was different now. Jesus had left the joy of the heavenly places and allowed himself to be made little lower than the angels. As he was hanging on the cross he had even been lowered to a point lower than men. There are two views as to the meaning of His statement that he was a worm and no man. One is that He was thinking of himself in that way. The other is that those who were gazing at Him saw Him in that light. The latter view seems to be most in harmony with the words which follow.

**Psa 22:7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,**

Compare Isa. 53:3.

*Isa 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*



It does not take much imagination to picture the scene at the foot of the cross. The Scribes and Pharisees whom He had reproached for their hypocrisy were now gloating over His condition. They were making faces at Him and wagging their heads back and forth in mockery

**Psa 22:8 He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.**

They were challenging Him to call upon God to take Him down from the cross. Since He had placed such trust in His Father up to this time, why did He ask why He had forsaken Him?

**Psa 22:9 But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.**

The speaker now changes. The following are the words of Jesus. Though from all outward appearance it seemed that He had been abandoned by Jehovah, He would still hope.

**Psa 22:10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.**

Christ had placed Himself in His Father's hands from the time in which he was in the womb of Mary until the time in which He was crying out for help. His Father had always shown Himself to be available and willing to provide such help. There had been much tribulation, but never had He been left powerless against His foes.

**Psa 22:11 Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.**

Surely God would hear and answer His pleas. He had even more need of help than had been the case up until that time. No man was there to help. Only Jehovah could furnish relief.

The reader will note that although David was in dire difficulty and danger from his enemies, the present description must be that of Christ while He was at the mercy of those who were crucifying Him.

**Psa 22:12 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.**

The bloodthirsty mob were like a herd of stampeding bulls. They were bellowing for His death in a manner more like beasts than like men.

**Psa 22:13 They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.**

The “gaping” describes the open mouth with the teeth bared like that of a hungry lion who has gained control of it’s prey and is ready to pounce upon it.

**Psa 22:14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.**

The Son of God who had stilled the waves and quieted the wind through the power of the Holy Spirit now was as weak as water which is poured out of a pitcher. Everything about His body had lost it’s ability to protect itself from the howling mob.



**Psa 22:15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.**

What a contrast this was to what He had been before! The superhuman power which had healed the leper was gone. The tongue which had preached the sermon on the mount had been limited to the extent that all it could do was cry out the question, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me?"

**Psa 22:16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.**

Those who were bent on murdering Him more closely resembled a pack of wild dogs than human beings.

They had driven nails through His hands and His feet to pin Him to the cross. These words did not refer to David. They referred to Christ Jesus.

**Psa 22:17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.**

As the outstretched arms supported the weight of His body, his ribs were easily counted through the flesh covering them. The scene was gruesome. Nevertheless, the watchers were staring at Him with satisfaction.

**Psa 22:18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.**

He had been left unclothed. The pictures artists have drawn of Christ upon the cross are more modest that was probably the case. It is quite likely that He spent

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some time with His nakedness completely exposed. Some of the garments were taken by various persons. One particularly desirable outer garment was gambled for at the foot of the cross.

Psa 22:19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

At this point Christ had no more power than other men. He was completely at the mercy of His foes. He begged the Almighty to intercede for Him. Why would He not come close and show His love for His Only Begotten Son?

Psa 22:20 Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

Must He be murdered by the weapons of men? Must his precious life be ended by the wild beasts who hungered for it?

Psa 22:21 Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

This verse is not talking about the mythological creatures which looked like horses and had a single horn on the front of their head. The name of the animal no doubt came from the fact that it had a single horn. This could have been true of the rhinoceros or of a certain type of large sea creature which also has a single horn which is a very powerful weapon.

The main point should not be lost. Those who wished to destroy Him were like mad bulls. They were like vicious dogs. They were like hungry lions. They were like charging rhinos.

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**Psa 22:22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.**

If the Lord would but rescue Him from His plight, He would, as he had in the past, give glory and honor to God's name. He would cause it to be lifted up among God's children. He would spread it to the entire congregation of God's own.

The following verses seems to be a look backward, after the prayer was heard and answered.

**Psa 22:23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.**

The psalmist calls out for the Jews to give God the praise which is due to Him. Respect Him. Glorify His name. He does hear. He will answer.

**Psa 22:24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.**

God had heard the prayer of David. He would also hear the prayer of His Dear Son. He had seen and hated the horrors which had been heaped upon David. He would do the same for His Beloved Son.

It does not stop there. God would not ignore the affliction of any of His faithful. When any one of them begs for help, He will see that all things work together for good in the end.

**Psa 22:25 My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.**

The great congregation may not be identical with that of verse twenty-two. This time it appears that the great congregation includes gentiles as well as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

**Psa 22:26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.**

Those who have humbled themselves will not be forgotten. They who have hungered and thirsted for righteousness shall find their hunger filled. They who have loved and obeyed the Lord will find that no one will be able to take their lives permanently. They will live eternally in the presence of the God whom they have adored.

**Psa 22:27 All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.**

Compare Psa. 2:8-9.

*Psa 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*

*Psa 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

After our precious Christ returned to appear before his apostles, He commanded them to go to all nations and preach the gospel to them. What was to be the result of obedience to that command? People from all over the earth would remember the sacrifice of the Son of God. Not only would they remember His death. They would

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remember the promise of forgiveness of sins. As a result they would worship before Him.

Psa 22:28 For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations.

Compare Rev. 11:15.

Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

The kingdoms of men come and go. The one eternal kingdom is that which is governed by the Lord of lords. Men may defy His power for a time. They will not be allowed to continue that defiance. Earthly kings are all subject to the One True King of the universe. The sooner men discover this truth, the sooner they will live in peace with nature, with fellowmen and with the Godhead.

Psa 22:29 All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

The rich and the poor alike depend upon Him. The fat are those who have much. Those that go down to the dust are the poor. All classes of men live under His scepter. He gives life. He removes life. No man can live forever without God supplying the living force.

Psa 22:30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

Christ was the seed of David. Those who have heard Christ and worshipped God have brought others to spiritual life. The word “generation” is not speaking of a group of persons who live three score years and ten, or by reason of strength fourscore. It is related to the word “genesis” which means to be brought into existence. The preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified has resulted in spiritual life for millions who have inherited eternal life.

Psa 22:31 They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.

Each century sees the family of God transmitting their faith to those of another century who are to hear about the Righteousness of the seed of David and honor that One who died for us. There will be “Victory In Jesus.”



Chapter 23

We take pleasure in dealing with an old friend we have known since vacation Bible school days when we were still sitting on mother's lap. After some seventy years we should have gained a much deeper appreciation of this masterpiece. Let us share it together.

There is disagreement over the point in the life of David when he wrote this psalm. The first part of the psalm shows very vivid recollections of the experiences of a young man caring for the sheep and leading them to the best pasture. Also it speaks of the need of protection for the sheep. Thus, many think it was written early in David's life.

The latter part of the psalm seems to look forward to the writer being led through death to that which lies beyond. Thus, others see it having been written when David could see the evening of life not that far ahead.

Whichever may be the case, it is one of the most beautiful, as well as meaningful, pieces of writing in the entire history of all mankind. It has no doubt comforted more friends and relatives of those who were being lowered into the grave than any other words. Our feeble efforts to comment upon it will fall far short of doing it justice.

Psa 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

The author of this psalm had been a shepherd lad, charged with leading the sheep to the richest pasture, as well as seeing that wild animals were frightened off. He knew the relationship between a shepherd and the sheep for which he cared. Since the Lord in heaven was

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his own shepherd, it stood to reason that he would be provided with what he truly needed.

**Psa 23:2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.**

There were all kinds of grazing land. Some was rich and luxurious. Some was rocky and the grass was sparse. The good shepherd was expected to know which location would be furnish his sheep with the finest possible food. Just as he had led his sheep to the finest sites, he felt assured that his own shepherd would lead him to the very finest in life.

The “still” waters were those which spoke of peace. Softly flowing brooks are soothing to the soul. What a contrast these make with the torrents of water cascading down the sides of the mountains after a lightning storm. The thought of the still waters brought calm to the heart of David. It can do the same for the souls of men thousands of years later.

**Psa 23:3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.**

When his soul was restless and he gazed into the distance where danger lurked, he had the promise of God that the danger would be pointed out. He would be led back into the proper pasturage where the wolves and lions would be hesitant to attack.

It was a source of peace to the author of the psalm to know that God had connected his own peace and safety with the influence of His name. As David walked in paths of righteousness, the name of Jehovah was glorified.



**Psa 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.**

There are mountains of joy and valleys of tears in the lives of every person. David had learned that in both conditions, he could depend upon the Divine Shepherd. Even if it came to the time when he would leave life on this side of the grave and pass through the shadows of the valley of death, That Great Shepherd above would see that he would emerge from that valley on the other side to sometime be with the angels of God.

God's rod and staff might cause some slight discomfort at times as they made it clear that his footsteps were headed into danger. In the end, he would be eternally grateful for the protection and guidance which were given to him.

**Psa 23:5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.**

The table mentioned here was far more than a dinner table. It consisted of every blessing he found himself in need of. It was food. It was protection. It was companionship. It was goals which made life worth living. Anointing the head with oil and filling one's cup to overflowing were terms used to point out the wondrous gifts provided to God's faithful that they might know of His care and His recognition of their worth.

**Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**

The house of this verse was not limited to the place where the psalmist laid his head down to rest at the close of the day. It was the household of his Father in heaven. In that house there was not danger of ultimate destruction. Even if death were to claim him before the time, he would still be recognized as an important member of the flock of the Great Shepherd. Every blessing was waiting. He must demonstrate his love for the Shepherd in order that the promise of dwelling in the Father's house forever would become a blessed reality.

This life is not the end. The man or woman who is faithful to the Heavenly Shepherd may look forward to walking hand in hand with the Lord during this earthly life. While doing so he or she may look beyond the valley of the shadow of death to blessings beyond the farthest reach of the mind's eye.



## *Chapter 24*

In spite of the unbelief of the masses, there is a God. He is the one who created all things, including man. He has allowed man to make his home on this earth for a short time. Then, when those few short days are over, man leaves what he has called his own and someone else makes use of it.

It is extremely wise for humans to be aware of the privilege of life, the brevity of it and the hope of eternal joy. This earth is but a testing ground in which we may prove our interest in extending our existence in a closer relationship with our Maker. This psalm leaves no doubt as to who is owner, and who is to be worshipped in the here and now.

**Psa 24:1 The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.**

Not only does the entire earth belong to God; everything upon the earth is His. Even we who call ourselves humans and who rule the vegetable and animal kingdoms are ultimately the property of Jehovah. For a short time we even have control of the material and physical bodies which our souls inhabit. Then the body returns to the dust from which it came and the soul goes on to the afterlife.

**Psa 24:2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.**

Men stand amazed at the immensity of the atmosphere and the oceans. How was it brought into being? We have many guesses from the scientific world, but really the

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secret lies in the mind of God. We only know that which He chose to reveal to us. How does something come out of nothing? Men are left scratching their brows.

Psa 24:3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

It is ridiculous for men to see themselves as sitting on the throne of glory. God sits in that place. No man ever has had, nor ever will have the wisdom or the power to climb to the side of his Creator. The more men learn about the universe, the more they should admit their frailty in comparison with the knowledge or power of the Lord.

Psa 24:4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

Does the reader wish to come into the presence of his Maker. The closest one can come is to keep both the inner man and the outer man clean and pure. One cannot approach God by living life separate and apart from the instructions of the Lord. To turn an empty and vain life into a rich and rewarding one, hear and obey the Word of the Lord. Love the truth. Avoid the lie. Fear God and do His will.

Psa 24:5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Altogether too many humans have studied very carefully the art of finding out what their human superiors desire from them, and then making use of

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that knowledge to gain their favors. It is infinitely more important for we humans to search out the will of God and do everything within our power to please Him. The advantages which arise from such efforts will last when time has changed into eternity.

No man is perfectly righteous without the help of God. All men sin. The righteousness which men may claim is that which comes through forgiveness of sin. Let us reach out for that which God has extended to us through the sacrifice of His Son.

**Psa 24:6 This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.**

What is meant by saying, This is the generation of them that seek God's face? The word "generation" is related to the word "Genesis." The thought here is that true life only comes about when men seek diligently to know the truth and apply it. It is possible to know God's truth. Seek it. Feed upon it, and it will make you free.

**Psa 24:7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.**

The present writer worked for a short time in the record office of the Michigan State Prison. It was necessary for him to deliver notices for prisoners who had served their time to be prepared for leaving. The gates had been closed to them for a long time. Now they were open for them to walk through without restriction. When the warden of the prison approached the gates, they were quickly thrown open.

The King of Glory is Jesus Christ. He has made a way

for sinful man to be released from the bars of the prison of sin. We must not neglect the opportunity to pass through the gates which he has unlocked for us.

**Psa 24:8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.**

**Psa 24:9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.**

Our King has won the victory over the forces of Satan. Any man who clings to the hand of the Lord of glory can walk past the shackles of sin and liver forever.

**Psa 24:10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.**

Do you object that this is speaking of Jehovah and not of Jesus Christ, His Son. I remind you that Jesus Himself said, "I and my Father are one!".

It should be added that many place a quite different explanation of the call for the everlasting doors to be lifted up that the King of glory might come in. The present writer has taken the view that the everlasting gates are the passageway into heaven. It is also possible that these gates are the doors of men's hearts which will not be forced open that the Christ may enter. The reader may well have read the thought many times before that the door of the heart must be opened from the inside. It will not be broken down. He is knocking and waiting for the door to open. Do not keep it locked.

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Chapter 25

Now we have a plea for God to lead those who place their faith in Him in the paths of truth and righteousness. There are many pitfalls which can entrap the unwary traveler as he or she passes through this earthly journey. The only way which leads to eternal reward is the one laid out by the Father and the Son.

Psa 25:1 Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

Psa 25:2 O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

Sometimes we have the experience of sitting at a table in a restaurant and having a server bring a delicious meal and place it before us. On a far larger scale humans are given the opportunity to offer their own soul to God. The one who refuses to present himself will be the loser. The enemies spoken of here include more than one with a bow, a spear or even an atomic bomb. They are those who would destroy our hope of heaven. They must not be allowed to bring us down to defeat.

Psa 25:3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

To be ashamed is to wish that we could go back and follow another path than the one chosen. The psalmist prays that all who offer themselves to the service of the Lord rejoice in the choice which they have made. The ones who should be ashamed are those who trespass against the declared will of the Almighty. They have no excuse



for their folly. It is just and right that such sinners be ashamed and wish they had traveled on the other road.

Psa 25:4 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

Psa 25:5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

This is an interesting pair of verses. God has declared His will for men in the Holy Scriptures. Should not man recognize the truth which has been placed before him and live by it? Is there some guiding spirit which must act along with the revealed Word of the Lord?

May we suggest that the way of salvation is not a path of loneliness. God has blazed the way through revelation and example. We who would draw nigh to Him must desire to follow His truth as much as He desires that we follow it.

Psa 25:6 Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.

From the beginning man has demonstrated his weakness. He has ever needed the mercy of a forgiving God to help him rise up and walk again after he stumbles and falls. Adam needed it. Moses needed it. David needed it. There is none who can claim perfection without obtaining it through the sacrifice on the cross.

Psa 25:7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.



If the psalmist was David, we remember the sins of his maturity more clearly than any he may have committed in his youth. But, this may not refer to David. It may include every man and woman who ever lived upon this earth, with the exception of Christ. There are sins of youth. There are sins of middle age. There are sins of old age. We must pray that the Lord forgive us of those of every age.

Why is the statement made that the sins might be forgiven for the sake of the goodness of the Lord? Is it not that forgiveness is a quality of the divine nature? We are commanded that we forgive those who trespass against us, even as we are forgiven of our trespasses against God. God is glorified when forgiveness triumphs over malice.

Psa 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

Psa 25:9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

What a wonderful thing it is that the Lord of the entire universe is good and upright. He is interested in changing those who have been living in ways of sin and worldliness to lives of truth and love. He will not force Himself upon men. His method is to watch for those who are willing to put self into the background. When this happens He is eager and very willing to teach those who humble themselves.

Psa 25:10 All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

Does this verse teach that the Lord will be unmerciful to those who refuse to keep His covenant and His

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testimonies? Certainly it does teach just that if men stubbornly refuse to desire His mercy and grace. It is left to mankind as to whether they choose truth and mercy, or lies and darkness.

**Psa 25:11 For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.**

When an earthly father finds that his children have rebelled against his authority, he knows his name has been downgraded in the community. When the Heavenly Father finds that His children have turned to follow Satan, God's own name is robbed of glory.

**Psa 25:12 What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.**

As we have mentioned numerous times, the fear of God is not one which paralyzes. It is one which causes men to do their best to avoid bringing His wrath down upon them. The one who truly fears the Lord will eagerly seek the truth which He has given through the Word.

**Psa 25:13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.**

The man who fears God and keeps His commandments is far more apt to find his own children living lives which are rich and fulfilling. We are not discussing the ownership of thousands of acres of rich land filled with great numbers of rental property. We are talking about that which is truly important such as a clear conscience and a realization that one has done what was expected of him when he was allowed to live.

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Psa 25:14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

The secrets of the Lord are precious and well worth seeking out. Those who are diligent in searching for them will be rewarded by an understanding of His will.

Psa 25:15 Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

Let us keep our eyes fastened on the truth. This writer's father used to advise him to keep his eye fastened on a fence post at the other end of the field when plowing a furrow. That way the furrow would be straight. If the eye drifted off the goal it was almost assured that the furrow would waver. We do not want our feet all tangled up in a net of sinful confusion. If we look toward the Lord He will lift us up from the mire and lead us to glory.

Psa 25:16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.

Psa 25:17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

What man or woman is there who has not at one time or another felt the same emotions which the psalmist expresses here. We have periods of exultation when all seems right with the world. These are then followed by periods of desolation and affliction. Both of these extremes may be experienced at any age from infancy to old age.

God can help. He can cause one to see through the misery of the present and see the joy which awaits those who endure unto the end. Keep close to Him. Then when trials rise up, be confident that He will be with you.

Psa 25:18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

Affliction and pain are not always the result of our own sin. The Lord Himself suffered because of the sins of others, though He was sinless. We must repent of our sins and call upon God to forgive them. Then, when forgiveness is granted, any suffering which continues is the consequence of living in a world where Satan and his followers have stained it.

Psa 25:19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.

Psa 25:20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

Psa 25:21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

These last three verses sound like David. He did have many enemies who would have liked nothing better than to see him suffer. Saul was but one of them. God is the Great Shepherd. When one places his soul in God's hand, he may be assured that his trust is not misplaced. Both individuals and nations need to place their faith upon the Rock of Ages. He is worth waiting on.

Psa 25:22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

Much of Israel's troubles were the result of failure to hear and heed the Word of the Lord. They were on the right path toward the solution of their troubles when they called out for divine help. Still, they must prove their willingness to serve God if they expected to have the request for redemption heard.

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## *Chapter 26*

Although we do not know that David was the author of this psalm, it seems to fit his style of writing. Some are hesitant to attribute it to David in that it paints a picture which does not fit the life of David. This could be a matter of the time at which it was written. If it was written before David's sin with Bathsheba it fits quite well.

It invites the Lord to examine his life and note that he has tried very diligently to live in accordance with the will of God. He has avoided sinners in this lifetime. He prays that God will see fit to keep him separated from sinners in the life to come.

**Psa 26:1 Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.**

David was for the most part a very good man. He had one very dark blot on his life, but before that time and after that time he was apparently walking in harmony with the will of his Lord.

There is one sure way of avoiding sliding into the pits of sin. That is to seek the will of God, and then place one's life in his hand. He is able to keep that which has been committed to Him and guard it against every foe.

**Psa 26:2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.**

You do not have to invite God to examine your heart. He will do that anyway. However, it is a way of showing that you have tried to live in a righteous manner. To prove means to test and find out if that which is tested

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is genuine. The reins were a reference to the kidneys. When both the heart and the reins are mentioned in the same statement, it is just a means of emphasizing the inner man. The psalmist is ready to open the door of his soul that God may inspect that which is inside.

Psa 26:3 For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.

He has kept the image of God in sight. Man was made in that image and is expected to try with all his might to reach that goal every day of his life. To walk in the truth it is necessary to study the Word of God consistently. Then it must be applied to life that not only God may see it, but that the fellowman can see it.

Psa 26:4 I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

It is good to be able to say that one has not joined the company of those who live empty and vain lives. The psalmist says he has not sat with such persons. A dissembler is one who destroys and tears apart that which is good. The psalmist adds that he does not intend to join himself to them.

Note the similarity of this verse with the statement of the first verse of the first psalm. The good man does not walk with the ungodly. He does not listen to their counsel, nor sit with them in making life's plans.

Psa 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.



Psa 26:5 I have hated the congregation of evildoers; and will not sit with the wicked.

It is made even stronger in this verse. The word 'hate' is used to express his feelings toward those who rebel against the righteousness of God.

The sinner sees heaven on earth in the pleasures of the flesh and the pride of life. One can not sit with those who love sin and still please Jehovah.

Psa 26:6 I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

The washing of hands was symbolic of declaring innocence. Pilate washed his hands to say that he was innocent of the blood of Christ.

The psalmist feels that he has lived such a life that he will not be condemned for coming into the presence of God to offer sacrifice. Is it not pleasant to feel that God will not turn away from you when you offer your prayers in worship to Him?

Psa 26:7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

The person who avoids the company of sinners and has lived a life of relative purity can preach the wondrous works of God to any who will listen. His thanksgiving will be have a ring of honesty. Others will hear and join him in praise.

Psa 26:8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

The habitation of God and the place where His honor dwelt in the time of David was the tabernacle. He is saying that he loved to be in the presence of God in that special way which can be enjoyed in worship.

Psa 26:9 Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men:

He does not want to be classed with wicked and bloodthirsty men. He has tried to avoid that kind of persons. He needs God's help in continuing to stay away from them. God can deliver us from the temptation to live as they live.

Psa 26:10 In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.

The wicked are bent on doing evil. They are ready at any time to reach out their right hand for a bribe. Their attention is always centered on self, not God or truth.

The right hand is the one most people extend to receive the bribe. Those who are left handed are not exempt from this temptation.

Psa 26:11 But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.

This statement is similar to what Joshua said in the long ago. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." If the evildoers are determined to live in sin, they must do it without the company or support of the servant of God.

Psa 26:12 My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

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In the first verse of the psalm it was said that the author would walk in integrity, and this would keep him from sliding. He now expresses it just a little differently in saying that a very good place to find an even spot is in the congregation of the Lord. One is much less likely to slip and fall when in the company of the righteous than when sitting with the sinners and the scornful.

## *Chapter 27*

We feel fairly confident that David was the author of Psalm 27. He faced great danger from both Saul and Absalom at different points in his life. In the first six verses of this psalm he reveals his gratitude to the Lord for protecting him in the past. In the second half of the psalm he prays for continued assistance in the future.

There is much of value in this chapter for every Christian in these latter days. We also have our ups and downs in life. Whether we realize how much God has done for us in the past, or whether we understand how important it is to continue receiving His help in the future, let us pray with all of our heart and have every expectation that He will hear those prayers and react to them for both our own good and that of His kingdom the world over.

**Psa 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**

God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. Without Him we walk in fearful danger, unable to see our way. With Him we can see to both avoid danger and march toward glory.

When we find ourselves in need of more power and wisdom than we have available, there is every reason to rest our souls in the hand of the Lord. He has the strength, and He has the wisdom to fulfill our needs, but those of every person on earth who will lean upon his everlasting arm. We need fear no enemy when He is with us. Faith is the victory!



**Psa 27:2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.**

There were those who had watched like vultures to see if David would stumble and fall so they could pounce upon him and as we sometimes put it, ‘eat him alive.’

He was immensely grateful to God that rather than having fallen victim to their vicious appetites, they were the ones who had stumbled and fallen.

**Psa 27:3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.**

In David’s heart he believed that it did not matter if an entire army had lined itself up against him. If Jehovah was with him, there was no reason to be afraid. After all, he had defeated both a lion and a bear when they tried to attack the sheep when he was the shepherd. He had conquered Goliath when he had but a sling and some stones and Goliath was clothed in armor and carried weapons.

**Psa 27:4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.**

David was single minded. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. A single minded man will focus his mind upon one goal. David’s goal was to dwell in the house of the Lord every day of his life, and to draw close to Him in the place of worship.

Some believe the word 'temple' indicates this psalm was written by someone after the temple of Solomon had been completed. The word here does not have to refer to the temple of Solomon. In the very next verse the word tabernacle is used. In the mind of David the two terms could have referred to the same edifice.

**Psa 27:5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.**

A pavilion is a place where one may be protected from the elements. God has offered to those of David's day just such a retreat. In the Holy of holies God made Himself available to the worshippers. Only the High Priest could enter into the Most Holy, but David felt the Divine presence as a protective covering.

A rock is a very stable footing. The psalmist felt that by placing his trust in the Lord God, he was standing upon a place which would not betray him.

**Psa 27:6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.**

These first six verses have had a unifying theme. There is joy and security to be found in placing one's trust in God. There is good reason to sing praise to Him and lift the voice in such sacrifices. David could hold his head up proudly and come to the place of worship with a truly grateful heart.

**Psa 27:7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.**

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Notice the contrast between the first six verses and these last eight. There is joy and singing in the first six. These next eight cry out for the help of the Lord when danger approaches as a result of persecution.

This does not necessarily mean the two sections were once separate psalms. As was pointed out in the introduction, the first part of the psalm could well have reference to God's help in days past. The last part could plead for a continuation of that help in the days to come. This does give a unified approach.

Does one have to cry out in an audible voice for Jehovah to know that person is serious in his prayer? I think not! God is not a man, that He must hear with physical ears. There are some who do not have the power of speech. Shall we conclude that they cannot pray with the same spirit as those who can utter audible prayer? The answer is obvious.

Our Lord is a God of both mercy and compassion. We need not fear that He will reject our approach to Him if we do so in humility and sincerity.

Psa 27:8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

The divine call has ever been, "Come to me and I will give you rest." No man can see the face of God and live. The meaning here is that God desires that we come into his presence. God had gotten that message across to David, and David had done just as God asked him to do. God had promised to hear if David came near. David was grateful for that promise.

Psa 27:9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my

help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

Men of prominence are sometimes prone to make those who wish an audience wait in order to impress the seeker with the control they have over others. God does not use that method. He might turn His face away from those who reject Him. He will never do so with those who genuinely seek His help.

The Lord had been David's help in the days past. David pleads with Him never to take away that helping hand. He knows that the Lord is vital to his continued success.

Psa 27:10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

The true meaning of this verse is probably better stated in today's English as, "Even if my own father and mother were to forsake me, I have confidence that God will not. He will help though all others were to abandon me."

It has been pointed out that many of the Hebrew manuscripts state that "My father and my mother *have forsaken me.*" We have no record in other scriptures that his parents did forsake him.

Psa 27:11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

A plain path is one which can be clearly seen. David wished to be guided in such a clear way that he could not be mistaken about the direction the Heavenly Father wanted him to take. His enemies would have delighted in seeing him make a deadly mistake. He knew that as

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long he could see the path of righteousness, and followed it, he could expect God's help.

**Psa 27:12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.**

There were times in David's life when lies were told about him. These lies were intended to destroy his influence and even his life. A slanderer is often more dangerous than one who attempts to destroy you face to face. It is more difficult to defend one's self against that which is done behind the back.

It is not just David who suffers from such lies. Almost every faithful Christian can tell of some time in life when false rumors were spread about their speech or other behavior. This psalm invites every man and woman of God to meet such falsehood with prayer for God to defeat such enemies.

**Psa 27:13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.**

One faints when he has gone as far as his physical and mental abilities will allow him to go any farther. David knew very well that he could never have continued without strength greater than his own. God had not been afar off where he could not reach out His helping hand to David while he was still alive.

Again, the lesson hits home. While we are still in the land of the living let us call out for God to help when we have reached the limit of our personal abilities. He will hear!

**Psa 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.**

But what shall we do if we call out and it does not appear that He has responded? David had the answer. Be patient! Wait for God to do things in His own way and in His own time. He knows infinitely better how and when things should be done. While we are waiting we must depend upon Him to provide the inner strength to go on.



## *Chapter 28*

This psalm follows in the same line as the two just previous to it. The Psalmist calls for the Lord to hear his prayer. He pleads that he may not be classed with the wicked who are deceitful and must be treated according to their deeds. In contrast to the punishment of the wicked, the righteous may call out for God's help and be confident that He will give them the strength and blessings necessary to carry on.

**Psa 28:1 Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.**

When help from other sources fails, the wise thing to do is call out for the Lord to hear. He is a rock upon which one may place their feet and be sure footed. It would be horrible if the cry was not heard. In that case the one offering the prayer would have no more hope than those who are scornful of the law of the Lord.

The pit is clearly the place where fire is mixed with spiritual darkness. The rebellious will find agony in the absence of the Sun of Righteousness. What a miserable fate it would be for the prayer to go unheeded.

**Psa 28:2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.**

A posture which was common to the Jews was to kneel down and lift up their hands toward the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place. The discussion as to whether this was the tabernacle or the temple makes

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little difference in the main point of this verse. It was directed toward God. Being a merciful and gracious God, He would certainly hear the sincere words of one of His faithful.

Psa 28:3 Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts.

In the judgment the wicked and the righteous will be separated from each other permanently. The wicked will be cast into the pit. The righteous will be lifted to the presence of Jehovah and those who have loved Him and kept His commandments.

The author of the psalm can hardly bear the thought of being with those who smile and say “peace, peace” when they are betraying one behind his back. How long is forever and forever. He does not wish to find out while in the presence of traitors.

Psa 28:4 Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

Is he calling for individual retribution, or is his cry for God to see that justice is done throughout all time? The present writer cannot go along with those who say this prayer has nothing to do with punishment of those who have mistreated him. Their actions must not go unpunished.

Psa 28:5 Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.

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God should be recognized as the Creator and Sustainer of all that is good and holy. Those who defy Him have closed their eyes and ears to love, mercy and godly persons. They deserve to be separated from these blessing in eternity. They have made it clear that this was their goal in life.

**Psa 28:6 Blessed be the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.**

How does the psalmist know the Lord heard his prayer? He has this confidence because of the promises which have been made by the One who never lies. He has promised He will hear.

Note the use of the word 'blessed' It is of interest that man can bless God. To bless is to wish the best for the one being blessed. Surely man can express his desire that God's will be done and His name be glorified.

**Psa 28:7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.**

If this is David writing, he did have reason to state that the Lord had given him the strength to continue under the persecutions that were directed toward him by Saul and Absalom, as well as others. He wanted the Lord to know just how full of thanksgiving his heart was. Yes, God was his helper both offensively and defensively. Strength to move forward, and a shield to ward off the lies as well as the swords of his pursuers.

This psalm was written as a song, as were most of them. God can never be praised too highly for His loving

care. This was true at the time it was written. It is no less true as these present words are written.

**Psa 28:8 The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.**

God will not abandon his chosen ones. He will provide the strength they require to serve. Nothing can separate them from his protective care. God's anointed might well include kings such as David, priests who served at the altars, and even today it would include Jesus Christ. Dare I say that every true Christian has been anointed with the Holy Spirit of God at the time of baptism? I am not talking about miracles. I am talking about spiritual power which enables one to accomplish the will of God from day to day.

**Psa 28:9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.**

What a precious thought to close the chapter! In verse six the psalmist stated that the Lord should be blessed by His people. Now he calls for the Lord to return the blessings. They need not fear being drawn into the pit with the unbelievers. They will be lifted up into the presence of the Father, the Son, the holy angels and the faithful who truly mean 'peace' when they pronounce it.



## *Chapter 29*

After several psalms which were very much alike, we now come to one which is quite different. In this one we are to use a thunderstorm to remind ourselves of the majesty and power of our God.

The storm seems to arrive from the direction of the Mediterranean Sea and sweep down over the land of Israel until it finally leaves calm and peace in its wake.

All of us have experienced such manifestations of the voice of the Lord, speaking so loudly of His glory. We ought never to hear a breathtaking clap of thunder without honoring His presence. Yes, there is always a trace of fear involved, but along with that fear of the storm we ought to feel the fear of the One who brought nature and its laws into being.

**Psa 29:1 Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.**

First we have a couple of introductory verses which prepare our mind to follow the thought of the rest of the psalm. We are told that the mighty owe God a recognition of His glory and strength. It is felt by some that the mighty are the angels of heaven. We think it more likely that these are those humans who have power and influence in this world of the flesh.

Even the mighty ones tremble before the thunder, the lightning, the cyclonic winds and the torrents of rain which give a hint of the end of this globe upon which we live. There is little the most mighty among men can do when huge trees are splintered by a bolt of lightning.

