

**GOD'S MESSAGES
BIBLE
COMMENTARY
SERIES**

VOLUME 12

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 75-150**

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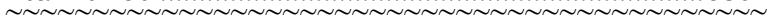


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**The Book Of
PSALMS**





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 76*

There is little doubt that this psalm was written to memorialize the victory of God over the forces of Sennacharib when the armies of the latter attacked the city of Jerusalem. Sennacharib was soundly defeated, not by Israel, but by an angel of the Lord.

It was more than a defeat for the powerful army of the Assyrians. It foreshadowed the rewards and punishments which will be dealt out in the final “Day of the Lord.”

**Psa 76:1 In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel.**

There are places in the world where the name of the Lord Jehovah is hardly known even at present. This is certainly not the case in Judah and Israel. In the time period in which the events of this psalm took place it was not as universally recognized as it is now. The Assyrians honored their false god, Nisroch. They had conquered much of the land in the vicinity of the Mediterranean Sea. But in both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Israel it was Jehovah’s name which received glory and honor.

**Psa 76:2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.**

Salem was the ancient name for the city of Jerusalem. It carried the idea of peace. This may seem odd in that Jerusalem has been involved in some of the most vicious fighting as any place in the world. Many, many times this city has been attacked and defended.

The basic reason it is known even today by the name



Jerusalem is that it was from that city that the gospel of the Prince of Peace was to be spread throughout the entire world.

God's tabernacle and His temple were both located on Mount Zion. Any foe who attacked that city knew beforehand that they were challenging the power of the God of the Jews. Sometimes the attacks were successful because the people of the Lord had neglected to keep the commandments which had been placed in their hands from the time of Moses. The present situation was not one of those times. God was not angry with His people when Sennacherab decided to take possession of it.

**Psa 76:3 There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.**

Assyria had weapons far superior to anything which Israel could place on the field of battle. If the battle was to be won through human wisdom and military strength, it would easily have been conquered. But that was not the case. Assyria had become overconfident as a result of recent successes. They felt that no power on earth could stand before them. Up to this point they had not come face to face with the power of Jehovah.

In a single night the army of Sennacharib was left in shambles. One angel of the Lord came down during the night and killed 185,000 of the Assyrian soldiers. The arrows were broken, leaving the bows useless. The shields and the swords lay inactive beside the bodies of those who would have made use of them. The battle itself was won through the destructive power of but one angel of the multitudes God could have called.

**Psa 76:4 Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey.**

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Mountains are often used in the Bible to picture concentrations of military power. Mount Zion was the location of God's army. The mountains of prey were those powers which preyed upon those they were able to subdue. There was little comparison between the power concentrated in any human forces and those of the Creator of heaven and earth.

Psa 76:5 The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

Those who had been so proud of their bravery and so defiant toward the people of God suddenly found they had been rendered as powerless as one who was attacked while he slept. The sleep mentioned here may even had meant the sleep of death. None of the Assyrians were able to lift a hand to defend themselves.

Psa 76:6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.

The horses and chariots upon which they had placed such great dependence were also rendered as powerless as if they were sound asleep. Both man and beast were helpless.

Psa 76:7 Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

It is God who is to be feared, not human wisdom and arms. It is God who successfully faces all opposition with the knowledge that He will not be defeated.

Who may stand in His sight when He is angry? There

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are none. The atheist cannot stand. The Polytheist cannot stand. The proud and haughty cannot stand. Dear reader, do not make the mistake of thinking you can successfully overcome the wrath of Jehovah when His longsuffering has reached it's end. He has proven over and over that the answer to the question asked in this verse is that NONE can stand in the sight of the angry eye of the Lord.

**Psa 76:8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,**

Men sometimes cringe when a lightning bolt cleaves through the sky and the thunder causes the ground to tremble underfoot. The fear which strikes through the heart of man when that occurs is but a tiny sample of the power possessed by the Almighty Jehovah.

**Psa 76:9 When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.**

The earth became still when the morning revealed thousands and thousands of dead Assyrian soldiers. It may well be just the opposite when God calls all men to the bar of judgment at the last day. The screams of those being cast into the everlasting fires of hell will be a stark contrast to the silence of the dead Assyrians.

**Psa 76:10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.**

Those who oppose God and His people only prove their own ineffectiveness when they are punished and their foolish attitudes toward life are held up where all can see. That portion of man's wrath which was not embarrassed

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because it was held back through fear of God, will also promote His glory.

Sometimes God allows man's rebellion to appear to show that He is in control. (See Exodus 9:16.)

Exo 9:16 And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

Psa 76:11 Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

The only wise plan of action is to promise God obedience and honor. Then the vow, or promise must be kept. It will do not good to vow obedience and then ignore the vow when threats are less overwhelming.

Psa 76:12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes: he is terrible to the kings of the earth.

The spirit of God was that which caused the will and the Word of God to be carried out in the beginning. The spirit of princes is that drive which puts will into execution. When the spirit of princes is cut off, those princes and kings will be humbled!

Chapter 77

Psalm number seventy-seven is titled “to the chief musician, to Jeduthun, a psalm of Asaph.” Jeduthun was a chief musician in the time of David. It may be that Asaph desired to write a song which would aid any follower of God in any age to overcome times of trial and doubt. It is written in the first person, as if the writer was personally suffering from difficulties which to him seemed to compare with the time in which Israel found itself in Egyptian bondage.

In the writing of spiritual songs, the writer may project himself into another setting than the one in which he lives. He then expresses words which assist those who will sing the song to strengthen their faith.

It is the conviction of the majority of commentators that the psalm was written in the time of the Babylonian exile. This brings on problems in that Asaph lived long before the time of the Babylonian captivity. Neither Asaph, Jeduthun, or even David had experienced that time of trial.

One thing is certain. The psalm is intended to inspire hope in times of doubt. Whatever the identity of the writer was, he appealed to the wonders God performed in the days of escape from Egyptian bondage to point out that God does not abandon his faithful. Regardless of the seeming abandonment, God is still concerned about His people and is capable of rescuing them from what appear to be impossible situations.

Psa 77:1 I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

The person in difficulty is so grieved that he cries out to God for help. Some go to God for help daily. Others only

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cry out when trouble and sorrow become overwhelming. The fact that this individual cried out with his voice is an indication that it was an audible cry. He wishes to tell the hearer or reader of the psalm that his cry to the Lord was heard.

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

His difficulties not only came during the daylight hours, they extended throughout the night. Other versions speak of him lifting up his hands all through the night. In spite of his constant appeal for the Lord to hear, it seemed at first that he had not heard. Because of this the person continued in his distress.

**Psa 77:3 I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.**

He still did not give up. He returned repeatedly to ask for assistance. About all he could do was to cry out, "God, please help."

**Psa 77:4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.**

He could not sleep. He could not find words to express his great problems.

**Psa 77:5 I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.**

In an effort to find a way out of his distress, he allowed his mind to travel back over days gone by. These times

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were far distant in time to his own day, but they did hold truths which might give some encouragement.

Psa 77:6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

He recalled days in his own life when there was a song of happiness. How wonderful it would be if he had some slight hope of such brighter days in his future.

Psa 77:7 Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?

It did not seem that such hope would bear fruit. Instead, it seemed that God had cast him off forever, and would never again send blessings into his life. Several questions rove through his mind. He would like to have a "No." answer to each of them, but at the time of his prayer, the answer seemed to be "No." It most certainly looked as if God had cast him off forever. It just as certainly looked as if God would never again bless him.

Psa 77:8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?

He realized that he had allowed sin to enter into his life, but in the past God had been merciful to pass them by after he had shown a repentant attitude. Now such mercy seemed to have been refused.

God had promised that He would be their God if they would be His people. Now he was desperately trying to be faithful, but God had turned His back.

Psa 77:9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

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No man could feel that he had earned the grace of God. He, like all other men had sinned. In the past he had received blessing even though he had not deserved them, if he showed a penitent attitude. Now that was not the case. All seemed hopeless.

**Psa 77:10 And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.**

He realized that the fault was not with God. It was his own spiritual weakness which had wrapped him about with grief. Still, he had one avenue of comfort. He would recall the days when God did help His faithful when they were in what appeared to be a completely helpless set of circumstances.

The right hand of God had helped those of the past when all was impossible. It was possible that He would repeat that help in the present.

**Psa 77:11 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.**

What were those works of the past which could give him confidence and comfort? They were wonders that only the God of heaven could have brought to pass.

**Psa 77:12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.**

He would ponder those times of God's grave and mercy. He would talk to others of that loving kindness which God had shown toward His people.

**Psa 77:13 Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?**

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He was convinced that if he was to be helped, it would be the result of drawing as close to God as possible. The sanctuary is the place where God has commanded His people to seek His blessings. In the days of Moses, it was the tabernacle. In the days of Solomon, it was the temple. In the latter days, in which we presume the reader lives, it is the church of Christ.

Psa 77:14 Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

God had done great wonders in the past. Today, the age of miracles has come to a close. Does this mean we cannot appreciate His greatness and ability to providentially care for those who love and obey Him? Certainly not. Even the atheist must admit there is wonder far beyond his ability to comprehend. The scientist peers through the microscope and the telescope, and gasps in amazement at the design and purpose found there. The devout Christian knows God is wondrous because he holds to that right hand every day of his life.

Psa 77:15 Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

The remainder of this chapter recalls details of how God rescued His people from seemingly impossible conditions in the past. The first of these examples is that of the famine in Egypt. Through God's assistance Jacob and his son Joseph were enabled to see that the land was fed. They would have perished if God had not caused Joseph to dream about the solution.

Psa 77:16 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

The next event was the crossing of the Red Sea. God's people were at the mercy of the Egyptian army. God then intervened by causing the water of the sea to roll back and allow Israel to pass through. Then those same waters closed back upon the Egyptians and caused them to drown.

Psa 77:17 The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.

Psa 77:18 The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

The third event was at Mount Sinai when the law was given. There was a great storm. The rain poured down, the lightning flashed, the thunder rolled and banged. An earthquake cause the ground to tremble under their feet. Then God gave the law to guide men through centuries to come.

Psa 77:19 Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

Men ought not to expect God's ways to be comprehensible to them. His ways are higher than our ways. As God led the people through the sea, the sea closed back together and no one knows just how God accomplished this feat. The same is true concerning the providence of God in the latter days.

**Psa 77:20 Thou leddest thy people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.**

After the giving of the law, God led the people with a fiery pillar of fire by night and cloud by day. Moses and Aaron acted as shepherds to lead the people to the border of the promised land. He can lead us from the trials of life to a better land, if we will but continue to place our trust in Him.

Chapter 78

This is a chapter dealing with the arrogance of God's people and the resulting consequences. It is most certainly not one of the more delightful chapter in the Word of God.

It is titled as a psalm of Asaph and there is reason to question that authorship. Asaph lived in the time of David and may have lived after David until the time the temple was erected.

It is a didactic, or teaching psalm and emphasizes the importance of passing truth from generation to generation. If this is not done, the wondrous things which God has done in the past will not be available to later seekers of truth.

Psa 78:1 Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

We have seen persons who cupped their hand over their ear to hear a little clearer. God is telling us this information is of vital importance. We must give it our finest attention. It is not the words of man. It is the Word of the God of heaven.

Psa 78:2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

A parable has been explained as an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It was a favorite style of teaching for the Saviour. Some of the truths of the Bible are clarified by the use of parables. Without the aid of the parables, many difficult passages might remain hidden in darkness and impossible to apply to our lives. The chapter

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intends to make clear just what happened when Israel disregarded the blessings and commandments of the Lord.

**Psa 78:3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.**

The past generations had witnessed the events the psalmist was trying to make clear. They had handed down what they had witnessed, to the generation addressed by the psalmist.

**Psa 78:4 We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.**

To fail to pass these truths on to their own children was the same as hiding them from those children. Such behavior would break the chain of transmission and lead to destruction. God's power and wisdom had to be made known to all men from the time His works were accomplished to the end of time.

**Psa 78:5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:**

The Lord had given the law on Mount Sinai. He had commanded those who were present at the time that they pass the law down to their children, who could then pass them to their own descendants.

**Psa 78:6 That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be**

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born; who should arise and declare them to their children:

The persons who heard or read of what their ancestors had actually witnessed had a tremendous responsibility. Unborn generations of the future must have access to the facts presented to those who actually saw and heard.

Psa 78:7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

This would allow the coming generations to build hope in the trustworthiness of the Lord and thus love Him and obey Him.

Psa 78:8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

By hearing of the catastrophes which befell the stubborn and rebellious people of the past, these later generations could then set their paths toward a more pleasant life in both this world and the world to come.

Psa 78:9 The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

During the conquest of the land, the tribe of Ephraim had turned back in cowardly fashion before the enemy. This was in spite of the fact that they had seen the presence of the Lord in times gone by. This was highly displeasing to God and resulted in the loss of their leadership among the people.

Psa 78:10 They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

God had presented the covenant on Sinai and He had kept His part by serving as their God. In return, they had failed to be His people and walk according to His instructions.

Psa 78:11 And forgot his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

What was it that He had done for them that caused Him to be angry with them? We shall be given a brief review in the upcoming verses. They forgot, but we should not!

Psa 78:12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.

One of the wonders took place at the edge of the Red Sea. They had been hemmed in at the shore, with the Egyptian soldiers, horses and chariots bearing down upon them. It appeared from man's point of view to be absolutely hopeless. Complete destruction was the only thing in sight.

Psa 78:13 He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

The impossible took place. God caused the water of the Red Sea to part and leave a passageway for Israel to use as an escape route.

We hear various explanations of how this could have happened. With God nothing is impossible. He did not

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have to freeze the water to make it solid. He simply commanded and it was done.

**Psa 78:14 In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.**

God guided them both by day and by night. He caused a cloud to appear and lead them during the daytime hours. He replaced this with a pillar of fire at night. When the cloud or the pillar of fire moved, they were to follow. When the cloud or pillar of fire became stationary, they were to set up camp.

**Psa 78:15 He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.**

When they became thirsty, the Lord caused water to come forth from the rocks of the desert. The water was clean and pure, just as if it had sprung up like a bubbling fountain from deep underground.

**Psa 78:16 He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.**

Both the quality and the quantity of the water was more than sufficient. These were not just trickles. They were streams. No person nor animal had to remain with an unquenched thirst.

**Psa 78:17 And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness.**

These amazing wonders should have persuaded Israel that they were in the hands of One who could and would

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supply every need. Rather than trusting Him, they sinned by complaining about their lot.

Psa 78:18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

We might expect his anger to be aroused. It was! We are told the God is not tempted, nor does He tempt any man. (See James 1:13)

Jam 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

At the same time, God was being tested, as if His promise to be their God was not to be trusted. They wondered if God would allow them to starve to death in that barren land through which they were passing.

Psa 78:19 Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?

Perhaps their stomachs were beginning to gnaw just a bit. When they looked around, they wondered how God could possibly find food for them. Again the situation seemed absolutely impossible from the human standpoint.

Psa 78:20 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

Yes, it was true that He had parted the waters of the Red Sea. It was also true that He has brought forth an



abundance of pure water from the rocks of the desert. But this was different. This was food for many thousands of people. Surely He could not solve this problem!

Psa 78:21 Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

Psa 78:22 Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

Their doubt and lack of confidence in the Divine hand was a very serious underestimation of God's abilities. Jacob and Israel are both names for the people of Israel in that Israel was made up of the twelve sons of Jacob.

If God's wrath was kindled like a fire at what Israel had done, does it not seem reasonable to conclude that the same thing will take place if spiritual Israel acts in the same way? Let us do better than they did.

Psa 78:23 Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,

Psa 78:24 And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

They had enjoyed manna from heaven. It had appeared daily in sufficient quantities to satisfy their need for food. Corn from heaven was simply a way of saying that the manna had the ability to nourish them through another route than cultivation of the land.

Psa 78:25 Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

They had been provided with food which was superior to anything they could have grown on earth. Again there

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was sufficient quantity to fill their stomachs, just as there had been rivers of pure water for their thirst.

But man is never completely satisfied, regardless of the blessing which are poured out upon him. He always envisions more and better, though he has been treated like kings.

**Psa 78:26 He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.**

**Psa 78:27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:**

They were given that which they asked for. They had loathed the manna, which they had termed "light bread." We are not told of the quantity here, but in the original account of the appearance of the quail, they piled up several feet deep. They got more than they asked for.

**Psa 78:28 And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.**

**Psa 78:29 So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;**

Now there was no reason whatsoever for any discontent on the part of the people. The meat fell so close they did not even have to go any distance to get it. Surely now they would trust in the providence of the Creator and Sustainer of the heavens and the earth. Not so!

**Psa 78:30 They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths,**

Even while they were in the process of eating the quail which had been rained down upon them, they were considering what they might complain of next.

**Psa 78:31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.**

God's longsuffering had reached the breaking point. He caused the death of some of the leaders of the people. If you have a herd of pigs, you kill the fattest and finest first. If the leaders would not cause the people to trust in the Lord, He would make it necessary to pick some new ones.

**Psa 78:32 For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.**

The present commentator recalls an event in his early boyhood which comes to mind as the attitude of Israel is seen here. Dad ran a barber shop. A customer put a coin in a candy machine and handed me a piece of candy. Dad told me to tell him "Thank you." I stiffened my neck and said, "I don't want to." He paddled me and repeated his command. I decided to make a contest out of it. The razor strap won.

Israel should have realized they were fighting a losing battle in failing to thank God for their blessings. There is no time in the history of the world in which man can afford to ignore the will of the Lord.

**Psa 78:33 Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.**

As a result of their foolish lust and pride, they found themselves wandering in the wilderness for many years. Many of them died there when they could have entered into the land of promise. Men do the same in our own day.