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Psa 29:2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

The word 'Lord' is mentioned over and over again in these few verses. It is never possible for either men or angels to overdue the praise which is right and proper to offer to His name. We should take the greatest pleasure in knowing He hears and appreciates our adoration.

It is not too difficult to comprehend what is meant by the command to worship Him in the 'beauty of holiness.' Let us consider first that His own Holiness is beautiful. We are not to worship Him casually as though He is no more pure and good than we ourselves. We are to attempt to be Holy as He is holy. The only way this can be done is for us to claim the cleansing power of the blood of His Beloved Son.

We turn then to the beauty of holiness which men are to display in their worship. Priests of Old Testament times dressed in white linen robes while officiating in worship. Every Christian is a priest today and the inner man should be clothed in white robes of righteousness, which are beautiful in the sight of the Lord.

Psa 29:3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters.

Here we have the thunderstorm approaching. If one opens his spiritual ears he can hear the voice of God speaking to him in the rolling clouds, the thunder and the tossing waves. The rain begins to fall and His voice can be discerned in the sound as it strikes the earth.

Psa 29:4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.



This verse will cause the old timers to remember the powerful preachers of the time before amplifiers became common in church auditoriums. The best preachers were those who had good lungs and whose voices could be heard in a five hundred seat place of worship. The voice of God can be heard for miles when one listens carefully to the oncoming storm.

Psa 29:5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

The cedars of Lebanon were tall and stately. But, when the lightning struck them they were left shattered and splintered, ready to be used for kindling wood. The voice of the Lord could not be heard in Greek, Hebrew or English. Nevertheless, it could be understood clearly in the midst of the flashing lightning and crashing thunder. It cried out, "I am the Lord, and there is none like unto Me."

Psa 29:6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

The entire covering of the mountains moved under the rushing wind. Looking down from a height it would appear that the mountains themselves were alive and dancing.

Most of the commentators make no mention of the unicorn. Is this political in nature? After all the unicorn was a beast of fairy tales; not reality. We have read that the word unicorn means one horn and could refer to the rhinoceros. This does not fit well with the picture drawn in the verse of the young one frolicking. Is this an animal

which has become extinct since the psalm was written? The present writer must confess his ignorance as to the identity of the animal mentioned in the verse. We will accept the basic lesson that whole mountainsides were seen moving briskly in the midst of the storm.

Psa 29:7 The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire.

Lightning streaks across the sky in a zig-zag path. Often it splits into a forked prong with two or more branches. The reader may recall the tongues like as of fire which settled upon the apostles' heads on the day of Pentecost.

Psa 29:8 The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

The storm has now moved out of the mountains and into the plains. It is just as impressive there but speaks in a different manner.

Psa 29:9 The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.

The sound and fury of the lashing wind and ear splitting claps of thunder strike such fear into the hearts of the female animals that some of them give birth to their calves prematurely. The bright flashes of the lightning light up the entire forest areas. Men and women move into the temple area and discuss the impressive power of Jehovah.



At this point, even the humans are providing a voice of the Lord as they discuss His glory and power with others who share their awe.

Psa 29:10 The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

Throughout all of the disturbances of the storm, the Lord God has looked on from the throne room of heaven. He knows this is a temporary matter. He can calm it when He chooses.

Do not forget the incident when Jesus was with the disciples in the midst of a storm at sea. He was sleeping while they were fearful that they were about to perish. When they woke him and asked if was not concerned that they were in such danger, He stilled the storm. Peace replaced the violence.

Psa 29:11 The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

There are many storms during this present life. Some have resulted in hundreds and hundreds of humans losing their physical lives. Others are of a completely different nature and sweep across the heart. They can result in the loss of one's spiritual life unless the victim of the storm is wise enough to appeal to the Master of heaven and earth. Then spiritual peace can replace the emotional tornados which come with the loss of health, loved ones, wealth and other lightning strokes.

Which path will you take dear reader? Will the voice of the Lord during the storms cause you to curse Him and die, or will it cause you to speak of His glory in the temple, the church?

Chapter 30

This psalm was written by one who had gone through a sequence of spiritual highs and lows. He had allowed himself to become so proud that he felt he could not fall. He did fall. Then when he turned matters over to the Lord, he was heard and given an positive answer. As a result he poured out his grateful heart to that Lord.

There is a strong tendency for us to attribute any of the psalms to David the king of Israel if there is no definite evidence that any other person wrote them. This psalm is one of those which sounds very much like the words of David, but we can see the spiritual highs and lows described here in the vast majority of persons who are sincerely trying to serve God.

Psa 30:1 I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

To extol is to praise and magnify; to lift up another and credit them with valuable deeds or words. Sometimes the extolling is done in a public manner where many may follow one's example. At other times the extolling may be done in the silence of one's own heart and mind.

There are many different kinds of foes. The psalmist had been at the mercy of one or more. God had stepped in and protected him from abuse. He was able to move on into further service.

Psa 30:2 O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

One type of foe is disease. The use of the word 'healed' leads one to think disease might have been the foe here.

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That is not necessarily true. Any time spiritual difficulties are overcome, one can say he has been healed. The present writer has faced human foes, disease, and other obstacles to service in the kingdom of God. Prayer was a major medicine in his own healing processes.

**Psa 30:3 O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.**

How many faithful Christians might have found themselves near the point of death and separation from this life on earth! Every day that the Lord sees fit to preserve us should be a cause for rejoicing in that we can further serve Him here. On the other hand, when we are called to pass through the valley of death, let us not go down into the pit of darkness where there is spiritual light. Let us constantly be ready to come when He calls.

**Psa 30:4 Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.**

Can the reader imagine a condition in which there is no holiness of God? I think it absolutely impossible for earth dwellers to conceive of no godly influence whatsoever. The thought of God's holiness should bring abundant joy. We most certainly should sing and give thanks for His goodness.

**Psa 30:5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.**

All persons, including Jehovah, become angry at the ones who mistreat them. There is a vast difference in the way God deals with such anger and the way humans do. As long as the one who has sinned against his fellow man is still in the memory, the man who has been sinned against is apt to try avenging the wrong. God reacts differently. His anger will flare up, but when the sinner comes to Him with a penitent heart, He promises forgiveness.

The weeping may be almost too much to bear at first, then after a relatively short time, it will be replaced by the joy of having been forgiven.

**Psa 30:6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.**

Here was the point at which the psalmist had allowed his confidence in his own abilities to tell him he did not need help. All was going so well he could never be seriously endangered. The scriptures say, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." He that becomes excessively proud is standing on a slippery footing.

**Psa 30:7 LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.**

When his mountain of success was standing strong and he had both feet planted solidly upon that mountain, all seemed well. Then God allowed him to see what happens when divine help is removed. When God turned His face away, the psalmist was troubled. If this does happen to be David, he was very, very troubled.



**Psa 30:8 I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.**

Supplication is intense pleading. When the author of the psalm was brought to his senses during the time the face of the Lord was turned away from him, he made the decision to beg for more powerful help than he could provide for himself.

**Psa 30:9 What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?**

His plea was that as long as he was alive, he could declare the truth of God. If God were to allow him to fall into the pit of the grave, he could not longer witness for Him. If his body turned back to dust, there would be no praise. If the Lord would keep him alive he would give Him praise and glory.

**Psa 30:10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.**

He had believed in the mercy of God. He was now asking that such mercy be shown to him. He had been wrong. He had been filled with pride. He wanted to rectify that wrong and reach up to take the hand of the Lord.

**Psa 30:11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;**

This verse is written in the past tense. The Lord had intervened and where there had been mourning there was now dancing. We are not talking about the

lascivious mixed dancing which some connect with joy and happiness. Little children out on a playground sometimes leap around and jump up and down when they are happy. We envision the psalmist as having a heart which was so heavy before God helped him, now having that heaviness replaced by a heart that danced with joy.

**Psa 30:12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.**

The promise of the psalmist is that he is so overjoyed by the forgiveness and assistance of his God that he will never again fail to honor and praise Him





## *Chapter 31*

This psalm fits the life of David closely. He is the likely author. Yet, as we have noted before, we are dealing with some degree of uncertainty. There may well be many, many persons who have had experiences similar to those presented in this psalm. Many have no doubt voiced similar prayers in the midst of adversity.

The reader may very well find himself or herself walking right beside the author and knowing that God is the only answer to the burdens of this present life.

**Psa 31:1 In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.**

There is One who may be trusted when all others fail to understand. That One is the Lord in heaven. As long as a man is willing to call upon Him for assistance, that man never needs to fear being totally confused. He will deliver His faithful in His righteousness.

It is not our own righteousness which will deliver. There is none righteous, no not one. However, there is a righteous God and a righteous Son of God. They offer their righteousness when men truly and sincerely call for their sins to be covered by the blood of the perfect Jesus Christ.

**Psa 31:2 Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.**

The psalmist asks God to bow down His ear in order that He may hear the trembling voice of His servant.

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Though it is impossible for a man to save himself, it is well within the realm of possibility for the Lord. He is a Rock for the faithful. We do not speak of a pebble which can be tossed around. We speak of a mountain upon which men may plant their feet in absolute confidence that the rock will stand solid. Jesus compared the man who built his house upon the shifting sand, and the one who built upon the rock that forever shall stand.

The psalmist called out to God to become a house of defense against that which would betray him. The rock God offers is both a foundation and a fortress. If one will stand upon it and hide inside it he will be safe from the enemy.

Psa 31:3 For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.

Why should it be said that it was for God's name's sake that He would come to the rescue of a persecuted saint? The reason is easy to see. If God fails to guide and protect those who call upon His name, then observers might well claim that trust in calling upon His name is a waste of time and effort, since it accomplishes nothing. That would tarnish the name of the Lord.

Psa 31:4 Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.

Nets are set as traps in which a victim may be caught up and then destroyed without power to defend themselves. Animals are often taken in nets. It is also true that men have been slaughtered in a similar manner. Their enemy actually cast a net down upon them rendering them incapable of swinging a sword though it

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might be right at their side. The Lord can make a way of escape from any net which has been cast over His own.

**Psa 31:5 Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.**

What wonderful words these are. They were uttered by Christ upon the cross. They were spoken here by the psalmist. Dozens of Christian martyrs repeated them as they were being murdered for their faith in God and Christ.

These words are appropriate for both the living and the dying. There is no better plan for man than to commit the spirit into the hand of God in order that he may be used in whatsoever way God wills. It is equally wise to lift one's eyes to the heavens when drawing those last breaths and renew that prayer. God is truth. He will hear and answer both prayers.

**Psa 31:6 I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.**

Is this verse in harmony with those which call upon Christians to love their enemies and do good unto them which persecute them? Since God is Love, and men are to make every attempt to be godly, is there any room for hatred in either the Lord, or His people?

Yes there is. It is possible to love the man, and at the same time hate the sin which he commits. God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son that they need not find themselves in eternal hell fire. At the same time, He makes it as clear as crystal that if a person defies Him and rejects His love, he will not hesitate to punish that person in a manner appropriate to his rebellion.

Those who place their trust in idols, or in the lies of pride hungry men are not the kind one should trust. Our trust must be placed in the One of whom it is said, "God is love."

**Psa 31:7 I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities;**

The psalmist does not hesitate to give God credit for having heeded his cries for help in the past. He is delighted that God had been aware of his troubles and had cared for him as only He could do. With that kind of help in the past, there was every reason to fear that he would be abandoned in the future.

**Psa 31:8 And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.**

It would have been possible for the Lord to leave him at the mercy of those who were attempting to kill him. That had not been done. Room had been made for him to escape from their wicked plans. He needed a continuation of that support.

**Psa 31:9 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly.**

Some would see a sharp division of thought at this point. They see the psalmist first pleading and then rejoicing in verses one through eight. Then they claim to see the same pattern in the next few verses. They



would like to attribute this to two different authors who had their work combined by an editor. This is not a necessary explanation. The author could have first considered his present trials and called for help. Then he could have recalled that his calls for help in the past had been answered. Beginning with the ninth verse, he could be returning to his plea for help because of God's past willingness to turn grief into joy. If He was able and willing to do that in the past, He could be trusted to do the same in the future.

**Psa 31:10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.**

The picture which is drawn in the next few verses is pathetic. One after another of the obstacles the psalmist is facing are listed in almost a one two three manner.

He has much grief.

He time is filled with sighs.

He is weak when he considers his iniquities.

His bones are consumed.

If the present reader has escaped any or all of these conditions during his own life, may it continue to be so. Most of us will have carried just such burdens ourselves.

**Psa 31:11 I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.**

The psalmist is not finished with his self portrait. Those around him have spurned him. His enemies

despised him. Even his neighbors who should have cared about him fled from his presence in order to avoid being classed along with him.

**Psa 31:12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.**

In his own mind he might as well have been a dead man. Just as men go about their business without memories of the dead, he was forgotten while still alive. A broken vessel is worth nothing. He felt worthless.

**Psa 31:13 For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.**

Lies and slander had been heaped upon him until he feared the liars, and they had caused others to fear him. It had gone so far as to bring others together to plot against his life.

One of the most difficult things to do in life is to protect one's self from cowardly behind the back gossip.

It is the picture drawn in the last few verses which lead us to think the writer of the psalm was David, and that it was written either during the time of Saul's jealous fear that David would be a rival for his throne, or in the time of Absalom's conspiracy against him to take his throne. In both cases the description which is given would apply.

**Psa 31:14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God.**

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He had gone through grief, tears, fear and isolation, but in all things he had trusted that the Lord would come to his side. He is the True God and He will see that all things work together for good to them that love Him and keep His commandments. It may be difficult to see that all things are working out when one is being crucified on a cross as some of the faithful Christians were. But the accounts are not all settled this side of eternity.

Psa 31:15 My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

Why do not all of us, as did the psalmist, say “My ties are in God’s hand?” He offers to place us in the hollow of His hand and use us to whatever degree we are willing to serve Him. It is a beautiful partnership when it can be said that, “He is my God, and I am His servant.” Under those conditions one cannot be defeated.

Psa 31:16 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies’ sake.

It is a pleasant feeling to have a stranger who is being introduced to us break out into a wide smile. It is also pleasant to see the same type of smile spread out across the face of an old friend. It is just as unpleasant to find that one faces gnashing teeth and a snarling frown from another person.

God will turn His face away from the wicked and rebellious sinners. But to those who have proven their fidelity to Him, He turns His face toward them with a shining smile. As in a previous verse we noticed that God’s name could be damaged if His people prayed and

He did not respond, it is the same here. If God does not show mercy when His faithful call out for it, observers might well declare Him to be an unmerciful God. If they are shown mercy when they call, it magnifies His mercy in the eyes of those who see it in action.

Psa 31:17 Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.

To be ashamed, and to be silent in the grave are on the same side of the ledger. The man who calls upon the Lord in time of trouble is casting his vote on the side of confidence. He has called and has reason to believe the Lord will answer his call. The wicked are the ones who should be confused and whose voice should be heard no more on earth.

Psa 31:18 Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

If anyone is to have his lips silenced it should be those who aim their slanderous words in the direction of the righteous. Their haughty pride and unfeeling contempt should be brought to an end. Good men should be heard both in prayer and when they speak to their fellow men.

Psa 31:19 Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

That which is laid up in heaven for good men and women is immeasurable in value. It has never even

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entered the mind of men what joy will be shared inside the gates of the heavenly city. The reader will make no mistake in letting his faith be known before others while living on earth. God is the source of all goodness. He has promised to pour out that goodness upon those who have proven their trust.

**Psa 31:20 Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.**

Inside those gates the faithful will be hidden from the barbs the wicked have cast at them while under the sun. They will be covered securely by the pavilion prepared by the Almighty Architect. There will be war no more!

**Psa 31:21 Blessed be the LORD: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city.**

To bless is to offer well being to that which is blessed. When men bless God they do so be praising His name and giving Him glory. When God blesses men the rewards are beyond description, just as their Giver is. But, what is that strong city which God had shown the psalmist? It could refer to some place of security on earth. It seems more probable that it is the heavenly city, and that the psalmist has caught just a tiny glimpse of its grandeur.

**Psa 31:22 For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.**

He had spoken without proper confidence when he had said he had been neglected and God had failed to

see his plight. That was wrong. God had heard him when he called to Him. He had proven that faith is to be held tightly. It has been rewarded before, and it will most certainly be rewarded again and again.

**Psa 31:23 O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.**

The saints are those who have allowed themselves to be separated to holiness. God know how to deal with both the proud evil doer and every one of His humble servants.

There is some question as to the identity of the ‘proud doer.’ This could be the one who proudly defied God and followed his own will. In that case the reward would actually be punishment. The Bible uses the term in that sense at times. Or, the proud doer could be the one who has chosen to serve God and is proud to do His will. Then the reward would be a blessing as we normally think of the word ‘reward.’

**Psa 31:24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.**

What a vote of confidence the psalmist gives the Lord at the close of the psalm. He has found that God has been his rock and his fortress through every trial. He wishes to commend Him to all who find themselves in trials and tears. In Him there is h-o-p-e! Without Him there is none.



## Chapter 32

This psalm and the 51st are closely connected. The collection of psalms is not in chronological order. The fifty-first psalm is a cry for forgiveness of the sins David had committed in the case of Bathsheba and her husband Uriah. The psalm before us speaks of the joy of David when he became certain these sins had been forgiven him.

There are seven psalms that are classed as psalms of penitence. They are 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143. This, of course, is one of the seven.

There is very little doubt that David was the author. Paul seems to have quoted from this psalm in Romans 4:6-8. (See below.)

*Rom 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,*

*Rom 4:7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

*Rom 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

**Psa 32:1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.**

The word 'blessed' can also be translated as 'happy.' David's life had been remarkably clear of sin, except in numbering the military forces of Israel and in the sins related to Bathsheba and her husband Uriah.

It is possible for Jehovah to forgive any sin of which one has truly repented. David had begged for forgiveness and had apparently received that forgiveness. It was

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difficult for him to express the gratitude and joy in his heart as a result of the cleansing which the Lord had granted him.

Psa 32:2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

In order for Jehovah to be willing to forgive sin, the person who has committed that sin must come to Him with honest confession of the wrong which has been done. There can be no attempt at deception. The Lord cannot be deceived.

Psa 32:3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

There was a time in which David felt that he could remain silent concerning the terrible guilt he felt in his soul. That did not work! He felt that his very bones had grown old as the silence burdened them. He could attempt to speak and act as if nothing was wrong, but neither words nor actions could take away the burden of the sin.

Psa 32:4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

Neither the daylight nor the darkness relieved the pressure. Just as the dry heat of the summer sun left the vegetation wilted and dried out, the condition of his conscience and his heart were as if they had suffered a severe drought.



Psa 32:5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

These are strange words if indeed they were written by David. If anyone ever tried to hide their iniquity, he did. He brought Uriah back from the battlefield with the thought that a conception by Bathsheba might be attributed to Uriah. This proved to be unsuccessful. He then had Uriah killed, also with the intention of hiding his own sin. One can even succeed in hiding sin from his fellow man. He can never hide it from the penetrating eye of the Lord.

Psa 32:6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

The only hope for a man who has fallen to the temptations of the Devil and the lust of his own heart is to repent, confess the sin and ask the Lord to help. There is a time when this can be done. There is a time when it becomes too late.

When one does repent, confess and pray to God for help, that man or woman will survive when floods of troubles would otherwise wash away any possible hope. David is not the only person who has tried to hide sin from man and the Lord, The same conditions must be honored by any who find themselves in similar conditions.

Psa 32:7 Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

One cannot hide the sins from God. What is possible is to allow God to provide a hiding place from the sins. When that is done God will make it possible for the individual to realize the freedom of deliverance from that bondage. Once more the heart can sing with the hope of heaven.

Psa 32:8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Is this David talking, or is it Jehovah Himself? This writer believes it is Jehovah. That man who will allow himself to be instructed in righteousness, and will make use of that instruction, can find the future to be far better than the past. God can and will provide strength to resist sin and a pathway to avoid it.

Psa 32:9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

Men are not to be like horses or mules. They must be forced to follow a path which is chosen for them. One places a bridle on their head and a bit within their mouth. The mule has no choice in the matter. Man has been given the power of choice. He can hear and willingly choose to follow that which is best. There is a way that man can follow that will keep him separated from sin and spiritual death.

Psa 32:10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

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This verse does not imply that sorrows will never burden the heart of the man or woman of faith. Jesus Himself was a man of sorrow. If it were not sorrows from the experiences of our own life, we would still weep with others who weep. Nevertheless trust in the Lord will allow His mercy to shine through those shadows as the sunshine after the thunderstorm.

**Psa 32:11 Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.**

Look at the beautiful words with which this psalm closes. Gladness, rejoicing, joy and uprightness of heart! Truly we can echo the words of the apostle Paul.

*Phi 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.*

## *Chapter 33*

This psalm has no title as most do. It does not specify the author. It is a song of praise to the Lord Jehovah. Because of the mention of the harp and the psaltery in the second verse, most attribute it to David, the sweet singer of Israel.

It includes praise for the character of God. It offers praise for the wonders of the universe which He created. It closes with the recognition that He is concerned about the welfare of every man and woman everywhere.

**Psa 33:1 Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.**

Man was created for two reasons. First, he was created in order that God might be glorified and pleased with the product of His power and wisdom. Second, he was created that He might find joy and fulfilment in serving his Maker and living in His image.

Thus it is both a privilege and an obligation for every human to rejoice and offer praise to Him. These actions and thoughts are most becoming to those who choose to follow His directions. The righteous will clothe themselves in adoration and purity of life.

**Psa 33:2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.**

There is a strange silence in the early portions of the Bible with respect to the use of musical instruments in worship. We do not find this practice before the time of king David. There is also a similar silence in the New

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Testament. This has led some Bible students to conclude that God never intended men to add musical instruments to the human voice as an aid to worship. They feel that God tolerated it in somewhat the same sense that He tolerated multiple wives in the Old Testament times.

This silence in the times of the apostles was not due to the fact that these instruments did not exist. They were available just as they were in the time of David. Your present commentator does not claim to be able to explain the contrasting policies between David's time and those before and after his time. The safe route for those of us in New Testament times is to be silent where the Bible is silent. The Bible is silent with respect to musical instruments in the worship of the church. The present writer will worship where musical instruments are not used, just as was the case in the time of the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is quite willing to make music with the 'heart strings' rather than the 'harp strings.'

Psa 33:3 Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise.

Why was the old song not sufficient? Because the new song was one of joy. The Lord was not telling us the old favorites were obsolete. The "Old Rugged Cross" has a long way to go yet. It will be appropriate until the Son of God returns to claim His own at the end of time.

The new song was to be entered into with enthusiasm. Sometimes loud singing is in order. Such songs as "Onward Christian Soldiers" call for the rafters to ring. But there are reasons for singing softly at times. It may well be in order to use contrasting songs within the same worship service. "Sweetly Lord, have We Heard Thee Calling" should not be sung in fortissimo style. Let us

recognize when to sing with loud voices and when to sing with are soft and sweet. These variations may well occur within the same hymn.

Singing with the spirit and with the understanding may call for different approaches at different times.

Psa 33:4 For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

What a wonderful thing it is that God has presented His Word to the world! His loving concern for His creatures should bring a heartfelt response from us as we contemplate His love.

Psa 33:5 He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

There are those who serve Satan. They love sin and riotous living. Their songs may well be sung on a “Bottle of Rum.” It is not so with Jehovah. He is perfectly righteous. He is interested in the happiness of His children, but He abominates revelry and lack of self control. Christians should do everything within their power to see that His will is done in all the earth. In the beginning He commanded that His people multiply and fill the earth. In the ages following He has called for them to fill the earth with His goodness and righteousness.

Psa 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

Genesis 1 informs us that “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” As the gospel according



to John begins, we are told that “in the beginning was the Word. All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made.” All three persons of the Godhead were involved in the creation. There is good reason for God’s people to let their gratitude be known.

Psa 33:7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

This verse is not talking about the glaciers which are in one sense a heap of water. The verse is discussing the separation of land and water. Man can only marvel at the wonders of creation. It was not until the time of Isaac Newton that the laws of motion and of gravity were discovered. God knew and used them from the beginning. Let us praise His Holy name.

Psa 33:8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

Men have always looked for heroes. They have praised their athletic heroes, their political leaders, and their geniuses in the financial world. This passage places the adoration precisely where it belongs. Human achievements are insignificant in comparison with the Divine Author of all heaven and earth.

Psa 33:9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

When God said, “Let there be light.” There was light. For at least six thousand years that command has stood. Night and day have come and gone; and they will continue

to come and go until the faithful find themselves in the realm where there is no night. God will be there in a very special way, and He is Light.

Psa 33:10 The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

The heathen are those who set themselves up in opposition to the will of the Master of heaven and earth. They may think they have the wisdom to direct their own paths. They do not have such wisdom. The plans of the self righteous will come crashing down around their heads when the heavens pass away and the elements melt with fervent heat. Sometimes the devices of the wicked fail miserably within a short time. Then again, it may be that they receive praise until God calls an end to everything that Satan and his servants have promoted.

Psa 33:11 The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

Build your house upon the rock my friend! We speak of the “Rock of Ages.” His counsel is to be trusted. Let Him direct your ways and stand with Him forevermore. The thoughts of the wicked shall perish. The righteousness of God will prove to be infinitely durable.

Psa 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

Nation after nation has found out the hard way that when a people turn away from God, disaster is but a step



away. Babylon, Greece, Rome, Germany and Russia have all failed to learn from the miseries of those who departed from God's counsel.

God's people transcend the borders of the nations of men. Abraham was promised that he would be known as the father of the faithful. Christ was a descendant of Abraham. The faithful today are those who have chosen to follow the Son of the Living God. They will share in the eternal inheritance which He has prepared for His own. Choose Him and He will choose you!

Psa 33:13 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

There is no man hid from the eyes of Jehovah. Even our thoughts are open to His inspection. We may expect to answer for our choices. Belief and obedience will result in a crown of righteousness. Rebellion will result in being separated from the presence of everything true and good, never to have hope of anything better.

Psa 33:14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

What will be the case if God looks upon the inhabitants of the earth and finds that some have not heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ? That is not our concern, except as we may or may not have done all we were able in seeing that the gospel was carried to every person in every nation. He will deal with all in a righteous way. We must see that our talents and opportunities are not wasted.

Psa 33:15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

Here we are not talking about fleshly hearts being fashioned alike. The point is that it was God who created the inner man. He knows what they should be held accountable for. He will weigh all thoughts and deeds, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.



Chapter 34

This psalm was no doubt written by David as an encouragement to others to follow the way of the Lord at all times. It begins with praise to God for his providential care and follows this with an invitation to others that they might enjoy the same blessings which David himself had experienced from the divine hand.

Psa 34:1 I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

The word “bless” is a most fascinating one. It is fairly simple to see how the Almighty God can bless the lives of those who place their trust in Him. It is not as easy to see how finite men can bless the Creator of heaven and earth. As David uses it, he refers to words and deeds which recognize the goodness and loving kindness of the Heavenly Father.

It is not a matter of blessing God when life is sweet and cursing Him when life becomes bitter. God is to be blessed when one awakens in the morning to a new day. He is to be blessed throughout the day. Everything which comes into the life of his children is either commanded or permitted. Every trial of our faith is a test to determine whether we are fit to live in the presence of the Godhead, the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. Even the presence of the influence of Satan must serve a divine purpose, or else God would have stamped him out of existence long ago. At the end of every day, and often in spite of tear stained eyes and a heavy heart, it is a grand privilege to bless our God.

Psa 34:2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

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This second verse aids in understand the one just before it. The blessing mentioned in verse one is boasting in the Lord. It is not boasting in personal achievements. It is God centered rather than self centered.

The proud will see this boasting as folly. They will continue to go their way which leads to destruction. The humble will hear of the praises the God fearing person offers. He, or she, will find peace and happiness in the wonders of the Lord.

**Psa 34:3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.**

The psalmist did not wish to praise God alone. He wanted to share the joyous experience with anyone else who would join him in his magnification of God's name. When God's people assemble, each gives spiritual strength to others who are present. When the efforts of the faithful are combined much greater results can be seen. Singing, giving, praying, etc. are all more efficient when practiced together.

**Psa 34:4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.**

David is described as a man after God's own heart. He did not live a sinless life. What he did do was to recognize his broken life and offer it to God that it might be mended. God is near at hand. He is anxious to hear the pleas of those who seek Him. He will help.

David had many fears. He fled from Saul. He lived in caves where there was the threat of attack by vicious beasts. God saw and was ready to deliver him. We know David today as a leader of Israel. His life pointed toward Jesus Christ, the King of kings.





**Psa 34:5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.**

Good man look to God for help. When they do so, the gloomy faces are often turned to smiles. Moses face shone when he descended from the mount after having been in the presence of Jehovah. There is a radiance surrounding the Christian which is not seen in the life of the wicked.

Every man and woman can look back at those childhood days when they had misbehaved and were fearful that mother or dad would find out about what they had done. Sometimes even a spanking relieved the tension and brought a smile to replace the guilty conscience.

**Psa 34:6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.**

Who is this “poor man” that cried and was heard by the Lord? Some think it was David. Others believe it to be anyone who has brought trouble upon themselves by sinful words and deeds. It is not speaking of one suffering from poverty. It is one who recognizes his faults and begs for God to come to the rescue. No trouble is so huge that the Father in heaven cannot overcome it.

**Psa 34:7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.**

The words of this verse indicate that the poor man of the verse above was any person who recognized dependence on Jehovah. God’s angel is ready and willing

to care for those in distress, if they will show their willingness to fear God and keep His commandments.

God uses angels to achieve some of the results which He desires. There are two possibilities as to the identity of the “angel of the Lord.” One is that it is the captain of the Lord’s host. The other is that it is a reference to God’s faithful angels in general. Either way we have the assurance that angels are interested in the welfare of men. They are so near that one could reach out and touch them if they were observable through the five senses. They serve as God’s agents in the care of the saints.

**Psa 34:8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.**

This is a key verse in this entire psalm. The one who has already tasted of the good word of the Lord can hardly refrain from urging others to do the same.

This present writer appreciates the example given by more than one commentator about the taste of honey. It is absolutely impossible to convey in words just how delicious this substance is to the taste buds. The only way one can fully appreciate it’s flavor is to taste it.

Life in the family of God is the same. With God as our Father, with Jesus as our elder brother, with the faithful of both the past and the present, to encourage and sustain us, we feel the need to reach out to others and invite them to taste of life in the Kingdom of God. There is no other way to fully understand it’s blessedness.

**Psa 34:9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.**

**Psa 34:10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.**

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Back in the years of 1929 to 1933 there was much unemployment. There were Christians who were forced to eat the same potatoes, cornbread and walk rather than ride to their destinations. An automobile was too expensive to buy or to drive. Yet those same Christians knew God was still in heaven. He knew of their plight. He would see that all things worked out for their good in the end.

These people did not have all they might desire in this world. They could rest in the assurance that their Master in heaven was going to reward them richly when He invited them to enter in to the joys of the Lord.

Psa 34:11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

David could have taught us many things. He was a master musician. He was a valiant soldier. He was a fine ruler. He did not offer to teach us any of those abilities. He wanted those of his own day and of every other age to see the reasons for the fear of God. He wanted us to see how that fear is demonstrated before both God and man.

Psa 34:12 What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?

What type of man is it that wishes to live long and see the good hand of God? He will go on in the next few verses to explain.

Psa 34:13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Right at the top of the list is the control of the tongue. One cannot use the name of the Lord in vain and expect to enjoy the good life. We are immersed in sinful language at

the time and in the place where I write these words. The workplace, the places of entertainment, the restaurants and the home are contaminated with filthy words.

Lies and deception are met on every side. The advertisements abound in false claims for the products, Hateful statements are made continually. All of such speech leads to anger or other corrupt behavior.

Psa 34:14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

There is a positive and a negative side to this matter of the fear of the Lord. The man who fears God will refrain from doing evil, but that is not sufficient. He must not live in a vacuum. He must seek out peace with God and with fellowman. That peace will not be found without an earnest effort to find it.

Psa 34:15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

God has a quite different attitude toward the rebellious and the righteous. The person who makes every effort to hear Him and obey His Word will find that God's ears are open to his requests. He will honor them as they have honored Him.

Psa 34:16 The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

On the contrary, God turns his back to those who turn their back to Him. They will find that wickedness is self defeating. Ultimately the good will be victorious. The evil will suffer defeat.

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Oh yes, it is true that evil dictators have their names recorded in the history books. They will also be recorded in the books which are opened in the final judgment, but they will wish that type of memories had been cut off.

**Psa 34:17 The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.**

**Psa 34:18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.**

The reader should take note of the characteristics of the one whom the Lord hears and delivers. It is not the proud, or the lover of evil. It is those who are:

1. Righteous.
2. Broken or heavy hearted.
3. Poor in spirit.

Such persons have the promise that God will attend to their problems. Job is an example of one who remained faithful to the Lord, and then found the Lord did just as he has promised in this psalm.

**Psa 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.**

God did not say the righteous would never find themselves afflicted. All of us know that is not a true statement. He promised that when afflictions do come, there will be a way of escape.

**Psa 34:20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.**

The diligent Bible student will immediately recognize the words of this verse. They are a prophecy related to the sufferings of Christ upon the cross.

When the Passover lamb was eaten, no bone was to be broken.

*Exo 12:46 In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.*

When Jesus died on Calvary no bone was broken.

*Joh 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

*Joh 19:32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.*

*Joh 19:33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:*

*Joh 19:34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.*

*Joh 19:35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.*

*Joh 19:36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.*

**Psa 34:21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.**

**Psa 34:22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.**

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Death and desolation will be heaped upon the wicked, who have God and righteousness. Such will not be true of those who trust and serve Him. Being lost is not a pleasant destiny. Separation from all that is holy will be the end of those who prove through this life that they do not wish to keep company with the saints.

Chapter 35

A number of the psalms express David's thoughts concerning those who attempted to destroy him. Those in which he asks the Lord to execute justice upon them are called imprecatory psalms. This psalm is one of them.

To critics of the Bible, these requests David makes are thought to be a contradiction to the principles Christ taught during his lifetime on earth. For example, he said,

Mat 5:38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

Mat 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Mat 5:40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

Mat 5:41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

Mat 5:42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Mat 5:43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

Mat 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Mat 5:45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

As we move through the text, we will give attention to these criticisms. There are ways to harmonize the seemingly contradictory teachings.

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The matters attended to in this psalm are thought to have taken place either during David's persecution by Saul, or by his son Absalom. It breaks one's heart to think that David's own son might have been one of those upon whom he asks God to take vengeance.

**Psa 35:1 Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.**

We are informed in Romans 12:19 that vengeance is to be handled by God and not by man. God knows each situation perfectly. He can and will see that the proper action is taken toward both the oppressor and the victim of the oppression.

*Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

David is praying for that to be done. Those who were fighting against him were truly fighting against God. It was right that God oppose their evil ways.

**Psa 35:2 Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.**

The shield and the buckler were defensive weapons. The shield was worn on the arm. The buckler was a covering for vital parts of the body. David was willing for the Lord to become both a shield and a buckler to him in his time of need.

**Psa 35:3 Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.**

The spear was normally an offensive weapon. David is asking that God stand in the way of those who hated him and prevent them from destroying him. He wanted God's spear to be planted between his enemies and himself that they might not succeed in their deadly plans.

**Psa 35:4 Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.**

God is able to cause entire armies to become chaotic and actually fight among themselves. It was right that those who wished to see David dead might lose their way and see their plans turned into confusion.

**Psa 35:5 Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.**

When wheat is threshed, the chaff is nearly useless. It might be used as bedding for livestock and then thrown out on the manure pile. The grains of wheat were the object of the harvest. David is convinced the enemies of God are as useless as chaff. He desires that the angel of the Lord blow them away that they be seen no more.

**Psa 35:6 Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.**

A dark and slippery way is most difficult to travel. With this kind of a path to follow, and with the angel of the Lord blocking their progress, it would be quite impossible for the enemies to continue their wickedness.

As we have noted before, there are differences of opinion as to the identity of the "angel of the Lord." Some

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see it as the preincarnated Christ. Others see it as the captain of the entire angelic host of God. Still others contend that it stands for the angelic band as a whole. Whichever is true, it would be impossible to complete their plans to assassinate David if he was protected by the arm of God.

Psa 35:7 For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.

Psa 35:8 Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

David had done nothing to bring on such hatred as was being shown. They were absolutely determined to trap him. When hunters used the net and the pit, they first dug a pit which was hidden from the sight of the victim. They then placed a net in the pit. When an animal fell into the pit, the net closed around it and rendered it helpless. This was the condition in which his pursuers wished to plunge David.

He felt that God would be quite just in causing his foes to fall into the same pit which they had prepared for his downfall. He was unable to defend himself. He could only pray that Jehovah would see fit to do for him that which he could not do.

Psa 35:9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

It was not that David was delighted to think of misfortune befalling others. It was gratitude to God for the hope he believed was available if only God would save

him from the foes. It was God's salvation which brought joy to his heart. It was not a spirit of vengeance.

Psa 35:10 All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

Has the reader ever "felt something in his bones?" With all of his heart David would thank the Lord for any help which was provided. He was confident that God would properly care for not only himself, but all who found themselves in a similar position.

Psa 35:11 False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.

Psa 35:12 They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.

There were those who had lied about David. They had accused him of things he knew absolutely nothing about. When he had tried hard to do good to others, they had returned evil in place of the good. They had done everything they could to discourage him.

Psa 35:13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

What was it that he had done in the way of good toward others? He had grieved over their misfortune. When they were sick he fasted and wore sackcloth. He prayed for their return to health.



What did he get in return? It was as if his prayer for them had never gotten higher than his own lungs.

Psa 35:14 I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.

He had treated these foes as he would have treated the members of his own family.

Psa 35:15 But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not:

Then, when he was suffering difficulties, they banded together and attempted to destroy him. The word abjects could have been translated as rejects. They were spiritual midgets who were continually bent on make trouble for him.

Psa 35:16 With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

They gnawed on David as a dog gnaws on a bone. They gritted their teeth and vowed to bring him to an end.

Psa 35:17 Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.

Surely God had not forgotten David's troubles. It seemed as though He was only acting as an onlooker who did not take part in the fray. He begged the Lord to

protect him before he was devoured by these men who acted like wild beasts.

Psa 35:18 I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.

David promised that if the Lord would intervene and rescue him, he would offer thanks where all could see his grateful humility.

Psa 35:19 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

Why would God continue to allow the enemies to revel in their persecution? They were winking at one another as if David's discomfort was a great source of amusement. They hated him with no reason and then enjoyed his suffering.

Psa 35:20 For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.

God has informed us that peacemakers are blessed. These enemies were not to be found in that group. They did not search for peace. They did just the opposite. When things were peaceful, they set out to bring violence.

Psa 35:21 Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.

What was it that they said they had seen? It was the same falsehoods which were mentioned above in verse

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eleven. The things they were saying did not have to be truth as long as they worked against David. Lies were just as useful for their purpose as was truth. They did not have to see something in order to broadcast it.

**Psa 35:22 This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O LORD, be not far from me.**

The enemies were not the only ones who had eyes. God had seen what David had done. He had also seen what the enemies of David had done. Nothing is done in such darkness that the Lord does not see it. David had walked with God. Would God please walk with him?

**Psa 35:23 Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.**

**Psa 35:24 Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.**

It was not that David claimed perfection. He knew he had committed sins. But, he was quite willing to have God treat him in accordance with the words and deeds he had spoken and done. He was ready to be judged by the same rules he wished his enemies to be judged by.

**Psa 35:25 Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.**

Would the Lord please prevent them from gloating over the damage they had done to one who loved Him? It would be a shame for them to be able to boast that they had defeated one who was doing his best to serve on the side of righteousness.

**Psa 35:26 Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.**

It was only right that those who sinned be the ones to be ashamed. They deserved to be dishonored by all who knew of their wickedness.

This writer believes that it would have been perfectly satisfactory with David if those who had been so intent on harming him had repented of their misdeeds and enlisted on the side of good rather than evil. This would have been quite in harmony with Christ's advice to pray for them that do all manner of evil against you. David did not wish for his enemies to suffer. He wished for them to be prevented from doing damage.

**Psa 35:27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.**

David wanted righteousness to prevail to such a degree that those who served the Lord and magnified His name would be seen as prospering.

**Psa 35:28 And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.**

There are three divisions in this psalm. At the end of each plea which David made for help, he made a solemn promise that he would praise God and promote the divine plan!





## *Chapter 36*

This short psalm of twelve verses is rich beyond measure. The comparison between the wickedness of self centered men, and the righteousness of the Lord is invaluable. The blessings that await those who fear God and keep His commandments are pictured as coming from the fountains of God's own love for those who love Him.

**Psa 36:1 The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.**

The disobedience of the wicked man comes about because he has no respect for God. Sin speaks to his heart and persuades him that lust and pride promise more than the restrictions which God has defined.

**Psa 36:2 For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.**

Satan used man's appetite for pride to deceive Adam and Eve. He suggested that if they would eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they would be as gods. They were ready to check it out by trial and error. They were firmly convinced that God need never know of their defiance. When man centers his affections upon himself sin and death follow.

**Psa 36:3 The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.**

Such a person turns away from the fountain of truth, and drinks from the poison of Satan's offerings.

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The sinner offends God through both his speech and his deeds. His words are blasphemy and lies. His deeds are damaging to his fellowman and despicable in the eyes of the Lord. Solomon once said that “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” It is a fool who speaks and acts as if there were no God.

Psa 36:4 He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.

Day and night the wicked plots his path of evil. When he should be resting for righteous pursuits, he lies awake seeking out ways of exploiting others. Not only does he not hate that which is evil. He hates that which is good and hungrily seeks out the ways of unrighteousness.

Psa 36:5 Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.

How pleasant it is after the hideous first four verses of this chapter, to turn our thoughts to the purity of the Lord. We move from the pits of hell to the gates of heaven.

Psa 36:6 Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

Man’s finite mind is incapable of measuring the goodness of God. His ways are so far beyond our own that doubts upon our part as to why God would do this or that may never be satisfied. From the smallest subatomic particle to the entire cosmos, His power and wisdom are



manifest. In Him we live and move and have our being. Without Him we are nothing.

Psa 36:7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

As baby chicks flee to the safety of their mother's wing, men should recognize the dangers which threaten when they expose themselves to the world. Wise men and women will snuggle close to the warmth of God's loving wings. They will never regret that choice.

Psa 36:8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

How would the reader like to inherit the joys and real pleasures available in the house of God, both in this world and in the world to come? The Father in heaven has riches untold.

This writer presently lives in a brick home with all the modern conveniences. He once lived in a house in which there were cracks in the windows and covers had to be piled high to keep body warmth at the survival level. That contrast has helped immensely in attempting to conceive of the difference between the fatness of the heavenly house and the pleasures to be found in the river of blessings which await the righteous, when compared with the mixed blessings and curses of this present world.

Psa 36:9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

Jehovah is so radiant that those who enter into the gates of heaven will need to be raised with new spiritual



bodies capable of withstanding His glory. The Word of God is a lamp unto our way and a light unto our pathway.

Psa 36:10 O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

How is it possible that men can turn their backs on the wonders God has prepared for those who love Him? He has promised to continue His loving kindness and his righteousness to the upright. He will not forget His promise.

Psa 36:11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

The foot of pride would trample upon the purity of the righteous child of God. The hand of the wicked would like nothing better than to pull the soul of the faithful from under the sheltering wing of God.

Psa 36:12 There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

Man was created with the power of choice. He may choose God and righteousness, or he may choose Satan and wickedness. The time will come when those who have chosen the path of sin and death will find they have been eternally separated from all that is holy.

The choice is yours dear reader. Will it be the pleasures of sin for a season, followed by the unquenchable fires of hell. Or will it be a few trials and tribulations for a finite time here on earth, followed by a crown of life with the Godhead, the angelic host, and the saints of all the ages unendingly?



Chapter 37

This psalm deals with the concerns which God's children feel over the prosperity of the wicked. David is given credit as the author. He knew the meaning of persecution. He also knew those who are faithful to God will be the ones who receive the final inheritance of their Father when all is said and done in the history of mankind.

The psalm follows the same theme as the book of Job. Several of the sayings of Jesus Christ are closely related to the major truth presented in this present chapter.

Psa 37:1 Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

All of God's children have no doubt cast their eyes upon the seeming prosperity of the evil-doers and wondered about God's statements of blessing for the righteous and disaster for the wicked.

We are told that this seeming prosperity is just that. The Christian is making a mistake of major proportions if he or she allow themselves to get heated up over the temporary comforts of the rich in this world's goods. It would be far better to pray than to fret.

Psa 37:2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

The grass and the herbs spring up luxuriously in the spring and bloom in great beauty. Then the frost hits, or the harvest time comes and they wither and die.



The wicked rich may look forward to a similar fate. Power, wealth and fame are fleeting. If such persons manage to evade the loss of their money or their property during their lifetime on earth, they still must part with it when the grim reaper cuts them off.

Psa 37:3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

The person who trusts in the Lord and follows the paths of righteousness is far more likely to find security in his property and sufficiency of food to remain healthy. There may be exceptions, but in general the righteous will be providentially cared for.

Psa 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

It is not a great burden for the righteous man to serve his Maker. Such a man will not desire that which God does not wish to him to have. He will pray that all things work together for good, and God will see that they do.

Psa 37:5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Psa 37:6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

What is it that the Lord will bring to pass for those who trust in Him? It is the glory which comes through association with the name of the Lord. The righteous life will be made to shine forth before all men. The judgment will uphold the innocence of the good man.



Psa 37:7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

To rest, and to wait patiently for the Lord are two means of saying the same thing. Neither the one who accumulates much of the world's riches, nor the one who plans and executes wickedness, should be envied. They have no true advantage over the man of God. The truth is that the man of God will reap a far more precious inheritance than the temporary possessions of the man of earthly wealth.

Psa 37:8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

Psa 37:9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

Over and over the psalmist condemns fretfulness. He warns the impatient not to give in and join themselves to the evil ways of the godless.

When the accounts are tallied and the rewards and punishments are passed out, the righteous will be pleased with the final outcome. The wicked will be shocked and miserable.

What is meant by saying that the ones who wait on the Lord will inherit the earth. There are several suggested explanations. One is that evil is self defeating and in the end it will destroy it's self. A second is that this is speaking of the new heaven and the new earth, and that the righteous will inherit the new earth when the present earth has been melted with fervent heat.

Psa 37:10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

Caesar had his day in the sun. He is gone. Hitler dominated the headlines in the early forties. He is gone. Mussolini and Stalen followed the same pattern. We still recognize their names, but they own nothing on this earth. Only God can say what the afterlife of such men will be like.

Psa 37:11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Jesus and David agree. The future of the meek is far superior to that of the proud and haughty. The meek who seek peace and ensue it will find it.

Psa 37:12 The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

Psa 37:13 The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

The wicked are often antagonistic toward the righteous. The righteous are seen as a hindrance to their evil designs. Therefore, they plot against them and grit their teeth with anger toward them.

This will not work to the advantage of the wicked. God still rules in heaven. The Devil and his own have but a relatively short time to accomplish their mischief. God sees their plottings and will bring them down when the proper time arrives. Verse thirteen does not imply that God is playing games with men. The point is that the supposed victory of evil over goodness is destined to borough crashing down.

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**Psa 37:14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.**

**Psa 37:15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.**

It is true that there is a war between good and evil. The wicked are convinced that they can take advantage of the righteous and gobble up everything their heart desires. They have made every preparation to defeat the upright.

The evil are in for a most shocking surprise. They shall find that in the end, they themselves will be pierced through by the weapons which they have prepared for the destruction of the upright. Every diligent Bible student will recall that Haman was hanged on the gallows he had built to hang Mordecai.

**Psa 37:16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.**

The righteous man may have less of this world's goods than does the wicked. The little that the righteous man possesses will be more satisfying than the possessions of a large number of the greedy rich.

**Psa 37:17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.**

Arms represent power. When the wicked set out to match their power with that of the Lord, they are headed for a fall. The Lord will add His strength to that of the meek. The battle will ultimately be theirs.

**Psa 37:18 The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.**

**Psa 37:19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.**

To say that the Lord “knoweth” the days of the upright is to state that he approves of the things they say and do. He will see that they are blessed with an eternal inheritance. When times are difficult, God will be with them and they shall find satisfaction. The reason they shall not be ashamed is that they will realize they have chosen correctly and would make the same choice again.

**Psa 37:20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.**

The fat lamb was fed in the best pastures for the purpose of providing tasty food when it was needed. When the lamb was cooked and eaten, the fat was no more. The wicked shall find that both their possessions and themselves will be as smoke which rises from the fire and then disappears.

**Psa 37:21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.**

The wicked are never satisfied. They constantly cast their eyes upon that which others own. They find ways to gain temporary control and then fail to return the goods to the owner.

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In contrast, the righteous are pleased with that which God has seen fit to place in their hand. They even watch for opportunities to assist those who have less than they have.

Psa 37:22 For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

We do not doubt the truth of the statement that the blessed of the Lord will inherit the earth. But, there is the question as to whether this inheritance is to be given in this world or in the new earth, after this one has been replaced by a new one.

The cursed of the Lord look forward to neither inheriting this present earth, or a new one. They have demonstrated their desire to live their own life. Without God's help, this is impossible. They are lost.

Psa 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

When the righteous man follows the path laid out by Jehovah, there are two who are delighted. The good man is delighted in following God's way. God is delighted that the good man has chosen to do that.

Psa 37:24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

Every man falls and comes short of the glory of God. This verse does not say the righteous man will never stumble. It does say that when he stumbles, the Lord

picks him back up and sets him on the way once more. The Lord is not watching like a hawk to see who has fallen by the wayside and sentence him to misery. He is watching to see what the fallen one is thinking. If the thoughts are set on doing better, that man will have God's guidance to move onward in paths of righteousness.

Psa 37:25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

This verse indicates that David was an old man at the time the psalm was written. His experience was that righteous men, and also the children of righteous men had enough to eat.

Psa 37:26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

Such a righteous man normally would have his needs met and would even have enough that he could lend to others who had greater need than he.

Psa 37:27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

Psa 37:28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Why are these statements repeated over and over? Is it not because of their importance to those whom God would like to bless? The contrast is in the fact that the wicked will be cut off, while the faithful saints live eternally.

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**Psa 37:29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.**

The righteous will come into ownership of the earth. This agrees perfectly with Jesus statement that the meek shall inherit the earth. Even if they die, their children are promised that the earth will pass on into their possession.

**Psa 37:30 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.**

The righteous understand the meaning of true wisdom. It is not in amassing huge bank accounts or in managing a gigantic corporation. It is in finding the whole duty of man, which is to fear God and keep His commandments. When that is the center of one's thoughts he will be proud to tell others of the judgment and the justice which will be delivered on that day.

**Psa 37:31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.**

It is not enough to have the law of God in the mind. One can know the entire Bible sufficiently to be able to quote many passages, and still not allow it to direct his life. If it is truly taken to heart, the steps of that person will walk the straight and narrow, and be ready to enter in at the gate which leads to everlasting life in the end. He will slip rarely, and when he does slip he will rise to walk with God at his side.

**Psa 37:32 The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.**

**Psa 37:33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.**

Though the wicked spend much energy and time in watching for a weakness in the life of the good man that he might persuade him to turn from God, The Lord will not allow him to be deceived if he wishes to remain true. The wicked may wish to see him condemned forever, but God will be with him.

**Psa 37:34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.**

With patience the one who trusts in God will find that his patience has been rewarded. That man will live to see the wicked cut off from power and will receive the promised inheritance of the land forever. Some see this as a promise to the fleshly Jew who was faithful, and believe the Jews will inherit the earth while others will go to heaven.

This present writer still feels that there is more here than he has yet grasped. The honest reader is challenged to live in such manner that when the promises of God come to reality, he will find glorious happiness rather than the curses which are prepared for the sons of Satan.

**Psa 37:35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.**

The green bay tree remained green when other vegetation had withered and lost leaves. David pictured the evil man as standing in glory dominating the lives of other men. He was proud and haughty with little respect for others of lesser power.



**Psa 37:36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.**

But the time came when the green bay tree was cut down. And the time would come when the wicked would see the same fate. Their dominance was but for a season. That of the faithful servant of the Lord would continue year after year. He would end up in a situation where there were no tears, no hunger and no disease. The wicked man would not be found in that paradise. He would have been removed forever.

**Psa 37:37 Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.**

**Psa 37:38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.**

If a man says he has no sinned, he is a liar and the truth is not in him. We are commanded to be perfect, even as the Father in heaven is perfect, yet no man ever has lived up to that perfect model except the Son of God. When the righteous man has made a valiant effort to live for God, that man will find the peace which passes understanding.

Will the wicked simply be erased from existence? That does not seem to be the teaching of the New Testament. Both heaven and hell are described as eternal in nature. The misery of the wicked will last as long as the joy of the righteous. To be cut off is to be separated from all that is holy and pure, with no hope of anything better.

**Psa 37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.**

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Psa 37:40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

After all of the warnings about walking in righteous paths and avoiding the company of the wicked, this psalm ends with a beautiful promise of God's help if man will only choose to trust in Him. He will help. He will deliver. He will save. Let us trust in the Lord with all our heart and He will direct our steps toward perfect peace forever and ever.



Chapter 38

The title which is attached to this psalm attributes it to king David. Since the majority of the psalms were the result of his labor and his attempts to lift men to high spiritual levels through better understanding of the will of God, it is reasonable to see him as the author.

We do know that David suffered tremendous guilt over his sin with Bathsheba. But it is still not certain that this psalm was written by him. It could be the work of some other conscience stricken person who was grief stricken over having chosen sin over righteousness. The facts are that many a man has trembled with fear when he comes to the realization of the enormity of his opposition to the will of his Maker.

Psa 38:1 O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

The one who has committed sin deserves to be rebuked. He deserves to be chastened to bring him to his spiritual senses. The point being made by the psalmist is that he now understands something of the horror of what he has done. He does not want God to go farther than necessary in bringing him back from his folly. He has suffered much. He knows he has been wrong. He will do better. He pleads for mercy.

Psa 38:2 For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.

God is a fearsome foe. His arrows stick in the mind as a guilty conscience and in the body as the physical consequences of sinful actions. The hand of God has



many ways of creating pressure on the one who has been ignoring His more gentle guidance.

Psa 38:3 There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.

This may be figurative language which is teaching spiritual lessons from physical illustrations. However, sin can produce just the kind of conditions mentioned. The smoker develops lung cancer. The drinker suffers with liver problems. The fornicator and adulterer may be eaten up with aids, syphilis, or other sexual diseases. Even the glutton may find himself with blood pressure and heart problems.

Psa 38:4 For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

Sin is a burden which no one can bear. It is far too heavy for any human to carry on the soul. It is only when men come to understand just how heavy it truly is that they will seek the help of the Lord in ridding themselves of it.

Psa 38:5 My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.

We have no other evidence from the Bible that David suffered physical affliction as a result of his sin of adultery. Thus, this psalm may be intended as a reflection of the thoughts of anyone who has ignored the Great Physician.



It may be that the wounds are physical and that they are offensive to the sense of smell. But we are quick to add that the stench of spiritual cancer, or sin, is far more serious than that of lung or liver cancer. It reaches to the nostrils of the God of heaven.

Psa 38:6 I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.

The weight of sin has become nearly impossible. The sinner can not straighten up under the load. Both mind and body feel the affects of what he has done. From the time he rises in the morning to the time he lies down to sleep at night, he carries the terrible weight. He tosses and turns and then begins another day which follows the same pattern.

Psa 38:7 For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh.

This verse is as close as we come to identifying the problems of the sinner who is expressing himself here as being a form of sexual disease. The combination of the words “loins” and “flesh” suggest such a conclusion. Even this is not certain. The word “loins” has more than one application in the Bible. For example, we are told to gird up the loins of our heart. The intent of the verse may be to indicate how the strength of the sinner may be sapped by his sins.

Psa 38:8 I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

Mental anguish can be agonizing. Your present commentator has groaned loudly over problems

which were unsolvable. Physical anguish can also be indescribable. If one has a combination of the two, that person will need help which no human can provide.

Psa 38:9 Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.

It may not be possible for our fellowman to see just how much suffering is being endured. That is not the case with God. He knows of the sin. He knows of the suffering it causes. The cure for the malignancy of sin is to lay it before God and sincerely ask him to wash the guilt away. The prescription He offers may not have a pleasant taste. Repentance is not easy; but neither is carrying a load of sin to the day of final judgment.

Psa 38:10 My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.

As a man who has run as far as he can run in a race, and is taking his last step before falling in a faint on the ground, the sinner has reached helplessness. He has no breath. His legs cannot hold him up. His eyes go black and he crumples to the track. Who will help??

Psa 38:11 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.

Rather than coming to his aid, those whom he trusted and whom he thought loved him, place a distance between him and themselves. While he was strong and able, his friends and kinfolk gathered about seeking his assistance. Now that he is unable to reward them, they cut him off.

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**Psa 38:12 They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.**

If the psalmist is David, the word of this verse could well refer to Absalom his son, who tried to alienate the hearts of his friends and take the throne from him. They spoke lies and spent all of their time dreaming up ways to deceive him.

**Psa 38:13 But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth.**

**Psa 38:14 Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.**

The psalmist had made every attempt to block out the lies as if they had never been told. He also refused to reply to the accusations. In other words, he was deaf and dumb to the hurtful arrows.

**Psa 38:15 For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.**

**Psa 38:16 For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me.**

He knew he was at fault and that the troubles had come upon him because of his unfaithfulness to the Lord. Yet when those who were closes to him turned away and waited for him to make a major false step, he also knew that God could help. If God did not help, there was no hope.

**Psa 38:17 For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me.**

**Psa 38:18 For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.**

He can go no farther. Every step he might take would have to pass through the mire of the trespasses of the past. There was but one way to relief. He would confess his sin. He would repent and reach up for the hand of God. He was persuaded that God would respond. With his hand in God's hand there would be a way upward.

**Psa 38:19 But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.**

**Psa 38:20 They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is.**

Evil men seek evil companions. They are known for their hatred of anyone who turns from their group and determines to live the better life. There were many of these who would combine their efforts to punish him for having repented. They would mock him and do him evil for his change.

**Psa 38:21 Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me.**

**Psa 38:22 Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.**

When one is forsaken by the Lord, he is most pitiable. The psalmist deserved the presence of God in his life. He had fought God in the past. He had made up his mind that this would not happen again. He begged God to come to his side with haste.

If the writer was David, his prayer to God was answered positively. He was apparently forgiven of his terrible sin, and was to be known through the centuries as a friend of his Lord.

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Chapter 39

The title again attributes the psalm to David and says that it was dedicated to Jeduthun. This was one of three chief musicians, the other two being Asaph and Heman.

David was in mental turmoil. Between his enemies, his conscience and his physical afflictions, he was having to make a heroic effort not to say things which he would regret later. Most of us are in sympathy with his predicament. Sometimes we are able to control that little fire. Sometimes we let it flame.

Psa 39:1 I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

David knew full well that he must exercise great patience to avoid unwise statements. He felt that he must bridle, or muzzle his tongue in order that those who were anxious to entrap him might not find occasion to do that. Also there was the possibility that he might exert a poor example for those who did respect him.

The discussion as to whether “bridle” or “muzzle” is the better translation is insignificant. To bridle is to keep it under control. To muzzle is to prevent any words at all.

Psa 39:2 I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.

For some time he had managed to keep his vow. He had avoided criticism, either good or bad. But this left him in Then the internal pressures began to flare up. It is

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difficult to tell whether his sorrow was over the sins he had committed, or the conditions in which he found himself.

**Psa 39:3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue,**

His feelings seem to have been much the same as those of the prophet Jeremiah who said,

*I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay (Jer. 20:9).*

David had reached the point where he could no longer contain himself. He “spake with his tongue.” What sort of utterance would be expected in this bursting loose?

**Psa 39:4 LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is: that I may know how frail I am.**

It was a prayer. He wanted the Lord to help him properly evaluate the days which he would live upon the earth. He needed the wisdom of God to see the meaning of the brevity of life and also the frailty of man.

**Psa 39:5 Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.**

There is a powerful thought expressed in this present verse. The days the average man lives on earth is not





to be compared with the eternal. We sing songs about “spending” eternity. That is not possible. Eternity is not measured in days. Time is meaningless in eternity. There is no beginning. There is no end.

The illustration of the days of a man on earth as being but a handbreath before God is the best we mortals can do to comprehend seventy or eighty years compared with the God who ever was, is, and ever will be. The word “vanity” is certainly proper. It means emptiness. True life and death swallow up time. Solomon expressed it as clearly as the human mind can absorb it.

*Ecc 1:14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

**Psa 39:6 Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.**

Man lives but a few years and passes from the scene. Any possessions which he leave behind will be passed on to others who may use them either wisely or unwisely. The concerns with which David was wrestling were like the wink of an eye. Man will enter the stage, walk across and depart.

**Psa 39:7 And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.**

Here is the proper answer. If there is no God, there is no hope. If the accomplishments of a human have been in harmony with the ultimate will of his Creator, life has meaning. If not, life is but a pit which leads to hell.

**Psa 39:8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.**

These last verses of the chapter help us to understand the earlier ones. David was fearful that his sins would separate him from God and would also make him a target of mockery by his foes. The only path of relief was in the belief that God would forgive him. His enemies could only be dealt with by the divine forgiveness of his sins.

**Psa 39:9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.**

There was nothing David could say to defend himself. God had permitted the suffering he had endured. It must have been needed or it would not have been allowed. He would sometime realize that the afflictions had caused him to grow in the eyes of Jehovah.

**Psa 39:10 Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.**

On occasion we hear a small child plead with a parent not to spank him any more. I can recall a time in which I or one of my brothers tried to convince our father that if he struck one more time it might break our bones. Now the punishment can be seen as just what was needed. There was no danger of broken bones. There was the strong possibility of better behavior.

David was pleading with the Lord that the corrective process had accomplished its end. He was concerned that it might be overdone and actually destroy him.

**Psa 39:11 When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to**

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consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.

Moths and butterflies live very short lives, perhaps but a day or two. Then their beauty is turned to dust. They gleam in the sunshine and then swiftly disappear in the shadows.

When man is recognized by his fellow man as having much to be admired, he can be deflated through the correction of the Lord as completely as a woolen garment which has been mangled by a moth. Man is nothing within himself. The Lord giveth. The Lord taketh away.

Psa 39:12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

Did we not say David had broken his silence with a prayer. He could have cursed God and died as Job was advised to do by his wife. David did not. He cried out for understanding and assistance in living this life in preparation for that which is eternal.

Psa 39:13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

David had gotten to the place where he could go no farther without divine help. He desperately wanted to use the short time he had left in the wisest manner possible. It is not this present writer's belief that David saw physical death as a complete annihilation. He would be no more among men here on earth, but he would go "hence" to whatever lay beyond.

The reader is referred back now to verse twelve.



David could look at the graveyards where his fathers were buried and conclude that he would join them after this short earthly journey. He must have faith, strength and hope.



Chapter 40

This psalm is one of about seventy-five which are credited to David as author. Outside of those who discredit the Bible, there is very little disagreement with his authorship. It is not possible to pinpoint the time in his life when the writing took place.

It is generally agreed that the psalm is at least partially messianic prophecy. There are some who would apply the contents specifically to David. Most think that it has heavy messianic content. There are some who believe the entire psalm applies to Christ. The fact that verses six through nine are quoted by the inspired writer of the Hebrew letter as a reference to the Saviour is strong evidence for at least those verses being prophetic.

Types and shadows are not always easy to analyze precisely. Jesus Christ is foreshadowed by prophet, priest and king. He is compared with Moses as a prophet. He is compared with Elijah as a prophet. He is King of Spiritual Israel, while David was king of fleshly Israel. The Hebrew writer was well within limits to apply at least portions of this psalm to the King of kings.

Psa 40:1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

Both David and Christ found occasion to be patient with the decisions of the Godhead as a whole. David was pursued by enemies until he cried for the help of Jehovah. Christ cried out, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?" The cries of both were heard and responded to in due time. David overcame his enemies. Christ sits today at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

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**Psa 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.**

The dungeons of ancient times were sometimes no more than a pit in the ground with one opening at the top for observation of the prisoner and a minimum of food and water. The floors of such pits became a miry, mushy, muddy footing which would ooze up around the feet.

Both David and Christ understood the statement of verse two above. Both faced situations in which their service to the Heavenly Father could be pretty accurately described by such a pit. The Lord removed both from the pit and placed their feet upon a foundation as solid as the rock of Gibraltar.

**Psa 40:3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.**

Verse three does seem to apply particularly well to the sweet singer of Israel. He received new life and vigor as a result of his help from heaven. Could this psalm before us perhaps be a stanza in his new song. Those who come to see the reason for David's new song should appreciate it and be inspired to trust in the Lord.

**Psa 40:4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.**

When man places his trust in men, he is very often seriously disappointed. Men all too often are swayed by the proud and haughty. They will turn to heed lies if

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doing so will bring them personal advantage. The one who places his trust in the Lord has his feet planted firmly upon the rock. When the winds blow and the floods come, that man's house will stand.