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Psa 78:34 When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God.

Psa 78:35 And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.

When they finally came part way to their senses, they decided it might be best to back off from their self sufficiency and ask God for help. Things were beginning to look more optimistic.

Psa 78:36 Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

Psa 78:37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

At this point the reader cannot afford to miss the truth declared in Matthew 15:8.

Mat 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

It is one thing to mouth flowery words to the Lord. It is quite another to back up those words with actions. Israel felt that they could deceive God by flattery and then do as they pleased. That is a very poor way to deal with the One who can see into the heart and soul of every individual. They had broken the covenant with God. They deserved to be annihilated.

Psa 78:38 But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

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God did not remove the people from the face of the earth. Even after their stubborn ways, He was compassionate. But there was another reason for not destroying them completely. He had made a promise to Abraham that through his seed all nations would be blessed. That promise would be kept.

**Psa 78:39 For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.**

A human father looks down at his wayward child and remembers that he is not dealing with another mature individual. He will take this into consideration in punishing that child. The difference is far greater when God looks down at His wayward children. He will not treat them as if they were His equal in power and mental ability.

He knows that the human is not eternal with respect to the flesh. The breath ceases. The soul exits from the flesh, and man is dead, never to have another opportunity to overcome his failures. This was taken into account in God's treatment of Israel.

**Psa 78:40 How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!**

**Psa 78:41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.**

Can man truly limit God? He can only do so by failing to live up to the opportunities and responsibilities placed within his reach. If he fulfils those God given blessings God can use him to accomplish that which will not be done if he refuses to fulfil them. Turning back when one should be moving forward is just such a limitation. Let the reader hear well!

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Psa 78:42 They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

Israel had been delivered time and time again from those who would have demolished them without the help of the Lord. We will be given a short list of such help.

Psa 78:43 How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan.

While they were still on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea God had fought for their freedom from the Egyptian Pharaoh. One plague after another had been brought upon their slavemasters.

Psa 78:44 And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.

We will not be given a complete list of the ten plagues, but will be given enough to prove the point God wishes to make. He had helped them when they could not help themselves.

1. He had turned the rivers of Egypt in blood.

Psa 78:45 He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.

2. The land of Egypt had been filled with flies.
3. The flies had been followed by frogs in massive numbers.

Psa 78:46 He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust.

4. Caterpillars had feasted upon their vegetation.
5. Locusts ruined the harvests.

Psa 78:47 He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost.

6. The trees and vines of the Egyptians had been damaged by hail and frost.

Psa 78:48 He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts.

7. The storms with hail and thunder also was allowed to kill their cattle and their sheep.

Psa 78:49 He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.

Egypt was to see the full wrath of God as He forced them to let His people go. The “evil angels” were not the angels of the devil. They were messengers sent by God to chastise the Egyptians by sending trouble upon them.

Psa 78:50 He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence;

Psa 78:51 And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

The final stroke against the Egyptians was the death of their firstborn male child. This may have been a remnant of the curse which was placed upon Ham when he uncovered the nakedness of his father.

Psa 78:52 But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.

When the Egyptians had been quite subdued, God lead His own people through the Red Sea and guided them through the wilderness as a shepherd would tend to his flock.

Psa 78:53 And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

While Israel had passed safely through the raging sea, that same sea closed in on the Egyptians and drowned both man and beast. They were no longer capable of enslaving the children of the promise.

Psa 78:54 And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased.

The border of His sanctuary refers to the land of Canaan. The mountain most likely refers to Mount Zion upon which God's temple would be built.

Psa 78:55 He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

The heathen of the land were not able to withstand them. Because of their idolatry, God allowed Israel to defeat them and take possession of Canaan. None of these wondrous things could have been achieved by Israel alone. Every success was brought about with the intervention of the hand of the Lord.

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**Psa 78:56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:**

**Psa 78:57 But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.**

How could God have blessed Israel more fully? He had taken them from slavery in Egypt, through the wilderness and into the land of promise. He had defeated those who would oppose them at every point along the way.. Did they express their gratitude by obedience to His will? By no means!!

**Psa 78:58 For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.**

He had explained that the heathen of the land had not been driven out because Israel was so deserving. He had done so because of the idolatry of those who worshipped sticks, stones and stars.

Now the Israelites had done exactly what the Canaanites had been doing which caused God to expel them. Israel built high places and worshiped the creation rather than the Creator.

**Psa 78:59 When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:**

**Psa 78:60 So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men;**

God's tabernacle was first located at Shiloh in the territory of Ephraim. At that time Ephraim had been established as the leading tribe. God felt their leadership had been misdirected. He allowed the Philistines to come

in and take the ark into their hands. The ark was the symbol of the presence of God. When the ark left, the glory of God left.

**Psa 78:61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.**

What a sad plight we have now for the people of God. The same strength and glory which had been available to them was now resting in the hand of the Philistines.

**Psa 78:62 He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.**

All those things which had gone so wonderfully well in the escape from Egypt, the travels through the wilderness and the entry into Canaan had now been replaced by misfortune. The blessings had been turned into cursings.

**Psa 78:63 The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage.**

The plagues which fell upon them now caused the death of the young men who were of marriageable age. The young maidens found a dire shortage of husbands. It was thought to be a major disgrace for a woman not to be taken in marriage and be given the chance to bear children.

**Psa 78:64 Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.**

Why would the widows of slaughtered priests make no outcry of grief at the loss of their husbands? Perhaps because the bearing of children into the horrifying

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conditions of the land at that time were not such as one might wish to expose infants.

Psa 78:65 Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

At this point it seems the Lord decided the punishment had gone far enough. Though He had not truly been asleep, He went into action quickly and effectively against the enemies of Israel. He was ready to make a vast change in the leadership of the nation.

Psa 78:66 And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach.

One explanation of the above verse says that it only means the enemies turned their backs to the attack of the Israelites. Another believes the verse describes a plague of hemorrhoids with which God afflicted them. It is not a very pleasant thought to consider fighting a battle in such a condition.

Psa 78:67 Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

Psa 78:68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

We have come to a couple of very key verses. God had used the tribe of Ephraim for leadership up to this point. Now He replaced the tribe of Ephraim with the tribe of Judah, which was of the descendants of David. That tribe was the one through which the Saviour was to come. That leadership will last until time turns into eternity as Christ sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

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**Psa 78:69 And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever.**

The sanctuary mentioned here may be the temple of Solomon. More likely it is the church which is the temple of God in these latter days.

**Psa 78:70 He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds:**

David learned leadership while shepherding the flocks of sheep in the field. When he became king of Israel he mad some serious mistakes, but God speaks of his relationships with the nation of Israel as being after God's own heart. David's descendant, Jesus Christ will prove to be a perfect leader of those who decide to cast their lot with Jehovah.

**Psa 78:71 From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.**

The lessons learn while caring for the sheep served him well

**Psa 78:72 So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.**

When faced with the challenge of reversing the fortunes of Israel from the hot wrath of God to a satisfactory relationship, David is strongly complimented.



## Chapter 79

Grief overflows like a river in this chapter. The Babylonians had invaded Canaan and had done unmeasurable damage to both the land and the people of Israel. This invasion took place in 587 B.C. and the psalm was written sometime after this destruction. Because of the similarity to the lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah, some believe it was written by that prophet. The style is nearly identical.

God had allowed the Jews to have the kingdom which they begged for. They wished to have one like the nations around them. God desired to be their King, but He allowed the establishment of an earthly kingdom. This would demonstrate the insufficiency of earthly kings to govern a spiritual nation. In this psalm we see the end product of that unwise demand on the part of Israel. Not only did they have a king like the nations around them. They adopted the idolatry of those same nations. Now they were dealing with the consequences.

**Psa 79:1 O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.**

The psalmist is not talking about an inheritance which Jehovah inherited. He is talking about the inheritance which came from the hand of God to his people. This included the land, the city of Jerusalem and the temple on Mount Zion. All of this was to have been holy and dedicated to the glory and honor of the Lord.

Now the heathen nations had taken over control of all these precious blessings. The walls of the city had been leveled, and the temple had been demolished.

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This left the people who had not been killed in horrible anguish.

Psa 79:2 The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.

The invaders had murdered so many of the Jews that they did not even bother to bury them. The Jews who had not been killed had been taken prisoner and marched off as prisoners to Babylon. The Chaldeans did not care whether the dead bodies were buried. The Jews were helpless to bury them. They laid out in the open where wild beasts and birds could tear them to shreds.

Psa 79:3 Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them.

The bloodshed was so great the rivers were red with it. Please excuse the use of a modern comparison here, but only a matter of a month before I write these words an airplane was hijacked and was driven directly into the world trade center in New York City. The number who were killed was estimated at well over three thousand. Their blood would have been sufficient to turn a river red. It is definitely not out of the question for this to have happened in Jerusalem.

Psa 79:4 We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

The writer is not talking about Jewish neighbors. These were not the kind of people you desire to have live



next door. These were those who hated the Jews and to delight in seeing them suffer. They mocked and scorned them with taunts that the God who was supposed to protect them was either not existent, or else did not care about their condition.

Psa 79:5 How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

The Jews had been told that they would spend seventy years in captivity. This seems not to have registered with them. They felt that if they begged hard enough the suffering might be lifted from them.

Jealousy had been provoked when the Jews had adopted the idolatrous worship of the nations who worshiped material objects such as rivers, stars and images made with their own hands. Yes, God was jealous. He had a perfect right to be. But, Israel wondered if that jealousy would go on forever.

Psa 79:6 Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

Israel felt that even though they had sinned greatly, they surely were not as evil as those who were causing such havoc among them. Why was God not visiting his wrath upon those who had never had a covenant relationship with Him?

Psa 79:7 For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place.

Jacob stood for the descendants of Jacob through his twelve sons. Jacob was the grandson of Abraham

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who had received the promise that his seed would be a blessing to all nations. This could hardly take place if these descendants were eliminated from among the living.

**Psa 79:8 O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.**

They pleaded with the Lord not to hold the sins of the past against them. They could do nothing to remove the transgressions from history. The only hope was that God would blot them out of His record. Only through His mercy could they ever expect to escape from the horrors which had come upon them.

**Psa 79:9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.**

Even if the Lord would not remove the suffering from them through forgiving their sins, there was a possibility that He might reverse what was happening in order that the mockers would not have reason to claim He had no power to act.

**Psa 79:10 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed.**

The general line of thought at the time was that if a people fell into distress, and remained in that condition, the god, or gods, which they worshiped were impotent. The enemies of Israel were laughing at them for worshiping

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Jehovah. Why did He not take vengeance upon them for the murder of His people?

Psa 79:11 Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die;

The sighing of the prisoners was that of the Jews who had been captured and carried off from their homes, and perhaps even from wives and children. If God saw fit to prevent these prisoners from the death which awaited many of them, He could do so. Would He?

Psa 79:12 And render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.

There are divided opinions regarding the statements of this verse. Does the seven fold retribution hold only symbolic meaning in that adequate and complete vengeance would be taken. Or, should it be taken literally to mean that the writer desired seven times as much horror to fall upon the enemies as had been poured out on them?

A second related question is whether or not it is in order for the people of God to ever pray for their enemies to suffer. We remember Jesus command that His followers should pray for their enemies, and that vengeance belongs to God.

Psa 79:13 So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.

Is this last verse a bribe or a sincere promise which was intended to be honored by those who made it? It

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sounds very genuine. Sheep are owned by their master and are expected to obey him. They are also dependent upon him for finding food and water. If the Jews would keep this promise to be sincerely grateful for their blessings, and would praise and glorify the name of the Lord, they would be cared for. If this was but a hollow promise which would be forgotten as soon as conditions improved, they could look forward to more difficulties in the future.

God has now replaced their old kingdom with a new spiritual one. He has placed Jesus Christ upon the throne. Will the sons of Abraham truly act as sheep who follow the Great Shepherd. Or, will they continue to turn away and bring misery to themselves?



## Chapter 80

The psalm before us is another of those lamenting the condition of those who had once been blessed so greatly by Jehovah. The author is unknown, but it is clear that he was among those who had lost the favor of God by their disobedience and lack of faith. He pleads with God not to forever turn His face away. If He will forgive, the promise is made that they will again call upon His name.

One group of commentators see this psalm as a continuation of the seventy-ninth. They feel that it expresses the sentiments of the entire nation of Israel as they found themselves in captivity in Babylon. A second group believes that it is the fall of the northern kingdom which has resulted in this sorrow.

The major point to be dealt with is the horrible condition which arose because of God's displeasure with His people. The author of the psalm begs the Lord to turn His face toward them once again.

**Psa 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.**

The cry is for God to please hear his people as He had done in the past. His ear had been turned away as a result of their moral corruption as they intermarried with the heathen and adopted their idolatrous worship practices.

This first verse speaks of God dwelling between the cherubim on the ark. This is claimed as support for the position that it was the fall of the northern kingdom which is under discussion. The ark had been removed from their presence after the southern kingdom fell.



**Psa 80:2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us.**

This verse has also been used as support the fall of the north. Ephraim and Manasseh were both a part of the northern kingdom. Benjamin often associated with the northern tribes, though not one of the ten tribes usually accepted as compromising the north.

A suggestion made by those who hold that the entire nation is under consideration is that when the entire nation of Israel marched through the wilderness, the three tribes mention were in the first rank, right behind the ark.

The plea is for God to demonstrate his power to His people once more and quiet the mockery of the nations who had made His people a laughing stock.

**Psa 80:3 Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.**

This is the first of three nearly identical verses in this psalm. The others are verses seven and nineteen. This first time the address is "O God." The second time it is "O God of hosts." The third time it is "O Lord, God of hosts." The praise become increasingly greater with each repetition. Any hope must come from Him.

**Psa 80:4 O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?**

The prayers had been falling on what appeared to be deaf ears. God was not responding in spite of the earnestness with which they approached Him. It is a terrible thing to have God angry with us. But, as Charles





Spurgeon pointed out, it is far worse to have that anger leave us without a communication line to His grace.

**Psa 80:5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.**

God had been so gracious to them in the past as He provided water from the rocks for their thirst, and manna from heaven for their hunger. Now all they received from Him was tears, tears, and more tears.

**Psa 80:6 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.**

Their neighboring nations were not only taking advantage of them, they were fighting among themselves to feed upon the spoils of Israel's weakness. Quite the opposite of Christ's command to His followers to pray for them that despitefully use you, great animosity existed between Israel and those who were taking plunder from them. Their enemies were taking great delight in Israel's deplorable situation.

**Psa 80:7 Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.**

Here is the second of the three triplet verses. Does it help to repeat prayers to God that He turn back to us after casting us off? It does if we are willing to do our part. He will not turn us, or turn toward us unless we repent of our sins. If we do repent and turn, He will forgive. That does not mean the sorrow will end immediately. It may be that God knows we need a bit more punishment to truly convince us to remain faithful.

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Psa 80:8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

The similitude found in these next few verses is precious. God often talks in pictures. This is one of those times. We can hardly miss the importance of the lesson being taught.

We have already seen God as a Shepherd in the first verse. Now we see Him as a keeper of a vineyard. God presents His people Israel as a vine which He had rescued from Egypt and planted in Canaan.

Psa 80:9 Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

As a vineyard owner would first remove all the competition for the nourishment of the soil, God had driven the heathen out of the land before He planted His vine in it. This had allowed it to take root and grow until it covered the vineyard, the land of promise.

Psa 80:10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.

Israel had flourished and grown until it provided shade for the whole of the vineyard. It was so healthy it's stems were like the trunks of cedar trees. This, of course was exaggeration for plainness sake, but it does make the intended point. Israel had thriven under the careful cultivation of the Lord.

Psa 80:11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.



We believe that the sea was the Mediterranean, and the river was the Euphrates. During the time of Solomon this entire area was occupied by Israel. It was the most powerful nation in that area.

Psa 80:12 Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

What a lamentable contrast appeared when the days of God's blessings were compared with the days in which His blessings had been denied.

Hedges or fences were built around vineyards to prevent the entrance of men or wild beasts who might invade them and destroy the fruit. God had protected His vineyard in such a manner. Passing nations who looked upon Canaan as a prey had been prevented from successfully attacking her.

Psa 80:13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

The was not true at the time of this prayer psalm. Wild animal nations had been allowed to break down the hedges. They were uprooting the vine, with the intention of leaving it to die in the captivity.

Psa 80:14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

It had begun to appear that God had abandoned His vine completely. Would He truly do that after He had spent such effort in caring for it? The psalmist could not

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believe He would never look with favor upon it, even if it bore the type of fruit He had expected.

**Psa 80:15 And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.**

God had taken great pride in the planting and cultivation of His people Israel. He had made them strong in order that they might give Him glory and honor. They could not do that in the weakened condition in which they found themselves under the hand of their captors.

**Psa 80:16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.**

With God having turned His face away from them, they were as helpless as a vine which has been cut off and lies waiting to die and be burned.

**Psa 80:17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.**

There is some question here as to the identity of the man of God's right hand. He is called the "son of man." It could refer to the people of Israel, who were God's chosen people. It could also refer to Jesus Christ, who is called the "Son of man." Jesus Christ does sit at the right hand of the Father in heaven. As the Word of God, he was a part of the Godhead in the beginning. The question does arise, however, as to whether it can be said that God made Christ strong for Himself. That seems to be more appropriately applied to the nation of Israel, which is sometimes called the sons of men.

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**Psa 80:18 So will not we go back from thee:
quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.**

The psalmist makes a solemn vow that once forgiven, the people will never again cease to respect the name of the Lord. Israel can hardly say that they have kept the promise of the psalmist. The Great Shepherd calls to them today, but fleshly Israel has not responded to the call.