Psa 40:5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

Although many men do not credit Jehovah with the magnificent universe in which they live, they have been observing those works for thousands of years and are still being amazed at the new discoveries which are being made. It would be unwise to take paper and pencil and try to make a list of the words and deeds which God has said and done for our benefit. They are innumerable. We can say, "How do I love thee. Let me count the ways." In the case of the Lord the counting will never cease.

Psa 40:6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

Here we meet the several verses which are quoted by the author of the New Testament book of Hebrews. There is no doubt that these apply to the Christ. Let us take note of them before we delve into the matter further.

Heb 10:6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Heb 10:7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

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*Heb 10:8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;*

*Heb 10:9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.*

*Heb 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

What is meant by saying that God did not desire sin and offering? The point is that the blood of bulls and goats did not make the removal of the guilt of sin possible. God had opened the psalmist's ears in the sense that He had made it clear to anyone who would listen. The boring of the ear of a slave in Biblical times when he could not pay for his freedom is only faintly meaningful here. Burnt offerings and sin offerings were but shadows of that which Jehovah desired of man.

**Psa 40:7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,**

**Psa 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.**

It is obedience which God desires. Sacrifices were offered for sin which had already been committed. What was truly desired was a life which delighted in doing the will of God, and did so. The law of God would then be kept from the heart and no guilt would be found.

It was the Lord, Jesus Christ who provided such a life. He declared that He had come to the will of the Father which is in heaven. He did pray in the garden of Gethsemane that if was possible the cup might pass from him, but if not "Thy will be done."

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Psa 40:9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

And Christ did preach righteousness. Not only did He preach it with his words, He preached it with his life. He had no sin. Here was the perfect obedience which was what the Father really desired.

Psa 40:10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

Jesus preached righteousness Himself, but He went much farther. He commanded his disciples to take that good news to the “great congregation.” That congregation consisted of every men of every nation. Nothing was to be hid from men’s eyes and ears. Kings and paupers, men, women and children of every color and every time were to be told of the way that leadeth unto life.

These last few verses can hardly be understood of any but the Word who became flesh and dwelt among men.

Psa 40:11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

It is the present writer’s belief that the focus of the psalm now shifts back to David. He cries out for the loving kindness and the mercy of God to be poured out upon him. In this way his soul may be preserved. Other than through the perfect obedience of the life of Christ, there was no way of salvation.

Psa 40:12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

Christ was encompassed by innumerable evils on many occasions. The Pharisees and Publicans, as well as Satan himself took aim at His life. But it is quite impossible to apply the words “mine iniquities” to Christ. They were not His iniquities which he took upon Himself. They were yours and mine. David had found himself so filled with guilt over his own sins that he was ashamed to lift up his eyes to the Lord.

Some claim Christ died of a heart attack, and that this is what was meant by saying, “my heart failed me.” I think the hear that failed was that of David. He had plunged himself so deeply into sin that he had difficulty seeing how he could be forgiven. His heart skipped beats when he pondered his need for the mercy of God.

Psa 40:13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

Though fearful that the multitude of his sins could have doomed him, David pleaded with all of his heart for forgiveness, guidance and strength. He needed help, and he needed it as quickly as possible.

Psa 40:14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

Both David and Christ could have prayed these last words. What a relief it would be to find that those who

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tried to destroy them had been confused in their efforts and were covered with shame before all men.

**Psa 40:15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.**

The word “reward” here is not talking about something which might be desired. It has to do with the consequences of their actions. Shame for their mockery was to be the only reward they would collect. They would be desolate because they had opposed the will of God and He had departed from them.

**Psa 40:16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.**

The blessing which is placed upon those who seek God and rejoice in trusting Him is just the opposite of the desolation pronounced upon those who fight against His will. The faithful will find great happiness in giving glory and honor to His name.

**Psa 40:17 But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.**

This last verse could certainly apply to both David and the Messiah. At one time both were rich. Christ left the glory of heaven to come to earth. David was surrounded by the wealth of Israel. Then Christ took upon Himself the form of a man and was born into a poor family from Nazareth and laid in a manger. David found himself fleeing from his own son Absalom.

May the reader realize that he or she is also poor and needy as a result of sin. But that the perfect obedience which Christ presented to the Heavenly Father was precisely the only thing which could act as a propitiation for our sins. Let us call upon God to wash us clean through the blood of the cross and do it before we stand to receive a statement of our eternal destiny.



## *Chapter 41*

Psalm forty-one begins in lamentation and ends in a note of triumph. There are those who have felt the psalm is not a unit, but rather a collection of unrelated thoughts. Although the main theme is difficult to identify, it seems that it may expose the variety of feelings which must have passed through the mind of David during the last days of his life.

**Psa 41:1 Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.**

How similar this first verse is to the beatitude which states “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” When one looks upon those less fortunate than himself and is moved to compassion and action to relieve the distress, God will do the same for that giver when he is found in distress.

**Psa 41:2 The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.**

This is considered to be a psalm of David. We are aware that this man went through great persecution at the hands of Saul. We also know he was bedridden in his last days. At the same time, we recall that when the Philistines were persecuting the people of Israel, it was David that stood up against Goliath to give them hope.

When one of God’s faithful is weighed down with illness or plagued by vicious enemies, God will see that all things work together for his good.



**Psa 41:3 The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.**

What is meant by saying the Lord will make the bed of the one who is languishing? This is still speaking of the one who has been merciful to others. To make his bed is to see him through the anguish he is experiencing. That person will be aided by the Lord, as he aided others when they were in need.

**Psa 41:4 I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.**

After the thoughts of God's help ran through his mind, David recalled that he had sinned grievously against the Lord. Could it be that his sins would more than cancel out the righteous actions which he had done? He begged God to forgive those sins and leave him with a clean soul.

**Psa 41:5 Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?**

The king knew perfectly well that there were those who were just waiting for him to die in order that they might gain power. They longed for his death, and also for his name to pass from the thoughts of the people.

**Psa 41:6 And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.**

**Psa 41:7 All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.**

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These evildoers would even come to see him and wish him well, even while they were listening carefully to see if they could find something which could be used against him when they left and mingled with others. They would spread gossip about him, hoping that they could damage his name.

Psa 41:8 An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

These enemies led others to believe David had a fatal illness from which he could never recover. They did not know this was the case, but it would have brought glee to their hearts if it did turn out to be the case.

Psa 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

David's trusted advisor, Ahithophel had joined with David's son Absalom in an attempt to overthrow him. This brought grief to his heart. He had difficulty understanding why those whom he trusted could stoop so low as to betray him.

This verse is quoted by Jesus at the time when Judas betrayed him. See John 13:18.

Joh 13:18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

Psa 41:10 But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

This verse may seem to contradict the teaching that "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. I will repay."

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However, we must remember that in old testament times it was also said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” David was the king. This makes a difference in that he was responsible for seeing justice done among the people. This was more than a personal attempt at reprisal. It was also a case of criminal punishment.

**Psa 41:11 By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.**

The Lord had demonstrated over and over again that he was with David. His foes had not been able to claim victory over him. Surely that would not change in the present circumstances. God would not allow his enemies to defeat him now any more than had been so in the past.

**Psa 41:12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.**

As far as David was concerned, if all men were against him, but God upheld him, all was well. There was reason to believe God would look upon him with grace and mercy without end.

**Psa 41:13 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.**

The word “Amen” means ‘Be it so.’ This verse doubles the “Amen” for emphasis sake.

This psalm is the last of what is called Book One of the entire collection. There are five of these divisions of Psalms. Each of them closes with the words found above in verse thirteen. They are found at the end of Psalms 72, 89, 106 and 150.





## Chapter 42

This is the first psalm of the second book of Psalms. It is classified as a didactic psalm, which means it was meant for teaching. There is strong reason to believe that this psalm and the next one were at one time joined. There is no title heading psalm number forty-three. That psalm continues with the same general thoughts as this one. We shall treat them as being separate because that is the way they are treated in the King James Version.

There is strong disagreement as to the author of these words. Some mention a captive in the land of Egypt. Others see the author as an Israelite held captive during the Babylonian captivity. Yet others are thoroughly convinced that this psalm was written by David when he was fleeing from pursuers east of the Jordan river.

The present writer does not believe there is conclusive proof as to the identity of the author of the psalm. Since that seems to be the case, he feels it wiser to apply the words to any person in any age who has once been close to God, but who has found himself starving for the bread of life and thirsting for the living water.

**Psa 42:1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.**

We have here a picture of a deer who has been frightened and has been running to escape danger. With it's sides heaving and it's throat parched, it searches frantically for a brook of fresh water.

In much the same way the inner man of the soul can become so deprived of spiritual food and drink that the main object of life becomes a search for such refreshment. All too often the nourishment is available and the deprived person fails to recognize it.

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Psa 42:2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Idols can never serve the purpose. They cannot see, hear nor move at their own will. The Lord is the Living God who possesses all of these qualities to a perfect degree.

The writer of the psalm longs for the time when he can once more come into God's presence. He wonders how long it will be before this can come about. This is clearly the thought of a righteous person. The unrighteous do not long to come into God's presence. Just the contrary. They attempt to push any thoughts of God's all seeing eye out of their evil minds.

Psa 42:3 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?

There has been much weeping. It has lasted both day and night. There are two reasons for this weeping. First, the individual is hurting from wondering why God has not yet remedied the suffering. Second, his enemies are chiding him by asking him where his God is. Their implication is that if there were such a God He should have come to the aid of the suffering one.

Psa 42:4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

This verse no doubt rules out a suffering slave in Egypt as the author. The temple, or house of God had



not been built at that time. This persons had at one time taken part in going to the temple with the multitude who worshiped there on the sabbath and other holy days. How wonderful it would be if only he could enjoy that fellowship again!

Psa 42:5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

There are times when one's mind becomes disobedient to his own will. The author of the psalm knows he ought not to be questioning God's mercy and goodness. He is confident that the time will come when he shall be able once more to know the comforting hand of Elohim upon him. God has not permanently abandoned him. A brighter day is ahead.

Psa 42:6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.

This verse is understood two different way. To some it speaks of the psalmist being in the area of Mount Hermon as he writes. To others it means that he only recalls memories of that area from the time when he was there. In either case he is trying to uplift his spirits by calling upon the Lord to give him strength and faith to carry on.

Psa 42:7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

The author has been overwhelmed by the storms of life. It is as if he were in the presence of Job in the depths of the sea with waterspouts swirling on the surface and reaching down into the deep. Without God all would be absolutely hopeless.

Psa 42:8 Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

But the situation was not hopeless. God watches over His own twenty-four hours of the day and night. There can be two way communication between the writer and his God. He can hear the song of hope which is constantly promised by God. He can also answer back through the means of prayer. God will be there!

Psa 42:9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

Rock is stable. One can stand upon the rock when the waves billow and the waterspouts swirl. God is the rock of our salvation. Jesus urged men to build their houses upon the rock. Then when the storms came and the waves rolled high, there could be safety.

Psa 42:10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?

A sword can do great damage to the flesh and bones of the body. The enemies who mocked the psalmist wounded

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him deeply by their constant query as to why his God had not come to help him.

**Psa 42:11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.**

In spite of all his troubles, the psalmist maintains his confidence that the Lord will see him through the storm. When that time comes he will open his mouth in praise. He commands his disturbed soul to cease it's questioning and continue to call upon the Creator.

## Chapter 43

Many believe this five verse psalm was once attached to psalm number forty-two as a single piece of work. It has the same general flavor and has no title as most of the psalms do have.

**Psa 43:1 Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.**

The psalmist is ready to plead his case before the God of heaven. He feels he has been dealt with in a very unjust manner and appeals to the Lord to see that he is released from the anguish he has suffered.

This first verse does not sound like David pointing his finger at the nation of Israel. At times Israel did act in deceitful and unjust manners, but this sounds more like someone suffering under either Assyrian or Babylonian captivity. We understand that the Hebrew word for nation here is *Goy* which generally refers to heathen nations who worshiped idols.

**Psa 43:2 For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?**

With the Lord at his side the psalmist feels that he has a source of strength which would remove the oppression of his captors. It appeared as though his fountain of strength had abandoned him. He was having difficulty understanding why this should be.

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Psa 43:3 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. Just as a ship on the ocean was able to use a lighthouse to find it's way, the seeker of truth is able to use the light of God's Word to lead him to it's source. The psalmist pleads for God to make such light available to him in order that he may return to the temple area on Mount Zion, and to the place of worship. He longed for that close relationship, and had missed it very much.

Psa 43:4 Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

If he can find a means to return to Jerusalem where the altar of Elohim rests, he will play and sing praises to He whom he loves so intently. His joy will be full.

Psa 43:5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Repeatedly he chastises his soul for being disturbed and questioning God's providential care. This same statement is found again and again. Perhaps the present reader can sympathize with him. Every righteous man or woman has gone through periods of time when troubles cloud the sky to the extent that it seems the Father in heaven has turned His face away. Even Jesus expressed much the same thought at the cross when he carried the sins of the world upon his back.

Chapter 44

We are here dealing with one of the great questions of religion. Why do bad things happen to good people? The answer, as given in this psalm is that somehow it is harmonious with the wisdom of the Lord of the universe. We do not have the omniscience which He has. Since it is this way, it is to our advantage to maintain our faith and live according to His commandments. All will be well when time has come and gone.

The identity of the author is uncertain. The latter portion of the chapter does not sound like David.

Psa 44:1 We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

The history of Israel had been passed down to him through the servants of the Lord in past ages. This history included many events in which God demonstrated His concern for His people by helping them in a variety of ways.

Psa 44:2 How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

One of the foremost favors was that the wicked inhabitants of the land of Canaan were driven from the land which had been promised to Israel. If Israel had depended on their own wisdom and power, this would never have taken place. Israel had to work in cooperation with the Lord, but it was He who made the victory possible. The Canaanites had been uprooted and Israel had been planted in accordance with the will of God.

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**Psa 44:3 For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.**

Israel could have swung the sword without the help of the Almighty for ages on end without taking possession. With God's all powerful hand beside their own, the sword worked wonders impossible otherwise.

**Psa 44:4 Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.**

If this is truly David speaking, he is the visible king of Israel, but speaks to the invisible King of heaven and earth. His plea is that God will pronounce the command that will free Israel from it's suffering at the hands of it's enemies.

**Psa 44:5 Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.**

There are two vivid scenes described in this verse. The speaker is confident that with the help of the Lord, the enemies can be toppled from their haughty position. Then they may be trodden underfoot. Several have commented that this is mindful of the charge of a wild bull and the stamping of that animal upon the victim which has been laid prostrate.

**Psa 44:6 For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.**

It would not be by the bow or by the sword that the victory would come. It would be by the same power that gave Israel the land when they entered it.

**Psa 44:7 But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.**

**Psa 44:8 In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.**

How many times God had intervened and brought success to His people! Because of those successes God's name had been held high and praised by His peculiar nation. He had also been respected by those who had been driven off.

**Psa 44:9 But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.**

**Psa 44:10 Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us spoil for themselves.**

But now the picture had become just the opposite. God had acted as though He cared nothing for Israel. He had allowed the enemies to defeat them and take away their possessions. Their armies had been thoroughly embarrassed.

**Psa 44:11 Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen.**

The next few verses do not sound like the words of David. The claim is that Israel has been scattered and

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driven from the land. This was not the case while David was king. These words sound like those of one who has seen captivity in Assyria or in Babylon.

Psa 44:12 Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase thy wealth by their price.

There had seemingly been little cost for the enemies of God's people. The author could see no advantage to God or His people by allowing them to be sold into the hands of their foes. It was as if they had been given away.

Psa 44:13 Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

Psa 44:14 Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.

Rather than being respected by those who had been allowed to harass them, Israel had been despised. They were scorned and insulted. The enemies had made fun of them and were shaking their heads in derision. How could either the Lord or His people be benefitted by this sad condition?

Psa 44:15 My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,

Psa 44:16 For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger.

The psalmist is overwhelmed by shame and confusion. The haughty behavior and words of the enemies had left the people ridiculed and the Lord blasphemed.

Psa 44:17 All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.

Now we are introduced to the monumental question facing all suffering followers of God. Since Israel had kept God's commandments, how could he have allowed such conditions to come about? Was there no explanation?

Psa 44:18 Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way;

Psa 44:19 Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

The psalmist claims innocence of both heart and deed. He cannot believe the people deserved that which has taken place. Their deeds have been in accord with the commandments of the Lord. Even the thoughts of their hearts are true to Him even though they have been deprived of their land and brought near to the point of death.

The dragons of verse nineteen are a symbol for vicious foes who have no compassion. The Devil himself is called a great serpent.

Psa 44:20 If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god;

Psa 44:21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

The psalmist is so convinced of Israel's innocence that he invites God to search through their actions and their thoughts. God is perfectly capable of knowing the innermost thoughts of men. The writer is certain that God will find no trace of idolatry among them.

Psa 44:22 Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

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In spite of the purity of their lives, they have been trampled upon. They are apparently of no more concern than sheep headed for the slaughterhouse.

**Psa 44:23 Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.**

In what seems to be a bold insult to the Lord, the writer calls upon Him to WAKE UP! Does He not realize the degree of anguish and pain His people are feeling? How long will he continue to turn His face the other way?

This was a serious lack of judgment. God does not slumber nor does He sleep. (See Psalm 121:4.)

*Psa 121:4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

Jesus disciples once found their Master seemingly unaware of the danger of rolling waves while they were in a ship. The Lord calmed the waves and proved that their fears were ungrounded.

**Psa 44:24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?**

Has the reader ever had the experience of needing badly to see someone of importance to solve a problem and found that the person who was sought was too busy with other concerns to tend to the problem? To the psalmist, that seemed to be the problem here. Had God really turned His face in the other direction and ignored them?

**Psa 44:25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.**

Israel felt that the weight they were carrying was too heavy to bear. When the Lord had been with them in the past. The nation had walked straight and tall. Now they were reduced to squirming along the ground so to speak.

**Psa 44:26 Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake.**

If only God would attend to their cries, they felt that it would work on His behalf in that their redemption would demonstrate His mercy and lead to praise from His people

**A FINAL NOTE.**

Why does God allow His faithful to face persecution and pain of many kinds?

Let us ask ourselves if we do not do the same. We allow our children to drive off in the family automobile knowing that their lives hang in the balance.

Let us note that God is testing the desire which we have to live with Him after the judgment. He created us as we make our decision to bring our own children into this world. We recognize that life is worth the living. God is willing to allow the testing of faith to separate those who love Him from those who do not. Those who love Him will hear the words, "Enter into the joys of thy Lord."

Thirdly, testing builds spiritual strength. It is more than just a matter of testing. The burdens we face lead to spiritual muscle, just as the pain of lifting weights, or running for long distances increases the ability to respond when the game is on the line.

God knows what He is doing!



## *Chapter 45*

Psalms 45 is a beautiful picture of a wedding. The original application is uncertain. The application for the Christian dispensation is obvious. It has deep meaning with respect to Christ and the church.

Even though the author may not have known its later meaning when it was written, God has verified that meaning when the writer of Hebrews quoted from it, as we shall show in the comments below.

**Psa 45:1 My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.**

The Hebrew word which is translated as “inditing” could well be translated as “overflowing.” The writer is so full of the wonderful truths which he is about to present that he can hardly wait to pour them out in words. Whether with tongue or pen, these wondrous thoughts must be poured out.

**Psa 45:2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.**

This verse can hardly be restricted to humans. The comparison is too grand. The one mentioned is not just the fairest among men. He is “fairer” than men. He has divine beauty. When He speaks, the grace of God is poured forth from his lips. This description fits the Son of God. He is the one who is blessed forever.

**Psa 45:3 Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.**

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He is urged to gird Himself with a sword that His majesty and glory may be made evident. Jesus Christ is the Word of God. The Word is the sword of the Spirit. The weapons to be used in the Christian age are spiritual in nature.

Psa 45:4 And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

Christ is known for having lived in truth, meekness and righteousness. He is also known for teaching His followers to incorporate these same characteristics into their own lives.

The right hand is the one which usually wields the sword. Awesome things will result from the use of the Word of God.

Psa 45:5 Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.

But God also makes use of arrows. As the one spoken of in this psalm rides out against the foe, the arrows of truth will sink deep into the hearts of a multitude who will then see the error of their ways and become a part of His own soldiers.

Psa 45:6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.

God has ruled from everlasting unto everlasting. Whether or not men recognize divine rule, it is there.

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The scepter is a mark of authority. It is folly for men to rebel against the authority of the Creator. His scepter is not only one representing power and authority. It is one that expects righteousness from His subjects.

**Psa 45:7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.**

Now we come to a most interesting verse. Who is the one addressed as “Thou?” Is it someone of ancient times? Is it the Father in heaven? Is it the Christ who came to earth?

We immediately dismiss the first suggestion because of the use of the word “God.” The one spoken of is Deity, not human. It makes a difference where we catch our breath in the verse. The punctuation as given in the King James Version above places a colon after the word “wickedness.” Therefore it appears that there are two personalities. The first would be Christ, who was God with us. The second would be God the Father who anointed Christ and sent Him to be an example and a sacrifice for men.

However; there is another way to read this statement. The sentence could be punctuated in such manner that the meaning would be that both of the words “God” refer to the same person. The meaning would then be that God the Father is the God of the one spoken to. In that case the verse would simply be emphasizing that God, who is the God of the one spoken to has anointed the one spoken to and raised Him above the sons of men.

The uncertainty disappears when we appeal to the words of the writer of the Hebrew letter. He states, the following in Hebrews 1:8-9.

*Heb 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.*

*Heb 1:9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

It would be ridiculous to deny that this is a reference to the psalm in question. The king spoken of in this psalm is the Son, and He is referred to as God. His reign will continue forever.

**Psa 45:8 All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.**

If this speaking of the king, or the one who is to be His bride? Men do not ordinarily wear perfume on their clothing. The next verse does seem to indicate that this king does so. He has proceeded from the palaces of heaven clothed in garments both beautiful and pleasant of odor. They are pleasant to all of the senses.

At the same time we must remember that this is a spiritual scene we are witnessing. Jesus Christ is dressed in spiritual garments so wondrous fine.

**Psa 45:9 Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.**

This king of whom we read is so important that the handmaids include the daughters of kings. Is it not true that the daughters of queens have given honor and praise to the Lord Jesus Christ?



The second part of the verse states that the bride of the king stands at His right hand in great splendor. She is dressed in the finest of gold. Dear reader, the queen is the bride of Christ, the church. She has recognized his call and has offered herself to Him that many children of God may come into being.

**Psa 45:10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;**

The words are now addressed to the bride herself. She must listen carefully to the advice which is about to be given.

Her husband, the king is to come before all else. The beliefs of her friends and relatives may, or may not agree with the truths commanded by her husband. Her happiness and her future will depend upon her dedication to His will.

**Psa 45:11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.**

When she does recognize the king as her protector and sustainer, He will return her love with faithful care. She will be provided with blessings and joy in her new life.

**Psa 45:12 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.**

Tyre was famous for fine merchandise. The queen would be favored with the finest of gifts. We must not make the mistake of thinking all members of the church will have nothing but material prosperity in this present

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life. But, there are gifts far better than silk and earthly mansions.

The bride will be so impressive that even some of those who have great wealth will wish to honor her.

Psa 45:13 The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.

Why does this verse not stop with the word “glorious?” It goes on to say “within.” Inward beauty is far more important than which wins beauty contests. The spiritual clothing of the bride is more valuable than the most precious gold.

Psa 45:14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

Everything about this queen will be magnificent. Her spiritual clothing is unsurpassed. Those who accompany her are pure in heart. Those who hear her voice and heed her call will find great happiness.

Psa 45:15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

The king came out of the palaces of heaven to claim His bride. The time will come when the queen and all those who have been joined to her, and have faithfully honored the king, will find the gates of heaven opened to them and may enter into the heavenly palaces.

Psa 45:16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.



The attention of the bride will become focused upon the production of faithful children rather than on the importance of her ancestors. She will teach her children to love their spiritual Father and to become spiritual leaders among mankind.

Psa 45:17 I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

The name of the bride will be “Christian.” No future time will ever arrive when that name will be erased from human memory. Because the bride has chosen to be obedient to her husband, the Son of God, she will share in the glory of her marriage. This shall be true both now and forever.

Chapter 46

This chapter is an assurance that God knows His own, and will take care of them. In the midst of trials and earth shaking events, His people need not fear. Even if death swallows up the outer man, the soul is safe from every threat.

Psa 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

God's children have a very real threat to deal with during their journey here on this earth. Satan is bent on destroying all that is righteous and sowing evil on all sides. If men and women become so independent that they fail to depend upon the God of heaven, they will find themselves victims of the Devil.

On the other hand, if men and women seek a place of refuge and a tower of strength, they can find those things in the Lord. He is both ready and able to protect His faithful from every trap and test which is laid for us.

Psa 46:2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

The picture presented here is as awesome as the natural man can imagine. Even if the earth were to be destroyed, man could rest in peace under the arm of the Almighty. If such earthquakes occurred over the entire globe that the continents sunk below the surface of the oceans, God is capable and willing to protect the faithful.

Psa 46:3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

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Though the winds and the waves wreak destruction such as has never before been seen, the man of God is safe from spiritual death. Tempests strong enough to shake the mountains cannot destroy the soul.

The Hebrew word “selah” indicates a pause in a musical composition. The reader will remember that the psalms were set to music. The use of the word in this verse tells us the composer had presented a complete thought. God can and will care for His people.

**Psa 46:4 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.**

The kind of river which is spoken of here is not the wild rampaging torrent which can cause destruction. It is the cool and refreshing stream which can quench the thirst of the citizens of God’s kingdom. The river flows from the very throne of the Lord. It is available to all who are in need of the water of life.

Tabernacles are temporary dwelling places. The souls of the faithful are on this earth for a short time. They will ultimately find their permanent home in the heaven of heavens with the saints of all the ages.

**Psa 46:5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.**

The word “her” in this verse refers to the city of God. The faithful citizens of that city will stand in the midst of all turmoil. They have the hand of God to hold to. The reader should compare the latter part of the eighth chapter of Romans with the truths presented above.

*Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*Rom 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

*Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Psa 46:6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.**

**Psa 46:7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.**

The heathen are those who defiantly oppose the will of the Lord and are bent upon serving themselves in pride and pleasure. They have fought against God from the beginning. But, when God takes action, all opposition will be brought to an end. It has happened again and again. It will finally climaxed in the passing of this environment, and the appearance of the new heaven and earth.

**Psa 46:8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.**

The basic question which must be answered is, "Who will win? Will it be the great Serpent, or will it be the family of God? The reader is told to take notice of what has happened to the evil workers in Biblical history. A

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careful examination of God's victories in the past will inspire confidence in the final victory over sin.

Psa 46:9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

The instruments of war will not triumph in the end. Wars will be replaced with peace. Spears, swords, arrows and chariots will be broken and burned. The only question is with respect to the time of the victory. Will this age of peace come before the return of Christ, or will it only be found when the earth itself is burned when the elements melt in the fervent heat? The signs are mixed. Prophecy does seem to predict a time of peace before the catastrophic visit from God as He takes vengeance upon His enemies. The other side of the issue is that the Bible speaks of wars and rumors of wars, with Christ appearing unexpectedly.

Compare the following.

Mat 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

Mat 24:4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

Mat 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Mat 24:6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

Mat 24:7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

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*Rev 20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

*Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

*Rev 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

*Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

*Rev 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*

*Rev 20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

*Rev 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*

*Rev 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

This present commentator is left with the impression that there is to be a lengthy period of time during which



Satan will be restrained and peace will reign upon the earth. Then, after the time of peace, there is to be a short period during which Satan will resume his influence. Then, without previous warning, Christ will appear, Satan will be vanquished and the judgment will occur.

One thing is certainly true. God and His people will be the victors. No material nor spiritual force is strong enough to defeat our Lord and His servants.

**Psa 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.**

**Psa 46:11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.**

God may be ridiculed by His spiritual foes. That ridicule will, over the long run, be ineffective. He will be held up in every age, and especially in the end time when this heaven and earth flee away and the new creation replaces it!

## *Chapter 47*

We have here a psalm of praise and adoration for the King of Jacob, but further than that He is the King of all the earth, both Jew and Gentile. He is pictured as having won the victory and having ascended to the throne as King of kings.

**Psa 47:1 O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.**

The command to clap the hands was an encouragement to show outward signs of the joy which was in the heart over the victory He has gained over His foes. It is difficult to determine just when this command was given. It could have been at the time the Assyrian army lost one hundred eighty-five thousand soldiers in a single night.

It could also have reference to the victory over death which Jesus Christ won when he died on the cross and then became seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

**Psa 47:2 For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.**

This verse seems more appropriate as a reference to God the Father rather than God the Son. All other gods are but idols. All kings of the earth are subject unto Him. They may have difficulty in recognizing His authority, but this has nothing to do with the reality of that authority.

The word “terrible” has no intention to be taken as fear, unless we are discussing those who oppose Him. To the righteous the word means awe and respect.

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Psa 47:3 He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

The identity of the “us” in this verse obviously refers to those who have enrolled in the army of the Lord. The victory is certain for those subjects of the Most High. The Jews were a chosen people whom God had led and fed for centuries. However, there is a secondary meaning above and beyond that fact. All people of the entire earth are responsible to the Master of heaven and earth. Any nation that fights against His people will meet certain defeat.

Psa 47:4 He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

As the Father of His family, the Lord will decide what is to be their inheritance when the conflict between good and evil has concluded. Human minds are quite unable to grasp the magnitude of the inheritance which awaits the spiritual Israel, or Jacob.

We come to another Selah, indicating a pause in thought.

Psa 47:5 God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

When and from where did God go up with a shout and a trumpet sound? We believe this speaks of the triumph Christ won in the resurrection from the grave and the ascension to heaven. While the first part of this psalm seems pointed more in the direction of the Father, this latter part fits the Son very well. At the sound of a trumpet the dead shall arise to meet the Christ in the air. Remember that Christ is said to be “God with us.”

Yes, at that time Christ will have won the victory over all opposition. There will be good reason for He and His bride the church to rejoice and break out in songs of praise.

Psa 47:6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

Psa 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

The praises are not to be mere amusement meant for self entertainment. The praises will spring forth from hearts which are filled and running over with adoration and thanksgiving for His leadership.

Psa 47:8 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

The heathen here may well be the gentiles who have dedicated their lives to His service. It hardly seems that the verse is saying the non-believers will still be present after the trumpet has sounded and mankind has been judged. This is an irrational position.

Psa 47:9 The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.

This last verse is a reference to the people who have followed the pattern set by Abraham, the father of the faithful. The promise to Abraham and Jacob that their seed will be greatly blessed will be kept when the princes of the earth have surrendered their weapons to God.

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## Chapter 48

We have now a psalm of praise to God for his care and protection of Jerusalem. Enemies had thought to break down the walls and damage the inhabitants, but realized their cause was hopeless and abandoned their attack.

**Psa 48:1 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.**

This writer recalls the childhood prayer which was offered at mealtime. “God is great. God is good. Let us thank Him for this food.” There are many great things in this world, but the One who created it is far greater than all else. His praise will never match His greatness, but it deserves the finest we can offer.

The city of our God is Jerusalem. In the past it has been the city situated near the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The present psalm without doubt had reference for it’s readers at the time it was written to that city in the land of Canaan. However, there is a New Jerusalem which is far more glorious than that in Canaan. That city is the one which comes down from heaven itself and welcomes citizens from every land to gather and dwell there forever.

The mountain of His holiness was Mount Zion, upon which the splendorous temple rested. The mountain of His holiness today is the spiritual mountain of power supporting the church of Jesus Christ which is the present temple.

There have been many suggestions as to the occasion for the praise which is here heaped upon both God and His chosen city. To the present writer it seems best to

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think of many events over many centuries. The earthly city of Jerusalem was attacked many times. As long as it's citizens maintained their spiritual purity, they were protected from every enemy. Only when they ignored Jehovah and His laws was the city plundered.

Psa 48:2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

It is not as much for the physical location of earthly Jerusalem that it is said to be the joy of the whole earth. It is because it was the city of the King of kings. Spiritual Jerusalem is even more to be praised because from it flows the opportunity to drink of the water of life.

Psa 48:3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

Those who have been protected within the walls of the earthly city rejoiced in that the walls of that city were absolute protection to those who obeyed the Lord. The armies of the foes of God's people were turned back in frustration.

The same will be true of the New Jerusalem. She stands as a fortress for Christians. The enemies of God's chosen people will find that they cannot annihilate either the city or those who dwell therein. Though they ridicule, torture and even put God's people to physical death, they will meet defeat along with the dragon whom they serve.

Psa 48:4 For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

Psa 48:5 They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away.

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It was the kings of the earth who purposed to destroy God's city. These were those of pomp and power. Not only that, they had assembled, indicating more than one. Even so, when they had the chance to see what they faced, they were awe stricken and thought best to retreat.

**Psa 48:6 Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail.**

The Lord used two illustrations which serve to describe the feelings of those who made their retreat. The first was the birth pains of a woman in labor. From the time of Eve women have dreaded the ordeal of childbirth. They have heard from other women, but they wait in anxiety not knowing just how severe the discomfort will be.

**Psa 48:7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.**

The ships of Tarshish sailed the Mediterranean. When the typhoon struck panic came with it. Some have wondered why the ships sailing on the Mediterranean would be used to illustrate the confusion the enemies of Jerusalem would feel. The point in both of the illustrations is that the results of attacking the city of God would be an extremely uncomfortable experience.

**Psa 48:8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.**

The kings of the earth had heard of the amazing power of the God of heaven who defended His beloved city. It was not until they had come close and seen just how true the reports had been that they made their decision to

turn back. God's city could not be defeated as long as it's citizens remained true to Him.

Again we have the word Selah which speaks of the truth of what has been revealed.

**Psa 48:9 We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.**

The reader should sympathize with the sentiments of this verse. God did not cease His protection of the city when the earthly city was replaced by the heavenly city. The temple where God dwells today is the church. No power in existence can destroy that temple. When the Son of God returns to take the church from earth to the heaven of heavens those who dwell therein will be thankful that they were permitted entry into His city and His temple.

**Psa 48:10 According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.**

The ancient city of Jerusalem is recognized by men and women of every land. It has been admired by those of many races around the world. God's power and goodness have been held up before Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and every part of the globe. Only those who wish to remain blind to the evidence will ignore the righteousness of the Lord.

The reference to the right hand should not cause concern among those who are left handed. God's right hand is but a means of expressing His ability.

**Psa 48:11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.**



Most certainly those of ancient times who dwelt in the city of God had reason to rejoice. How would the reader have felt if he had been among those who returned from captivity and gazed at the rebuilt temple. God's righteousness and providential care of Israel would have been most impressive.

**Psa 48:12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.**

The people are challenged by the psalmist to take a good close look at the city. Walk around her and count the towers on the walls.

**Psa 48:13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.**

Look at the strong walls which protect her. See the beautiful palaces enclosed within those protective walls.

Then see that the word is passed on to generation after generation. God is to be glorified. There is none like Him!

**Psa 48:14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.**

Those who keep the covenant between Israel and her God will find that He supports them even unto death. But, it does not stop there. They will find that the gates of the New Jerusalem will be swung open for their entry into the company of those who have conquered death through the blood of Jesus.

(See Revelation 21:23-27.)

*Rev 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

*Rev 21:24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.*

*Rev 21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.*

*Rev 21:26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.*

*Rev 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

(And Revelation 22:14)

*Rev 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*



## *Chapter 49*

Men all too often place their future in the accumulation of fame, education and wealth. The chapter before us sets out to show the folly of such an approach to life. “This world is not our home. We’re just a passin’ through.”

**Psa 49:1 Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world:**

The first order of business is to call attention to what the psalmist has to say. A deaf ear can do far more damage than he is able to foresee. The advice about to be given is not for one class of men. It is for everyone.

**Psa 49:2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.**

The upcoming teaching is not confined to either the powerful or the weak. It is not intended for the poor without applying to the rich. There is a message for every man alive.

**Psa 49:3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.**

Wisdom and understanding should be constant twins. Wisdom is crippled in making right choices if there is a lack of understanding to provide a foundation for the choices to be made. Some persons speak when they need desperately to feed the mind with more truth than they possess. Disaster is the result of such carelessness.

**Psa 49:4 I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.**

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There are two phases of advising others. One must first have ears that are open to the truth and receive only that which is of benefit to both themselves and others. This must be followed with great care as that truth is passed on to those who can benefit by it. Idle words are tools of the Devil.

The writer of the psalm understands that the harp could be a means of empowering the truths which he had gleaned and wished to pass on to his fellow men. This is not a proof that the musical instruments should be used in worship services during the Christian age. David used them. They can become instruments of human entertainment all too easily.

Psa 49:5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

Satan and sin follow us hungrily at our very heels. We must take great care to distinguish between that which is capable of swallowing us up and that which will strengthen us in the service of our Lord.

Psa 49:6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

There is tremendous temptation to trust in the temporary power of silver, gold and other valuable possessions. We can easily forget that such power is here today and gone tomorrow. Men walk directly into a death trap when they place their material possessions above those which are eternal.

Psa 49:7 None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

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A human soul is worth far more than all the riches in the world combined. The price of redemption has been paid by the blood of the Son of God. That is the price God demands for the redemption of a soul. No man has enough wealth to take it's place.

**Psa 49:8 (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)**

**Psa 49:9 That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.**

It is that blood of Christ which is effective to the end of time. Without it's redeeming power the soul of man will be lost. The finest coffin cannot protect the body of man from becoming corrupted. The archeologists know full well what they will find when they open a grave which has been sealed for ages.

When the blood of Christ is applied, the body may decay, but the soul will avoid corruption.

**Psa 49:10 For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.**

The wise man and the fool are both bankrupt when their bodies perish. The rich man and the pauper are both penniless when they are lowered into the earth. Men who believe they gain immortality when they pass on their riches to their descendants deceive themselves and their heirs.

**Psa 49:11 Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.**

The use of the word “houses” here does not refer to dwelling places. It is talking about families. The rich and powerful often convince themselves that they have reached out for immortality when they make out a will which leaves many riches to their children. They fail to realize just how quickly that wealth can be dissolved by a thoughtless son of daughter

They carefully place their name on the arch over the entrance to their estate. That guarantees nothing. Unless the world comes to an end, the name of which they are so proud will be removed and others will follow..

**Psa 49:12 Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.**

The prestige of the most honorable of men will vanish away in time to come. Material wealth can disappear just as surely as the life of the beast is here today and gone tomorrow.

**Psa 49:13 This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.**

The manner of thought and behavior of those who depend upon riches and fame is usually foolishness in the sight of the Lord. The “Selah” is intended to underline this verse as a vital principle.

**Psa 49:14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.**

Such foolish persons are laid in their grave with no more hope of eternal life than a sheep. Their bodies will





rot and their souls face separation from both their riches and their Maker.

**Psa 49:15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.**

The psalmist is thankful that he has not placed his hope of the future in that which men find honorable. He has sought out the Lord and lived in such manner that he can look across the border from time to eternity with hope.

**Psa 49:16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;**

Why should the poor man envy the one who becomes wealthy in this life. Oh yes, that one has glory for a moment. That is no reason to either fear him or be jealous of such riches. The poor man who is rich in faith will receive spiritual wealth within the gates of the New Jerusalem which will put the earthly mansion of the rich man to utter shame.

**Psa 49:17 For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.**

It is as impossible for the rich man's mansion to follow his body into the coffin as for the camel to go through the eye of a needle. At death the man of faith finds that his riches will be waiting for him. At death the man who has placed his entire confidence in earthly riches will find that they have been left behind.

**Psa 49:18 Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.**

While the careless rich man gloried in the riches and the praise of others while he was alive, neither the praise nor the riches will follow him when life here is finished.

**Psa 49:19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.**

Such a man will find himself in company with those who preceded him to the pit of damnation. Spiritual light has the Lord as it's source. Having disdained the Lord in this life, the self centered unspiritual man has been swallowed up in the darkness where the only illumination is from the everlasting fires of hell.

**Psa 49:20 Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.**

There is no more hope for one who has placed their hope of heaven on the fame and riches of this world than there is for the beasts which have no soul.

We must close the discussion of this chapter with a reminder that even in the old testament there was reason to believe in life after death. It is true that the old testament does not have as much to say about resurrection as does the new testament, but passages such as this begin to bring the reality of eternal punishment and reward into focus.

See also the following scriptures.

Psa. 16; Job 19; Dan. 12 and Isa. 26.



## *Chapter 50*

We usually do not expect to find final judgment scenes in the old testament. We do have one in this chapter. The basic question which is discussed is the relationship between sacrifices and condemnation. Can one compensate for a careless attitude toward sin by the offering of sacrifices?

**Psa 50:1 The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.**

This is not just any authority calling men to account for their sins. It is the Almighty True and Living God of all creation. His call for attention rings out for every man of every age to give attention. There will be no exemptions.

**Psa 50:2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.**

There are two Zions. One was the physical mount in Jerusalem. The other is the spiritual mount of the Christian age. In both cases God has caused His glory to be made evident. He expects it to be honored.

**Psa 50:3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.**

Jesus Christ is “God with us.” He will return and every eye shall see Him. At that time there will be great disturbances. Fire and earthquakes will be associated with that appearance.

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Psa 50:4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

The entire creation will be alerted for the vital announcement which is to be made. Heaven and earth have witnessed the loving concern of Jehovah for the people. They have also seen the type of reaction which the people displayed as they had His Word revealed to them.

Psa 50:5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

When the Lord calls for a sacrifice from the people, and the people respond to that call, a covenant has been agreed to. He will be their God, and they will be His people.

Psa 50:6 And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.

There is no higher judge than the Creator. Both heaven and earth declare that He has kept His part of the covenant. The verdict on His part is that He has acted in agreement with His righteous character

Psa 50:7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.

The question then is, How have His people reacted to their part of the covenant. The Lord is ready to state His approval or disapproval of their behavior. Because He is GOD there is a need to take the upcoming remarks very seriously.

Psa 50:8 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.

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When the animal sacrifices had been made in the manner that God had specified there was no reason for Him to scold them for making such sacrifices.

**Psa 50:9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.**

The oxen, the goats and the lambs which they had offered were not truly their own. These offerings were but that which had been placed under their control. They were only giving up that which they had first been given.

**Psa 50:10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.**

**Psa 50:11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.**

There is not a single bird, beast or domesticated animal that had come to them without the grace and love of God. They had only given to God that which truly belonged to Him.

**Psa 50:12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.**

**Psa 50:13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?**

God does not become angry when men fail to offer sacrifices from the flocks and the herds because He requires food for His stomach. He does not require animal flesh or blood to satisfy physical hunger. Men need such nourishment. God does not.

**Psa 50:14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:**

**Psa 50:15 And call upon me in the day of trouble:  
I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.**

When then did He make it so clear that they were to offer such sacrifices? The reason was that He could observe a visible display of their gratitude. He had promised to care for them. He watched to see outward evidence of their affection.

When the people did show such gratitude and offer their thanks, He would be there in the time of their trouble. But, He did deserve to be glorified and He expected it.

**Psa 50:16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?**

Thus the Lord has a very valid question. The wicked among the people felt that obedience to God's commands was unnecessary. They did not obey His statutes, nor did they teach others to obey them. There were some matters which needed to be dealt with.

**Psa 50:17 Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.**

He is now ready to make the specifics of His disappointment crystal clear. As the two parties of a covenant. They had the right to expect His blessings and instruction. In return, God had the right to expect their obedience and their thanksgiving.

**Psa 50:18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.**

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God had commanded that men not steal from their fellow humans. The wicked had not been doing that. They had allowed the thief to steal without punishment.

God had commanded that husbands and wives be faithful to their marriage partners. The wicked had been putting away their marriage partners for reasons other than adultery.

By not making God's anger toward such actions clear to the sinners, they had actually become as guilty as if they had stolen and put away their own partners without proper cause.

Psa 50:19 Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

Another source of guilt was the misuse of the tongue. Their words were used to spell out lies. They took advantage of others by distorting the facts.

Psa 50:20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.

The wicked would even stoop to making false accusations against their spiritual brethren. They acted in similar manner against their own fleshly brothers. Did they truly believe that a righteous God would allow stealing, lying and other evil actions to go on and on without His chastisement?

Psa 50:21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.

God had kept quiet as long as He had only because He wished to give the wicked sufficient time to come to their

senses and change their ways. Some of them had failed to appreciate His long suffering. They had the mistaken belief that because He had not punished them in the past, He would not show His wrath in the future.

Psa 50:22 Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

It is utter folly to ignore the commandments of the Lord. He has shown in the past that He will suffer human rebellion for a time, but that this longsuffering is not eternal. The one who defies His instructions and despises His warnings is placing himself in eternal danger. When God's patience reaches it's end, there is no power on earth or in heaven which can successfully deliver the sinner from certain and awful punishment.

Psa 50:23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

Both the tongue and the rest of the body are to be used to praise and glorify Jehovah. The word conversation in this last verse has to do with both words and actions.

This entire chapter is most precious. We are to offer our sacrifices because we love Him. Our bodies are to be presented as living sacrifices. It is a tragic thing to defy His will. The individual who continues to reject the loving sacrifice of the Father and the Son by refusing to become a servant of God faces existence in eternal torment. The one who has once tasted of the heavenly gift and then vomits up the tasted blessings will scream along with has always refused Him. It is better never to have heard the truth than to have heard it and despised it.



Chapter 51

There are seven of what are called the “penitential” psalms of David. This is one of them. It is considered by many to be one of the highlights of the entire Bible. It is the plea for forgiveness of a man who has committed both adultery and murder. If, after plunging this deeply into sin, it is possible to have hope that God will still erase the guilt, each of us may share in such hope.

God is capable and willing to forgive sin. However, that forgiveness depends upon the complete penitence of the sinner. The psalm before us indicates such an attitude on the part of David. He could hardly have exhibited any greater sorrow for his rebellion against the law of the Lord than he expressed in this psalm.

Psalms 51:1 {To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.} Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

The psalm is addressed to the chief musician. Can one truly expect such thoughts as are found in this psalm to inspire others to break out into song? The answer to the question is “Yes!?” Let us look at the words of one of the well known songs in our hymn books. Its title is “Whiter than snow.”

Whiter Than Snow

Lord Jesus I long to be perfectly whole,
I want thee forever to dwell in my soul.
Break down every idol, cast out every foe.
Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.



We are incorrect when we think of every hymn in our books as being full of joy, and possessing a rhythmic beat. There is little doubt that many of the psalms in the bible book of Psalms were written to be used as chants. Psalm 51 may well have been one of these.

Nathan the prophet had related to David the story of the man who had an entire flock of sheep, and who had taken a lamb from another man who had but one. When David spoke of his disgust for one who would do such a dastardly deed, Nathan informed him that he was the man. He had taken the wife of another man when he had a plurality of them

This information caused David tremendous anxiety and the words of the psalm before us express his deep sorrow over what he had done. Nonetheless, we remain concerned over the fact that he did not give up Bathsheba, but produced a child through her.

Psalms 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

Soap and water do an excellent job in the removal of external filth. They can do nothing in the way of removing the stain of sin from the soul of a man. The soul requires a completely different cleansing agent.

We need to pause right here to reflect upon our own spiritual condition. The man who claims he has not sinned makes God a liar, for God declares that all men have sinned and come short of His glory. It every one of us to be careful in condemning David without considering the need for our own cleansing. There is a strong temptation for us to park our own guilt out of sight while we heap contempt upon king David. It is critical that we admit our own failures and repent as deeply as did David.



Psalms 51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin [is] ever before me.

David could not erase the feelings of guilt from his mind. All of us can sympathize with the king. We have had similar experiences and felt the pangs of our conscience.. We have done that which we know to be wrong. Until we confess our sin and determine to do better we must face the constant reminder that all is not well. If we do not do that the memories will return to haunt us. If we have not repented and we still feel no guilt, we are of all men most miserable.

Psalms 51:4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done [this] evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, [and] be clear when thou judgest.

Had David really concluded that he had not sinned against either Bathsheba or her husband? We can hardly believe this. He had sinned grievously against both of them. The point he makes is that sin is defined and will be judged by God Almighty. David realized that all sin is open to the all seeing eye of the Lord. God had observed the sin which he had committed. There could be no doubt that David was guilty. God was justified when he defined sin. He was within His rights to pass judgment on all sin. The only remedy was for David to repent and beg for mercy.

Psalms 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

This verse is the backbone of the belief of many that sin is inherited from the time of Adam and Eve. That

belief is contradictory to some very plain Bible teaching. (See Ezek. 18:19-20 and Eccl. 7:29.)

Eze 18:19 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

Eze 18:20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Ecc 7:29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

The true meaning of the verse is that David had been born and raised up with sin around him constantly. He had yielded to the temptation and had corrupted the inner man. This was not an attempt on his part to excuse his sin. It was a statement of the power of sin over the mind.

We might also add that in the beginning God told Adam and Eve to multiply and fill the earth. If sexual intercourse is inherently sinful, then God commanded the first couple to commit sin. This is not rational.

Psalms 51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden [part] thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

David told the Lord that he recognized God's desire for both the outer man and the inner man to be clean. The hidden part might be invisible to men, but it was certainly visible to God. He begged God to help him find truth and apply wisdom in his thoughts and actions.

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**Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

Hyssop was used in sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals upon those guilty of sin during old testament times. If God willed it to be so, the soul of David could be made pure as the driven snow.

**Psalms 51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; [that] the bones [which] thou hast broken may rejoice.**

David had lost much joy and gladness as a result of the anger of the Lord which he knew must rest upon him. He felt as if the inner man had been broken into pieces.

**Psalms 51:9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.**

If only the Lord would turn His eyes away from the sin and overlook it David could reclaim the joy of living. If God would wipe away the sin as one uses a blotter to absorb stains, hope could once more have a place.

**Psalms 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.**

The outer man is energized by the pumping of the physical heart. The inner man is energized by the Spirit of the Living God. David asked that the spirit be made clean.

**Psalms 51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.**

It was a very real fear to David that he might be forever told to “depart from me, ye worker of iniquity.” Above all things he wanted God to know he wished for God to be with him through the presence of his Holy Spirit. The greatest loneliness in the world is that of being separated from the Sustainer of life everlasting.

**Psalms 51:12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me [with thy] free spirit.**

The joy of knowing God approves of one’s life and is ready to give strength and guidance is most precious. We cannot walk alone. We must have One far wiser and stronger than ourselves to mark the way. Otherwise we will stray and fall.

**Psalms 51:13 [Then] will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.**

David had certainly fallen far short of his obligations to rule over the people of God in such a way that they would learn to live righteously. His influence upon men would have turned righteous men to sinners if they had followed in his steps. Now he promises God that it will not be so in the future. He will do his very best to turn sinners unto righteousness.

**Psalms 51:14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: [and] my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.**

This verse reminds us that David was the ‘sweet singer of Israel.’ This psalm itself was a way of crying out loudly that God is righteous and must be obeyed.

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Psalms 51:15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

There have been men and women who have placed stones in their mouths and made speeches. By this method some overcame their speech defects and became recognized as orators. David proposes a different method. He offers a prayer to the Lord that his ability to praise God will be strengthened that men might find salvation.

Psalms 51:16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give [it]: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

All the blood of all the sheep, oxen and goats in the land were worthless if the life was not dedicated to purity. God would turn away from burnt offerings if the one who offered was bent on continuing in his sin.

Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

The sacrifices which God truly appreciates are given. There must be a spirit of humility. There must be a penitent heart. If these are present, the external sacrifices will be accepted.

Psalms 51:18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

To build the walls of Jerusalem was not meant to say the walls had not been built, nor that they had been broken down and needed to be replaced. This statement

was a request for God to protect His people through His power and for His glory.

Psalms 51:19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

If the hearts of the people were pure, including David's own, the sacrifice of the bulls and goats would be effective. If the hearts were not right, the sacrifices were a waste of time.

Let us make application to the present. If the hearts of men are filled with wickedness, attendance at church assemblies will be useless. Along with David, we must repent of our sins and determine we will resist the Devil, or we worship in vain.



Chapter 52

This psalm is thought by most writers to have been addressed to Doeg the Edomite. This was a man who told King Saul that David had been befriended by Abimelech and had been fed and armed by Abimelech and the priests at Nob. Saul commanded Doeg to kill the priests. This he did, killing eighty-five of them.

That explanation is not the only possibility. The psalm could be intended for any person who convinces himself that he is able to oppose the will of Jehovah. It would be well for the reader to carefully consider his own attitude toward the dedicated servants of God. One does not have to murder God's servants to cause great damage to the forward movement of God's plan for redeeming men. It can be done by sarcasm and mockery. It can be done by a life walking side by side with Satan.

Psa 52:1 Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually.

The mighty man is the one who in convinced he can successfully sabotage God's plans as he sets his own will above that of the Lord. Such a stand will come crashing down before God's all powerful arm. The self deluded power hungry person who opposes God will find that God survives forever, while the opposer is doomed to defeat.

Psa 52:2 The tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

The tongue is a powerful organ for either good or evil. It can be used to preach the gospel, or it can be

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used to lie and destroy others. The belief that it can be used deceitfully for self glorification or the damaging of others is but an illusion. It may appear to bring grand victories for a moment. In the end it will move one toward spiritual suicide.

When shaving with an extremely sharp razor one may find that he is bleeding from a cut that he did not even realize had been inflicted. A deceitful tongue is much the same. It makes things look good when they are wicked and deadly.

**Psa 52:3 Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.**

The proud man may well fasten his affections of whatever seems to multiply his power, or whatever adds to his possessions or prestige. He will not hesitate to sacrifice truth to accomplish such self satisfaction. Righteous speech comes in second in a contest with increased riches and earthly power.

**Psa 52:4 Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.**

God's faithful servant will consistently love the truth and hate the lie. It is not so with the one who serves Satan. He will love the evil and hate the good.

*Psa 52:5 God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.*

The one who is bent on destroying others with lies and deceit will find that in the end it will be his or her

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own soul that has been destroyed. He may believe he is secure behind his falsehoods. God knows exactly where he can be found. Hide and seek games do not work with Jehovah.

Psa 52:6 The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:

The present commentator does not believe this verse is encouraging the righteous to take enjoyment in the eternal torment of the wicked. It is suspected that the laughing is merely recognizing how completely foolish it is to fight against God and His servants.

Psa 52:7 Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.

Real strength does not come from the use of lies and deception to build up one's security in the present life. It is the height of foolishness to take pride in the growth of ability to succeed at the expense of others.

Psa 52:8 But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

These last two verses of the present psalm present the attitude of the saints of the Lord. The house of God is the family of God. His children are those who recognize Him as their Father.

A green olive tree does not wither. It depends upon an inner nature which is fed by the blessings of God. David, the psalmist contends that the way of wisdom is to nourish one's self with the knowledge that God's mercy is eternal for those who love and obey Him.

Psa 52:9 I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints.

Now the psalmist, probably David, makes a solemn promise. He will glorify the name of the Lord. He will point out to others that God's name is dependable. The one who humbly glorifies that name will be eternally happy that he followed the pointing finger of His Maker.



Chapter 53

This psalm is almost identical with psalm fourteen. I will comment on all verses, but the reader might do well to compare the discussion here with that on the fourteenth. The material would not be repeated in the holy canon if the repetition were not needed.

Psa 53:1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good.

The reasons a man who makes the statement that there is no God are not difficult to follow.

1. No man has ever explored the entire universe. God might be in the place where he has not been.

2. No man is eternal. God might exist at a time when he did not exist.

3. No man can be everywhere at once. God might be in the place where man has just left.

4. We are told that God is Spirit and that no man hath seen God at any time. There are realities that men of the past did not know of; for example atoms and electric current. God can exist outside time, space and matter.

Those who truly convince themselves there is no God have sinned. Since they deny God's existence they will not allow Him to apply His cleansing power to their souls. Every one of them is living in sin. In contrast, those who believe in God and reach out to Him have also sinned, but they repent. They are made clean through the means which He has made available for the purification of their soul.

Psa 53:2 God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God.

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God constantly looks down upon men from the heavenly realm to see if there are any who perfectly understand truth and perfectly follow truth. No man at any time has been hidden from His all seeing eye.

**Psa 53:3 Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

What has God seen? Every man who ever lived has stained himself with sin. From the time of Adam until the present, all have sinned and come short of the glory of the Creator.

**Psa 53:4 Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.**

There are two kinds of persons who commit sin. There those who try very hard to love the Lord and obey His commands. They do slip, perhaps every day. They repent and ask forgiveness of both their known and their unknown breaking of God's will. Then there are those who deliberately fight against both God and His children. They act as if the consuming of God's family is no more than feeding upon a piece of pumpkin pie.

**Psa 53:5 There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.**

God's faithful will ultimately be victorious. He has repeatedly shown the folly of fighting selfishly rather than righteously. God is on the side of the pure in heart.

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He will lift them up to be with Him. The remains of the wicked will always be treated with the abomination they deserve. If not today, it will come to pass in eternity.

Psa 53:6 Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

This prayer has been answered. The salvation of spiritual Israel, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has appeared from the land of Mount Zion. It is true that God saw fit to bring Israel out of Babylonian captivity and bring them back to Palestine. But far more important is the fact the those who have been captivated by sin have a way of release through the blood of the Lamb of God.

Chapter 54

The heading of this psalm, as given in the King James Version speaks of it as a psalm of David when he was betrayed by the Ziphites among whom he had hid to escape injury at the hands of Saul. It speaks of dangers faced up to this point, the need for divine assistance at the present, and a promise of grateful sacrifice and thanksgiving in the future.

It is just as applicable for the Christian today as it was for David many centuries ago.

Psa 54:1 Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.

God's name has to do with all of the wisdom and power that is associated with that name. The author knew God could help. He prayed that He would give that help. God knows every detail of our relationship with Him. He will judge accurately and dispense His rewards and punishments in accord with the record.

Psa 54:2 Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

We are promised that God hears the prayers of the righteous. This hearing is more than just a consciousness that the prayer was offered. It is assurance that God will see that all things work together for good to them that love and obey Him.

Psa 54:3 For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

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One would question why “stranger” would rise up against any righteous person. It is because such strangers to God will take advantage of any person whom they find defenceless. These oppressors were setting themselves up as if there were no God. If the author of the psalm was David, they were opposing both the purposes of God and the welfare of David. He badly needed help!

**Psa 54:4 Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.**

The Lord has promised He will help those who love and serve Him. David is confident that the help will be extended to both himself and to those who are trying to help him in his distress.

Dear reader, do not forget this precious promise from the source of all goodness. His promise was not to David alone.

**Psa 54:5 He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth.**

The words “He” and “Thy” are used here to refer to the same Lord; the one who ultimately rules heaven and earth. The prayer is that God will see that justice is done. God has promised those who love and practice evil will be destroyed unless they repent. Without a heartfelt change of direction, those who hate God’s faithful servants will be cut off and find themselves surrounded by evil in the presence of the Devil and his cohorts.

**Psa 54:6 I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for it is good.**

There is confidence in the psalmist’s writing that the promise of God’s help will be received, and that it will be

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appreciated to the extent that God's name will be praised. With such gratitude in his heart, this faithful man of God is more than willing to offer any sacrifice with his power.

Psa 54:7 For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

God had been true to His promises in times past. There was no reason to question either His willingness or His ability to answer the prayer of the psalmist. The answer might not be the one expected, but it would be the one which led to the well being of both God's servant and God's kingdom.



Chapter 55

It is supposed that this psalm is the result of betrayal of David by both his son Absalom and a supposed friend, Ahithophel. If so, there will be readers who can at least partially sympathize with him. David was not the only one to have met such difficulties. Even so, the man of woman of God must move onward toward the eternal goal of heaven.

Psa 55:1 Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

We can all be assured that God will hear such a prayer if the one offering the prayer is giving a whole hearted effort to live in accordance with His will. God has promised to both hear and answer the prayer of the righteous. He will keep His promise.

Psa 55:2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

Some persons are more vocal than others when they are suffering. There are those who suffer silently. There are others who find it difficult to suppress groaning when in agony. David's suffering was due to betrayal by those who should have loved him. We can understand his grief.

Psa 55:3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

What truly faithful friend of God would find himself in suffering at the hands of the wicked? Might we suggest

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that those who follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ could very well shed similar tears to those of the king of Israel.

The wicked hate the righteous because of the glaring difference in the pattern of their lives. The wicked see the righteous as wasting their time in religious folly. They will point the finger and mock. In the case of our Lord it went much farther. They caused Him to be placed on the cross before they cried out that He could not even save Himself.

David's betrayers accused him of being wicked. According to them, he was unfit for the position he held.

**Psa 55:4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.**

He was heartbroken that such things as were happening could even come to pass. His fear was so deep that he felt his life was in serious danger.

**Psa 55:5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.**

Trembling with fear is a horrible experience. The small child cries out to it's parents in the middle of the night as it trembles with fear because of a dream. With David it was more than a dream. The waves of fear were about to become more than he could bear. Those who hated him were being successful in their efforts to make his life miserable.

**Psa 55:6 And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.**

The dove is known for being a peaceful bird. It has the power of flight and when it finds itself in danger it

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can take wing, flying to other parts where the danger is left behind. It was much more difficult for David. He had responsibilities which he could not take off as easy as removing an old coat.

Psa 55:7 Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

The word ‘selah’ expresses hope that the words just uttered may be brought into reality. The king of Israel could not just walk away and never come back.

Psa 55:8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.

Oh yes, it was a windy storm and a tempest. His foes had spoken lies about him. They had been convincing enough that they had turned large numbers of others against a good man.

Psa 55:9 Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

Is the psalmist praying in opposition to God’s stated will when men are told to pray for their enemies? When David used the word ‘destroy’ as he did here, he may have meant his desire was that God would turn his enemies from their paths of strife and violence. Many men have prayed that their enemies might be made friends.

But when he prayed that their tongues might be divided, he was asking that their slanders might come into conflict with other statement of like nature. Would it not be wonderful to see the strife which is produced by hatred turned into love and peace.

Psa 55:10 Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.

There seemed to be no end of the bitter words spoken against the king. Evening and morning, day in and day out they continued their malice. The city had been filled with it.

Psa 55:11 Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

What hideous words we have combined here in describing the words and behavior of those who planned to damage one who had trusted and befriended them.

Psa 55:12 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

It would have been far easier to bear if the source of the malice was a long time enemy who had never been a supposed partner. It was not.

Psa 55:13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

Ahithophel had been a trusted counsellor. He had been considered a friend and a guide. Cherished moments had been shared between the two men. Now those precious memories had been shattered.

Psa 55:14 We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

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The house of God mentioned here would have been the place of worship. The two of them had bowed their heads and bent their knee together before the throne of Jehovah. Nothing sweeter can be shared than this kind of togetherness.

**Psa 55:15 Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.**

Did not David pray for those who had betrayed him to die and go to hell? It would be most difficult to do, but a better course would have been to pray that the Lord act as Judge to see that all who could be persuaded to leave their course of hatred might be turned back. God knows infinitely better than humans just what is the best way to deal with sin and sinners. Jesus said to pray for our enemies and those who use us spitefully.

**Psa 55:16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.**

If those who had tried to cause such misery as David had experienced were so tied to their wickedness that they would not turn from it, the king would still call upon his Lord to save him. He would try to live the good life. He would call upon his Divine Partner for the help which he needed so badly.

**Psa 55:17 Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.**

This verse was the inspiration for one of the best known hymns in our hymnbooks. "Morning, noon and evening,

ever will I pray.” It is one thing to utter words. It is quite another to utter those words in confidence that they will be heard and answered for the good of all concerned.

**Psa 55:18 He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.**

Not everyone was against David. He had genuine friends who would not believe the words of jealousy and hatred which had been spoken in attempts to destroy his rule.

**Psa 55:19 God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.**

What makes men think they can cause suffering on the part of others and escape without punishment? One thing is lack of suffering on their own part. Those who suffer can better see the need to avoid causing such suffering for others.

Those who were persecuting David, had not been through the difficult things they were causing him to bear. If they had seen the unpleasant side of life they would have more easily understood the need to place their souls in submission to God. They were too proud to see a need for partnership with their Creator.

**Psa 55:20 He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant.**

The word ‘he’ in this verse is not speaking of God. It refers to the one who was so wicked he would turn

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against those who had been friends and who had shared common goals.

Psa 55:21 The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

Ahithophel had spread it on thick. David would never have guessed that while the words of flattery were being aimed in his direction, the edge of a sharp knife lay concealed beneath their smoothness. We sometimes use the term “stab in the back.” That was what the king had felt.

Psa 55:22 Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

The faith still shines through. All who read this verse are advised to lift their burden to the heavens and ask for the help of the One who has promised to give just such help. He knows the identity of the righteous. He will help to lift those heavy loads.

Psa 55:23 But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

The contrast between God’s treatment of the wicked and of the righteous is greater than that of day and night. Those who love bloodshed and death will find their lives cut short. If they hate life so viciously, they shall be separated from it.

The one who stands with God through the miseries caused by the unbelievers will be rewarded for their trust. David promised to be among those who trust.



Chapter 56

This short psalm follows very closely the sentiments expressed in the one just previous to it. David is thought to be the writer. He has been treated disgracefully by those whom he had trusted. The opposition to him had threatened to overwhelm him. He could not believe that the Lord had hidden His face from the events. In the end God would protect him from those who hated him. There was solid reason to place confidence in the One who has the personal qualities of being all-wise, all-powerful, all-good and eternal. God had helped in the past. He would continue that help.