**Psa 80:19 Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts,
cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.**

Here is the third and last of the three nearly identical verses. Israel must turn is they expect God to.

Chapter 81

This is believed to be a psalm calling for loyalty on the part of Israel in remembering the Lord on the great festival days. Songs of joy were to be sung, accompanied by musical instruments. There were four of these major feast days. The blowing of trumpets may mean that the particular feast under consideration was the Feast of Trumpets.

There was a clear danger of becoming mechanical in the worship. God desired that the people remember what He had done for them up to that point, and how they had reacted to His loving kindness. They could be enjoying a far better life if they had been willing to love and obey Him.

Psa 81:1 Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

True singing is an outer display of inner emotions. The Israelites had been taken from abject slavery in Egypt and guided to the land which flowed with milk and honey. This psalm was written while the people were still in their own land and had not been taken in either Assyrian or Babylonian captivity at the time. The call is for them to rejoice in God's blessings. There should be rejoicing upon the realization that God has freed one from bondage. It is just the opposite when one comes to realize there is a distance between himself and his Creator.

Was the singing the joyful noise, or was the joyful noise in addition to the singing? It is possible that the joyful noise was from the musical instruments listed in the next verse.

Psa 81:2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

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The psalms were written with the purpose of making possible the praising of the Lord in song. The timbrel was a type of percussion instrument. The harp was a stringed instrument, and the psaltery is thought by some to have been a conch shell which could be blown. A variety of instruments was then used at the command of the Lord as accompaniment to the human voice. Vocal music and mechanical instrumental music were both commanded.

**Psa 81:3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.**

**Psa 81:4 For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.**

New moons announced the beginning of the months. The new moon which appeared in the seventh month of Tisri was the time of the Jewish New Year. It was even thought that the first day of creation was that same seventh month. It was a time for joy. The keeping of this feast was a statute Israel was to keep in accordance with the law of Jehovah.

However, we must note that the law of Moses was nailed to the cross through death of Christ. A new covenant with a more spiritual nature has replaced it. Unless the new law of Christ authorizes mechanical instruments of music as accompaniment to the singing in New Testament worship, the instrument should be avoided.

There are three means by which such authorization can be given.

1. Direct command
2. Necessary inference
3. Approved example

None of these can be found in the entire twenty-seven books of the New Testament. We do not carry

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animal sacrifices into the Christian worship. Neither should we cling to mechanical instruments of music as accompaniment to vocal music. We are told to sing and make melody “in our hearts.”

Psa 81:5 This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not.

Joseph is used here as a synonym for the nation of Israel. Joseph carried on the testimony of the Lord after Jacob passed on. Joseph’s life reached it’s greatest influence when he worked toward the release of his people from Egypt. It was Joseph and his people who heard the strange language spoken by the Egyptians. The language of the Egyptians was opposed to the will of God and was thus strange to Him. The pronoun “I” has a dual application. The language of Egypt was strange to Israel and in another sense it was one which God did not understand.

It was not that God could not comprehend the words. It was that the thoughts the Egyptians voiced were “strange” to the mind of the Lord.

Psa 81:6 I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.

The burdens on the shoulder were the yokes which supported the weight of the loads which the Israelite slaves were forced to carry. The pots were the furnaces where the brick were produced in that land.

Psa 81:7 Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah.

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How many times must the slaves have cried out to God for relief from the Egyptians masters who treated them unmercifully! God heard their cries and brought them forth from that land with riches which rewarded them for their labor.

The secret place of thunder sounds like the peak of Sinai where God spoke in voice of thunder and gave the law of Moses.

The waters of Meribah are discussed in the seventeenth chapter of the book of Exodus. The water was bitter and the people murmured. God showed Moses a tree which when cast into the waters caused them to become sweet and fit for consumption.

**Psa 81:8 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;**

There was a need for Israel to hear God's testimony. He would repeat some truths which had been made very clear in the past. There was need to listen carefully

**Psa 81:9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.**

There was to be no dependence upon the so-called gods which the people of Canaan had worshiped. These had been all too attractive to Israel. It was not they who had delivered them from Egypt. It was not they who had guided them through the wilderness and made it possible for them to enter Canaan.

**Psa 81:10 I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.**

It was Jehovah, the only true and living God, who had blessed them so bountifully. He should be able to expect their loyalty and obedience. IF they would show such loyalty, He would minister to their every need. As an infant opens it's mouth wide to have food placed in it, God would see that they were filled. They would lack nothing.

**Psa 81:11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.**

How could it be that after having had such proof of God's desire to bless His people, they would not even open their mouths to feed on what He still wished to offer them. When He attempted to guide them, they stopped their ears and stiffened their necks.

Multiplied millions of persons in the present day should be able to answer that question. They also behave in the same way. God's Word has been ignored as men and women are determined to direct their own paths.

**Psa 81:12 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.**

The words "I gave them up" are among the most piteous ever uttered. It takes a long time for God to give up on men. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all might walk in the paths of righteousness provided by His Word.

But Satan has powerful weapons in his arsenal. Lust and selfishness cause men to concentrate upon their own wills, and not upon the will of Jehovah. It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. Destruction will follow.



**Psa 81:13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!**

We are forced to recall what Jesus said when he looked down over Jerusalem and said,

*Mat 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*

Nothing more need be added to Jesus words!

**Psa 81:14 I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.**

The sorrows which Israel had borne as a result of ignoring the guidance of their Lord could have been avoided if they had only listened. With God's help, no foe could have caused dismay.

**Psa 81:15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.**

The "haters of the Lord" were those of Israel who would not hear Him. If they had only opened their mouths and allowed Him to fill them, they could have lived a far superior life than that which they had lived.

**Psa 81:16 He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.**

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Not only would they have been fed with His blessings, they would have received the very finest which could be imagined. The finest of the wheat and the honey out of the rock are God's way of saying, "This is the best." Christ is the one who provides honey from out of the Rock.



Chapter 82

Serious oppression was taking place among the Israelites. Those who possessed power were taking advantage of those with lesser standing. God did not appreciate this attitude and behavior. If He were to take this same attitude He would have eliminated the human race from existence thousands of years back.

Psa 82:1 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

The God of heaven and earth did not create man and then turn His face the other direction. He maintains a constant watch to see and judge the actions of men.

The reader should note that the word “gods” in the above verse is not capitalized. This will become important in our considerations as we move through the chapter.

Psa 82:2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

At the time this material was written, the wicked were being allowed special privileges, while the poor and needy were being persecuted. Those who were acting in such manner should have realized that the eye of Jehovah is open to all such sinful actions.

The word “Selah” means to pause and consider the situation. It was most certainly not pleasing to Jehovah. He holds that the value of the poor and needy souls is just as great as that of the rich and powerful.

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**Psa 82:3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.**

Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God did just what is called for in the words of verse three. He came to earth from the right hand of the Father in heaven to lift up the fallen and see that the righteous were rewarded, regardless of their lack of material prosperity or the power and control they had over their fellow man.

**Psa 82:4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.**

The responsibility of the followers of Jehovah is to see that the righteous are encouraged and the wicked are discouraged. This is not the manner in which the world deals with their fellowman, but it is the way in which the Lord in heaven expects His children to respond.

**Psa 82:5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.**

Those who oppress the poor and needy do not realize just how serious their thoughts and actions are in the sight of the Almighty. They are actually walking in darkness and blind to the outcome of their cruelty. What they are actually doing is placing obstacles in the way of God's plan for man.

**Psa 82:6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.**

May we call the attention of the reader to the words of John 10:34.

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Joh 10:34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

Joh 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

Joh 10:36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

Those who obey the Father in heaven are children of that Father. As children of the Heavenly Father, they are addressed as gods. This was true of the faithful in the Old Testament times and is still true today. God's children are not to use their power to take advantage of others. God does not act in that manner, and He does not expect His children to do so.

Psa 82:7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

It does not matter how much one has of prestige and possessions in this world. The time will come when the bodies of both the pauper and the prince will turn to dust in the grave. Jehovah's faithful will find blessings after the judgment. Those who reject His way of loving care will be eternally separated from such blessings.

Psa 82:8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

The wise man or woman will fear God and keep His commandments. Since the Father in heaven is to invite the righteous from every age and every nation to enter into the eternal joy of His presence, those righteous persons will inherit everlasting companionship with the

faithful of the ages. The riches they will then share will be beyond the present imagination. Can we afford to oppress others when God commands that we treat others as we would like to be treated?



Chapter 83

Psalms number eighty-three may be divided into two main divisions. The first is a call for God to take notice of the list of powerful enemies of Israel that were intent on destroying her influence from the face of the earth.

The second is a plea for God to bring such difficulties upon those enemies that they will recognize the seriousness of their position and either be destroyed themselves, or recognize that JEHOVAH is the Ruler of all creation.

Psa 83:1 Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

The psalmist wonders why the Lord has held back rather than to actively oppose the enemies of His people. It is surely not because He is unable. In times past He has chastised foes at numerous times. There must be a reason for not doing so whenever such opposition threatens His followers.

Psa 83:2 For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.

The reason for the present plea is that God's enemies have risen up in active opposition. They are organizing against Israel and threatening their complete destruction. If they are ignored any longer the problem will not improve.

Psa 83:3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

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**Psa 83:4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.**

From the time of Abraham, or even before, the people of God have been only a minority of the entire population. Rather than recognizing the only true way to peace and happiness, they dream of a day in which the name of the Lord is erased and morality has given way to earthly lust and pleasures. It was true in the day of the psalmist, and it is just as true today when the entire population of the world is considered.

**Psa 83:5 For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee:**

Who were all of these opponents of the Lord and His people. We will be presented with a list of some that the writer of the psalm recollected. The list is not one we read with great pleasure. Both the wickedness they did and the chastisements God laid upon them cause us to shrink back in horror.

**Psa 83:6 The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;**

The word “tabernacles” does not refer to religious places of worship. It has to do with the meeting places where they planned their destructive dreams of annihilating God’s family.

The Edomites descended from Esau. Obadiah predicted that Edom would meet destruction. See Obadiah 10.

*Oba 1:10 For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.*

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The Ishmaelites were descendants of Ishmael who was Abraham's son by his handmaid Hagar. God predicted before he was born that he would do violence to his brother Jacob, and he would be cut off forever.

Ammon and Moab were descendants from Lot. They resisted the entry of Israel into the land of Canaan and were continuing foes of the Israelites.

Psa 83:7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

Gebal was a small area south of the Dead Sea. They did not hesitate to add their efforts to the hatred against Israel. The Philistines were long time foes of the Israelites. Although Tyre was less opposed to Israel, they also at times added their hostility.

Psa 83:8 Assur also is joined with them: they have helped the children of Lot. Selah.

The people of Assur were the Assyrians. They descended from Shem who was one of the sons of Noah. At one time Israel was taken into Assyrian captivity.

Again we come to the word "selah." This calls upon us to pause and reflect on the seriousness of the picture which has been presented.

Something which very thought provoking in this list of foes of Israel is the fact that these foes did not exist at the same time. Some did, and some did not. This leads us to think that this psalm speaks to us of the opposition to God's true followers which has existed in the past, and will exist in the future until divine power overwhelms them.

Psa 83:9 Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison:



Psa 83:10 Which perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth.

One enemy after another who aligned themselves against the people of the Most High found that they ultimately faced ignominious defeat. It is said that in some cases the fallen bodies of Israel's enemies were not even buried, but were ground up and used as fertilizer for the fields.

Psa 83:11 Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna:

Psa 83:12 Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

Zeba and Zalmunna looked forward to taking over the houses of God's people for themselves. With the help of Jehovah, the Israelites defended themselves and their property.

Psa 83:13 O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind.

What was the psalmist pleading for God to do to these enemies of righteousness? The wind is quite capable of separating the wheat from the chaff. There are two possible explanations of the figure used in this verse. One may be that Israel was to be like a whirlwind which drives away chaff but leaves the valuable wheat behind where it can be collected for use. The other is that the "wheel" was a wide metal wheel which was driven over the wheat until the chaff was separated from the solid grains which could then be gathered.

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**Psa 83:14 As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire;**

**Psa 83:15 So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.**

Another picture used to describe the proposed destruction of the enemies was that of a fire sweeping over a mountain, leaving only ashes behind it.

In actuality, the psalmist does not leave out the possibility of correct the enemies pattern of life. Verse fifteen does not say remove them from the earth. It leaves room for possible changes of direction to the point where they are no longer a threat. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. However, if there is no repentance, there will most certainly be destruction.

**Psa 83:16 Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.**

Causing their faces to fill with shame over their sinful ways is an attempt to turn these foes into servants of God rather than enemies. If they truly feel shame, they have opened a door in their mind to allow repentance.

**Psa 83:17 Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:**

If they will not turn and seek the name of the Lord that they may serve Him rather than oppose Him, of course their shame will turn to death. That which life is all about will be lost and never recovered.

**Psa 83:18 That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.**

Neither men, false gods, or even angels may successfully contend with JEHOVAH. He is the highest of the high. Let each of us recognize the foolishness of opposing His will. From the beginning of man until the appearing of Jesus Christ in the final judgment, opposing God and His followers is sure and certain spiritual death. Let us not be a part of it.



## Chapter 84

We have been examining some unpleasant words as we studied the psalms just previous to this one. What a contrast this is! There is hardly a more pleasant picture painted in the entire Book of God than the one given here.

Many are strongly convinced that this is a psalm of David when he was running from Saul. It has a strong resemblance to the twenty-third psalm. Yet, this is not a necessary conclusion. Adam Clarke, for example, does not attribute the psalm to David.

It is true that there are statements which strongly hint of the author being one who has been denied the opportunity to enter the tabernacles of the Lord. But, it is also true that the words spoken could have been those of a dedicated follower of God in any age. Such a person has a heart that appreciates the chance to be near God, and at the same time longs for an even closer relationship. The reader may, for instance, already be a steady worshiper of the Lord, and still desire with all his heart to be in a more direct presence in heaven.

**Psa 84:1 How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!**

The Hebrew word translated as “tabernacles” indicates a place where God’s presence can be approached on a temporary basis. This psalm seems to have been written previous to the construction of the temple of Solomon. The author longs for the blessings which are to be found through drawing as close to the Lord as possible.

**Psa 84:2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.**

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It is not just a slight longing to be in the tabernacles of God; it is an overwhelming desire that is produced in both the mind and the body. We are not at home on this earth. Our true home is that which is offered to the righteous after the resurrection. Dear reader, your own heart and flesh should join in with those of the author of the psalm in crying out for an eternal home in the heaven of heavens.

Psa 84:3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

Is this verse saying sparrows and swallows were building nests for their young in the holy tabernacle of God. It is possible, but more likely the statement is figurative and means that the God who cares about even the sparrows and the swallows cares about those who desire to share in his love and protection. The birds have nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay His head while He was here on earth. He also longed to be back on the throne at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Should the Christian not share in that hope. We do not have to sit on His right hand. Just to be there would be greater than our fondest dreams.

Psa 84:4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

If we are found faithful and do find ourselves in heaven, is it possible that our praise to Jehovah would cease? Would those who have been faithful through a lifetime in the flesh be apt to discontinue their adoration when in the presence of the Godhead and others who have



walked the paths of righteousness? The answer to those questions is self apparent!

Psa 84:5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.

That person who draws spiritual strength from the Father in heaven have hearts that are fixed upon the truth. They take great pleasure in keeping the commandments of God and ever learning more about Him. This is true happiness.

Psa 84:6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

Baca means “weeping.” Yea thou we walk the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil for God is with us. The tears will stream down our cheeks at times. However, as long as we are confident that the Creator and Sustainer of the universe is with us, we will continually dry those tears and walk in the company of the Sun of Righteousness.

Psa 84:7 They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

The faithful do not allow trials and griefs to prevent them from becoming spiritually stronger. Just as a person may build up physical strength by lifting weights, the spiritual man may become stronger by overcoming doubt.

Psa 84:8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

We have come to our second “Selah.” The first was found in verse four. In each case we are encouraged to pause and contemplate the great meaning of what has just be said.

God has promised that He will have an open ear to the prayers of the righteous. Even though He has given us that promise, we do well to let Him know that we recall that promise and claim it in lasting hope.

Psa 84:9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

A shield is used for protection from arrows and spears. The darts of Satan are ever ready to pierce the hearts of those who fail to use God and His promises as their shield. Jesus Christ is called the “Anointed of God.” But every true and faithful Christian can also claim that title. (See 2 Cor. 1:21.)

2Cor 1:21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

The psalmist is turning his face upward and calling for God to respond by looking with favor upon him. We should do the same.

Psa 84:10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

It is not that a day in the favor of God is better than a day in the tents of Satan. One day with the Lord is infinitely better than a thousand in the company of the wicked.



It would be far better to be the least in the Kingdom of heaven than to rule in the palace of the Prince of Darkness. This is, if he had a palace. He will be found in a lake of fire.

Psa 84:11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

The sun is a light by which men find the way to their goals. Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. Only by following close in his steps can we find the Way.

The shield is a protection against that which might puncture our souls and lead to eternal agony. We cannot afford to walk this planet earth with neither a spiritual Sun or a Godly shield.

If we walk in the paths of righteousness, we need not fear that our ultimate destiny will be glorious. Life here will be sweeter. Life hereafter will be a fulfilment of the purpose for which God brought us into being; *perfect happiness*.

Psa 84:12 O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

Your present commentator finds a shortage of words which could describe the last verse of this chapter. At a loss for adequate words, we will only repeat the word which was already used twice in this psalm.

Selah.