Psa 56:1 Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

Sometimes it appears that there is no escape from the evildoers. As an example of what can happen in real life, I recall that my father at one time operated a barber shop. Some of the barbers in town had decided they wanted to raise the price of haircuts. A meeting was held to get everyone to back the price rise. My father served a poor part of town and felt that his customers could not afford to pay the higher price. He spoke up in opposition to the increase. Within the week after the meeting, inspectors came to his shop and found ashes on the floor where a customer had opened the door of a small wood burning stove and spilled them. My father's license was revoked. This was during the depression and we had hard times. I know he must have felt somewhat like David, and that men were trying to swallow us up.

Psa 56:2 Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou most High.

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It was not a one time occurrence that David was dealing with. Over and over again he found it necessary to be protected against the hatred of his foes.

**Psa 56:3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.**

**Psa 56:4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.**

When all looked completely overwhelming, David looked beyond his fears and knew the Lord was aware of his difficulties. No man, or no group of men, have the power to destroy what the Lord is protecting. The arm of flesh is not capable of defeating the finger of the Almighty. According to the Christ, He cast out devils through the power of the Holy Spirit. One version attributes his success to the “Finger of God.”

**Psa 56:5 Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil.**

We can only imagine what his enemies were capable of doing to distort whatever he said to their own ends of destroying him. Day by day there were constant in contemplating new lies attacking him.

**Psa 56:6 They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.**

The actions of his foes were not random. They were carefully planned. They waited and they watched to see what damage they could add to that which they had already done.

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Psa 56:7 Shall they escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God.

Surely it was not possible that such evil men would be allowed to damage others and then suffer no bad consequences for what they had done. Would the Lord just forget the sins which had been committed against David?

Psa 56:8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?

No, the tears of God's saints will never be forgotten when they have been suffering for doing that which is right. They are precious in His sight. He will preserve the memory of them as if they were kept in a bottle. They were written in the pages of His unfailing memory. But, there will be no tears in heaven.

Psa 56:9 When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.

David was persuaded that nothing was powerful enough to overcome the protecting arm of God. His prayers would be answered. God would not abandon him.

Psa 56:10 In God will I praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word.

Psa 56:11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

When God make a promise that He will be with one, that person is secure. His life may even be taken, but God lives on. His faithful will live when time has dissolved into eternity.

Psa 56:12 Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

Psa 56:13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

Verse twelve is probably talking about the vows which he has taken to be faithful to God. It is possible to take the words two different ways. The vows of God had been made that He would protect His own. The vows of David had been made that he would remain true to God. Since God had delivered him from stumbling and falling as he tried to serve, David would show his appreciation by continuing to walk in the light of the Divine will while living here in the body.



Chapter 57

David is hiding from Saul. He feels a deep need for help from on high. He has trusted in the Lord in days gone by and has had his trust rewarded time after time. God has answered his prayers many times and protected him from such enemies as the wild beasts who would feed on the flock over which he kept watch. When confronted with the giant Goliath, he had been given the power to overcome.

Why would not that same protection be allowed to him while fleeing from a man who was trying to take his life.

Psa 57:1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

The picture of a mother hen spreading her wings out over her chicks is used often in the Bible. God is worthy of our trust. He will encircle those who trust him and see that all things work together for their good.

When the chicken hawk has passed over, the mother hen continues to lead her chicks to feeding areas. When David's fears had been removed, he would also depend upon the arm of the Lord to lead him to greater service.

Psa 57:2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.

Men sometimes help greatly when we are in need. Sometimes they help a little. Sometimes they fail to help at all. It is not so with the Lord. He is capable and willing to afford whatever help is needed.



Psa 57:3 He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

The ultimate source of help is God in heaven. David did not pray for the death of Saul. He prayed that God would prevent Saul from swallowing him up. He prayed with the utmost confidence that his prayer would be answered according to the will of his Maker. ‘Selah’ is an expression of that confidence.

How wonderful it is that Christians lean upon the everlasting arms of the One who is the source of mercy and truth. Those who serve Satan have to call upon the ‘Father of liars’ for their help.

Psa 57:4 My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

David compares those who seek his life to vicious lions who stalk their prey with teeth bared. These men do not have teeth like lions. They have teeth which are spears, swords and arrows. They are hungry for his life and search diligently for him day by day.

Psa 57:5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.

What does it mean that God is exalted above the heavens? Who knows how far God’s glory reaches? Astronauts have walked on the moon. Mathematicians have attempted to calculate the size of our universe.

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However, there may be an endless array of what we call our universe. God is over all! Certainly His glory extends far above this globe upon which men live!

**Psa 57:6 They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah.**

Nets and pits are means of capturing fleeing prey. David felt much as a bird might feel when it became aware of a net just ahead, or as a deer might feel when stepping upon the edge of a straw covered pit.

Strangely enough, those who were attempting to trap him had only succeeded in making trouble for themselves. They had fallen into their own pit. In the case of Haman, we find that he was hanged on a gallows which he had caused to be built for others.

**Psa 57:7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.**

Sometimes when faced with an unexpected danger our heart seems to flutter and stop for a moment. This brave young man was so confident of the help of his Lord that he was ready to sing and give praise to Him. We sometimes call such as this ‘whistling in the dark. David knew of the danger and still had such confidence in Jehovah that he paid honor and glory to Him.

**Psa 57:8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.**

**Psa 57:9 I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.**

What a promise David made here. He did not cringe in fear over his dangerous plight. He had a means of overcoming fear. He would play upon his harp and sing God's glory unto all nations.

He has done just that. The psalms which David wrote and sang are known from one end of the earth to the other. They not only allowed the heart of David to be fixed. They have warmed the hearts of many who faced dangers from that time to this.

The present writer once sang with a group of students from a Christian college. One of the places where the group sang was at a tuberculosis hospital where some of the patients knew their life was about to end. Some of the psalms of David were among the requests the patients made.

**Psa 57:10 For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.**

**Psa 57:11 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.**

Let us, along with David, offer praise to God. His glory and His mercy are greater than any man, or any group of men can imagine. They reach beyond heaven and earth, into the infinite and the eternal.



## *Chapter 58*

David longs and prays for the day to come when wickedness will be appropriately dealt with. He cries out that the leaders of the people have allowed themselves to be caught up in the wave of evil thoughts and actions. Those who have leadership responsibilities must accept those duties and see that injustice is removed from the land.

**Psa 58:1 Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?**

When a group of people as a whole lose their hunger for righteousness and proper judgment, that group of people is destined for agony. Without the proper resistance to injustice every person in the congregation will finally suffer. It is altogether too easy to speak of righteousness and then let injustice reign. When that takes place, the peace of everyone is placed in the gravest of danger.

**Psa 58:2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.**

In the heart are the issues of life. It is the pure in heart who shall one day see God. Those who are impure of heart spend much time in planning actions through which they can fill their own selfish goals at the expense of others who are unable to resist. It is sad enough for men to participate in spontaneous unrighteousness. It is far worse to lie upon the bed at night and evaluate just how much can be poured out the following day.

**Psa 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.**

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This verse presents a hyperbole, or exaggeration. A newborn infant does not lie. It cannot speak. The verse is not dealing with total hereditary depravation. It is merely declaring that evil workers begin their malicious ways very early in life. Men and women are free agents. They can choose to do evil, or they can choose to do good. The evil begin to make their choices early, and they all too seldom reverse their self centered ways.

Psa 58:4 Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;

Psa 58:5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

The poison which the wicked pour out is deadly. Attempts to cause a cessation in it's flow usually meet with great difficulty. A call for change in their manners meets a deaf ear. Most of us have seen the snake charmers at work. They play music, and as they do so, a snake will move back and forth with the music. The wicked and evil workers among men will not hear the voice of those who call for a change in their actions.

Psa 58:6 Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

These evil workers can also be compared to vicious young lions who seek to devour men as prey. David asks that God break out the teeth in order that the bite of these individuals may have the sting removed.

Psa 58:7 Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

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The prayer is that the continuous flood of injustice which is emitted from the lives of such enemies of God might be cause to disappear as a stream sometimes disappears in the sand of the desert after an occasional rain.

**Psa 58:8 As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.**

A snail may leave a slimy trail behind as it slowly makes it's way across a surface. The snail may be found dead at the end of the slimy trail. The prayer this time is that the wicked might melt away and be seen no more.

It is a most unpleasant thought to think about a woman who has carried an unborn babe in her womb for five months and then bring it forth only to find it dead. The prayer of the psalmist is that wickedness might die before it is born.

**Psa 58:9 Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.**

Thorn bushes were a choice means of getting a quick hot fire in the days of David. His prayer is that the fire which Saul and his helpers were trying to build under the live of David might be blown away by the breath of God before the heat could even be felt in the pot they planned to boil.

**Psa 58:10 The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.**

This present verse is one of the most difficult in the Bible. It seems to teach just the opposite of that which Jesus Christ taught when he said to pray for our enemies, and to do good to those who despitely use us. We are also reminded of the saying that "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. I will repay."

Here we seem to see God giving permission to the righteous to tramp around in the blood of the wicked. Is there an explanation for the seeming contradiction? I will do the best I can to harmonize the two lines of thought.

First, the vengeance which is taken upon the wicked in taken by God, and not by man. But when a man sees the curses being poured out on the wicked by the hand of the Lord, it is in order to rejoice that the Judge of all the earth has punished in His own infinite wisdom.

**Psa 58:11 So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.**

When God slew one hundred eighty-five thousand Assyrians in a single night, there was reason for rejoicing in the hearts of Israel. They had not wielded the sword, but the enemy had been rendered helpless by the Sword of the Lord.

One wonders just what the emotions of the righteous will be in the final judgment when the wicked are told to depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, and are then cast into the eternal fire of hell.



## Chapter 59

The title of this psalm states that it is a psalm of David. Most of the commentators have followed that claim. This may or may not be true.

There are three quite reasonable lines of thought. The first is that it was written by David when Saul became jealous of him and tried to seek him out and kill him. The second is that it was written by Nehemiah at the time when the walls of Jerusalem were being rebuilt after the captivity and the work was being opposed by Sanballat, Tobias and Geshem. The third is that the psalm is general in nature and could have been sung in various situations where there was a need for deliverance for the people of God from those who hated them.

The comments below will attempt to apply the psalm in a general way applicable to any of the three lines of thought suggested above. The reader is reminded that we have songs in present day hymn books which also fit many varied sets of circumstances. Two of such hymns are "Walking Alone At Eve" and "Not Now But In The Coming Years."

**Psa 59:1 Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.**

To be certain, David could have uttered these words while hiding in caves to escape the jealous hatred of Saul. He realized that without the help of the Lord, Saul had the power to bring his life to an end. He felt that he should not raise his own hand against the Lord's anointed. He needed the help of God to defend him.

Nehemiah was in a bit safer condition than David, but he also was surrounded by those who were doing their utmost to bring an end to the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. He prayed that he was acting within the will

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of God and that divine power would be provided.

Most devout Christians of the present day will be able to recall conditions which threatened to overwhelm their efforts to serve in the kingdom of God. This fifty-ninth psalm would fit any of these circumstances.

Psa 59:2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

Evil men and women may not hesitate to shed the blood of those who stand in their way. Such persons are completely self-centered. Greed, power and hatred control their lives. Jesus Christ Himself was made a victim of just such men.

Psa 59:3 For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD.

The psalmist pleaded that these enemies were not trying to punish him for any sin he might have committed against either God or man. God knew the facts and could accurately judge both himself and his foes.

Psa 59:4 They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold.

This verse does not imply that God had been asleep and was unaware of the events which were taking place. God has promised to hear and answer the prayer of His faithful. However, He does expect us to ask for His help when we are seemingly helpless.

Psa 59:5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.



The heathen are those who are trying to destroy the efforts of the person or persons doing the work of the Lord. Those who are deliberately opposing the progress of God's servants deserve to be punished for their folly. As long as they continue in their wickedness, they deserve no mercy.

Psa 59:6 They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

Such vicious persons act like wild dogs. They wait until they have the cover of darkness. Then they gather around their prey, ready to devour it.

The mention of the word "city" here is probably what caused some to see this psalm as having been written by Nehemiah. This is not a necessary conclusion. God often refers to His people as a city.

Psa 59:7 Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear?

These are not real wild dogs. They only act like these vicious beasts. They pour out threats. Their words are intended to cut like two edged swords. All the while they convince themselves that their sins will go unpunished.

Psa 59:8 But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

How ridiculous it is for finite men to stand up in defiance to the One who holds the very life and breath of every man in His hand every second of all time! It it were not so serious, it would most certainly be a laughing matter.

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**Psa 59:9 Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.**

Because the word “his” is not capitalized, it may be that the translators of the scriptures felt this pronoun had reference to the enemy rather than to God. In that case the verse would be stating that because of the strength of the enemy, the psalmist would feel the need to call upon the arm of God rather than to depend solely upon his own resources.

**Psa 59:10 The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.**

Confidence is expressed that when God is called upon, He will go before his servants and see that they are treated in a just manner.

**Psa 59:11 Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.**

God has the power to slay any who oppose Him. This may not be the best path. Important lessons may be learned by observing the defeat of the wicked without removing them from the scene. As an example of the truth of this verse, the Jews have been scattered among the nations of the world as a result of their rejection of the Son of God as Saviour of the world. If they had been eliminated, the lesson would be less clear.

**Psa 59:12 For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak.**



Those who boast so confidently that there is no God will find one day that the words from their foul mouths will return to haunt them. Then they will meet their just deserts.

**Psa 59:13 Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.**

This verse is not a contradiction to verse eleven. They are not to be slain. Their opposition is to be dissolved. Those from one end of the heavens to the other must be taught that God is supreme.

**Psa 59:14 And at evening let them return; and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.**

It is true that they will return to continue their growling and threatening. They circle around the city of God time after time. They bite and injure whenever they can. Since they cannot defeat Jehovah, they are never satisfied

**Psa 59:15 Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.**

These last verses of the psalm remind us of the words of Joshua when he said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. The opponents of God may make much noise. They may great damage to those whom they seek to devour. They are granted such freedom for the moment.

**Psa 59:16 But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.**

Like Joshua, the writer of the psalm is ready, with his house, to serve the Lord. He will sing the praise of his Maker, who has seen him through trouble in the past, and will do so again.

**Psa 59:17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.**

Note the contrast between the growling of the enemies of God's people, and the singing of those who make the decision to serve Him. Thus, "I Will Sing of My Redeemer."



## Chapter 60

Psalm number sixty is somewhat different. With only twelve verses it tells of a defeat for Israel as a result of God's displeasure with His people. We are not told just what had caused the disappointment on God's part. We are told of the consequences, which were most unpleasant for the people.

Then an expression of confidence in the Lord is given in the latter part of the psalm. This presumes of course that Israel will remedy the cause of the rejection and will hold the divine banner high before all nations.

**Psa 60:1 O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.**

This psalm is titled as a michtam of David. The michtam psalms were teaching psalms intended to lift Israel to higher levels of loyalty to God.

God had cast His people off for a time and allowed them to be scattered as a result of their lack of loyalty to Him. It has been suggested that while they were occupied with enemies in the north of the land, there was an invasion by the Edomites in the south. They had apparently become so independent that they felt able to defeat their enemies without laying their troubles before Him.

Now they had realized their mistake and were calling for His aid. They were ready to turn to Him if He would once more turn back to them.

**Psa 60:2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.**



We do not know whether this trembling and shaking of the earth is talking about an earthquake, or is figurative language referring to an upheaval of the confidence of Israel in the face of their enemies. It seems more likely that it was shaken confidence due to a setback by the Edomites.

**Psa 60:3 Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.**

The hard things which the Lord had shown His people had been a sharp surprise. Things had been going well as long as they were faithful to Him. Now that He had allowed them to taste disappointment they were made to understand more fully just how much they needed His protecting arm.

**Psa 60:4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.**

A banner is a means of unifying a movement. The flag of a nation is displayed to increase the patriotism of that nation. In the case at hand, God has provided a banner for those who fear Him. If they are ready to walk with Him and hold His banner high, He will be with them as truth wins the battle with evil and falsehood.

**Psa 60:5 That thy beloved may be delivered; save with thy right hand, and hear me.**

God's beloved is His faithful servants. There is a way of deliverance for them as they march with Him, hold His

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banner high and remember that victory only comes when He makes it possible.

David is the king. He sets the tone for the people as he calls out to God to hear their plea for help and use His right arm to insure the defeat of the foes.

Psa 60:6 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

God had promised His people the land of Canaan would become theirs. He had promised that David's lineage would always see a king on the throne. That everlasting King would be the Messiah and Saviour of the world. God's promises were secure.

Psa 60:7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;

We now have a listing of major territories in the land of Canaan. Some are on the east of the Jordan river.. Others are on the west. They are all subject to God's control. Each of the areas would make a contribution to God's plans for man.

Psa 60:8 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.

In contrast to the support the Lord would give to the Israelites, He would look with disdain upon those who attempted to destroy them. The Moabites and Edomites were despised. God would look upon Moab as a place

to discard dishwater or bathwater. Edom would be considered a proper place to dump the trash from His shoes. If the Philistines suffered a better fate, it would only be because they respected Him and His people.

Psa 60:9 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

David is assuring Jehovah that he understands the need for divine help if Edom is to be defeated. No man will be able to give the needed strength.

Psa 60:10 Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies?

With this understanding that God is the only real answer to the defeats of the past, David calls for Him to go out with the armies of Israel in the future. In effect, David is promising Israel will hold God's banner high and this causes him to believe God will march with them.

Psa 60:11 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.

Psa 60:12 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

Without the help of the mighty arm of the Lord, man's own strength would be insignificant. With the power of the Living God on their side no enemy could stand.

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## *Chapter 61*

There is not a more valuable psalm than this one in the entire one hundred fifty. All of God's people have experienced moments, or perhaps days in their lives when it seems that life has caved in. David, even as king of Israel found times of this kind. His reactions, as recorded for us in these eight verses, can lift our own spirits to new hope.

Adam Clarke believes this psalm was written by someone who had been removed from Israel during the captivity and longed for return to the homeland. I can see the possibility of this, but it seems much more likely that it was written by the hand of the king when he found it necessary to hide from those who had driven him from the city of Jerusalem.

The sentiments expressed certainly give voice to feelings which God's faithful have shared during their lifetimes.

**Psa 61:1 Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.**

It is highly gratifying to know God has promised to hear those who cry out to Him. The privilege of opening our hearts to Him is as precious as any blessing of food, clothing, shelter, friends, etc. He has promised to attend such prayers, and He will keep his promise.

**Psa 61:2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.**

This verse is not just talking about location upon the earth. It includes the seemingly unending distance from

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earth to heaven. David had been driven from Jerusalem because his own son had turned against him. We can understand why his heart was overwhelmed. It is not easy to face the fact that those whom we thought to be friends have not lived up to the definition of that term. It is far more disheartening when a child one has loved and reared from infancy has created some of the waves which threaten to submerge one in hopelessness.

But there is a rock which is so dependable that in the midst of the most severe of tribulation it can provide a place to stand secure. That rock is God. When we find ourselves unable to reach up to Him because He is so much higher than we are, He makes up the distance by reaching down to us.

It would be well for the reader to open his or her hymn book and reread the dear old song which proclaims that "There Is A Rock Which Is Higher than I."

Psa 61:3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

This verse speaks in the past tense. God had been a shelter for David in days past. He was convinced that the same would be true in the present and the future.

A tower provided two advantages. It was a fortress which an enemy would find extremely difficult to penetrate. It was also an observation point from which the enemy could be seen approaching. God provides both of these blessings for His own.

Psa 61:4 I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

If this is David writing the psalm, the temple had not yet been built. The tabernacle was the location where

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God's presence abode on earth. David was referring to more than the temporary dwelling before the more permanent temple was erected. He was using a figure of speech for the protective power of his Master. As a hen spreads her wings over her chicks to protect them, God had protected the man who was "after mine own heart."

**Psa 61:5 For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.**

Vows had been expressed by both David and the Lord. David had promised to allow Jehovah to direct his steps. Jehovah had promised to do just that.

What is the heritage which is given to those that fear God's name? A heritage is that which one receives from his parents as an inheritance. God was David's father and as one of God's children David had enjoyed God's presence for many years. He was exceedingly grateful for that which his Father had provided.

**Psa 61:6 Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations.**

The scope of the picture broadens. The prophet Samuel had assured David that one of his seed would occupy the throne of God's kingdom forever. See Second Samuel 7:4-16.

*2Sa 7:4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying,*

*2Sa 7:5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?*

*2Sa 7:6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.*

*2Sa 7:7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?*

*2Sa 7:8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:*

*2Sa 7:9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.*

*2Sa 7:10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,*

*2Sa 7:11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.*

*2Sa 7:12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.*

*2Sa 7:13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.*

*2Sa 7:14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:*

*2Sa 7:15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.*

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2Sa 7:16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

**Psa 61:7 He shall abide before God for ever:
O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.**

The British are fond of their statement which seems to rest upon the promise of God. "Long live the King."

Every faithful servant of God has a similar promise to that which was made to David. Such a servant will receive mercy and truth. He will be preserved even beyond the removal of this present heaven and earth and will abide with God and Christ forever.

Psa 61:8 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

In view of the truth provided in this magnificent psalm, why should not every child of God make the same promise, to sing God's praises, and to perform the vows he made to God when the blood of Jesus washed away the guilt of his sins?

Chapter 62

Again we have a short psalm of just twelve verses, yet one which contains a vast amount of truth and help for all those who seek the only truly dependable source of help in time of serious trouble.

The title gives credit for the psalm to David and is said to be for the use of Jeduthun in the praise of Jehovah. It was supposedly written at the time when those whom David trusted above all others turned against him and he found it advisable to depart from the city of Jerusalem and hide in the caves to avoid being killed by those he had befriended in the past.

The psalm contains a message confirming the power and mercy of the Lord. When all else fail, He alone can be fully trusted.

Psa 62:1 Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.

When the psalmist says his soul “waiteth” upon God, he means that he will maintain silence and trust his God to see that all things work for the best. If all is placed in the hand of the Lord, salvation can be had. If he cries out for help from any other source, there is apt to be great disappointment. He will not tell God how to help. He will be quiet and allow God to work out His will.

Psa 62:2 He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

This psalm is sometimes called the “only” psalm because of the several times that word is used. The “only” rock upon which he dares to place his hope is the Lord.



Rocks were places of security in the land where David was attempting to escape from those who would harm him. They served as both hiding places and as towers for observing those who were bent on doing damage. With God as his rock, David was confident that he could not be utterly shattered.

Jesus Christ is today called the “Rock of ages.” We may have the same confidence in Christ which David expressed with respect to the rock of which he spoke.

Psa 62:3 How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.

There are two different views concerning the identity of the bowing wall and the tottering fence. Some see these as David himself as nearly helpless before those who would bring him to destruction. He would then be the wall which was ready to fall, or the fence which could be trodden down.

The more reasonable view to the present writer is that the bowing wall and the tottering fence are those who had plotted against him. He had depended upon them in the past, but they had been no more dependable than a wall which allowed danger to invade, or a fence which enemies could march across without hindrance. He uses the word “ye” when talking to them.

Psa 62:4 They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.

How sad that such as his own son Absalom and his supposed friend Ahithophel had acted as if they loved and

served him while at the same time they were actually planning to replace him. They had proven to be just the kind of hypocrites that Jesus faced in the latter days of his life.

Psa 62:5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

Here again is our key word “only.” David is confident that God is the only source of true power and sincere help. He is willing to lay his life in the loving hands of the Almighty and merciful Lord of heaven.

Psa 62:6 He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.

Here is an almost identical statement to that made in verse two, except that this time he does not use the word “greatly” He simply says he will not be moved at all. It would be most wonderful if all men would come to understand the truth which David stated. Most men place their salvation and defence upon frail men and insecure riches. Both will fail in times of distress.

Psa 62:7 In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

Note the confident use of the pronoun “my.” God was his salvation, his glory, his strength and his refuge. The same thing should be true of all men. There may be temporary dependability in other sources of each of these. The only permanent dependability is in God.

Psa 62:8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

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Who is David writing to when he calls for all people to pour out their hearts before the Lord? Is he not addressing men of all time and all places. Surely so!

Has the reader had occasion to do what David is advising? It is in just such circumstances as David faced that we are in most need of turning our faces upward. When life becomes so stormy that no solution is found, God will still be there for the ones who have loved Him and obeyed His Word.

**Psa 62:9 Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.**

Men who have little power and have no ability to help can not rescue the troubled soul. Men of riches, power and fame, are usually unwilling to help. The helpless are vanity because of their inability. The rich and powerful are even less helpful because of their selfishness. Both groups are empty as sources of dependability.

**Psa 62:10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.**

It is folly to trust in forcing others to help by stealing from them; and even if riches come to one through noble means, those riches can flee away as snow before a midsummer sun. The affections of the heart should be placed upon that which is far more substantial than gold, silver, human wisdom, or human power. The Rock that is higher than I is the only unailing support.

**Psa 62:11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.**

God speaks the first time through His power. There is none to match it. All things were created by Him and are subject to Him.

**Psa 62:12 Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.**

But unlike man, the infinite power of God is mingled with mercy. He does not manipulate man simply because He has the power to do so. He could, if He had desired, remove all men from existence as a result of the contamination of all men by sin. Through His mercy, He makes room for repentance.

What a beautiful thought we find at the conclusion of this great psalm. God's mercy is extended to every man who continues to strive for perfection. Like David, place your own life in His care and He will walk with you. He will listen to you and He will both power to overcome, as well as mercy when you stumble.



## Chapter 63

This is almost certainly a psalm of David. According to verse one the writer is in a dry and thirsty land. According to verse eleven he is a king. According to verse nine, there are those who are trying to destroy him. This fits David very well at the time he was fleeing into Idumea from the uprising of his son Absalom and other supposed friends who had turned against him.

**Psa 63:1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;**

David feels a very personal relationship with God. He refers to the Creator as *my God*. This reminds us of the words of Christ when he said, “My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me? It is the height of blasphemy to use these precious words in the way some persons so lightly use them as they vent their feelings in cursing.

Every man should feel the emotion which David show when he considers God to be his own personal God. When God is thought to be an impersonal force, or only interested in mankind as a whole, we lose one of the greatest comforts available to us.

The word “early” is a key to David’s thoughts. He is ready and eager to call upon his God for help. Just as his body thirsted for physical water in the territory where he found himself, his soul thirsted for the refreshing of the soul which the water of life coming from the God of heaven offers to those who recognize their need for it.

**Psa 63:2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.**



Although the scriptures teach that no man has seen God at any time because God is Spirit, the evidences of God's presence had been seen in the tabernacle. The ark of the covenant was there, overshadowed by the wings of the cherubim. Any person with their eyes open can see the glory and the power of God in His holy Bible, in the wonders of nature, and in those who make up the church, which is His temple today.

**Psa 63:3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.**

Many martyrs have given their lives rather than deny God. It is far better to have the support of God's loving kindness and choose Him rather than life's riches. To gain the whole world and lose the soul is a poor choice.

**Psa 63:4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.**

Would David deny his God and curse him because of the danger in which he found himself as he fled from those who pursued him? Not by any means. As long as he had life and breath he would praise God and seek His help.

**Psa 63:5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:**

As the belly could be satisfied by eating the fatted calf, the soul could be satisfied by the spiritual food provided from the hand of the Lord. God deserved praise and David was proud to offer it.



**Psa 63:6 When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.**

The bed spoken of here was not an innerspring mattress. It was probably a heap of dirt in the darkness of a cave where he had been forced to hide himself from his pursuers. Those conditions did not keep him from turning his thoughts to his Maker as he prayed for protection in the middle of the night.

**Psa 63:7 Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.**

The wings of a mother hen are spread out so her chicks can find a hiding place from hawks. God's protecting wings had overspread the king. This caused him to have a glad heart. He would not forsake God. Nor would God forsake him!

**Psa 63:8 My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.**

**Psa 63:9 But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.**

David's soul clung to the hand of the Almighty. He would not fear, for God would keep him from falling. He makes a contrast between his own security and the perils of those who sought to kill him. He would be held up. Those who were trying to destroyed him would go down to the grave. The "lower parts of the earth" may very well refer to that which is far more serious than the graveyard.

**Psa 63:10 They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.**

The enemies would die by the sword. Those who live by the sword shall also die by the sword. After death, their dead bodies would be discarded and become food for foxes, or jackals.

**Psa 63:11 But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.**

Along with David, everyone who places their confidence in Jehovah will find fulness of life, even if the physical life were to be stolen. There is a mansion in heaven which is prepared for those who love and obey God. Those who use His name in vain will find their eternal abode alongside Satan, the “father of liars.”

Dear reader, are you living a life similar to that of Job. Almost everything that could discourage a man could be found in the life of Job as Satan tried to prove to God that he could cause him to curse God and die. Job resisted to the very end. When he had finally defeated the power of Satan, Job received twice as much as he had possessed before his trials. Do not give up on God. Even though you meet death, you shall live on.



## *Chapter 64*

The title of this psalm indicates it to be the work of David the king. There is fairly good agreement that this is correct, although it could have application to others of God's people who were hunted by those who sought to kill them.

**Psa 64:1 Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.**

The righteous man is convinced that the Lord hears his prayer. He has enough evidence of the goodness of God that he is confident of divine protection from the hands of Satan's allies. The writer of the psalm believes God loves him and will care for him.

**Psa 64:2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:**

Sometimes wicked men work alone. Other times they come together to formulate their evil plans. It is not easy to protect one's self from those who hide and make their plans in secret.

As I write the commentary on this verse, the world has been shocked by men who planned secretly to hijack two large airplanes and cause them to be flown directly into the World Trade Center Twin Towers in New York City. These criminals planned their deed in secret. They killed several thousand innocent victims in the collapse of the two buildings. A vast search is being conducted for the leaders of this atrocity. Men may not know who laid these murderous plans, but the God of heaven knows. Justice will be done.

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The word “insurrection” in this verse supports the author as David as he faced the rebellion of his own son.

Psa 64:3 Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:

The tongue is a very blunt organ; but when it is whetted to a sharp edge by being exercised against others, it can act as a two-edged sword. The bitter words which are sent forth by a tongue aimed at a human victim are like poisoned tipped arrows.

Psa 64:4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

No man is perfect. But all men are commanded to be perfect, even as their Father in heaven is perfect. This goal is attained when one diligently strives to defeat the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Even when the person falters, God provides a way of washing those sins from the soul of a penitent man or woman.

The wicked take joy in shooting at those who try so earnestly to love God and keep His commandments. They convince themselves that God either does not exist, or else does not care for His own. The attitude of those who destroy good men with their slander is deadly. It does not just harm those at whom they shoot their bitter arrows. It will result in their own eternal destruction from the presence of everything upright and godly.

Psa 64:5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

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Such gangs of insolent defiers of the Lord come together with the aim of organized destruction of the property and souls of other persons. They encourage the sins of the group by convincing each other that no one will discover their hateful words and deeds.

**Psa 64:6 They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.**

Does this verse speak of the iniquities of their victims, which they magnify and use to destroy them, or does it speak of the iniquity which lies deep in the heart of the one who plots against the life of another? The true meaning seems to be that these men search deep into the midst of their own hearts until they discover some dastardly plan which has the power to crucify the target of their hatred.

**Psa 64:7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.**

Their bitter arrows are not the only ones which can do damage. God has his own quiver full of them. He knows whom to shoot, when to shoot. His aim is perfect. Those who have used their tongues to maim others will find that their words have been turned back toward them by the Great Archer. *“Be sure your sins will find you out.”*

**Psa 64:8 So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.**

When God does visit the sins of the wicked upon their own head, they will be such a hideous sight that

men will be afraid to be near them, lest they meet the same fate. This was true of those of Noah's day as well as the Egyptians who were drowned in the Red Sea. Even thousands of years later we recoil in horror at the thought of such misery.

**Psa 64:9 And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.**

When such punishment takes place, it will cause the onlookers to reconsider any evil plans which they might have hidden deep in their own hearts. The wise will then turn from darkness and follow the pathways of light.

**Psa 64:10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.**

Look at the three powerful words used in this verse. The righteous shall be **glad**. They shall place their **trust** in the Lord. They shall glory in Jehovah.



## *Chapter 65*

If the student of the Bible has been moving through the book of Psalms in succession, the change in tone introduced by this present psalm compared to those just previous to it will be genuinely welcomed. The scene of a godly man being pursued by ungodly enemies is replaced by extreme adoration for the amazing grace of the God who created us and visits us constantly with his grace. Read and study this chapter of God's word with both thanksgiving and devotion.

**Psa 65:1 Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.**

The true servant of God praises Him with all the heart, soul, mind and strength. Then he finds himself incapable of putting his appreciation into words. The verse is not saying the worshiper is waiting for God to lend an ear. It is describing the incapability of adequately telling God just how much we respect Him.