Chapter 85

The eighty-fifth psalm is believed to have been written shortly after the return from Babylonian captivity. Many had not returned. They were free to move as they pleased and chose other plans. Those who did return faced very difficult times. They were grateful to the Lord for allowing their return, but at the same time they found themselves faced with hardships which were greater than they had expected.

The psalm expresses their thanksgiving for the opportunity to resettle in the promised land, but then cries out for help from the hand of God.

Psa 85:1 LORD, thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

The Lord had not entirely forgotten His people while they were in Babylonian bondage. They had been allowed to go through the suffering because they had adopted the idolatry of the nations around them in the land of Canaan. God expected them to learn the foolishness of worshipping false gods. They had learned the lesson quite well. There is no record of them having practiced idolatry after the return.

Psa 85:2 Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

The fact that they had been allowed to return was proof that God felt they had been punished long enough for their sin. This verse uses two words in discussing the attitude of God toward those sins. They had been forgiven

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in the sense that they had been covered. God would look the other way until the blood of Jesus Christ was shed on the cross. Then the sins would be completely washed away.

**Psa 85:3 Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger.**

The wrath of God had been seen in the bondage they endured in Babylon. Now that bondage had been loosed. The anger of the Lord no longer flamed so fiercely. He had shown that He would bless them if they ceased to ignore his will.

**Psa 85:4 Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.**

When they pleaded for God to turn them, repentance was to be assumed. It is ridiculous to pray for forgiveness if one intends to continue those actions which resulted in God's anger.

**Psa 85:5 Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?**

Although God would have had a right to continue His wrath, they felt that He would bless them again if they became faithful. Would He really punish the children through generation after generation for that which their fathers had done?

**Psa 85:6 Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?**

Most Christians have sung that of favorite hymn, “Revive us again.” The people of Israel had much reason to ask for revival. The Spirit of God gives spiritual life. The man or woman who attempts to shut the Spirit out of their lives is in danger of committing spiritual suicide. Israel had come to realize the importance of walking in the Spirit.

**Psa 85:7 Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.**

It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. He cannot save himself. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the way of death. Only through the mercy of the Almighty can men arrive at the purity which is required to live eternally with the Father and His redeemed.

**Psa 85:8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.**

Hearing the Word of the Lord invites peace into one’s life. Rejecting His Word brings conflict with both God and one’s fellowman. God desires that all men find peace. Still, He allows them the freedom of choice to walk in the paths of destruction.

**Psa 85:9 Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.**

The blessings of God are offered to those who choose to walk in His way. He is delighted when men make the choice to choose truth and righteousness. When that choice is made, the glory of God can be seen in the life of His children, and in the prosperity of a nation.



**Psa 85:10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**

The mercy of God is dependent upon the love of truth. When truth is accepted, mercy is given. When righteousness is the path one walks, peace will embrace the traveler.

**Psa 85:11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

How is it that truth springs out of the earth? May we suggest that this verse speaks of Christ walking on earth and presenting truth to men by example. It is also possible that one can learn truth by observing what takes place in the prosperity of the people when they honor the commandments of God.

Righteousness observes both the needs of man and the deeds of man. The Lord sees and He will respond to the lives based upon truth and righteousness.

**Psa 85:12 Yea, the LORD shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase.**

The principle application of this verse was in the hope of Israel. If they honored the will of God, they were assured of His blessings. The land would be productive. The people would be able to rejoice.

We must add that this same principle can be applied to modern days. When men walk in the ways of Satan, they will find violence and suffering. When they love and obey the Lord, their lives will be happier. Their efforts will be more productive.

**Psa 85:13 Righteousness shall go before him;  
and shall set us in the way of his steps.**

God has given us a set of footsteps which lead to heaven. They were made by His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. The man or woman who would be righteous will carefully follow those footsteps. The Way has been made clear. The help is promised if we will only take His hand.





## Chapter 86

Many call this a psalm of David although it is the only psalm in this present portion of the book of Psalms which is credited to him.

The psalm is asking for the help of the Lord in the walk through this present life. Confidence is expressed that such help will be given. The psalmist realizes his dependence upon the One God who created and sustains the entire universe. He deplores the tendency of some to call upon those which are only called gods, but have no right to that title.

**Psa 86:1 Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy.**

There is no way to measure the difference between the grandeur of God and the helpless condition of man without the aid of God. Any human, no matter how intelligent or how rich he is has derived all that he has from the Lord. We must agree with the writer of the psalm that when compared with Jehovah, all men are poor and needy. The one who denies this truth is headed for disaster.

**Psa 86:2 Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.**

The present writer does not believe the psalmist was saying he was sinless. All men commit sin. The message here is that his soul has been committed to the care of God and he considers himself to be as a sheep in the care of the Great Shepherd.

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Psa 86:3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.

One would have no need to cry out for mercy, except that the presence of sin in his life is understood. When one truly realizes the need for mercy, he will not hesitate to confess the need for divine forgiveness. That forgiveness is not a one time thing which continues to keep one spiritually clean regardless of what the person does after the cleansing process is applied. Sin will be committed daily. Prayer needs to be offered daily. When repentance is genuine and when prayer is offered for God asking for help, the blood of Christ is capable of continually cleansing. However, that in no way justifies repeating the sin to see just how far the Lord will go in returning one to a holy state.

Psa 86:4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

We would be more apt to word the sentiments of this verse as, "O Lord, I lift up my soul to you with the knowledge that only you can cleanse it and give me reason for rejoicing."

The soul is that portion of the man which is capable of entering through the gates of heaven if God utters those words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Psa 86:5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He will accept any who truly repent and pray for forgiveness. He is a God of mercy, but



do not make the mistake of thinking that calling upon Him means expecting His mercy while walking in the footsteps of the Devil. God is not a fool.

Psa 86:6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

What a wonderful things it is to realize that God will help us in our weakness provided we constantly try to overcome that weakness. Each of us would be without hope if this were not so. God is training us in much the same way that we attempt to train our children who are in need of our wisdom and strength.

I can recall an incident in which my father warned we children that we must never put our tongue upon the metal pump handle to our well. My brother who was two years younger than myself, had a very active curiosity. He wondered why this would be such a bad thing to do. When he was by himself and all the rest of the family were in the house, he did just as we were told not to do. Of course it was near zero that day and his wet tongue stuck tight to the pump handle and he could not get loose. He couldn't make much noise because his tongue was useless. He had to wait for several minutes until someone came outside and poured warm water on the pump handle. He learned not to do that any more. We must learn spiritual lessons ever day of our lives and pray to God to help us when we are hurting.

Psa 86:7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

Yes, truly God will hear and answer when His own call upon Him for help; but let us not wait to call upon

Him until the day of trouble has come. We need His help also when all things seem to be going well. Each time He helps us, it should spur us on to do a finer job of listening to His truth and avoiding the pitfalls.

Psa 86:8 Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.

The use of the word “gods” here is not an admission that there are other gods who can compete with Jehovah for our loyalty. Satan comes closest to being competition, but he is in no way comparable to Jehovah in wisdom, power or righteousness. We do not need personalities whose goal is to delude and destroy men’s souls. The gods mentioned in this verse are only figures created in the imaginations of superstitious humans. Those who dabble in witchcraft and sorcery have nothing to offer mankind but misery.

Psa 86:9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.

At some time, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Every nation will be made quite aware that the need to glorify God is genuine and that refusal to glorify Him will lead to hideous torment. Let us pray that as many as possible will find out this truth before it is too late.

Psa 86:10 For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.

All one has to do to realize the greatness of God is to open his eyes to the mysteries which have been searched

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out during a single generation. There is but one True God. He desires that men be comfortable while here on earth, and that they will make the kind of decisions that will allow them to live with Him in eternity. Only He can lead one to such bliss, and He has given His solemn promise that if we will be led, He will lead us.

**Psa 86:11 Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.**

This is the kind of prayer our Lord wants so much to hear from the lips of men. He has, in a multitude of ways, demonstrated just how much He wants to see men saved. One does not sacrifice an Only Son as the Lord did in sending Jesus to die that we might live, without being delighted when with our whole heart we accept His love and reach out to Him with all of our heart

**Psa 86:12 I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.**

How could any person do less? When the Lord has given so much for us, it is but natural that we honor His love with a genuine attempt to give Him the honor, power and glory which He deserves. Let us take the greatest pleasure in giving Him this glorify.

**Psa 86:13 For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.**

God is higher than the highest. The lowest hell is as far as it is possible to get from the Holy and Righteous Ruler of rulers, and King of kings. If one were to have saved my physical life, I would be forever grateful.

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Should I not be more so when it is my soul which has been protected from hell.

Psa 86:14 O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.

It is not always easy to stand up before the proud men of earth and declare one's allegiance to the God of heaven. Such men lack wisdom. They do not hesitate to mock the humility of those who fear a God they cannot see. Regardless of their folly in refusing to admit the existence of One infinitely greater than themselves, they will one day find that their ridicule has been turned into trembling and fear when they are told to, "Depart from Me. I never knew you."

Psa 86:15 But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

The psalmist very well understands that he is in need of compassion, grace, longsuffering and mercy. He is convinced that these characteristics of the only True God will show those traits toward him and will make it possible for him to conquer death, hell and the grave.

Psa 86:16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

The reader has probably seen the statement of an infamous infidel who declared, "O God, if there be a God, Save my soul, if I have a soul, from Hell if there be a hell!" How vastly different are the words of the verse



under consideration. Christians have strong reason for their faith, their hope and their love. They will not be disappointed!

Psa 86:17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, hast helped me, and comforted me.

The writer of this psalm does not ask God to show him a token that he may see it. He asks for it in order that those who despise him for his dedication to the Lord may see it and come to believe. God has helped and comforted the psalmist in the past. He has every reason to believe such help and comfort will be granted to him again in the future. He believes prayer makes a difference.

Chapter 87

This short psalm glorifies God's Holy City of Zion. Part of it refers to the earthly city of Jerusalem with its Mount Zion. But, it also has prophetic overtones in that much of it applies to the New Jerusalem which came into existence with the preaching of the gospel to the Gentile nations and the invitation to all men who will to become citizens of the heavenly city. The church of Jesus Christ is the spiritual Mount Zion.

That spiritual city comes into focus in this chapter of Psalms. You are invited to enjoy the scenery as we move into the study before us.

Psa 87:1 His foundation is in the holy mountains.

God has used mountains throughout the ages, upon which to build His places of communication with man. He used Mount Sinai in the days of Moses. He used Mount Zion for the building of the temple in earthly Jerusalem. He has the Jesus Christ, the Rock of Ages to provide a foundation for the church, as the gospel is spread throughout the entire world.

Psa 87:2 The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

The twelve tribes of Israel moved through the wilderness from one location to another until they settled in the land of Canaan, where the nation of Israel grew and glorified Him. The city of Jerusalem became the holy city, and Mount Zion was more precious than any other site. It was from this place that the gospel was to reach out and be offered to all men, Jew and Gentile alike.

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**Psa 87:3 Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.**

Not only are glorious things presently spoken of Mount Zion and the Holy city of Jerusalem. They will continue to be spoken until time is dissolved in eternity.

Selah calls for the reader to pause and reflect upon which has just been presented.

**Psa 87:4 I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there.**

Men often like to mention the cities in which they were born, and perhaps raised. There were those who were citizens of Babylon, the wicked city which had little respect for the Lord. Palestine was the home of the Philistines. Tyre and Sidon were recognized as cities of poor reputation. There were those who called the land of Ethiopia their home land.

**Psa 87:5 And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.**

Of all the locations in the history of the world, Mount Zion with it's city of Jerusalem, and it's crowning jewel, the temple of Jehovah has been very special in the heart of God. It is at this point that the thought turns in the direction of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The individual who has been born a second time and can say that he claims the spiritual Jerusalem as the city of his birth is precious in the eyes of the Lord.

God will see that this spiritual city lives on and finds its place in the heavenly places with its Maker.

**Psa 87:6 The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah.**

The Lord has his book of remembrance. He knows who has been born spiritually, to become a citizen of the everlasting Kingdom which shall never fade. Not one of those who have been born in Christ, and who have been faithful unto death, shall fail to be counted.

**Psa 87:7 As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee.**

This last verse of the chapter pictures a scene of great joy. This is not a proving ground for the use of instrumental music in the worship of the church on earth. This is a heavenly scene where the springs of joy continually refresh the souls which will never die.



## Chapter 88

This psalm is one of the most gloomy chapters of the Holy Bible. It speaks of a condition just about as hopeless from the earthly point of view as is possible to imagine. The person pictured in the psalm is afflicted with an incurable affliction. Friends have forsaken him. His prayers seem not to be heard. Even so, he continues to pray.

The title which is given to the psalm attributes it to Heman. It is not clear as to who Heman was, or at what time he lived. The psalm is said to be a song. This is most surprising! Does one really sing about situations such as are presented? It is possible that it was to be used to show the need for continuing dependence upon the Lord when conditions appear to be completely impossible.

**Psa 88:1 O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee:**

We already feel a sense of pity for the person who is crying out to God. He has continued in prayer, both day and night without relief. If there is any hope, it must come through the divine hand. Many of the readers will understand a bit of what he is suffering. Your present commentator had but a small taste of what is being described. He contracted rheumatic fever at the age of twelve years. The physician prescribed complete bed rest for six months. He would not be able to associate with his school classmates. He could not even get up to go to the barn and help his father do the chores.

And yes, he did pray to God both day and night. Was death not far ahead? There was a heart murmur which in some cases ended in death. May I assure you that the

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one who had cried out to God day and night meant what he was asking in the prayers he uttered.

Psa 88:2 Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

At times we bend down to get closer to one who is having trouble being heard. The one praying here begs the Lord to lend an ear to his petitions. If he had been heard previously it did not seem that it had resulted in any relief from his grief.

Psa 88:3 For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

The soul is sometimes used as being identical with the life. We speak of body and soul. This person's life was so filled with trouble that he could see nothing ahead but the grave. Over and over through the psalm he uses phrases which apply to conditions after death.

Psa 88:4 I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength:

He has already counted himself as good as dead. He has no more strength to resist and live on. There was much more uncertainty concerning the condition of the dead at the time this psalm was written than there has been among Christians after the resurrection of the Son of God.

Psa 88:5 Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.

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Free from what? Most likely he feels a yearning to move from his present suffering to a situation in which he feels there would be no more consciousness of the pain and sorrow which he feels. Perhaps God just allows one to moulder in the grave and crosses that individual off the list of those for whom He cares! Such is not the case, but when overwhelmed with conditions beyond which one cannot see hope, being free from the afflictions is preferable to living on.

**Psa 88:6 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.**

The sufferer sees himself as being in a pit so deep he cannot escape. It is cut off from the light of friendship with others, and even from the eye of the Lord. Still, he will continue to pray.

**Psa 88:7 Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.**

Although he does not specify any particular sin which would have brought the wrath of God down upon him, he still feels that it is God's wrath which is the source of the difficulties. The afflictions have come in such abundance that they seem like ocean waves which are about to overwhelm him.

**Psa 88:8 Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.**

Friends have shunned him. His condition is such that they wish to avoid his presence. The result is that he finds

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himself lonely. It does him no good to venture into their presence. They will melt away and he will be left alone.

Psa 88:9 Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

He weeps daily. He has raised his hands toward the heavens in pleas for help. He has a threefold problem. He cannot help himself. His former friends are nauseated by his presence. He prays, but God does not relieve the burdens.

Psa 88:10 Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah.

He is so near death that he is beginning to wonder if God can be praised from the grave. If God truly desires that he offer praise to Him, why does He allow him to die?

Psa 88:11 Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?

The grave does not seem to be a very desirable place from which to declare the glory of God. The divine lovingkindness and grace can hardly be extolled by one who has passed from among the living, and whose body is rotting in a coffin.

Psa 88:12 Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

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He sees death as a realm of darkness in which communication is impossible. He would like to declare God's wonders, but a cold body does not remember and the darkness of death obscures the message.

**Psa 88:13 But unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.**

He finds it impossible to understand why God has not demonstrated in some way that his prayers have been heard. He will pray again on the morrow, and on the morrow after that. The word "prevent", as it is used in this verse means to "come before." He has not completely given up. Surely the loving kindness and grace of Jehovah will respond to his call sooner or later.

**Psa 88:14 LORD, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?**

Though men may not understand the reasons for God's ways, we may still hold our confidence in the fact that everything which happens to the one who loves God is intended to work for good in some way. As an example, the one who can hardly walk down the aisle of the hall of worship may think he or she is doing very little for either God or men. It may be that just the opposite is true. As able bodied persons see the effort which is made in the midst of trials, faith is demonstrated and some of the finest sermons have been preached without a word being uttered.

God may not be casting off one's soul. He may only be using the individual to show others the nature of true faith. God does not abandon one until there is no hope of bringing his soul into eternal bliss. God's face is never turned the other way from those who genuinely wish to honor and obey Him.

**Psa 88:15 I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.**

The person in the psalm has been suffering for a very long time. He has felt that he has been at death's door for most of his life. How can God think allowing such horrible things to happen will serve any righteous purpose? He believes the difficulties prevent him from serving rather than making him useful.

**Psa 88:16 Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.**

**Psa 88:17 They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together.**

The obstacles were a daily matter. They appeared to have eliminated any praiseworthy action or words on his part. All he could see was hopelessness.

**Psa 88:18 Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.**

There are some persons who are naturally outgoing. There are others who are much comfortable spending time alone. But, even those who prefer to be alone for much of the time find themselves hungering for companionship when trials and afflictions come. We like for our friends to be available for comfort when life becomes seemingly impossible.

There is one very impressive lesson contained in this present psalm. Jesus Christ, the Son of God passed through trials more severe than any we will ever suffer. This psalm could well be titled, "The Man of Sorrows."