Because of that great respect, we make our vows that we will continue to fear Him and keep His commandments. We make those vows and we intend to keep them.

**Psa 65:2 O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.**

Only the fool will take the position that there is no God. Only the blind will close their eyes to the need for communication with Him. Every man, woman or child on earth, must come before Him admitting their need for His blessings.

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Psa 65:3 Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

It is true that every person has sinned and except for the grace of the Almighty, every person would be eternally separated from Him. Prayer would be impossible. But as an earthly father is willing to respond to the confession of his children that they are sorry for being **bad**, God is eager to forgive the transgressions, going so far as to give His Son that men might have an intercessor.

Psa 65:4 Blessed is the man whom thou choolest, and causet to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

Who is this man whom the Lord chooses and causes to approach unto Him? Is it not the man who repents of his sins and stands at the door knocking?

The word which is translated as temple in this verse is a general term and may not be restricted to the temple built by Solomon in Jerusalem. The person who places themselves in God's loving hands will have blessings beyond understanding. Knock and it shall be opened unto you.

Psa 65:5 By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea:

The word "terrible" could also have been translated as "awesome." Satan may answer those who call upon him with terrible things in wickedness. God answers His servants with righteousness. His concern for those who

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seek Him extends to all men, either on land or on the sea. All ages, all races, both sexes, etc. may make their praises and their petitions known.

**Psa 65:6 Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power:**

His power is unimaginable. The structure and movements of nature are subject to His will. The order, purpose and design of mountains, rivers, clouds and stars obey His Word.

**Psa 65:7 Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.**

God can raise the waves of the ocean to majestic heights, or He can calm them as Jesus did those of the sea of Galilee. The conflicts of humans may be silenced if His will is respected.

**Psa 65:8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.**

The beauty of the sunrise and the sunset are but tracks of His ongoings. There is no point on earth that His wonders cannot be seen. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He brought them into being as a means of developing a family who can live in His presence when this present heaven and earth have been replaced by a new one.

**Psa 65:9 Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God,**

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which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

God's "visiting" of the earth speaks of His constant outpouring of blessings as He knows man has need. It is not that He comes and walks the earth as His Son Jesus Christ did. It is that He gives the rain when it is required, and the harvest to supply food for the body.

Psa 65:10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

Here we have a picture of the goodness of God in supplying the needs of the animal world as well as the human population with natural laws which bring about the solid food which is necessary.

The soil is cultivated by plowing it into furrows. Then the rains come, the plants grow to maturity. The fruit of the land springs forth.

Psa 65:11 Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

God's tracks can be easily followed by observing the wonders of the harvest. As a cart which is loaded to overflowing is pulled along its pathway, the load may spill a trail which marks its path. Just so, the evidences of God's visit can be seen in the trail of blessings which He leaves for us.

Psa 65:12 They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

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It is not just the cultivated fields which feel the effects of His care. Even the uninhabited portions of the earth cry out of the beauty and holiness of the One who made them. The hills and the jungles bloom in response to His love.

**Psa 65:13 The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.**

Meat from the animals grazing on the pasture lands speaks to us from our dining tables of God's glory. Fertile soil in the valleys produces the wheat required to make our flour.

It is not just the pastures and valleys which have need to rejoice and sing. It is the man who is created in the very image of this God. The pastures and valleys do not have the same type of voice that men do. Our own rejoicing ought to speak even more gratefully than theirs.

*Glory to our God.*

## *Chapter 66*

We have in this psalm another precious gem from God's treasury. The sixty-sixth psalm is one of praise and thanksgiving. The title does not list David as the author. It reminds the reader that the Lord is to be honored for His love, for His supreme power, and for His mercy and patience toward those who pay Him such honor. He has proven Himself to be able and willing to reward the righteous and defeat the wicked.

The psalm is very general in nature and could have been written in connection with delivery from Egyptian bondage in the time of Moses, with the release from Assyrian conquerors, or the return from Babylonian captivity. What is even more vital to those of us in the latter days, it applies to possible escape from the bondage of sin, as well as the rejoicing resulting from forgiveness, plus the strength God gives His children to find and follow the path to heaven.

### **Psa 66:1 Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:**

Every land and every man on earth is called upon to respond to God's goodness. The word "noise" does not imply the beating of drums or the blowing of horns. It does seem to imply happiness and energy in praising God for having brought the earth and its inhabitants into existence. God's blessings have reached into every land. His praises should rise up from every place His blessings have been received.

The joyful noise does not demand shouting out at the top of one's lungs. One can obey the command to make a joyful noise by singing sincerely and with a





vigor appropriate for the message of the song. The song “Hallelujah Praise Jehovah should be sung with greater than average volume. The song “Pass Me Not O Gentle Saviour” calls for a more reserved sound. Yet both of these songs should be sung with great sincerity.

**Psa 66:2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.**

One really does not have to have a hymn book in hand to sing forth the honor and glory of God. To sing forth is but to let others know of the majesty of the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. We have received more blessings from God than the human mind is able to realize. This calls for an effort on our part to share our gratitude with Him and with our fellow citizens of the earth.

**Psa 66:3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.**

We are hesitant to think about the terror of the Lord. Still, His ability to deal with mankind does require our greatest respect. Throughout history it has been evident that God has much love and mercy toward those who deserve such treatment, but that He also has the ability to conquer those who oppose His will. How much better it is that men hear and obey than to challenge Him and be destroyed!

**Psa 66:4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.**

The time will come when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess His glory. The question is

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“Will that bowing and confessing be voluntary or will it be forced?” How wonderful it will be for those who have felt it a privilege to bow the knee to God and confess the name of Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of men. How awful it will be for those who lived for self and sin!

Selah calls attention to a remarkable truth which must not be ignored.

Psa 66:5 Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.

The works of Jehovah in the guidance of men through the perils of this life are certainly worth pondering. Why should an infinitely wise and powerful God pause to give his attention to weak and foolish men? Because He desires them to be with Him in glory for ever and ever.

Psa 66:6 He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

The sea which was turned to dry land could well have been either the Red Sea or the Jordan River, perhaps both. In the day of Moses and in that of Joshua, there was great rejoicing among His people over the salvation of Jehovah. The same should be true of the one who is washed in the blood of the Lamb of God today.

Psa 66:7 He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

God sees all. The sins of men are not hidden. The praises of men are music to His ears. Only the deliberately ignorant will ignore His commands.

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**Psa 66:8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:**

In every age from that of Adam, through that of Moses and on into the age of Christ, God has blessed those who give public credit to His glory, honor and power. From the young boy or girl to the aged man or woman, the praises offered to Jehovah should be heard throughout the world and throughout every age.

**Psa 66:9 Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.**

If men and women will praise God for His support, He will respond by continuing to offer His guidance. He will not leave nor forsake those who love Him and keep His commandments.

**Psa 66:10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.**

It will not always be easy as a follower of the Way, the Truth and the Life. It is as though this world is a testing ground to assure that those who are invited to pass through the golden gate into the land of endless day will be fit to live and love there.

**Psa 66:11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.**

What kinds of testing must men pass through in order to enter into that land? They must carry burdens and override temptations in a similar way to that of those in ancient days who walked on foot and bent over sideways

as they carried burdens on the hip. The afflictions of this present life must be endured even unto physical death. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

**Psa 66:12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.**

Such things as are pictured here were very real to many of God’s faithful at one time or another. They have been trampled under the feet of horses until their bodies were mangled and writhing in pain. Nevertheless, those who have endured shall march through the gates of heaven to a place where there is no more pain and no more tears.

**Psa 66:13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,**

That which follows in the verses from here to the end of the psalm naturally follow that which has been presented in the first twelve verses. God’s support and blessings will bring forth vows to walk in His ways. The psalm was written when men entered into the tabernacle or the temple with burnt offerings. They recognized God’s care. They were happy to make offerings in return.

It is no different today. The house of God is the Church of Jesus Christ. The Christian will not offer burnt offerings as was done in the Patriarchal and Mosaic ages. They will give of their means on the first day of each week to promote the work of the Lord.

The good man or woman will promise to give of both their life and their possessions. They will keep those vows in both good times and bad.



**Psa 66:14 Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.**

Men and women are much quicker to make vows to God when they find themselves in serious danger. As these present words are written great destruction has been visited upon one of the greatest cities in the world. This has caused some who have had very little concern for spiritual things to attend church worship services. We can only hope and pray that many of these will keep the promises they make during such peril.

**Psa 66:15 I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.**

Those in the time this sixty-sixth psalm was written promised to offer burnt offerings such as lambs, rams and goats. The offerings men should be promising to make at present are both material and spiritual. We are to lay by in store from that which God has prospered us. We are to present our lives to Him as “living sacrifices.”

**Psa 66:16 Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.**

The reader is called upon to give attention to what God has done for him and let others hear of the affection which causes him to serve in spirit and in truth.

**Psa 66:17 I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.**

Let us expand somewhat on this seventeenth verse. As a living sacrifice, the Christian must willingly give his

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entire self to God. His mouth must be opened to allow his tongue to speak of God's majesty. His ear must delight in hearing the commands and promises of the Lord. His feet must follow the path proclaimed by the Son of God. His heart must yearn for a home in heaven.

All of this will come about as a result of a desire to be in the presence of the Father, and as the bride of the Saviour Jesus Christ. May I become a bit personal here? Some fifty plus years ago I met the woman who was later to become my wife. As soon as we became reasonably well acquainted, we knew marriage was a real possibility. I did not have to steal a kiss from her. When I put my arm around her shoulders and bent my head toward her face, she eagerly met my lips with her own.

Such a union was to be a taste of what was to come, both in our human marriage and in our partnership with the Lord. He gave Himself for us. We were delighted to give ourselves to Him. He has not betrayed us. If we are faithful, He will meet us in glory.

Psa 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

Every man and woman will fall short of perfection from time to time. God understands that we may waver. That is why He lovingly promised that He will hear our pleas for forgiveness. In contrast, if we hunger and thirst after sin, we will find that His ear has been turned away. What a terrible thought!

Psa 66:19 But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

The author of the present psalm had reason to feel that God had not turned a deaf ear to his praise and



thanksgiving. He had heard the pleas for help. He would forgive and continue His blessings.

Psa 66:20 Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

There is no way men and women can bless God in the same manner that He blesses them. What they can do is thank Him for His all He means to the faithful. He hears our prayers and showers us with His love as He leads us home through His commands, His example and His promises. This earth is not our home. We are just holding the hand of the Lord our God as we pass through the testing of our souls while we keep our eye upon that which lies beyond the cross.

Chapter 67

As was suggested in the comments on the psalm just previous to this one, some of the shortest are also some of the most meaningful. This is one which should certainly not be overlooked because it contains only seven verses. Those verses are rich spiritual food.

The psalm calls for all nations to recognize the value of God's rule over men. God expects the enlargement of His kingdom. Such an enlargement would mean order, peace and prosperity those who accept His guidance. He will guide righteously, and He will bless bounteously.

Psa 67:1 God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

God has the power to bless men. He also has the power to punish them. The psalmist asks that God not curse us when we repent of our sins, but that He extend mercy to us and bless us when we call out for those blessings.

A smile is sometimes described as being radiant. This type of smile appears when one is pleased. If God is pleased with us and willing to smile upon us, we will find life full and satisfying. The relationship between God and man is a two way street. When we serve God we please him. When He is pleased, He then blesses us, smiling upon our efforts to spread his glory where it can be realized by those of every nation on the face of the globe.

“Selah” means “pause and think” about this truth.

Psa 67:2 That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Is this verse a prediction of that which shall one day come to pass? Is it a conditional statement which sees the

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scene of God's saving health only if the nations bow to His will. There are passages such as the twentieth chapter of the book of Revelation which seem to assure Christians that the Devil and his servants will be defeated for a lengthy period before the final judgment comes to pass.

**Psa 67:3 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.**

Oh what hope shines forth here. What a wondrous world this would be if all the people did what the verse calls for. It would be like heaven upon earth if the praise was accompanied with obedience.

**Psa 67:4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.**

When men fail to give God the opportunity to direct their lives tears and sorrow follow quickly. When men follow God's laws and examples it is most certainly true that they shall be glad and sing with joy. War and misery follow when the nations turn their back on the Lord. Peace and happiness are only found when nations praise and obey Him.

**Psa 67:5 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.**

Every Christian should join in the sentiments expressed in verse five. Though these words were written many centuries ago, they are perfectly fitting for all nations and all centuries.

**Psa 67:6 Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.**

Is God telling us that this increase in the harvest is fertile fields with bumper crops? It very likely much more. This increase may just as well apply to a harvest of souls and growth of the kingdom of God, as to corn, beans and cattle.

It does seem that nations who have praised God have enjoyed more happiness and greater productivity than those who have been overrun by witchcraft and government through godless dictators.

**Psa 67:7 God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.**

This verse does not start with the word “if.” It seems to be a prediction that a time will come when men all over the earth will fear God, keep His commandments, and glorify His name.

The present writer promises to work toward the realization of a globe which bows before it's Lord. We can only dream of the kind of spiritual blessings such a world might find poured out upon them!

## *Chapter 68*

We are presented a picture here of the triumphal march of God's followers. It may be a serious mistake to apply the psalm to one particular march. In the escape from bondage in Egypt, God's people followed the ark across the wilderness. In the time of Joshua, God's people marched into the promised land of Canaan. As I write these words God's faithful are marching on to Zion,, the wonderful city above.

Although it may seem that the foes are powerful and dominate the earth, it will not always be so. The time will come that God's army will claim the victory. Both during the battle and after the victory is won, we must sing His praises and give Him the glory. He will release the captives and take them to the mansions He has prepared for them. Without Him there is misery and defeat. With Him there is victory and joy.

**Psa 68:1 Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.**

It is not the case that God has gone to sleep and has forgotten His people. He is well aware of the battle which is being waged between those who follow Satan's selfish and pride filled ways, and those who love and serve Him. When the time is right He has always intervened to insure victory for the righteous. The foes of the godly will meet defeat.

**Psa 68:2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.**

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Smoke from a burning log seems permanent as it rises toward the heavens. Such is not the case. With a few puffs of wind, it is scattered. After a time the viewer looks in vain for the slightest trace of it's presence. Wax appears to be substantial until it is heated in the fire. Then it melts and runs in every direction. The wicked are doomed to defeat. They cannot stand before the strength of Jehovah.

Psa 68:3 But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

It is quite the opposite with the righteous. With God at the head of the march, there is reason to greatly rejoice. The victory is certain. The mockery of evildoers will turn to cries of confusion.

Psa 68:4 Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

The letters JAH are those from which the more lengthy name of Jehovah is constructed. This is the only place in the Bible where the shortened form is used.

His followers are called upon to do three things. They are to (1) sing (2) extol (3) rejoice. His praises are to be sung. His name is to be extolled or magnified. His power results in rejoicing.

Psa 68:5 A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.

There are a number of reasons why God should receive glory and praise. He has shown Himself to be the provider



for those who are orphaned. He has upheld the case of widows who have been too weak to defend themselves. He has not turned the world over to Satan. The entire creation is His. In the end, it will fall upon it's knees, either to beg for mercy, or to magnify His name.

Psa 68:6 God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

The word "solitary" implies loneliness. It may seem to God's children that they are all alone in the conflict with evil. God has a remedy. He has a family with the greatest concern for their brothers and sisters. There is companionship under the Fatherhood of God and the fellowship of the saints.

The contrast is vivid between the family of God and the barrenness of the selfish congregation of Satan. The rebels against God do not have the "water of life" to quench their spiritual thirst.

Psa 68:7 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

This portion of the psalm may be assigned to the time of the march from Egypt to Canaan. God went before the Israelites in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The people were constantly guided. They were ever encouraged by the signs which were placed before them.

Psa 68:8 The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

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When the law was given from Mount Sinai, the entire mountain trembled at the voice of Jehovah. Morning after morning the people went out to gather the manna which had dropped down from the heavens to give them nourishment in that parched desert.

**Psa 68:9 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.**

When the Israelites were in danger of dying from thirst, God caused refreshing rain to quench that thirst. He confirmed His people in that wilderness centuries ago. He will lead His people through the wilderness of sin in which they find themselves in the latter days.

**Psa 68:10 Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.**

The congregation of Israel survived in the wilderness only because they followed God and share in the blessings which He showered down upon them. Although they were poor, He is rich. He is ready to pour out from His riches just such blessings as are most needed at any given time. This is true today.

**Psa 68:11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.**

The call came for God's army to begin the march. There were a great multitude who were ready to move forward. They encouraged others to march with them. This reminds us of the command in the gospel accounts to go unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven.



**Psa 68:12 Kings of armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.**

Those who seemed to be too powerful to defeat found themselves fleeing before the force of the chariots of the Lord. Booty was taken as a result of the victories, and the women who kept the home fires burning were able to share in the winnings.

**Psa 68:13 Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.**

This might refer to the pots and slave duties of those years of Egyptian bondage. Or it could refer to the ones who did not actually go out to meet the enemy in person, but supported the effort and sent others.

Whichever is the case, God's help resulted in a drastic change of conditions. To lie among the pots sounds very much like living in poverty. To be like the wings of doves and covered with silver and gold speaks of great riches. Those who followed the Lord would cease being downtrodden and would fly high.

**Psa 68:14 When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.**

The scattered kings were those who fled from before the onward march of Israel. The scattering of the kings before Israel was as if it had snowed, and the snowflakes were scattered until the ground was white.

**Psa 68:15 The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; an high hill as the hill of Bashan.**

The hill of God is Mount Zion. It is not as high and impressive as some of the mountains nearby. But Zion is God's choice as the center of His presence on earth. Remember dear friends, that the church of Christ is called Zion. It may not appear as majestic as some of the other mountains of power on the earth, but it will forever be "God's hill."

**Psa 68:16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.**

The other power centers may leap in jealousy. It will do them no good. God has chosen His army and will empower it above all others. It is far too strong for any effective opposition. God dwells with His people. None can match Him.

**Psa 68:17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.**

Chariots are weapons of war. Twenty thousand of God's chariots can overpower any who choose to challenge His purposes. If one angel had enough power to destroy 185,00 Assyrian soldiers in a single night, imagine what power thousands of angels could present.

**Psa 68:18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.**

God sits upon His heavenly throne. Under His direction those who have made captives of others will find





themselves to be in captivity. The devil has taken vast multitudes into the bondage of sin. The devil himself will be cast into a lake of fire, along with those who have used his temptations to seduce men and women and control their lives.

Who is it that has received gifts for men? Is it not the Christ, the Son of God? He has been given the responsibility of offering eternal life to those who will follow in His steps. He also promised through the apostles that if He departed from them, He would send the Holy Spirit as a gift from the Godhead.

Even those who have fought against the will of God have the chance to be forgiven of their sins. When they obey the same will of God which they once despised, they invite God to dwell among them.

**Psa 68:19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.**

The gifts which God offers to men are exceedingly abundant. A dedicated servant of God could well write a small volume about the daily blessings which are provided from the hand of the Lord.

**Psa 68:20 He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death.**

Many nations have worshiped false gods. The God which fathered Jesus Christ is the only one who can present the gift of eternal life. He can save to the uttermost. No man or woman need die the death of the wicked.

**Psa 68:21 But God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.**

Soldiers have sometimes made a vow that they will not cut their hair nor shave their beard until their cause has won the victory. Such a vow will not avail against Jehovah. The hairy heads of those who have sworn to fight Him will be bruised. They may even be removed from the body.

**Psa 68:22 The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea:**

It will not matter where God's people have been laid, either as captives or as dead. The day will come when those who have been lost at sea will be raised. Those who are buried in the earth will have their grave opened. There is no place in heaven or in earth to which the delivering hand of the Lord cannot reach to resurrect them.

**Psa 68:23 That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.**

The only word which comes to mind in the above description is "gory." When men walk around in the blood of their enemies, those enemies are dead. They have been defeated. The defeat is so complete that they are not even buried. The dogs come and lap up their blood as a wolf would tear it's prey.

**Psa 68:24 They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.**



The nations of Egypt, Edom, Moab and Ammon had seen just how useless it was to block the way of God's subjects. He is the King supreme. He was associated with the ark in the tabernacle and later in the temple. He sits enthroned today in the heavenly sanctuary.

**Psa 68:25 The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing with timbrels.**

The victory march of the Israelites was most impressive. The singers went before the rest. Then followed those playing on various musical instruments. Young women were in this latter group, playing on timbrels.

Today God's army is to sing and make melody in their hearts. The time will come when they will sing to the accompaniment of angels playing on harps in heaven. The Bible is silent about the use of instruments of music in the Christian dispensation.

**Psa 68:26 Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel.**

A fountain pours forth that which refreshes. The fountain of Israel would be those who pour out their praise to Him who is the source of every blessing.

Blessings result in increasing the pleasure of the one who is blessed. Can men actually cause God to have increased pleasure? I believe the answer is "Yes." It is pleasing to God when his people offer praises, glory, honor and service to Him. The gratitude of men is a blessing from men to God.

**Psa 68:27 There is little Benjamin with their ruler, the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.**

The tribes of Benjamin and Judah lay in the south of Canaan. Napthali and Zebulun were located in the north. These tribes were representative of the entire nation. From the smallest to the largest they marched to victory with the Master.

**Psa 68:28 Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.**

Since God had broken the bonds in Egypt and had nourished and guided His people through the wilderness, and had given them the victory over the idolatrous nations of Canaan, the prayer was that He would continue to be with them and help them to make proper use of that which they had been given.

**Psa 68:29 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.**

Kings did bring gifts to the temple area as they paid tribute to David in Jerusalem.

But may we suggest that much more is involved. If we allow the Jerusalem to be the New Jerusalem which comes down from heaven we can then apply the statement in this verse to lead to that of Revelation 21:22-26.

*Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*

*Rev 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

*Rev 21:24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and **the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.***

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Rev 21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

Rev 21:26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

Psa 68:30 Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people that delight in war.

War is not the goal of God. Those who throw the spear need to be scattered, with peace being the natural way of life, and not war. Self submission can lead away from war and toward peace. Men ought to be first offering themselves, then their possessions to the God of all.

Psa 68:31 Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

Egypt and Ethiopia represent distant nations who would hear the gospel preached. Some would hear and respond to that message. Both Jew and Gentile would become a part of the one body of Christ.

Psa 68:32 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:

Psa 68:33 To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.

The kingdoms of the earth are to become obedient to the call of the Word of God. God's voice has rung out over the globe. As His Word is preached to men, they are to speak back to Him in songs and in prayers. The heavens



and the earth declare the glory of God. Men shall add their voices to the adoration.

Psa 68:34 Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds.

Let men from every nation on earth recognize the real strength of the Lord. His power is as high above any other as the heavens are higher than the earth.

Psa 68:35 O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.

Friends, we are supposed to be marching for the Master as we hold hands with our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. The word “terrible” might well be translated “awesome.” God can be terrifying to those who oppose Him. He can be awesome to those who profit by His strength, wisdom and power. Let us lift up our faces from earth to heaven and praise His Holy Name.

Chapter 69

The authorship of Psalm sixty-nine is disputed. Many hold that it is another of the psalms written by king David. Others think it could have been written by a captive during the seventy years Israel spent in Babylon. Other suggestions have been made, but these are the two most widely accepted.

There are many quotes from it by the inspired writers of the New Testament. We will make reference to some of these as we move into the comments. Some of the verses can hardly be identified with the Son of God. Others were clearly believed by certain New Testament writers to be applicable to the sufferings of the Saviour.

Perhaps we should take note of two strong indications that David wrote at least some of the psalm. (See Acts 1:16-20 and Romans 11:9.)

Act 1:16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

Act 1:17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

Act 1:18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

Act 1:19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

Act 1:20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

Rom 11:9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them:

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**Psa 69:1 Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul.**

Waters are used in the Biblical writings to represent difficulties which surround one as the waters of a flood would threaten to overwhelm those who found themselves in the midst of them. The waters mentioned here do not just surround the one who is calling for help; they have penetrated his very being. Help is desperately needed. The psalmist knows the only possible power capable of rescuing him is God.

**Psa 69:2 I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.**

The difficulties leave no firm place upon which to stand. He is sinking. The troubles continue to multiply. If no help comes, the end is not far off.

As a youngster we lived on a farm with a large pasture. On the pasture were two small lakes. They were surrounded by what we called “muck.” Several times we found that one of our cows had become mired down. Only their head would be seen above the quagmire. We never did lose one, but on different occasions it was necessary to fasten a rope around their horns and pull them free using a tractor. Without this help they would have perished.

**Psa 69:3 I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.**

The psalmist has cried out for help until he can cry no longer. None has responded. He has peered into the distance hoping to see one who would give aid. None could be seen. The only possible source of help at this point was the Ruler of the universe.





**Psa 69:4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.**

*Joh 15:25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.*

This is a quote by Christ Himself. Being the only sinless life in history, and being hated by the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, this was an accurate picture of that which was happening to Him. The reason for their hatred was not that Jesus had done them any wrong. It was that they despised Him for pointing out their sinful behavior.

But what was it that Jesus restored and had never taken? If someone had been robbed of something and the police captured the thief and restored that which had been taken, they would have restored that which they had not taken. If one lost a billfold and someone found it and restored it to the owner, that person would have restored something which he had not taken away.

When Jesus died for the sins of others, His blood paid the ransom for the eternal life which men have lost through their sin. He thus restored that which he had not taken from them.

These first four verses seem to fit the life of Christ extremely well. There is strong reason to believe they apply to Him.

**Psa 69:5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.**

God knows the sin and foolishness of all men. David had been foolish in his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband. The sins of any person among the captives in Babylon would also have been known by the Lord. But Jesus Christ had no sin, nor was any guile found in His mouth. The only way these words might be applied to Him would be in that He took the sins of men upon Him as He went to the cross.

I feel highly uncomfortable with this last explanation of the verse. I believe some of the words found in this psalm do not refer to the Son of God.

**Psa 69:6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.**

What a horrible thought it is to think that possibly, as a result of one's own sins, others who were seeking the Way of the Lord might be confused and eternally lost by observing such erratic behavior. We must walk at all times in such way that others who follow in our footsteps will be able to see more clearly and follow more nearly.

**Psa 69:7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.**

Any person who is making a strong attempt to live a Godly life will find that he is reproached by those who live in wickedness. They will try to make the righteous turn from holiness and join them in their foolishness. They will use vulgar language in the presence of their victim. They will try to shame him for cowardice in that he will not share in their sin.

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**Psa 69:8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren,
and an alien unto my mother's children.**

Even one's own brothers and sisters will at times turn away because of the difference in life styles between the righteous and the wicked. Jesus own half brothers mocked him. Note that these are called his "mother's" children. They were not the children of His Father.

Psa 69:9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

The "zeal of thine house" may well be the enthusiasm which the psalmist had for the service of God's cause. Jesus is the prime example of one who had been eaten up because of His willingness to do all His Heavenly Father commanded. However, many others since His time have been killed as a result of their dedication to the Kingdom of God. Those who hate God will hate those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Psa 69:10 When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

The more dedication the psalmist displayed in his life, the more mockery was aimed in his direction. Weeping and fasting only caused those who loathed him to increase their hateful attitudes.

**Psa 69:11 I made sackcloth also my garment;
and I became a proverb to them.**

Sitting in sackcloth and ashes was a very vivid way of showing sorrow for sin, or for expressing sadness over



the plight of others. His outward show of inward grief was met by hurtful sarcasm.

Psa 69:12 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.

From the prominent persons who sat in the gate of the city, down to the most lowly and sotten drunkards, the righteous man was a target for jokes. This was true of Christ and is also true of God's children today.

Psa 69:13 But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

The psalmist would not return fire toward those who ridiculed him. Instead, he would pray to the Lord that he might receive strength in his day of difficulty. He called for God to hear his plea for help.

What is the acceptable time? It is that time which the Lord deems best for His assistance. He knows when and how to help those who are in difficulty. He has promised to help His own. He will save through His mercy and His truth. We must depend upon His mercy in that we do not deserve salvation. We must depend upon His truth, in that we cannot see our own way through the fog of this sinful world.

Psa 69:14 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

Psa 69:15 Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

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It is altogether too easy to give up and allow the mire of sin to submerge us. The depths of the grave and the pit of hell reach out their hungry fingers to take possession of the souls of men. The only way the righteous can evade destruction is to hold to the hand of the Almighty. Nothing is capable of tearing us loose if we hold tightly. The last few verses of the eighth chapter of Romans makes this solemn promise. (See Romans 8:31, 37-39.)

*Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

*Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

*Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Psa 69:16 Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.**

**Psa 69:17 And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily.**

What a piteous yet confident call from the persecuted to the Lord! God is full of loving kindness and mercy. He will not only hear the plea. He will do that which is necessary to rescue the perishing and the persecuted. It may not be that the answer will come as speedily as we would like, but the faithful WILL BE RESCUED.

**Psa 69:18 Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies.**

If we deliberately separate ourselves from God, we have no hope. However, if we draw near unto Him, He will respond in like manner and will be found in time of need. No enemy is strong enough to drown us in the mire.

**Psa 69:19 Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee.**

Yes God knew of the reproach which was laid upon David. He knew the reproach laid upon His Only Begotten Son. He knows that which is brought upon his servants of ever time and place. Those who suffer such reproach will be rewarded far greater than any suffering they may bear in these few short years of existence here on earth.

He also knows who those are that have reproached his servants. Any enjoyment they have gained from their cruelty will be far outweighed by the suffering they will endure if they do not repent of these sins.

**Psa 69:20 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.**

It is not easy to find one's self accused of cowardice or stupidity for not following the ways of the devil. There should be others who would offer comfort. All too often such comfort is missing from fellowmen. The broken heart may not be healed until this life has passed on to the next.

**Psa 69:21 They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.**



This verse is beyond doubt a reference to the manner in which Christ treated when he called out from the cross, "I thirst." He was given gall and vinegar to drink. The gospel writers did not fail to make the connection between this verse and the cruelties He suffered at the hands of the merciless.

**Psa 69:22 Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.**

The table represents those necessities and luxuries of life which both the righteous and the wicked enjoy. The righteous use such blessings as a means of serving more effectively. The wicked make no connection between God and that which is heaped upon their table. The psalmist asks that such ingratitude be punished as they use that which should have been devoted to serving the Lord to serve Satan.

**Psa 69:23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.**

Since evil men do not wish to see, let them wander in the darkness. Since they do not wish to use their physical strength for walking in the Way of the Lord, let their spiritual muscles grow weak from disuse. Any person who has reached the age of seventy-five years or over can appreciate the truth of what is being said here. Those arms and legs which were once stable and strong become weak and trembling. Hips are broken as they fall when once they would have run.

**Psa 69:24 Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.**

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Psa 69:25 Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents.

It is right that God display anger toward those who have only indignation toward His blessings. Sometimes this distress will cause them to reflect on the goals they are pursuing and turn back before the grave cuts off their opportunity to take that action.

Psa 69:26 For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.

Those that God has smitten are those who have been smitten because of their service to God. Those who are wounded are those who have been wounded in the line of duty. It is quite true that evil men take advantage of those who are already downtrodden. They have little mercy in their hearts for any others. Such men killed Christ after they had beaten Him unmercifully. We can almost see them standing at the foot of the cross pointing and laughing at the Lord.

Psa 69:27 Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness.

It is not that God is responsible for the multiplied iniquity. They do not wish to live lives of purity. God allows them freedom of choice. When they choose to add sin on top of sin they put themselves into such a condition that they cannot be permitted to drag their sins into the presence of the Holy Lord.

Psa 69:28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

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This does not sound at all like the commandment to pray for your enemies and those who despitely use you. The book of the living is that list of persons who have committed themselves to obey the will of God. God knows His own. This does not mean they cannot someday be told to depart from His presence. We recall the words, "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall."

On this earth we move into a desirable community with fine neighbors. Then one day a neighbor places his house up for sale and very undesirable persons move in. Heaven will not be so. We may rest assured that if we remain true, we will then have neighbors who are also delightful to know.

**Psa 69:29 But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.**

The high and mighty who persecuted others in this life will find themselves brought down. The poor and sorrowful in this life will be set on high. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall see God."

**Psa 69:30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.**

As one of those who are poor and lowly in spirit, and who have little of the luxuries of life, the psalmist promises to offer that which he has as a sacrifice. He will sing the praises of the Lord, and will give Him thanks for life and the chance to serve.

**Psa 69:31 This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.**

If one is to make a choice between only being able to offer a song of praise and a prayer of thanksgiving, or a fat



ox with beautiful horns and hoofs, it is good to know that God will be greatly pleased by the more humble sacrifice. But woe be unto that person who has thousands of fat cattle and then offers only a prayer or a song.