Jesus called out while upon the cross, “My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?” We may know that He will understand and see that no effort we put forth will be ignored. Along with our Lord, we may make use of times of trial to show Satan We will not be drowned by afflictions.

## *Chapter 89*

We are approaching a discussion of one of the most important and interesting of the Bible. This psalm is prophetic in nature. It deals with the shortcomings of the human kings of the nation of Israel, and points clearly to the reign of Jesus Christ as the Messiah who would become both a Priest and a King.

There are numerous references to this psalm in the New Testament. We will point out several of them in our discussion.

This material was written during a very low period in the history of Israel. When Israel desired a king like the nations around them, Jehovah pointed out that He would do as they asked, but then He went on to tell what sort of things this human king would do. There would be many abuses of power. The facts of history verify the truth of God's warning.

The situation became so dismal that Israel found themselves in Babylonian captivity. In this psalm we find the people crying out and wondering why, after God had promised that David's kingdom would last until the end of the world, they were being humbled by other nations. God informs them in this psalm that He is not through with His work. A descendant of David will take a spiritual throne and reign until every enemy of God's people was overcome, including death.

**Psa 89:1 I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.**

The psalmist is ready to defend both God's mercy and His faithfulness. Men may fail to honor their word. God



will not fail. He has made promises and He will keep those promises. That which seems to be a lack of mercy toward His people is not that. The miseries of captivity are not proof of failure on the part of God to keep His word or to love His congregation.

Psa. 66:2-4; Eph. 5:19; Acts 16:25; Isa. 55:11; Isa. 46:11; Matt. 24:35; Isa. 45:19; Rom. 3:3-4.

**Psa 89:2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.**

The psalmist is still contending that God's mercy is dependable. The very heavens, both that of the sun, moon and stars, as well as that where His own throne is located, speak of His loyalty.

**Psa 89:3 I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,**

**Psa 89:4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.**

The first two verses are the words of the psalmist as he declares God's dependability. We turn in verse three to the covenant which God made with David that he would maintain a throne in the heavens from which David's seed would rule until this heaven and earth is replaced by a new heaven and a new earth.

Acts 1:20; Psa. 109; Psa. 69; Psa. 22; Dan. 2:44.

**Psa 89:5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.**

Both heaven and earth would show forth the glory and wisdom of God. There would be signs in the heavens and there would be wonders on the earth which could only take place if the Lord exists and cares for the souls of men. (Psa. 19:1)

**Psa 89:6 For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?**

When compared with all other personalities, the Lord stands infinitely higher in knowledge, wisdom and power, as well as in faithfulness and concern. Those who are in covenant relationship with Him, and keep their part of the covenant, need not fear that He has abandoned them.

**Psa 89:7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.**

The fear mentioned here is that which restrains one from criticizing God's pattern of action. He has every right to be respected and trusted. Any who would condemn Him make a very serious error in judgment.

**Psa 89:8 O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?**

**Psa 89:9 Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.**

The power of Jehovah has been observed in the natural world. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, called out to the raging waves of the sea, "Peace, be still." and they



obeyed his command. Psa. 86:12; Exo. 14; Jonah 1; 2 Cor. 5:11; Heb. 12:29.

**Psa 89:10 Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.**

Rahab is used several times in the scriptures to identify Egypt. The armies of Egypt were broken in pieces as the water of the Red Sea closed in over them while they were pursuing God's people. (Matt. 8:26)

**Psa 89:11 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.**

The entire universe, including the earth and all that it contains were originated by the mighty hand of the Lord. He is able at any time to cause them to follow His will. (Gen. 1:1)

**Psa 89:12 The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.**

From north to south, and from mountain to valley, answer to His call. They exist only because He allows such. Scientists speak of space, time and matter as basics in the world of physics. God is the Master of all three.

**Psa 89:13 Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.**

Since the present writer is left handed, he would like to point out that God has a pretty powerful left hand too!

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Seriously, God's hand is limited only by the perfectness of His person. He can do no evil.

Psa 89:14 Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

The best of men sometimes make errors in judgment. God does not! Yesterday, today, and through the final judgment, God's decisions are just. He will not show partiality. He will show mercy when men repent, but He will not be unfair.

Psa 89:15 Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.

Psa 89:16 In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

We are reminded of the beatitudes proclaiming the blessedness of the righteous. Those who follow the pattern of life presented in that precious gem of scripture will not regret their choice. These are the ones who walk in the light of God's countenance. They shall be blessed and rejoice. (I John 1:7, Matt. 23:12)

Psa 89:17 For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

Any true exaltation of the human soul is only possible through the approval of the Lord and the strength which He is able to provide. (Gal. 6:14)

Psa 89:18 For the LORD is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.



To those suffering bondage and captivity, as were the Israelites, it often seems there is no defense from the injustice of the captors. Israel need not fear that all things will work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to His purpose. They have a King far stronger than that of the Babylonians.

Psa 89:19 Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

God had spoken to the holy prophets and declared that He had chosen a leader from among His people. The chosen one was to provide the help needed to escape from the bondage which His people all too often labor. God would exalt this chosen leader and place Him upon a throne.

Psa 89:20 I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

The reader must be careful at this point. The psalm was written long after David died. The Messiah who was to come from the seed of David is the one spoken of. It is the dynasty of David which was the avenue through which our Saviour arrived on earth. The Father in heaven personally anointed His Only Begotten Son to be King of kings. (2 Sam. 7)

Psa 89:21 With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.

Christ voluntarily came to this earth as an example of perfect obedience. He limited Himself to some degree

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by inhabiting that body of flesh. Still, His divinity offered strength which ordinary men and women do not command.

**Psa 89:22 The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.**

This verse sounds strange in view of the fact that Satan and his followers were allowed to persecute Him, beat Him and nail Him to the cross. The fact of the matter is that he could have called ten thousand angels to His side if He had chosen to do that. He willingly went to the cross that He might provide the perfect sacrifice for your sins and mine. All glory to His name!!

**Psa 89:23 And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.**

There shall come a time when every knee shall bow before the Son of God. Ultimately the torment of hell will be visited upon those who reject Him. How is it possible that humans can hate the One who loved them as He did?

**Psa 89:24 But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.**

The same faithfulness and mercy which are characteristic of the Father were to be the characteristics of His Son. As the Israelites in Babylon needed to reach out to the Lord God for help their time of distress, men today are to reach out to the Lord's Anointed for escape from the bondage of sin.





**Psa 89:25 I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.**

The seas and the rivers were boundaries in the days of the patriarchal and Mosaic ages. God's powerful hand has never been restricted by such boundaries as the Mediterranean Sea or the Euphrates River. Christ has similar powers. National and physical boundaries of the universe are unable to hinder His purposes. (Gen 15:18; I Kgs 4:21)

**Psa 89:26 He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.**

If there had been any doubt as to the identity of this Anointed One was, this verse should remove all doubt. He is the One who could in a very special way call God His Father. He is the Rock of God's salvation in that He is the Rock upon which God has built the church.

**Psa 89:27 Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the first born from the dead. He is the first born in the sense that He has received the double portion of the Father, and has been selected to be *THE LEADER* in the family of God. No king other than He can make such claims. (I Sam. 13:14)

**Psa 89:28 My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.**

Now the tone of the chapter swings back toward the human descendants of David. God would not abandon



them. The covenant which God had made through Christ would stand as solid as a Rock before all efforts to destroy it. (Rom. 8:29; Heb. 1:5,8,9)

**Psa 89:29 His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.**

David's seed, which is Christ will reign as long as heaven and earth stand. Even when this present heaven and earth have been replaced by the new heaven and earth, Jesus Christ will be with the Father in the heaven of heavens. (2 Sam. 7:12; Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5-6; Dan. 2:44)

**Psa 89:30 If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;**

**Psa 89:31 If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;**

**Psa 89:32 Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.**

These present three verses apply to the human king David. They were no doubt wondering why, as subjects of God's kingdom, they had been allowed to suffer such tribulation as they were enduring. The answer was that the covenant God had made with David did not protect them from punishment when that covenant was broken. They would be punished if they disobeyed God's commandments. Their stripes would certainly not be pleasant. (Ezek. 21)

**Psa 89:33 Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.**

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Although they would be punished for their transgressions, this was not a sign that God had given them up as hopeless. He still loved them. That which was happening to them was because of His love and faithfulness. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Psa 89:34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Psa 89:35 Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.

There was hope in the midst of their distress. The punishment would not last forever. Men break their covenants with God, but God never breaks one first. He had made a promise to David. That promise would be kept. In spite of all appearances, He was still with His people.

Psa 89:36 His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.

Psa 89:37 It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

Jesus Christ was the son of David as well as the Son of God. It is He that will endure forever. It is He whose throne will last as long as the sun encircles this earth. Every day when the sun brings daylight, and every night when the moonlight beams, God is reminding His people that He still cares.

Right here we should probably take note that it would be impossible for the Israelites in Babylon to peer through time to the coming of the Saviour. We have his life recorded in history. Prophecy is difficult to comprehend

until it has been fulfilled. Then it becomes much clearer. (Psa. 19:1; Psa. 9:6-7; Rom. 1:16; Acts 2:41-47.)

Psa 89:38 But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.

Psa 89:39 Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.

The reply of the captives now comes back to the Lord. It certainly looked as if He had been filled with wrath toward the dynasty of David. It certainly looked as if the crown had been removed and thrown to the ground. Was the continued captivity not a sign that these things were true? (2 Kgs. 17; 2 Kgs 25.)

Psa 89:40 Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.

Psa 89:41 All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.

Hedges were used to prevent invasion by enemies who would do damage. The Israelites were pointing out that their enemies had invaded the promised land and had taken them as bondservants. Their defenses had been useless. They were ridiculed by those who entered their homeland and took possession of whatever they chose. (2 Kgs. 24:13)

Psa 89:42 Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

It was not Israel who were rejoicing. It was those who plundered their land and mocked their God.

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**Psa 89:43 Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.**

A dull sword is a useless weapon. Israel was complaining that God had in effect disarmed them and placed them at the mercy of their foes. They could not defend the land of Canaan.

**Psa 89:44 Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.**

**Psa 89:45 The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.**

The nation which had once been glorious in the eyes of others was now ridiculed. The family of David was unable to rule. Men were dying while still young as they had been killed in battle and had been mistreated in a foreign land.

Here again we see the word “Selah.” Wherever this word is used, it calls for the reader to take particular notice. Something very meaningful has been said. (2 Kgs 25; Dan. 2:44; Dan. 7:13-14.)

**Psa 89:46 How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?**

It looked as if God would never allow His anger with the people to calm. It had seemingly been forever that they had been suffering in slavery.

**Psa 89:47 Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?**

The psalmist feels impelled to ask God if he will live to see any change in conditions. Are His people to die in hopelessness? (Jam. 4:14.)

**Psa 89:48 What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.**

It is appointed unto all men to die, and after that the judgment. Israel had not as clear a picture of heaven, hell and the judgment as the present day reader of these words has. The psalmists question asks if what they were enduring was all there was to life. Live, slave and die? Can a man escape the certainty of death? (Psa. 3:2.)

**Psa 89:49 Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?**

**Psa 89:50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people;**

God had made such wonderful promises to David. What had happened to them? Was it possible that God would ignore those promises? He is a God of truth. How could He fail to keep His word?

**Psa 89:51 Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.**

Nations had great pride in their gods. Now the enemies of Israel were mocking both the people and their God. God had called David a “man after mine own heart.”



Now the rule appeared to be in ruins. The nations chided them for their lack of leadership.

**Psa 89:52 Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.**

This last verse is a note of hope at the end of a chapter of gloom. Regardless of the outward appearances, God is in heaven. As long as that is true, His beloved people will be remembered. He is trustworthy. He is the source of all happiness. Love, trust and obey Him. This is the path to eternal bliss. This world is not my home. (Luke 1:32-33.)

## Chapter 90

This is one of the psalms which many persons cherish and associate with a loved one who has been laid in the grave. It has been used innumerable times as a text for funeral ceremonies. It discusses the brevity of human life. It compares that brevity with the eternal nature of God. It calls for care in the living of this short time on earth in order that one might prepare for existence after the resurrection and the judgment.

The majority of the commentators believe it to have been written by Moses in the time of the wilderness wandering. The traditional title which has been assigned by uninspired persons states that it is a psalm of Moses.

Your present writer has grave doubts about crediting Moses as the author. I tend to agree with Adam Clarke, who contends that the average life span of those living in the days of Moses was greater than the four score years mentioned in the chapter. The evidence for Moses as author is certainly not certain.

**Psa 90:1 Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.**

What a tremendously comforting verse this is to the faithful! Those who belong to God dwell in Him and He in them. Sometimes the term dwelling place has been translated as refuge. Either of these thoughts produces comfort in the minds of those who face anxiety and tribulation. From the time of Adam, until the last generation finish their life on earth, God is as close as they will allow Him to be.

**Psa 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the**

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world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

The mountains are obviously very old; but that is not the full extent of the presence of the Lord. He existed before the earth was ever brought into being. Let us go even farther. He is from everlasting to everlasting. This does not mean everlastingness may be divided into two parts. It is but one eternal realm which never began and never ends. God IS. He ALWAYS HAS BEEN. He ALWAYS WILL BE!

Psa 90:3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

It is not so with man. Man had a beginning; however man will always be. He will exist in either heaven or hell when time been dissolved.

Since man faces either eternal life or eternal torment in the fire of hell, he had better plan for that which lies beyond the grave. The trump shall sound and the dead shall arise. When God calls for all to appear before Him, all men will wish they had used time on this earth to promote the glory of the Lord.

Psa 90:4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

Yesterday may have seemed to be an extended period of time while it was being lived. Now that it has faded into the past, it seems to have been very brief.

A watch in the night is a term used in the military lingo. It was about three or four hours that the watchman was assigned to be on the alert for danger. When life

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reaches it's end, it will seem to have been as brief as one three hour period while one has been asleep.

**Psa 90:5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.**

Man comes and goes like the waves of the ocean. One moment he is here. The next he is gone. As a river of water soon sweeps a twig out of sight, man leaves this world and disappears in the grave.

**Psa 90:6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.**

Any farm boy who has worked in the hay field will appreciate the truth found in the illustration of the grass of the field. One waits until the alfalfa, clover, or whatever it may be, has reached it's most luxurious state. Then the mower cuts it off and lays it on the ground to wilt in the sun. It is astonishing to see the difference a few short hours can make in the appearance of that which has been cut off.

**Psa 90:7 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.**

Death came about because of the sins of men. God's anger is aroused by sin. He told Adam that in the day he sinned death would be the result. God will not tolerate sin. It must be either punished or forgiven through adequate repentance and sacrifice.

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Psa 90:8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

God knows of our sins. That which we believe to have been hidden in the secrecy of darkness becomes just as visible to God as that which has been done where all men might see it. God IS light. There are no secret sins as far as His all-seeing eye is concerned.

Psa 90:9 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.

Our King James translation falls a little short of the originally intended meaning. The Hebrew word which is translated as “tale” leads us to think of a simple story we might read to our children. A closer meaning is that our days can be counted like a tale of bricks which when they have been laid are no more a part of the original stack. Each brick which has been laid is no longer available for laying. Each year of our lives passes away and is no longer available for living.

Psa 90:10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

A score is twenty. Three score is sixty. Three score and ten is seventy years. By present standards, one is normally beginning to face physical problems at the age of seventy. By the time one reaches the age of four score, or eighty years, life has usually become filled with the reality that it will not be long until it is cut off.

To say that we then fly away is but another way

of saying that we are no longer a part of the human population living on the surface of this earth. We are then placed in the grave to sleep the sleep of physical death, until the trump sounds and the dead arise to stand before the judgment bar of Jehovah.

Psa 90:11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

The Lord tells us that vengeance is His, and that He will repay. That will not be a pleasant reality when one reaches the bar of judgment. God's blessings are wonderful. His wrath is terrifying. It will do no good to cry out for His help after one has heard the words "Depart from me, I never knew you!"

Psa 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

God has repeatedly warned us to number our day and apply our hearts to wisdom. Even in the time of Solomon, we were informed that the whole duty of man is to "Fear God and keep His commandments."

The difficulty is that in order for teaching to occur, learning must accompany it. No teacher can teach until the student is willing to learn. God has done His part. It is now up to man to do his part. Our days are one less today than they were yesterday. We had better take heed.

Psa 90:13 Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

This verse indicates that the psalmist was much concerned over the fact that God's wrath was still being felt in this life and also would be felt in the eternal realm.

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God does not repent in the sense that man repents. God does not sin. However, God does remove His wrath when men repent. Let each of us in every age recognize the critical importance of doing whatever God calls for to take away His eternal anger.

**Psa 90:14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.**

No man deserves heaven. All men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Therefore, we must depend upon His mercy if we are to have hope. He has informed us of the terms which must be met if hope is to exist. Our happiness and gladness depend now upon our reaction to those terms.

**Psa 90:15 Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.**

The small child sometimes feels that he has been punished sufficiently to repair his mischief. He will cry out, "Please don't spank me any more. I will be good." That is the plea of the psalmist. He feels that the amount of affliction which the people have already suffered should be enough. Is it not time that gladness can replace sorrow? That time will certainly come if the one who is being punished turns from sin before it is too late.

**Psa 90:16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.**

The request is that God not give up on His people. Will He not pardon their iniquities and bless them in the

days to come. Will their children be forced to endure the difficulties they have faced because of their sin?

**Psa 90:17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.**

Rather than destroying everything associated with the man, God is asked to forgive and use His people as His servants. Might they have contributed something which would continue to His glory and their hope when this life was completed.

Is not this the attitude that all of God's creation should possess? All things have been created for a purpose. Let us find that purpose. Let us follow it to the end of our days. Let us move from time into an eternity of joy, and not of grief!



## Chapter 91

There is a strong relationship between the ninetieth psalm and this ninety-first. The previous one spoke of grief for those who ignored the offers of the Lord. This one speaks of the protection and security which are available to the one who trusts and obeys Him.

We do not know either the date or the author. There is no title attached as is the case with most. It does seem possible that it was written in the time of the wilderness wanderings. I shall assume that it was written by Moses and pertained to those years in the wilderness. But, the psalm has great meaning for our own day and must not simply be passed off as one for the ancients. It carries a valuable message for both the friend and the foe of the Lord in every age.

**Psa 91:1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**

The secret place of the Most High was the Most Holy Place, where the High Priest was the only one allowed to enter, and that only once during the year. That was the place where the ark rested and God spoke from His throne between the wings of the cherubim. Today that secret place is within the church of Jesus Christ.

The shadow of the Most High is the protective providence in which those who place their trust in the Lord may find protection from the heat of God's wrath.

**Psa 91:2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.**

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When all is going well, the refuge and the fortress may seem of little importance. It is quite the opposite when danger threatens. There are multiple foes in the spiritual conflict which can be seen just by opening one's eyes. With God as our refuge, we may be confident that no enemy can destroy us. He will be there in every time of need.

Psa 91:3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.

The fowler set his net in a hidden place where the prey would be ensnared before even realizing the danger. The same is true of Satan, who delights in using his snares of lust and pride.

The noisome pestilence is the plagues of sin which infest the hearts of men before they realize the degree of contagiousness sin demonstrates as it ravages the world. God desires to protect His own from both of these enemies.

Psa 91:4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

The illustration here may seem somewhat delicate, but there is a tenderness in God that makes itself known to those who are willing to place their souls in His care. The mother hen sees a hawk in the sky. She clucks for her chicks to come and gather under the protection of her wings. The shield and the buckler were defensive armor worn by soldiers in the field of battle. The shield could catch the force of the blow from an enemy sword. If the shield missed and the sword managed to strike



the chest of the soldier, the buckler was a second line of defense.

God's truth can guard against the fiery darts of Satan. He has revealed that truth through Jesus Christ who existed as the Word before ever the world was formed. That truth has been transmitted through the prophets and the apostles. We must make full use of it.

Psa 91:5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

A favorite method of warriors in the time of the psalmist was to sneak up in the dead of the night and attack before their presence was suspected. God has adequately warned His followers in order that unsuspected attacks are much less liable to succeed.

Then there are also those who feel they are strong enough to overcome their prey, even if it is known that they are coming upon them. The Lord can also give the strength and courage needed to meet the most impressive enemies. The fight may not always go well at the moment. But, when all is concluded, it will be well with the souls of the righteous. This sin filled earth is not the end of men's existence.

Psa 91:6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

There are diseases which strike at any time, day or night. These are not human foes. However; they may be even more destructive. It is claimed that one fourth of the entire world population died during the bubonic plague. Bubonic plague may cause the death of the body. It can

not destroy the soul in hell, unless the soldier of the Lord gives up the fight.

Psa 91:7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

Remember, dear reader, that “few there be that enter therein” In this gigantic spiritual battle, there will be more who fall than there will be who hear those words, “Enter into the joys of thy Lord.”

Psa 91:8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

The one who has made the Lord his or her refuge may see the horrible end of the wicked. He will not have to endure it. While here on earth he will have the chance to walk in the way of Jehovah. He should be capable of choosing the way of holiness which will lead to life everlasting. Every person is a creature of choice. Evil leads to suffering. Purity leads to ultimate happiness.

Psa 91:9 Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

It may seem strange to speak of the Lord being a habitation. The Bible does not see it that way. The fact is that we know far less than we think we do about spirits. A habitation is a place where one may dwell. We are taught in the scriptures that God can dwell in us and we in Him. The manner in which this is done may be beyond our comprehension. The truth of the statement cannot be disputed. God said it!



Psa 91:10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

Psa 91:11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

Critics of the Bible love to search out verses such as this one and point out that good men and women do suffer, sometimes very painfully. Clearly the passage does not teach that the good *NEVER SUFFER*. Job was declared to be a good and upright man. Yet, he suffered horribly. It is well to look at the conclusion of the book of Job. Because of his unwillingness to curse God and die, he was better off in the end than in the beginning. See Job 42:12-17.

Job 42:12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

Job 42:13 He had also seven sons and three daughters.

Job 42:14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.

Job 42:15 And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

Job 42:16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

Job 42:17 So Job died, being old and full of days.

Another topic about which we know far less than we might desire to know is in the nature and responsibilities of angels. They are charged with guarding the security of

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the faithful. This is proved by the conversation between the Devil and Jesus Christ.

**Psa 91:12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.**

Satan felt that he could destroy Jesus by causing Him to sin. He quoted, or rather misquoted the above verse. He challenged Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple and see if the Heavenly Father would send angels to catch him before he hit the ground.

Jesus replied that one was not wise to test God's honesty or power. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

**Psa 91:13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.**

Lions, adders and crocodiles were well known and much feared foes. *"But, if God be for us who can be against us."*

**Psa 91:14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.**

It is the Lord who is speaking in these last verses. When the man of God calls upon his Creator for help, he may rest assured that the help will be given. The promise is, however, limited to those who have demonstrated their love for Him and who have respected Him as their Father in heaven. This is more than knowing that the Bible speaks of Him as Jehovah, or Elohim, or I AM. It is an intimacy which inspires the man to love and obey God, and which causes God to bless and keep the man.



**Psa 91:15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.**

God promises solemnly that the man who walks with Him through life may call upon Him when trouble rears it's ugly head. That man will be delivered from his trouble and honored for his faith.

**Psa 91:16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.**

The person who lives and walks with God will find that life here on earth is longer and richer. He will also find that life eternal is a faithful promise of God.

## Chapter 92

Psalms 91 and 92 were the last of book three. This psalm is the first one of the fourth book. It is a glad chapter, telling of the joy of the Lord and urging the reader to sing praises to His name. We are reminded of that simple prayer which is repeated by small children. "God is great, God is good. Let us thank Him for our food." There is much for which men of every age and time have reason to let Him know of our love and our gratitude.

**Psa 92:1 It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:**

Why is it such a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord? First, it builds the kind of communication line every person on earth needs. There is a chain of events which are very precious. We receive blessings. We appreciate and use those blessings. We praise God in our thoughts and our speech. But it goes even farther. We thank him by our lives of righteousness.

He does not overlook our thankfulness.

Second, giving thanks to the Lord brings health to the mind. The person who fails to express his thanks for what has been done for him develops a callousness which is then passed on to others. This infectious spirit spreads over the land, making life much more difficult to bear.

**Psa 92:2 To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,**

Offering thanks is not a once in a lifetime event. It is a continuous thing. Certainly we should offer thanks to the

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Lord at mealtimes. Is that as far as it goes? No! It begins every morning when we wake. It continues throughout the day until we lay our head upon the pillow that night. My friend, you will never be sorry that you communed with your Heavenly Father in every waking hour of every day of your life. He is loving. He is kind. He is faithful in keeping His promises to those who appreciate His blessings in prayer.

Psa 92:3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

There were times in the past, such as in the time of the psalmist, that God commanded His servants to offer their praise with the accompaniment of musical instruments. The harp and the psalter were stringed instruments. Upon the divine command, it was proper to worship in this manner.

The fact is that there is neither command nor example for the Christian to use such accompaniment. The command to the Christian is to “sing and make melody in the heart.” (See Eph. 5:19.)

Eph 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Eph 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

The point to be made is that the joy and thanksgiving are to be made known to God. This is to be heartfelt; not a matter of entertainment or habit.

Psa 92:4 For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

Psa 92:5 O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.

When one considers the wonders of his own body, it is pure folly to deny the quality of God's works. The greatest physicians of every age have struggled to grasp the magnificence of the human body. The greatest astronomers have expressed their awe at the design found in the starry heavens.

The ultimate conclusion is that God thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and His ways are higher than men's ways. Let us adore Him!

Psa 92:6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

A brutish man is one who lives at the level of an animal. He is profane, in that he does not consider the wonders of the present or the hope of an afterlife. It is the fool who has said, "There is no God."

Psa 92:7 When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever:

We very often see the wicked prosper in this life. Pride and lust sometimes make men rich. They also give such selfish persons power over others. The problem with this is that this life comes to an abrupt halt and the wicked rich face an everlasting separation from all that is pleasant.



Psa 92:8 But thou, LORD, art most high for evermore.

In contrast, the Lord God is far richer than all the wicked combined. He has more intelligence and wisdom than all of the wicked combined; and it will continue so when time is ended.

Psa 92:9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

The ones who have proven to be enemies of God will lose the battle. Every foe shall be conquered. After that, the judgment.

Psa 92:10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

The psalmist speaks as a friend of God. He is convinced that his power will be multiplied by the Lord. As a rhinoceros, a one horned animal, has the power to crush it's enemies, God's allies draw from His unlimited power. They are special in His eyes. To be anointed is to be given special honor. God awards such honor to those who love and obey Him.

Psa 92:11 Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me.

The friend of God will ultimately see that which God has prepared for him. His ear will hear of the defeat of his

foes. Like Job of old, he may suffer for the moment. But, he will be greatly rewarded after the testing is over.

Psa 92:12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Psa 92:13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

Psa 92:14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

In preparing the comments for this chapter, I have read of a sermon which I wish I had heard. It concerned the “Palm Tree and the Cedar.” The palm tree is known for its ability to survive the high winds. It is also known for its long life and its productivity. A single tree may produce several hundred pounds of fruit in a single year.

The cedar is known for its ability to grow in the rugged mountains. It grows toward heaven, reaching heights above those of the surrounding grass, herbs and trees. The man of righteousness will withstand the contrary winds of life which threaten him. He will live longer and be more productive than the wicked. This may not be true of every individual person. It will be true when the two groups as compared.

Psa 92:15 To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

Is it not interesting that God is said to be a rock in this old testament passage, and that the confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is declared to be the Rock upon which the Church of God is being built? God is dependable and everlasting. He is deserving of the praise which both men and nature are expected to offer to Him.

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## Chapter 93

This very short chapter of only five verses praises the Lord for His power, His rulership, His durability and His eventual victory over every enemy that rises in opposition to Him.

**Psa 93:1 The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.**

Human rulers like to surround themselves with dignity. They choose expensive clothing. They appoint associates that are of high prestige. Their dwellings are palatial. The God of heaven is clothed with even greater majesty. His strength is unlimited. He created the universe and established the laws which control it. It will last until He decides to remove or alter it.

**Psa 93:2 Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.**

The Holy Bible records conflicts in heavenly places and rebellion against His authority on earth. In spite of such opposition, He has existed as the Supreme Authority from the everlasting past until the present. We have the promise that His rulership will never be overthrown in the future. He is King from everlasting unto everlasting

**Psa 93:3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.**

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The floods spoken of here are not floods of water. They are floods of turmoil caused by those who have convinced themselves they may live under their own rules. These floods come like waves of the ocean. Their voices are the boasts of the pride filled opponents of God. They make a lot of noise which is intended to strike fear into all that is holy.

Psa 93:4 The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

When all is said and done, the proud voices of the enemies of God will be turned into groans of defeat. In similar manner to that of the gigantic ocean liners who defy the most gigantic of the heaving waves, God is powerful enough to defeat the combined voices of all foes combined.

Psa 93:5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.

What a wonderful thought it is that the Supreme and Everlasting Ruler of all is holy! Satan is powerful, but he and his followers are evil. Earthly monarchs have some degree of power, but they mix evil with the good they do. The more powerful an evil earthly ruler becomes, the more confusion and suffering he is likely to produce.

Jehovah is absolutely holy. We have the assurance that by His very nature, He cannot lie nor commit sin. It is the responsibility of man to support His cause. Those who do so will find glory awaiting them.



Chapter 94

The psalm is a cry for God to step into a dismal situation where wicked men were making life most miserable for those whom they were able to dominate. It appeared to the psalmist that divine action against the horrors of the time was taking an excessively long time to bring justice.

There is a philosophical lesson to be learned from the questions and answers which are presented. God does not work on man's schedule. He acts when and how He knows is best.

Psa 94:1 O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

At the outset in our discussion of this psalm, we must call attention to the words written by Paul the apostle in Romans 12:19.

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.

Vengeance and chastening are two different operations. When men take vengeance, it is nearly always done in haste, without carefully thinking of how much should be dealt out, and for what purpose. For this reason God urges men to not act hastily in retaliation for offenses from their fellowmen.

God knows what needs to be done for the spiritual well being of all concerned. Sometimes He causes the wicked to perish at His own hand, such as He did when Nadab

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and Abihu offered strange fire upon His altar. Sometimes He directs men to apply the penalty for sin as He did in commanding that adulterers be stoned to death in old testament days.

**Psa 94:2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.**

In the case at hand the psalmist is pleading with the Lord to bring an end to the suffering which the wicked are bringing upon those who are weaker than they are. The word “reward” which is used here is not necessarily a positive word. It can refer to that which is due to the wicked just as much as that which is due to the righteous. The reward of the righteous is pleasant. The reward to the wicked is unpleasant.

**Psa 94:3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?**

Both in individual cases and in the world in general, it seems to we humans that God has postponed the chastisement of evil men too long. They are allowed to be insolent toward the authority of both human and divine law.

It is well, however, for us to be patient and trust in the judgment of the Lord to act in perfect justice. He can see the total effect, whereas men cannot.

**Psa 94:4 How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?**

Perhaps we would do well to consider the problems of self discipline, or discipline of those over which we have

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authority. Breaking a bad habit can backfire if we try to do too much at once. Correcting a misbehaving child can lead to an increase in rebellion if applied in an unjust manner.

It is not the prerogative of men to take vengeance simply to cool their own hot tempers. It is most true that the wicked have allowed to hurt others from the time of Cain, without being immediately removed from existence. But would it not be tragic if persons were lost in hell as a result of being eliminated before they had sufficient time to repent of their evil deeds. Again, God knows the right answers to some very difficult questions here. He has decided to allow some evil persons to continue existence for reasons which humans are unable to see through.

Psa 94:5 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

Some believe the griefs pictured in this psalm were brought about by the Babylonians while the Jews were in captivity in that land. Strangely, the difficulties the Jews were enduring were the result of their own misbehavior in worshiping idols, etc. Now they were pleading with God to punish the Babylonians for making their own lives nearly impossible.

Psa 94:6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

Nebuchadnezzar had taken no pity on the Israelites. Defenseless widows, the Jews were not native to the land of Babylon. They had been imported as servants. They were looked down upon with disdain. The orphan children, who had no parents to protect them, were being

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killed to eliminate the need to feed, clothe and shelter them. These were devilish and hateful deeds which were causing much bitterness among the captives.

**Psa 94:7 Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.**

**Psa 94:8 Understand ye brutish among the people, and ye fools when will ye be wise?**

The thinking of the Babylonian captors was that the God of Jacob was a local God and had no authority in the land of Babylon. He was the God of Jacob and his people. He would not attempt to control that which was done in another land. The fact that His people were being allowed to suffer was to them an indication that Jehovah did not see what was happening, or else did not care about it.

**Psa 94:9 He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?**

**Psa 94:10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?**

Oh yes, God who made the eye can see what men are doing. The same Lord who planted the ear can hear what men are saying. The One who teaches grown men as grown men teach their own children knows the thoughts of men's minds.

**Psa 94:11 The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.**

One of the things which God knows about the thoughts of men is that compared to His own thoughts, they are

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vain or empty. When man directs his own steps, he marches straight into disaster. This is just as true today as it has been for all the ages.

Psa 94:12 Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

It is not always true that unpleasant conditions are harmful to men. He whom God loveth, He chasteneth. He presents truth to men. They are allowed to choose obedience or disobedience. Then they are punished for the disobedience to direct them toward more righteous paths.

Psa 94:13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

When God corrects men through chastening them, He is not being unjust. He is steering them away from the final punishment which awaits those who will not learn right ways.

During this testing period, the pit of hell is being dug for the eternal torment which is to come upon those who will not take correction.

Psa 94:14 For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

Present suffering of the righteous does not mean God has given them up. What IS happening is that He is applying discipline which will prepare them for an eternal abode with Him if they will profit by His leadership.

Psa 94:15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

God's followers can rest assured that any chastisement is intended to uplift those who will let themselves be turned from evil. Then, when they have lived in upright fashion, they will find God to be just in His treatment.

Psa 94:16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

This verse sounds almost like the words of Joshua in the days of old. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The question asked in the verse is from the mind of God. He invites all who will to stand on His side in order that the workers of Satan may be defeated.

Psa 94:17 Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.

The righteous man realizes that there is no hope without the aid of the Lord. The silence mentioned is not just the silence of the grave. It is the silence which is found among the righteous because of the absence of the fallen soul.

Psa 94:18 When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

But all is not hopeless. Every man is aware of the fact that on occasion his feet slip and he begins to stumble toward a deadly fall from the presence of the Lord. When

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he comes to his senses and wishes to walk uprightly, he needs a hand to lift him up. That hand is offered to those who sincerely wish to follow the will of God.

**Psa 94:19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.**

Hundreds of thoughts pass through the mind of every man and woman every day. Among these passing thoughts are those in which God delights. When those thoughts are put into action and God is delighted, His comfort will fill the soul of that person who loves the good and hates the evil.