**Psa 69:32 The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.**

This present writer has seen poor farmers reach into their pocket and pull out a coin as the contribution basket passed. The Lord may be better pleased with that small coin than with a larger financial contribution from one whose life does not demonstrate daily sacrifice. The widow's mite can inspire others who love God to do all they can also.

**Psa 69:33 For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.**

The prisoners whom the Lord does not despise are those who have been captivated and imprisoned because of their fighting spiritual foes. He knows of their condition and will see that they are ultimately rewarded for their sufferings.

Another possible explanation is that the prisoners of the Lord are those who have been taken captive by His own righteous army and have decided to become soldiers of the cross.

**Psa 69:34 Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein.**

The proper behavior for the entire creation, including mankind, is to declare the wondrous glory of God and



serve Him in the manner He desires. The heavens are to declare the glory of God and the earth is to show His handiwork. Men are to give Him glory, honor and praise.

**Psa 69:35 For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.**

The Zion which God will save, and the cities of Judah that are to be built may be the city of Jerusalem which rests on the hill of Zion. After all, He did cause Jerusalem to be rebuilt. He also made it possible for new cities to appear in the land of Israel.

But, it could be much more. God's people are sometimes seen as a holy mountain of faith. Let those who love the Lord look forward to that New Jerusalem which is above, and where sorrow and tears will all have flown. What a tremendous possession to contemplate! Heaven is there not far from our grasp, beautiful haven of peace.

**Psa 69:36 The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.**

The faithful of all generations shall inherit the New Heaven and the New Earth. It is not something which fades away. And the wonderful part is that one generation will not have to be erased for the next to join it in glory.

## *Chapter 70*

The title of this psalm calls it a memorial. It is nearly a duplicate of Psalm 40:13-17. It has been called an accidental fragment, transferred from the fortieth psalm. Along with J. Vernon McGee, I reject the word “accidental.” If David is the writer of both the verses in psalm forty and those found in this chapter, I sympathize with his repetition of the pleas for divine aid. Who is there of God’s children who has not called upon Him repeatedly for help? Not only do we cry out for that which we cannot provide for ourselves; we wonder just how long it may be before the help comes.

**Psa 70:1 Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.**

Both David, and the Christ whom he prefigured, were hunted down by enemies who sought to destroy them. The words of verse one could very properly have been said by either of them. David fled from Saul. Christ hung upon the cross. The God in heaven could, and would deliver both of them from their pain. He might not do so immediately, but He would not abandon them.

**Psa 70:2 Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.**

This certainly applies to David. Those who pursued him were proud and haughty. They laid careful plans to take his life. The word “soul” here is the same as life. It is true that one could lose his life without losing his soul, but

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the two words are used often as synonymous. The prayer of the psalmist is that God would use His power to turn the shame from himself to those who desired his end.

Psa 70:3 Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.

Mockery is a tool of the Devil. The one who walks with God does not attempt to downgrade others. He will point out their need to reform, but he does not take pleasure in their discomfort. He is constantly attempting to lift the sinner to a higher plane.

Even in the field of athletic competition there are often penalties for those who gloat over the discomfort of those whom they have defeated.

Psa 70:4 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

While the prayer has been that the enemies of righteousness be turned back and their plans be confused, the same prayer calls for men to magnify the name of the Lord. The promise is that those who magnify God and His plan of salvation will themselves be magnified and saved from eternal destruction.

Psa 70:5 But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

These words of course do particularly apply to David at the time he was fleeing from King Saul. In a sense they also apply to Christ in that He willfully allowed Himself

to be made lower than the angels that he might sacrifice Himself for the lost.

Along with David and with the crucified Christ, you and I need deliverance through the Divine Hand. We need to seek that salvation before it is too late. God will respond as He deems fit. It will be in His time and in His way, but He will deliver us from evil!



Chapter 71

There is much guesswork done as to the author of this psalm. It has no title attached in many of the versions and ancient manuscripts. There are some who contend that the reason for the lack of a title is that the seventieth psalm was once attached to it. It could well be from the pen of David, but that is far from certain. This commentary will proceed from that assumption.

The theme of the psalm has to do with confidence that if the Lord has been with one from the womb to old age and grey hair, He can be depended upon to continue His care unto death, and through it. It is a very comforting message for those of us who have come to realize we have much less time to serve here on earth than we once had. Still, we must remember that the wise man cautioned us to “Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth—” We look forward to everlasting life with God in heaven. If that is to be true, love and obedience must last until the last breath is drawn.

Psa 71:1 In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

If we do put our trust in the Lord, He will keep His solemn promise to direct our steps. We may at times wonder where He is leading us, but there is tremendous satisfaction in knowing that One far greater than ourselves is at the steering wheel.

Psa 71:2 Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

It is not our own righteousness which will allow us to escape the destiny of Satan. There is none righteous, no

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not one. The righteousness which will allow man to come into the everlasting presence of the Godhead in heavenly places is that which comes with prayer and repentance over the sin which has entered our souls. The blood of Christ can cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

**Psa 71:3 Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.**

God is said to be three different things. He is a strong habitation. He is a rock. He is a fortress. Each of these has a beautiful promise. We may dwell in Him while still walking this earthly vale. We may be assured that the Rock upon which we stand will never be moved. We may depend upon Him to protect us from the darts and arrows of Satan. Without God we will be defeated. With Him we cannot not be defeated.

**Psa 71:4 Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.**

If one's home were to be broken into during the night and the intruder were to have every intention of taking our life and our possessions, we would be everlastingly grateful to anyone who interceded to save us. Satan is trying to do just that. He and his followers take great satisfaction in destroying the lives of others. God is able to keep that which we deliver to Him. Neither the father of lies, nor his servants can overcome the strong right hand of our Father.

**Psa 71:5 For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth.**

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Psa 71:6 By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.

There is very good reason for the righteous to continue to place their hope and trust in God. They would never have come into existence had He not granted the power to become. From the time of birth God sustained life. He provided all that was needed to bring one from the womb of a mother to the time of grey hair and feeble footsteps.

Psa 71:7 I am as a wonder unto many; but thou art my strong refuge.

In what sense does the psalmist declare that he is a wonder unto many? If the penman was David, it is not difficult to see why this might be said. This man killed an armored giant. He protected his sheep from the mouth of the lion and the bear. He led the nation of Israel from a small beginning to a position of respect among those surrounding them.

Just how was all this accomplished? Only with the help of the God of heaven. He was both source of strength and a place of refuge.

Psa 71:8 Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.

Morning, noon and evening those who have received such blessings from God should pay Him praise and honor. He is with us when we wake. He does not forsake us as long as we cling to Him. It was only when the sins of men were carried to the cross that God's Son asked

why he had been forsaken. He had only been separated for the moment. He would be raised from the tomb to become King of kings.

Psa 71:9 Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.

Is there the slightest danger that God will cast one off in the time of old age, if that individual calls upon Him for help? Does the weakness of old age break down the walls of protection the Lord has built around us? The psalmist had no need to fear being left alone and helpless. Physical strength may fail one, but spiritual strength does not fail unless one loses faith. The truth of the matter is that spiritual strength may continue to grow even as physical strength dims.

Psa 71:10 For mine enemies speak against me; and they that lay wait for my soul take counsel together,

Psa 71:11 Saying, God hath forsaken him; persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him.

The word “enemies” is in the plural. Satan is not working alone. He and his helpers are both cruel and wise. They know men’s weaknesses. They will not hesitate to take advantage of any frailty.

Sometimes the obstacles to faith are pride and worldly pleasure. These are more apt to be met in youth and middle age. The culprit who triest to steal our confidence in God as old age arrives is disease. The death of our loved ones brings tears. Is there truly a God? If so, why should such sorrow be allowed to exist? When I die will the graveyard be the end? These are all questions which



cross the minds of the godly as the eyes, the ears and the limbs become noticeably less dependable. All too often the faith falters.

But, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

Psa 71:12 O God, be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help.

The only time God is far from one is when one has chosen to place distance between himself and his Maker. Our sincere cries for help will be heard and answered. The enemy may appear to be near victory over us. Soon the opposite will be found true. Faith is the victory which overcome the world!

Psa 71:13 Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered with reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

Once more we are forced to compare what are sometimes called “imprecatory” prayers with Jesus’ admonition to pray for those who despitefully use you. This does not sound at all like praying “for” one’s enemies. Let us assume that these are persons who are beyond the point of no return and who will not respond to other methods of treatment.

We certainly do not want to be confused by the attacks of the adversaries. If anyone must be confused it is better that it be those fighting against the godly than those who are godly. Those who insist upon continuing to oppose righteousness deserve to be reproached and dishonored.

Psa 71:14 But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

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**Psa 71:15 My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.**

Instead of yielding to confusion, the psalmist vows to maintain his hope and increase his praise to God. No man is able to count the total of the blessings which fall upon him day by day. There is no way to give God all the praise which He deserves for His loving care.

Whoever the writer of the psalm is, he has much company in his understanding that his blessings are innumerable.

**Psa 71:16 I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.**

First the writer speaks about God. He informs others, or perhaps even speaks to himself in that he will move forward in spite of the efforts of those who would see him destroyed. He will do that with the strength provided by the Lord. Alone, he could not succeed. With the aid of the hand of God he is convinced he can overcome all opposition.

**Psa 71:17 God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.**

There are two sides to this matter of training. God has presented to man those truths that are essential to life eternal. Even so, many ignore such truth and find themselves in the midst of spiritual corruption. The psalmist has been taught from his youth because he recognized the need to attend to the teaching. He has continued steadfastly in the light which was made available to him.



**Psa 71:18 Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.**

He now repeats the statement that he is old and greyheaded as he speaks. He pleads that he be given enough time to demonstrate the strength of God to those younger than himself. They shall also need the wisdom to choose the good over the evil. He does not plead for his own generation along. He prays that the witness he declares will strengthen all those who are to come.

**Psa 71:19 Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!**

Not only is the righteousness of God dependable; it is like a mountain upon which one can stand with the Lord and challenge any and all foes of that which is right and good.

**Psa 71:20 Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.**

Why do men suffer with great trials and afflictions as the years accumulate? Could God not prevent these discomforts? Yes He could certainly do that. But, how many times has the reader seen the effects of a child raised with a silver spoon in it's mouth and almost no disciplinary measures applied? God is preparing his followers for something finer than what is seen here and now. The trials which we face build character. There will come a time when the graves will be opened. Those

who were faithful unto death will be quickened and live forever. They must be ready for that time!

**Psa 71:21 Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.**

**Psa 71:22 I will also praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.**

This promise could have referred to the few years the psalmist had before entering the grave. It could also refer to the everlasting day where the sun never sets.

**Psa 71:23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.**

One's rejoicing does not stop with the lips. Deep within the heart of the godly there is a melody which provides the impulse for the lips to move in songs of praise. Even when the lips tremble and the voice begins to rasp, the melody in the heart is as beautiful as ever. Yes, "I'm Redeemed, I'm Redeemed."

**Psa 71:24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.**

As many as will listen will hear the praises of He that is higher than the heavens. He has answered the call of His servant from the womb to the time of the grey head. He will not fail in these last days. Praise ye the Lord.



## Chapter 72

This psalm is thought by most commentators to be a prayer offered by David on behalf of his son Solomon, who would soon be replacing him on the throne of Israel. The last verse of the psalm states that *The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended*. This statement leaves some with little doubt that it was from the pen of David.

This does not settle the issue. A very large number of early manuscripts do not have this twentieth verse attached. This causes another group to believe it is a prayer of Solomon, with the coming of the Messiah in view. In the notes below we will view David as the author of the psalm and will consider it to have application to both Solomon and the Messiah.

**Psa 72:1 Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.**

David prays that his son Solomon will have access to the laws of God. Along with possession of the laws, he prays that the God's righteousness will also be available. David knew from his own experience that the responsibilities resting upon the king are enormous. He must have strength to apply the judgments of the law to the rebellious and also the wisdom to reward the conscientious for their exemplary behavior.

**Psa 72:2 He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.**

A good king will treat every subject unselfishly. He will not take advantage of the hard worker. Neither will he fail to support those who cannot provide for themselves.

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Psa 72:3 The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

The mountains are probably those with great power as compared with the little hills which must be content with far less influence. What a wonderful land it is that finds the powerful and influential interested in the peace of all men. The mountains reap happiness in knowing they have promoted peace. The little hills are grateful to the mountains for sharing with them.

Psa 72:4 He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

This good king will care for the poor and the needy. He will exert his own influence to prevent the rich from persecuting the less fortunate.

Psa 72:5 They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

Little by little we can see the Messianic tones enter into the prayer. The use of “Thee”, and the reference to the reign lasting throughout all generations as long as the sun and moon endure applies to no human. The Messiah is the only one who will outlast the heavens.

Psa 72:6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.

This King will come down from the heaven of heavens with the water of life. The result will be that spiritual life will bloom as the grass rises fresh after the morning showers.

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**Psa 72:7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.**

Evil kings stimulate the evildoers. Lying and violence rage across the land. Under a righteous king peace prevails and good people are multiplied.

**Psa 72:8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.**

Solomon controlled the land from the Sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean. Jesus Christ rules one end of the earth to the other.

**Psa 72:9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.**

This king will rule in the cities, but he will also rule in the deserted places. No one shall be able to vanquish him. He will continue his reign until every foe shall be compelled to recognize his authority. This, of course was true of Solomon and will be true of the Son of God. The last enemy will be death.

**Psa 72:10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.**

Tarshish may have reference to what is now known as Spain. The isles could well be those found near the shores of the Great Sea. Seba and Sheba were not a part

of Solomon's dominion, but the rulers, such as the queen of Sheba brought good will presents to maintain good relations with Israel.

**Psa 72:11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.**

**Psa 72:12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.**

Now the Messianic picture dominates again. Not all kings of the earth bowed before Solomon, nor did every nation on earth serve him. Christ is known for promoting help for the needy. Through the centuries the followers of the Lord have demonstrated a willingness to share what they have with those less fortunate.

**Psa 72:13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.**

**Psa 72:14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.**

It depends upon what is meant here by saving the souls of the needy whether this could apply to Solomon or not. Only the Christ gave His blood that the eternal soul of men might be saved from damnation. It is true, however, that at times the word soul is used in the scriptures to mean the whole of the person, and includes the body. In that sense Solomon could have saved the souls of many from death by physical violence.

**Psa 72:15 And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.**

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Solomon was given large amounts of gold from the surrounding nations. Prayer was no doubt lifted up for his continued life and welfare. He was praised in his own day. He is still being praised throughout much of the earth, even though dead for many centuries. There is reason to believe that he will be remembered positively until civilization on earth reaches it's close.

Psa 72:16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

Under the rule of Solomon the people were at peace. The crops were not trampled by the hooves of horses and the wheels of chariots of war. The hills and the valleys both were covered with produce. Both cities and countryside enjoyed food, clothing and shelter.

Psa 72:17 His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

This verse hardly seems to be confined to Solomon. Only the Christ fits the description above. His name is a name above all names. Millions and millions have been blessed as a result of His words and deeds. He is truly the One whom all nations will recognize as blessed.

Psa 72:18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

Psa 72:19 And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

Do not the two verses above logically follow the one just before them? The One mentioned in verse seventeen is the Lord God of Israel who glory will fill the earth.

The duplicated Amen, Amen is a way to express the deepest sincerity in the prayer just concluded. Let it be so. Let it be so.

Psa 72:20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

This is the verse spoken of in the introduction to our comments. It is not found in a large number of the early copies of the book of Psalms. It is just possible that this entire psalm is a prayer uttered by Solomon as he looked forward to the coming of the Lord of lords and King of kings. The Son of man may be seen in the psalm if David recorded it or if Solomon did so.



Chapter 73

The one hundred fifty psalms are divided into five separate books. The five books are divided thus:

Book 1	1-41
Book 2	42-72
Book 3	73-89
Book 4	90-106
Book 5	107-150

We have concluded the first two books with psalm seventy-two. This third book is said to be the psalms of Asaph. Asaph was a musician, as was David. Most of the psalms in this third book are from Asaph. But not all of them are. This third book contains seventeen psalms. They are attributed as follows:

Asaph	11
Korah	3
David	1
Heman	1
Ethan	1

The psalms have been classified as to type. Many of them include material of one of these basic types.

1. Wisdom
2. Messianic
3. Lament
4. Penitential—These are not found in Book 3.
5. Praise and Thanksgiving
6. Liturgical
7. Imprecatory

The present psalm is closely related to psalm thirty-seven and also to the book of Job. All three of these portions of scripture deal with the presence of suffering in the lives of the godly. All three present the same answer. God knows far better than we do just what is best for both His kingdom, and also for every individual. When time has ended, the wicked will be punished and the righteous will be more than satisfied with the reward they have received.

Psa 73:1 Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

What a beautiful thought is presented in this first verse. It may appear that God has forgotten His faithful, but this is far from the truth. The rest of the present psalm will explain why this can be said when one can see so much sorrow in the lives of those who serve Him with all their heart.

Psa 73:2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

Asaph declares that he had walked in a dangerous path. It had resulted in a near disaster. The line of thought he had followed was slippery and he had come close to perishing.

Psa 73:3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Asaph had looked at the prosperity of the wicked with envy. They had chosen to live their lives ignoring the commands of the Lord. This should be absolute

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foolishness; yet they seemed to be happy and blessed. He wondered if their way of life might have been more satisfying than the one he had chosen as a servant of God.

**Psa 73:4 For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.**

Even when he observed the manner of their death, they seemed not to suffer as much pain and anguish as did the followers of God's will. They appeared to live with less grief and die with less suffering.

**Psa 73:5 They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.**

**Psa 73:6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.**

As far as Asaph could see, the wicked did not face as severed problems with disease and other kinds of catastrophe.

As a result of living an evil life and still not reaping as they had sown, they became filled with pride. Just as a person might wear ornaments such as gold necklaces and rings on their fingers, these boasters held up their independence as proof there was not need to obey the Word of the Lord. If anyone confronted them they simply used force to remove what was in their way.

**Psa 73:7 Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.**

Those who eat more than they need sometimes have bloated faces and bodies. All too often it seemed, the wicked were like fatted calves. They spent this world's goods upon their own gluttonous appetites.

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It is difficult for a man to possess more than his or her heart dreams of. These selfish persons wallowed in that for which others might be starving.

Psa 73:8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.

These persons are bold in their conversation. They relish the idea of running roughshod over the less fortunate than themselves. We sometimes use the terms “high and mighty” in describing them.

Psa 73:9 They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

Nor do they stop the boasting with challenging men. They use the name of the Lord in vain. They mock the law of the Lord. Their boasting and wicked words appear to go unhindered as they curse with flippant tongues.

Psa 73:10 Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.

The pronoun “his” could refer to the wicked, whose tongue defies all that is righteous. It could also refer to God. If it is the wicked person whose people go about blaspheming, then the full cup which is wrung out **to** them is the comforts they enjoy in spite of their evil ways.

If it is God whose people are said to return, the full cup will only be received when the final rewards are enjoyed in eternity. This present commentator feels that the former explanation of the verse is more accurate since the very next verse appears to continue the thought that



the wicked get away with their selfish ways without God doing anything to prevent their wickedness.

Psa 73:11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

Thus the idea in this verse is that the wicked assume God either does not exist, or else He can do nothing to stop their selfish way of life. They probably feel that is there is a God, He certainly does not care about the presence of evil.

Psa 73:12 Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

What a horrid description of the wicked has been given. Even as they take advantage of others, they grow richer and richer.

Psa 73:13 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

Psa 73:14 For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

Asaph felt that he was being forced to conclude that he had made a wrong decision in following the law of the Lord. He had tried daily to keep his lust and pride under control. What had it profited him? Every morning when he awoke he had met grief while the sinners were apparently delightfully happy.

It is wise for us to pause right here and make a very emphatic statement. **THE WICKED ARE NOT ALWAYS AS HAPPY AS IT MIGHT APPEAR!**

If the things of this world are one's major concern

there are too many ways such gain can melt away in the blink of an eye. Businesses can go bankrupt. Mansions can burn to the ground. Evil companions can decide they are better off to betray than to assist. Thieves and robbers may break through and steal. The person who thinks the rich have no concerns is only deluding himself. Riches of earth are temporal. The true riches are those which are laid up in heaven!

Psa 73:15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.

If the psalmist were to let others of God's children know of the kind of thoughts he had they would quite possibly be disappointed with either him or the Lord. He had decided it was best not to say anything. We may only wonder how many others through the centuries have felt just as Asaph did. Why O why does God not punish the workers of evil?

Let us ask what I believe to be a very appropriate question. How would the reader like for God to cause a fatal disease to strike his own wayward child? Would he or she not pray that the child be given time to repent? Some of those who are allowed to continue in their folly will come to their senses at a later time. God wants every person who will make such a decision to have the opportunity to leave the paths of Satan.

Psa 73:16 When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

For some time the psalmist pondered the problem. At times it hurt so deeply he had to get his mind off these thoughts.

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**Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.**

This verse marks a most welcome change in mood. It was when Asaph went into the place of worship the he found an answer to the problem which seemed impossible to solve. It was when he considered the end of the righteous and the end of the wicked that he realized the truth of God's promises.

**Psa 73:18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.**

One cannot suffer much damage falling from a low height. He can suffer severe damage, or even death if he falls from the top of a twenty story building. These evil people had been allowed to mount up to a point where they took great delight in looking down on others. They needed to observe the command to "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

**Psa 73:19 How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.**

Every possession of which the sinner boasts can disappear like steam which rises from a boiling pot. The healthy body can become racked with disease. The power to control others may be taken over by those even more powerful.

**Psa 73:20 As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.**

Just as a sleeping person may open his eyes to find that the dream was only within his imagination, the person who loses every thing can then hate his own past.

**Psa 73:21 Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.**

Asaph was ashamed that he had even allowed himself to question the promises of the Lord. The “reins” are the kidneys. Both the heart and the reins are used to refer to the deepest feelings one can have. Asaph was heartsick that he had envied those who walked in wickedness.

**Psa 73:22 So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.**

He had been as foolish as those of whom he had been envious. He had not considered all of the facts. A lowly animal could have thought things through as carefully as he had.

**Psa 73:23 Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.**

He determined to continue his devotion to Jehovah. The Lord had been very good to him. He had been held up and led by God’s eternal power and wisdom. There was absolutely no reason for him to desire a place with the unrighteous.

**Psa 73:24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.**

**Psa 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.**



Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” A few sacrifices here in time will lead to a crown of righteousness with the Father in heaven. God is in heaven. There is no man on earth capable of offering what God can offer.

**Psa 73:26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.**

The flesh will decay. The heart will cease beating. God promises to share everlasting life and glory which will never fade away.

**Psa 73:27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.**

Those that leave the presence of God to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season will find themselves forever separated from all that is good. This is real death. Life is to enter into the glory of heaven. Hell is to be cast into the fire with the devil and his angels.

**Psa 73:28 But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.**

Every man on earth has been offered the same arrangement. The Lord tells us that if we will draw nigh to Him, He will also draw nigh unto us. If we choose to depart from Him, He will treat us in like manner.

## Chapter 74

This psalm is in very much the same vein as the one just before it. Asaph is given credit for writing it. It is a call for the Lord to take action and deliver Israel from the oppression of those who have made ruins of the temple.

Surely God would not hold their sins against them forever. The point is made that the enemies of Him and His people were boasting of their conquests and were unconvinced that Israel would ever rise to prominence again. If He had rescued Israel from enemies again and again in the past, He could certainly do it again.

It has been pointed out by several that there is no admission of sin on the part of the people. They are simply saying the period of punishment has lasted long enough. When will the Lord step in and reverse the piteous conditions of those He had once proudly called His people?

Several different times have been suggested as fitting the circumstances pictured in the psalm. Most agree that it deals with the conditions of Israel during the Babylonian captivity sometime shortly after 586 B.C. Some contend that it was in the time of the Maccabean persecution around 186 B.C. Yet others set it at the time of the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 at the hands of the Romans. The time which seems to fit the details of the record here in this psalm is 586 B.C. when the temple was burned and the walls of Jerusalem were leveled to the ground.

**Psa 74:1 O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?**

There should have been no doubt in the minds of the people as to why God had allowed them to go into



captivity. They had ignored His law. He had sent prophets to warn them of what would come unless they repented. He finally did what was necessary to get their attention. He removed them from the promised land.

Perhaps the word “forever” is a key word in this verse. Even though they knew why they had been punished, it seemed that the punishment was never to come to an end. Was the Lord ready to eliminate every trace of Abraham’s descendants from the face of the earth and forget about the promise that through Abraham’s seed all nations of the earth would someday be blessed?

**Psa 74:2 Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.**

It was hardly believable that Jehovah would forget the effort which had been put into the creation and protection of His nation. He had chastened them as a father would chasten his children. He had guided them to Mount Zion where the temple had been built. He had displayed His glory in the most Holy Place. Would He now turn and walk away as if they did not exist?

**Psa 74:3 Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.**

The psalmist pleads with Him not to remain aloof. Will He please turn to them and tend to those who are bent on destruction of everything holy?

**Psa 74:4 Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs.**

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The roaring is that of boastful pride. The foes have actually placed their own emblems of power in the place of worship to show their disdain for Israel and her God.

Psa 74:5 A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

In the past, when the temple was under construction, a man could make a name for himself by wielding an axe efficiently and cutting timber for the temple framework. That had been a glorious work.

Psa 74:6 But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.

It was not so any more. The enemies of God were proud of working with axes and hammers to dismantle the temple which had been one of the wonders of the world at that time. They were chopping the beautiful carvings on the doors and walls of the building to pieces. We are told by historians that many nations had donated gold for plating over the carvings. We can almost envision the tears of the Israelites in the vicinity who still were loyal to Jehovah.

Psa 74:7 They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

The casting of fire into the Holy Place and the Most Holy was for the purpose of burning everything to the ground. There was nothing to be left. They intended to remove all evidence of the power of the Only True and Living God.



Psa 74:8 They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.

The use of the word “synagogue” here has brought on discussion. It does not speak of one synagogue. It speaks of “all” the synagogues in the land. It has been contended that synagogues as they were found in the time of Jesus were not in existence until after the return from Babylon. This would place the writing of the psalm at a much later date than 587 B.C. The literal meaning of the word synagogue has to do with a place where people came together for worship. This could have been private houses. The implication is that the enemies were intent on removing the least trace of evidence for a people dedicated to serving the True God.

Psa 74:9 We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.

The Israelites looked in vain for signs of their own dedication to the Lord. There were not even any prophets left to encourage them with guidance from God. Who could tell them how much longer the suffering would go on?

Psa 74:10 O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

Was there to be no end to the embarrassment at the hands of the foes? It seemed only reasonable that God would take offense at the insults which had been hurled at Him personally. Even if the people still must be punished, why did He not defend His own honour?

Psa 74:11 Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom.

The right hand is the hand used by the majority to accomplish that which they set out to do. Had God inserted His right hand into the bosom of his robe with the intention of never putting it into action against those who were snarling defiance at Him?

Psa 74:12 For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

They knew that the Lord had been on their side in days of old. He had not looked down from heaven without saving His people from perils of many kinds.

Psa 74:13 Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.

This has to be a reference to the parting of the waters of the Red Sea which allowed Israel to pass over safely, and then closed in upon the Egyptians, drowning them. The breaking of the heads of the dragons in the waters is said to be figurative language for the slaughter of the vicious beastlike Egyptians.

Psa 74:14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

This verse would then be a repetition for emphasis. The Egyptians were first drowned in the water of the sea. Then they were cast upon the shore and consumed by the inhabitants. It speaks of “people” inhabiting



the wilderness, but the “people” could well be the wild animals. This would mean then that the Egyptians were drowned in the water and then eaten by hungry beasts.

The point which must not be forgotten is that God protected Israel from destruction.

Psa 74:15 Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers.

When Israel reached the Jordan River, the source of the river ceased its flow. The river then dried up and the people of God entered into Canaan. Repeatedly God had demonstrated His power and also His concern for the welfare of His chosen nation.

Psa 74:16 The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

It was certainly not because God lacked the power to do whatever He decided was necessary to relieve the oppression of the Babylonians. He had created light in the beginning. He had set the sun and the earth in such position as to provide day and night.

Psa 74:17 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.

The power of God had also been responsible for the borders of the oceans and the size and positions of the continents. Mountains and valleys brought lakes and rivers. Summer and winter were not just accidents. They were also designed for the good of mankind. God’s wisdom and power can be seen under the earth, on the earth and above the earth.

Psa 74:18 Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

To the psalmist it seemed that the Babylonians had reproached Jehovah and had made a mockery of His name in all the earth. How could He just ignore this defiance?

Psa 74:19 O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.

The turtledove may be different from other doves in being more easily made a pet. God was being asked to show special affection for His peaceful people by not allowing others to mistreat them endlessly. They had been a favorite. Now they seemed abandoned.

Psa 74:20 Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

Israel had not respected the covenant. They had not acted as God's people. Yet now they were calling upon Him to honour His part of that covenant. They did not even have a safe place to hide from the viciousness of those who hated them.

Psa 74:21 O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

Would the Lord allow His people to return to their place in the land and possess it in pride? They could not do so by their own power. They were poor and in great

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need. What they could do was to praise Him if He would deliver them.

**Psa 74:22 Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.**

It was to God's own honour and glory that He punish those who trampled His name in the dust and felt that could do so without repercussions.

**Psa 74:23 Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually.**

They were quite wrong in believing God had overlooked both the haughty spirit of the enemies and the cries of those who had once been so precious to Him. The situation was not improving. It was growing steadily worse.

At the proper time God did heard these prayers for help. He caused Cyrus the Persian to issue a decree permitting them to return to their land and resume their worship of Jehovah.

## *Chapter 75*

This psalm is a natural follow up to the two just before it. Both psalm seventy-three and seventy-four dealt with the question as to why the wicked often prosper and the righteous so often suffer. This one contains God's reply to that very serious question.

God is the ultimate Judge. He will do that which He knows to be best for all concerned. Men would do well to leave such problems for His infinite wisdom to resolve.

**Psa 75:1 Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.**

This is a pleasant change from the gloom of the two psalms just previous to this one. Rather than questioning God's procedures, the psalmist is offering thanks for that which God has done in the past. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. We can add one more phrase to these. The works of God demonstrate His impartiality. He will judge fairly.

**Psa 75:2 When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.**

This is the voice of the Lord speaking now. He is pointing forward to the time when He will call all men to answer for their actions in this life. This could refer to individual actions which will be called to account by the natural consequences of either wicked or righteous thoughts, words and deeds. For example, smoking can cause lung cancer. Drinking can lead to murder by drunken associates.

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It is far more likely that this verse is discussing the final judgment of all men when punishment and rewards are assigned. It is too soon to worry about any seeming partiality which allows the wicked to prosper in this life. In His own good time, the Lord will judge righteous judgment.

Psa 75:3 The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.

The time will come when the elements will melt with fervent heat and the heavens will be dissolved. The only reason this has not already taken place is that God is holding the foundations of the universe in His hand. Do not be deceived. God is not being mocked.

Psa 75:4 I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn:

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." He then acts accordingly. His own selfish pride and lust dominate his life. His god becomes pleasure. God calls upon such fools to wake up. Cease to do evil and turn to the paths which lead to eternal life.

The wicked depend upon deceit and force to achieve their goals in life. If someone stands in the way, push them aside and go on. The horn of a bull represents great power. That is not the way of the Lord. Power can enforce that which is wrong. The drawback is that such enforcement will come to an abrupt end in the judgment. God has the power to overcome all opposition.

Psa 75:5 Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.

Business leaders may have the power to buy a competitor's company. They may create a monopoly which destroys their opposition. Criminals may use a gun to rob others of their property. Slave owners may beat their slaves. All such action is described here as lifting the horn up and waving one's power around where it can be seen and feared. The stiff neck is one which is so proud it fails to bend down to help others or to change directions when it's mistakes are clear.

Psa 75:6 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.

Temporary advantages may be gained by power and deceit, but these are not the kind of promotions which really count. One may look in any direction he may wish to gain temporary advantage on earth, but eternal gain is only had by looking upward to the Judge of all the earth.

Psa 75:7 But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

When all men are called to face the True Judge in the Great Judgement at the end, they will find that any unjustified promotions which they received during life on earth will fade into the background. Eternal reward and punishment will be based upon whether Christ or Satan has been their pathmaker.

Psa 75:8 For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.

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God can offer a cup of eternal blessing, or He can produce a cup of wrath and torment. The righteous will be **invited** to enter into the joy of the Lord. The wicked will be **required** to drink the wrath of God to the very last drop.

**Psa 75:9 But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.**

The Psalmist now states his own conclusion as to his own plan of action. He will sing the praises of the Almighty God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is the One who never makes mistakes in judgment.

**Psa 75:10 All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.**

He that exalts himself shall be humbled. He that humbles himself before Jehovah shall be exalted. There will be no errors.

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