**Psa 94:20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?**

The throne of iniquity is the source of evil. It pours forth lies, immorality and selfish pride. On occasion it even makes use of law to enforce it's will. Many a dictator has caused laws to be enacted which work against the holiness of Jehovah. Adolph Hitler was a prime example of how law can be used to accomplish evil purposes. Because he felt the German people were a superior race, and the Jews might be close competition, he caused thousands of Jews to be murdered. There can be no fellowship between those who make such laws and Jehovah or His faithful.

**Psa 94:21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.**

It is not debatable that such tyrants have combined their forces to make life miserable for God's people. They

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have cause thousands of gallons of blood to be shed from the bodies of good men. Jesus Christ did no sin. Yet evil men placed him upon that cross at Calvary. They rejoiced in what they thought was triumph. They had not won the fight against the Son of God. He rose from the grave and rules at the right hand of the Father today.

Psa 94:22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

The psalmist is absolutely correct. The rock of ages still provides a refuge for the protection of those who choose to hide their souls from the eagles who would feast upon them.

Psa 94:23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

As a young lad I can recall working with potatoes which had been stored in the basement of our house in the attempt to preserve them for later use. When we began to sort them at that later time for cooking, we found that some had completely rotted. A special place was designated for casting those rotten potatoes out. They could not be eaten. They only threatened to cause others to rot beside them.

God will, in the proper time, separate the rotted souls of men from those that are pure. Those rotted souls will be cut off and will be cast into the pit to be destroyed from the presence of the godly.



Chapter 95

This psalm is one of several clustered together here which have been labeled as “liturgical” in nature. They are thought to have been used in the assemblies of the Jew as they worshiped the Lord. They have many thoughts which are repeated again and again, just as our present day hymn books do.

This particular psalm makes three basic points. (1) God is to be praised. (2) Why He is to be praised. (3) How He will respond to that praise.

Psa 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

We begin with the admonition to sing His praises with joy and enthusiasm. Our salvation depends upon Him as it's foundation. How can man fail to let Him know of our thanksgiving?

The word “noise” is used. The word “sound” may come closer to the meaning of the Hebrew in which the psalm was written. We usually think of noise as being a hindrance or distraction. Singing with joy in our hearts can hardly be thought of as unpleasant, either to God or to men.

Psa 95:2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

Charles Spurgeon makes a very valuable comment on this matter in his three volume set of commentaries on the psalms. He points out that there are two characteristics of the worship described in these first two verses. We must sing with enthusiasm, but at the same time we must sing with reverence. Both of these characteristics must be

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present or else the worship may well be in vain.

If we sing with enthusiasm, but lack reverence, the singing will be no more worship than would be the singing of “Jingle Bells.” If we become so caught up in solemnity that we stifle our enthusiasm, the worship service may more resemble a funeral than an expression of praise. A proper balance is needed.

**Psa 95:3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.**

The intention of the present verse is not to admit there are other gods to whom praise should be offered. The thought is that man made gods are no gods at all. There is but one God. That God is Jehovah. It is He alone that should be the object of our worship.

**Psa 95:4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.**

Man may examine the deepest caves of the earth, or he may inspect the highest of the mountains. The Lord created both. He made them and He is capable of controlling them.

**Psa 95:5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.**

It is similarly true that the wonders of the seas and the ocean are the result of His omnipotent hand. Whether we concern ourselves with the atmosphere, the hydrosphere or the lithosphere, they are evidence of the power of our God. When men stand and gaze out over the Grand Canyon by day, or peer through the night at the star studded heavens, all has come into being through the will of Jehovah.

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**Psa 95:6 O come, let us worship and bow down:
let us kneel before the LORD our maker.**

He is not only the Creator of the material universe. He is the Maker of man. Therefore, there is most excellent reason for man to humble himself and offer Him praise and thanksgiving.

Is it necessary to kneel or fall flat on the face to show our humility? Both of these were done on several occasions in the record presented through Holy Scripture. Some may find kneeling or falling flat before God is the best way for them to feel the greatness of God. Others may discover the same humility while lying in bed. There are some who would find it absolutely impossible to kneel. Nevertheless, the heart must be filled with respect if our prayer is to be honored.

**Psa 95:7 For he is our God; and we are the people
of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if
ye will hear his voice,**

**Psa 95:8 Harden not your heart, as in the
provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the
wilderness:**

The shepherd cares about the sheep. He guides them to lush pasture. He protects them from beasts who would devour them. The Lord would like nothing better than to lead His people to heavenly rest and in the meantime protect them from the enemies who would feed upon them.

Verse seven contains a very important little two letter word. That word is "if." Men are creatures of free choice. They may turn a deaf ear to the voice of the Shepherd. A deaf ear and a hardened heart which cannot be penetrated by the Word of God will cause men to wander in the wilderness of sin as did the Israelites in the forty years

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spent in the wilderness of the desert. They had provoked God to the point that He caused all but Joshua and Caleb to perish without entering the promised land.

**Psa 95:9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.**

Israel had seen both the manna from heaven and the water gushing from the rock. Yet they murmured against God rather than giving Him the praise He was due for releasing them from slavery in Egypt and guiding them toward Canaan.

**Psa 95:10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:**

It was not because God had failed to reveal His ways to them. He had called Moses to the top of Sinai and had given the guidance which He knew they needed. The problem was with them. They hardened their hearts with unbelief and ingratitude. They said they would rather die in the wilderness than face the giants which were in the land. God allowed all but Joshua and Caleb to do just that.

**Psa 95:11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.**

The wrath of man is one thing. The wrath of the Lord is quite another. The Israelites labored long in the wilderness. They did not find rest from their labors. God has told us of three kinds of rest. The first is the rest which he required on the seventh day of the week in the Mosaic age. The second is the rest which should have





been enjoyed by the Israelites, but which they missed because of unbelief. The third is the heavenly rest which is promised to those endure faithfully unto the end of their days in the Christian age, for they will enter into the eternal rest which is to be found in heaven.

Let us close with the quote which the writer of the book of Hebrews gives us in attempting to persuade the Jews not to reject the rest which Christ offers.

*Heb 4:3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

*Heb 4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.*

*Heb 4:5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.*

*Heb 4:6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:*

*Heb 4:7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*

*Heb 4:8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.*

*Heb 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*

*Heb 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*

*Heb 4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

Let us strive to enter every day of our lives. Tomorrow may be too late!

## *Chapter 96*

This psalm is a beautiful call for all men to praise God. The present writer agrees with the statement made by some that too much of our prayer is on the side of asking for blessings from God, and not enough emphasis is placed upon praising Him for His perfections. If we expect blessings in the future, it is wise for us to express thanksgiving for what He has done in the past and what He is doing at present.

This psalm is almost identical with verses twenty-three through thirty-three of I Chronicles 16. The repetition is not evidence that either of these passages is uninspired. There is very often the need for repeating that which needs to be taken seriously.

**Psa 96:1 O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.**

A new song is one which expresses new thoughts. God's salvation is declared in the present psalm. Miriam and the people of Israel rejoiced after crossing the Red Sea. Noah rejoiced upon exiting from the ark after the flood. If the reader is a Christian, he or she should recall the new song which they found in their heart when they realized their sins had been washed away through the blood of Jesus Christ.

The new song is intended by the Lord to be sung by all the earth, not just the Jews. The gospel is to be preached to all nations. Those who obey it will have reason to sing that new song.

**Psa 96:2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.**

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When one has come into possession of something which is so wonderful it is impossible to fully tell of its greatness, it is but natural to tell others of it. Perhaps the reader will recall that new bicycle which was received at Christmas, and the new song which was felt in the heart when riding it for the first time. The glory of the salvation which comes through obedience to the gospel is infinitely more wonderful than any gift, or earthly award any person ever received

Psa 96:3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

At the time this psalm was written the readers comprehension of heathen would have been very limited compared with the present understanding. The heathen would have been those nations surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, who did not accept Jehovah as their God. Some would have been close by Israel. Others would have been as far off as Egypt and Ur of the Chaldees.

Today the gospel is known around the globe. For the most part, the heathen are those who have heard of it and expressed no interest in it. Nevertheless, we must continue to take the above command seriously. It is sometimes surprising what happens when time and experience with sin have mellowed the hearts of those who have rejected the Word in the past.

Psa 96:4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

Psa 96:5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

It is not possible to praise the Lord to a greater degree than He deserves. Our finite minds are not capable of

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realizing His full greatness. Those who offer praise to idols are wasting time and energy. The idols have been created. The True God is an uncreated being. The word which is translated as “idol” in the fifth verse has the meaning of “nothings.” These “nothings” have not done anything. They have no power to answer prayer or appreciate praise!

**Psa 96:6 Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**

The Lord sits upon the throne of the heaven of heavens. There is no greater majesty than His. When one enters into His presence all other beauty fades into insignificance. As the shekinah and the glory associated with it preceded the ark in the wilderness, God’s glory surrounds Him at present.

**Psa 96:7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.**

How can mortal men give glory and strength to the One who has both glory and strength to absolute perfection? They may do so by proclaiming the glory and strength which He possesses to other men, that the entire population of men and angels can witness their testimony. That glory will be found in their thoughts, words and deeds.

**Psa 96:8 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.**

The glory due unto His name is all the glory we are capable of offering to Him. When we come into His



presence we are to bring two kinds of sacrifices. One is from the material and other earthly blessings He has placed in our hands. The other is the dedicated life which He has a right to expect of us.

**Psa 96:9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.**

Sin is ugly. Righteousness is beautiful. When one approaches God in worship, he should either have already allowed God to cleanse him from the ugliness of his past sins, or he must be willing to allow such cleansing by repentance and prayer.

**Psa 96:10 Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.**

These admonitions are not for a select group of persons. They apply to every race, from every part of the globe. Any who have not accepted the evidence of God's existence and righteousness must have the opportunity to hear and obey those truths. They will answer some day for their reception or rejection of the will of the Lord. He will judge them impartially. He will judge with the full knowledge of their attitudes and actions. His will be *righteous judgment*.

**Psa 96:11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.**

All of creation, from the heavens to the earth, to the sea, as well as all that is found in each are to express their gratitude for the holiness of the Lord.

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Psa 96:12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

Psa 96:13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

All will be dealt with in righteous judgment. God will reward where reward is due. He will punish where punishment is due. When He comes in the final judgment all will be set right. Men cannot examine all the evidence in perfect fashion. God can, and He will.



Chapter 97

Every chapter of the Word of God is precious and valuable. Still, some must be pondered with great care if one expects to reap the full benefit which they contain. The one we are about to examine is a treasure among treasures. It has two main divisions. First, it tells of the greatness of our God. Then, it tells of the importance of being prepared for His judgments.

Psa 97:1 The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

This is a most comprehensive statement. It does not state that the Lord reigns over one nation. It does not state that He reigns over one continent. It states that *He reigns*. This includes the entire creation. The sky, the earth and the sea are under His rule. Angels and men, as well as every bird, every beast and every fish of the sea are subject to His will.

This is reason for great rejoicing on the part of that which is ruled. He is powerful, wise, loving and eternal. The only way in which misery can enter His domain is for His will to be rejected. In that case, havoc may be expected.

Psa 97:2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

There is great mystery surrounding Him. "See Deut. 29:29."

Deu 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto

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*us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

The minds of humans are limited. We are unable to penetrate the clouds of mystery which would have to be pierced in order to read the infinite mind of the One who created all things. Some things have been revealed. Other things remain hidden from men.

One thing we know! His throne is sitting in righteousness and His judgments are perfect. If we trust in Him, we will forever have our sights set upon hope. Joy will be ours in the end.

**Psa 97:3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.**

God illustrates His tremendous energy through an example we may fathom with our limited minds. We are familiar with fire. God uses that to help us understand His abilities. When the law was given on Mount Sinai, lightning and fire were seen. The wicked will be cast into a lake of fire. The elements will melt in fervent heat, etc.

**Psa 97:4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.**

There is no location on the face of the earth that fails to see lightning flash across the sky. When this happens men should realize the vast difference between the power of God and the power of men. Most of us cringe at the sight of a sharp bolt of lightning crossing the sky and the eardrum shattering noise of the thunderclap with follows.

It would be a mark of wisdom on our part if all men would look behind the scenes and arrive at the truth that there is a God in heaven.





**Psa 97:5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.**

Volcanos are hills melted as if they were wax. The eruption of the volcano sends up lava flows which are like rivers of fiery rock. Can man duplicate this? Even if we object that we have atomic bombs which can approach the same effect, God had this power for thousands of year before man harnessed some small part of it.

**Psa 97:6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.**

The sun provides the energy needed to give illumination to the entire earth. The stars have been used to navigate the oceans. From the subatomic particles of the atom to the galaxies in the farthest reaches of space men may see His majesty if they will only look.

**Psa 97:7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.**

There is absolutely no excuse for worshiping images carved out of wood, stone or metal. Man must worship his Maker, not that which he has made. Those which are called gods are nothings.

In addition to the self made idols of wood and stone, there are a host of idols of quite another sort. If worship is the dedication of our heart, soul, mind and body to the target of that worship, we may include power, riches, entertainment, sex and adoration by other humans in our list.

All of these idols should be utilized in the service of

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God. They are not competition with Him in any sense of the word. He stands alone as Ruler of all.

Psa 97:8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD.

Zion was in the heart of Jerusalem, the city of God. Time and time again God's people saw both His signs and wonders, as well as His providential supervision. We do not see the miracles in these latter days, but we certainly have indisputable evidence of His care as He guides those of us who will follow His outstretched arm to the gates of heaven.

Psa 97:9 For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.

Psa 97:10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

Those who have seen, heard and believed the evidences for God's power and goodness must love that which He loves. They must hate that which He hates. They are made in His image. They must grow to be more and more like Him.

If they will do so, they will find that He both preserves and delivers. The shepherds of David's day understood this well. When there were wild beast endangering the sheep, the shepherd had to prevent an attack. If there was an attack, the shepherd was to deliver his sheep from the beast. How great is our God!

Psa 97:11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

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Can light truly be planted? Yes, it can. Just as seed is planted in the soil and is expected to burst through the soil into the brilliance of the rays of the sun, the light of truth is sown in the heart of the upright. It then enlightens the soul of that person and spreads to all who find themselves in his presence. God is light! Open your heart and let Him in.

**Psa 97:12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.**

The man or woman of God should be glad. The man or woman who rejects God should be grief stricken. Heaven is a place of great rejoicing. Hell is a place of hideous agony. The lover of goodness is preparing for glory. The doer of wickedness is marching straight into a darkness he has never experienced on this present earth. It is a darkness caused by the absence of *spiritual light*.

## Chapter 98

There is great similarity between the ninety-sixth psalm and this ninety-eighth. The call goes forth from both of them to sing a new song of praise to Jehovah for His greatness in the care of His people. All of the earth is called upon to praise Him and look forward to salvation from sin.

**Psa 98:1 O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.**

The “old song” was sung when sin hung heavily over the head. It was sung when the people were in the bondage of slavery in Egypt or Babylonia. God had caused the release of Israel from such prisons. He had also made it known that there was a possible release from sin through sin offerings. Later He would produce prophecy through Isaiah and others that a Son would be given for the sins of those who repented and turned from their disobedience. The new song would express the joy in the heart over such new freedom.

**Psa 98:2 The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.**

The nations surrounding Israel had witnessed the deliverance of God’s people. They also had seen His salvation at work. They should have become proselytes to the religion of Jehovah, though very few did.

**Psa 98:3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

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God had initiated his plan of salvation through the physical descendants of Abraham. He certainly did not intend to limit the promises to the Jews. What He had done for Israel could be expected as a blessing to the remainder of the nations when they recognized the value of bowing down to Him.

Psa 98:4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

The reaction to God's great gift of salvation was to be enthusiastic. It was to be reverent, but it was to demonstrate the thanksgiving felt in the soul. We are a bit concerned about the use of the word "noise." Noise is thought of presently as something undesirable. The sounds the people were to make in praise to the Lord were anything but undesirable. They were "music in His ears."

Psa 98:5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

David was known for his skill in playing on the harp. The voice of singing and the melody arising from the plucking of the harpstrings blended in grateful offering in gratitude for God's blessings.

Psa 98:6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.

In the present day the trumpet and the cornet are very much alike. This was probably not true in the time of the writing of this psalm. The trumpet was more apt to be used to call one to worship. The cornet would have been used in the worship.

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**Psa 98:7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.**

This verse likely refers to the sea of people who raised their voices in song of praise. Both land and sea were to utter words of gratitude for His mighty works.

**Psa 98:8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together**

**Psa 98:9 Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.**

Evil and wickedness have been a part of human history through at least six thousand years. For much of that time it has appeared that evil would dominate the world. It was not always to be that way. Just as God had shown His power by delivering Israel from bondage in Egypt and Babylon, He would deliver them from the clutches of Satan in the days to come.

Jesus Christ reigns at the right hand of the Father in heaven in this Christian age. He and His followers are waging a war against the devil. On the day of judgment this war will come to a dramatic close. Christ will return to take the loyal children of God to their eternal home in the new heaven and earth. Should not such a promise be received with joy and gladness?



## *Chapter 99*

This is one of the cluster of what are called “liturgical” psalms in that they seem to have been designed for use during the worship services of God’s people. Just as men presently sing a number of the psalms as a part of our worship, these people prized such psalms as means of teaching men and glorifying the Lord.

**Psa 99:1 The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.**

It is not just any personality that reigns from heaven. It is the Creator, Sustainer and Judge of the universe. It is the **LORD**. The word “tremble” is used to speak of extreme respect and willingness to act in accordance with the will of God. It is not a fear which paralyzes. It is one which obeys from the knowledge that God has the right and the power to command His creatures.

**Psa 99:2 The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people.**

There is a vast difference in the greatness and power of the most influential humans, and those who are without such recognition. The gap between the greatness of God and that of the greatest of men is far wider than that between the greatest and the lowliest of humans.

**Psa 99:3 Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.**

In view of what is said in verse two, it is only reasonable that men bow down and worship Him. As

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well as being powerful, He is holy. This means that His thoughts and actions are without blemish. God is never found stained with sin as men are.

Psa 99:4 The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

The people of earth need never fear that they will be treated unfairly. Every person will be dealt with through equality of justice. The righteousness of God will prevail not only in ancient Israel, but in the affairs of the Christian age.

Psa 99:5 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.

According to Isaiah 66:1, the earth is the footstool of the Lord. Those who inhabit the earth should recognize that they are at the mercy of God. It is a mark of wisdom that they should send their praises upward to the highest of the heavens where Jehovah dwells in majesty.

Again we find the word "holy" used as His description. He is holy as Creator. He is Holy in His dealings with men. He will not abuse them unjustly.

Psa 99:6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

Moses and Aaron were from the priestly tribe. Both served as leaders in conducting the worship in their times. When they called upon God to hear their prayers, He heard and answered their requests. Samuel served as a prophet of God. If men will hear God, He will hear them.

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**Psa 99:7 He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them.**

The cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night guided Israel through the wilderness. These great men respected the Lord and in turn, He respected them.

**Psa 99:8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.**

God forgave these men of the sins they committed. However, since they did on occasion decide to follow their own thoughts in contrast to His, He found it necessary to chastise them for corrective purposes. They did not lose their eternal hope. They did suffer grief for their carelessness.

**Psa 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.**

The holy hill in the day of the psalmist was the site of the tabernacle or the temple. Today the holy hill is the Church of Jesus Christ. It is through our participation in the worship of the body of Christ that we may become holy, as He is holy.

## *Chapter 100*

This is the last of the group of psalms beginning at number ninety-four which were very suitable for praising God during worship services. It exalts the name and the character of the Supreme Being. It was meant to be sung with joy and gladness by those who had learned to appreciate their relationship to He who made them and loved them. The sentiments of the psalm are very much in order at present. God did not make men for the purpose of casting them off and separating them from Himself forever.

**Psa 100:1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.**

God's people were meant to be happy. We are not talking about the giddy, party spirit. We are talking about a smile on the face and a heart full of thanksgiving for life and the opportunity of service in His kingdom.

In present day language the word "sound" would be a better translation of the word "noise." Noise implies unpleasantness and confusion. Noises hinder effectiveness. Joyful sounds may promote efficiency.

The call is not just for the descendants of Abraham. It reaches out to every land on the globe. Every man in every nation is invited to join in the glad song.

**Psa 100:2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.**

The present writer taught school for many years. He had students who ranged from the fifth grade to seniors in college. It was a pleasure to teach those who liked to

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be taught. It was much more difficult to deal with those who wished they were anywhere but in a classroom. What does the reader think God's reaction is toward those He has created and blessed with uncountable blessings and opportunities, and who then prefer the pleasures of sin for a season rather than the hope of eternal life?

Psa 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

There is not a person on earth who brought himself into existence. We must even be careful about boasting of our own achievements. We did not make the food we eat, the air we breathe, the clothing we wear, or any of the materials we require to accomplish feats in this world.

Even after He made us, we depend upon Him as sheep depend upon a shepherd to protect them and lead them to that which they need to survive.

Psa 100:4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

In consideration of all these blessings, how can man possibly bypass the privilege of singing His praises? To bless is to "speak good of." Job's wife called upon Him to "Curse God and die." Dear reader, you do not have to curse Him to die. All you need do is fail to honor Him, serve Him and love Him.

To enter a city of ancient times one had to pass through the gates. Jerusalem was God's city. One passed through one of several gates into that city. After entering the city one could further approach God by passing into the courts of the temple, where praise was offered.

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Today we live in the New Jerusalem. The temple of God is the Church, which is the body of Christ. All blessings are found in Christ. Enter into Christ with praise and thanksgiving. Sing a song of praise to the Lord with joy and gladness.

**Psa 100:5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.**

There are three excellent reasons why God's name should be blessed. He is good, and in Him there is no evil. He is forever merciful. As long as man is ready to repent, God is ready to extend His mercy. It will never be exhausted. Thirdly, God's truth lasts until the end of the world. Man's word may fail. God's Word does not.



## *Chapter 101*

This is one of the two psalms in the section of the book which a number of Bible students credit to David. It is thought that it was written near the time when he became king of Israel. This may or may not be the case. It contains material which fits the situation of many, many persons in service of the Lord, particularly those with some degree of authority. Let us see how it may apply to most of God's true followers yesterday, today, or tomorrow.

**Psa 101:1 I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.**

The author declares his intention to sing praise to God for His mercy and His judgment. This is a very wise choice. God is all too often thought of as a God of forgiveness and mercy. However, He is also a God of justice and judgment. We obey Him for two reasons. The first is that we love Him because He first loved us. The second is that we fear the punishment He has declared He will heap upon the stubborn and willingly disobedient..

**Psa 101:2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.**

If David was the author of the psalm, and wrote it at the time he became king of Israel, we can see why he would have made such resolutions as we read here. For the most part, David was a man after God's own heart. Even after his sin with Bathsheba, he hung his head in sorrow and tried valiantly to pursue a better way. His

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intentions would have been to associate himself only with the upright, and to avoid as much as possible those who were sinful.

Of course, this decision would be commendable in any person in any age.

Psa 101:3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

Satan loves nothing more than to see men and women feast their eyes upon that which will contaminate their souls. We have enough difficulty maintaining our purity of heart without deliberately searching out the lusts of the eye and of the flesh. The writer of the psalm resolved to avoid any such actions. It is best to avoid even the appearance of evil.

The writer did not wish to have persons who turned back from the service of God and gave in to the temptations of the Devil in his presence. He was well aware that evil communications corrupt good morals. He wanted his own life to be upright.

Psa 101:4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.

When he says he will not know a wicked person, he is not maintaining that he could not call the name of any such person. He means that he does not know this type of person as a close friend or fellow worker.

Government is very often accused of political back slapping. Some of the accusations are deserved. A wicked person will ally himself with others of the same nature so that each can promote the selfish causes of the other.

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The psalmist does not wish to participate in this kind of dishonesty.

But, is this same attitude not found in the home and in the workplace. It is not too difficult to let greedy persons know you do not care to have them as close friends.

**Psa 101:5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.**

Now the writer is getting down to specifics. The one who slanders others wastes his time in distributing information which will harm another. Sometimes the information is true. Sometimes it is not. But the slander is intended to do damage to the victim. A number of commentators have pointed out that there is not one victim of slander. There are three. The slanderer damages himself, he damages the one who hears and believes the slander and he damages the one he slanders.

The slander is very often the product of a haughty person. He sees himself as capable of looking down on the individual whom he slanders. Those with such proud hearts and haughty pride make very poor companions. Again, the truth of this verse applies to a much wider circle than that of David's court.

**Psa 101:6 Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.**

The type of friends with whom a righteous persons should surround himself are those with lives which advertise a humble heart. They are those who walk in the footsteps which God has laid out for us.

It does seem from this verse that the writer is in

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a position of supervision. He does not wish to have servants who will hinder his intent to walk in an upright manner.

Psa 101:7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

The “house” of which he speaks is that area which he governs. It might well be his own family. It might be an entire kingdom. Whichever might be the case, the liar is not to be tolerated. He must either change his behavior or he must leave.

Psa 101:8 I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

This verse even makes the point stronger that David could have been the writer. He would have had power over both Jerusalem and the entire land.



Chapter 102

We are now presented with a picture of terrible agony and suffering. This horrible condition is only able to be borne through the hope that come of God's eternal care for His own. The author is unknown, though it is commonly thought that he was one of the captives of Israel who were persecuted in the Babylonian captivity.

All of God's children have been faced with great anxiety at one time or another. The hope of help from the powerful hand of the Lord enables them to pass through these times of testing. They are assured that the conditions of earth and it's inhabitants are temporal, but that the promises of Jehovah are to be trusted when time has been dissolved. The trying of the faith will be followed by joy without end if the person does not fall by the wayside.

Psa 102:1 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

As uncounted multitudes have done down through the centuries, the writer admits his inability to overcome through his own power, the difficulties he faces. This commentator has known strong men to break down in tears and weep like two year olds. There comes a time when our human frailties become much more evident to us than when life is flowing smoothly.

Psa 102:2 Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily.

God does not find it necessary to tilt His head to one side and listen intently in order to hear the pleas for help

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which His children present to Him. He knows the fall of every sparrow. The only question is whether or not the one calling for His help has acted in such a way that the request will be granted.

The one doing the praying in this instance knows he is in the deepest of trouble and that there is little time left. He may expire before the answer to his prayer is given.

**Psa 102:3 For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.**

His life is passing away like grass in a bonfire. His body is rapidly become as ugly as ashes in a fireplace. His days are being used up much like smoke rises into the air and is seen no more.

**Psa 102:4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.**

His heart is broken. His spirit has faded as grass withers under the heat of the midday sun. The forgetfulness in this verse is not that of old age. Many persons in their later years cannot remember the names of old friends, or where they laid their eyeglasses just a few minutes before. The forgetfulness here is due to the loss of appetite which has come about through the horrible conditions being endured.

**Psa 102:5 By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.**

We sometimes say of one who has lost far too much weight, that he or she has become no more than a “bag of bones.” This can take place when worries become so heavy that the appetite fails.



**Psa 102:6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness:  
I am like an owl of the desert.**

The birds named in this verse are recognized as loners. They do not have a large number of companions who will lend them assistance when they are in need. One writer has suggested that a sparrow will mourn for days over the loss of his mate.

**Psa 102:7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone  
upon the house top.**

The author of the psalm watches in loneliness, without a friend who can make the load lighter. The scene from his perch atop the ridge of the house is most dismal.

**Psa 102:8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and  
they that are mad against me are sworn against me.**

The captives in Babylon were at the mercy of their captors. The intent was to get as much labor from them as possible and then let them die without the dignity of a respectable funeral. The feeling was so strong that the captors had sworn to destroy them.

**Psa 102:9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and  
mingled my drink with weeping.**

Sackcloth and ashes were often the lot of those who groaned under the conditions they faced. The person speaking here has been surrounded by such ashes to the point that his food contained them. He did have water to drink to quench his thirst, but the weeping was so great the drink was mixed with tears.

**Psa 102:10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.**

What was the supposition as to why these piteous conditions had arisen? It was because of God's displeasure with Israel's lack of faith. The Lord had exalted His people in the eyes of the surrounding nations with blessings poured out as rain. When they failed to appreciate these blessings and had shared with those surrounding nations in idolatrous worship, God had allowed them to fall. They were now in the valley of depression, where in the past they had been dwelling on the mountain tops of joy.

**Psa 102:11 My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.**

It seems that the shadow which declined was the one seen at the end of the day when the sun was setting. Israel had been cut down. They lay helpless in the power of the Babylonians. They felt that if God did not intervene soon, it would be too late!

**Psa 102:12 But thou, O LORD, shall endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.**

The contrast was very great between the vast change which had been Israel's lot as they descended from God's grace to His chastisement. The one hope was that the unchanging God would reach down and lift up His people from their suffering.

**Psa 102:13 Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.**

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Since God remains the same yesterday, today and forever, the writer of the psalm felt help would come from the hand of God. A promise had been made to Jeremiah that the time had been set at seventy years. (See Jer. 29:10.)

Jer 29:10 Forthussaith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

Had not the set time arrived?

Psa 102:14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

Oh how much Israel desired to go back to the city of Jerusalem. Even the stones and the dust of that city were most precious in their memories.

Psa 102:15 So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

When God saw fit to visit his people and allow them to return to the land of promise, the nations who mocked them while they were captives would be forced to honor His name. Even the kings of the nations would bow before Him.

Psa 102:16 When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

When did the Lord appear to build up Zion? May we suggest that it was when Jesus Christ came and commanded His apostles to go unto all the world and preach the gospel to every nation. His glory did appear when God became flesh and dwelt among men. The spiritual kingdom of Zion began to take precedence over

the physical city of David in Jerusalem.

Of course, the Lord Jesus Christ is to return at the end of the age in all of His glory as all men stand before Him in the final day. This prayer which is under consideration is looking forward to the coming of the Babe in Bethlehem.

Psa 102:17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

Those who are lowly in spirit may be assured that God gives attention to their needs. He will not ignore their prayers. He delights to bless those who place their lives in His hand. The psalmist is perfectly convinced that God will lift Israel up once more. He prays that it will not be too late for him to see it.

Psa 102:18 This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

Psa 102:19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

A sanctuary is a holy place of security. God dwells in the heaven of heavens. The eternal God exists in perfect security from the efforts of His opposers to dethrone Him. He will always be there to observe the needs of the faithful and to provide such blessings as He sees are proper at the time.

Job thought in his day that it had gone way past time, but he maintained his confidence in God's dependability. God noted his faith. He blessed him in great abundance.

Psa 102:20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

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The prisoners spoken of now are not the same as those of the previous verses. These prisoners are those who have sinned and are resting under the condemnation of eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord. When Israel had faced physical death at the hands of the Babylonian rulers, God knew of their needs. But, the ones who are groaning this time are those whose hearts have been punctured by sin. God has not forgotten them. He would come to their aid, and had been making such preparations from the time of the sin in Eden.

**Psa 102:21 To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;**

The name of the Lord which was to be declared here is that of the Son of God. Zion is the New Jerusalem. That is where the real hope of the captives in Babylon lay. They must be released from their spiritual chains.

**Psa 102:22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.**

Can the present reader feel the intent of God to move from the physical distress of Israel, to the spiritual distress of the lost people of the nations of the earth? God is beginning to introduce the key to freedom. It is found in the Christ who gave himself for the sins of those who were ready to follow Him.

Men and women of every nation were to hear of the Kingdom of God, ruled by the King of kings. Both Jew and Gentile would come together to serve in that Kingdom.

**Psa 102:23 He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.**

These words could apply to a suffering captive in Babylon, but they could also apply to the Christ. Christ died at the age of thirty-three. His days had been shortened when He gave His life on the cross.

**Psa 102:24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.**

The reader will remember very well the words of Christ as He cried out, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? At that point He had forfeited a normal lifetime on earth at the hands of those who crucified Him. His everlastingness had been sacrificed to appease the wrath of the Father who felt the need to demonstrate the consequences of disobedience.

**Psa 102:25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.**

The heavens and the earth with which mortal men are surrounded did have a beginning. God said, “Let there be light, and there was light. Matter is not eternal. Human bodies are not eternal. God had an eternal purpose in bringing them into being. But they are not eternal.

The letter to the Hebrews quotes verses twenty-five and twenty-six almost verbatim.

*Heb 1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:*

*Heb 1:11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;*

*Heb 1:12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.*

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Psa 102:26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

The heavens and the earth will pass away with a great noise. The elements shall melt with fervent heat. A new heaven and a new earth will replace these temporary ones. The problems of this mortal life will either disappear for those who enter the joys of the Lord, or they will be vastly increased for those who are cast into the horrors of hell.

Psa 102:27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

The promises of Jehovah will be kept. His guarantees are not lifetime guarantees. They are valid for ever and ever.

Psa 102:28 The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

God's promises are not limited to a single generation. The captives who were to be released from Babylon were promised that their descendants would be providentially care for just as they were. The captives who are released from the sentence of spiritual death, may also be assured that God will be there for their children under the same conditions of faith that were used to judge themselves.

Chapter 103

What a pleasant change we have once more. The previous chapter focused our minds on the loneliness of the pelican and the sparrow. This one praises God for His kindness and mercy toward those who love Him and respect His will.

Much of it deals with His relationships with Israel of old. Yet, it is just as meaningful today to the one who genuinely seeks to build such relationships with Him in the present dispensation. The words sweetness and beauty apply to this chapter as well as they do to any other in the Holy Book.

The author is probably David, however there are many who believe it to have been written after the return from Babylonian captivity. In the latter case it would have arisen from the grateful hearts of the Israelites when they were allowed to serve Him once more in the blessed promised land.

The psalm is easy to follow as it tells of the personal need of the author to bless God; then tells why such praise should be given. Others are then urged to add their praise to that of the writer, and the conclusion calls for the entire universe to join in the adoration, including all from the archangels to the inanimate creation. Let the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament show forth his handiwork.

Psa 103:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

The word “bless” is used in two different senses in the Bible. God blesses men when He gives them something which they need to live full and productive lives. God



does not need that which man can give to Him. When man blessed God the blessing consists of praise and adoration. It is true that God is pleased with our words of thanksgiving and admiration, but it is more a matter of what God deserves than it is of what He needs.

As humans, we never praise the Lord to the degree His character invites. We find our limited minds unable to perfectly comprehend His greatness. Nor are we able to grasp but a small fraction of the provisions He makes for our guidance. Even after we have extended our heart, soul, mind and body to their utmost, we must still confess that we have fallen short of offering Him what is due.

Psa 103:2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

It is not possible to count all of our many blessings. We do not know of all of them. We cannot recall all of them. Our goal must be to do a finer job of praising Him this time than we did the last time.

Psa 103:3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Are the iniquities and diseases the same, or is the verse talking about spiritual disease and physical disease side by side. Disease is capable of hampering life and leading to death. In the case of physical disease the effects may be pneumonia, cancer or other devastating problems of the flesh. Death finally results if the affliction is not cured. In the case of spiritual disease, it may be lust, pride or hatred. God has provided cures for both of these major classes. The psalmist is no doubt placing a heavier emphasis upon the healing of spiritual infections.

Psa 103:4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

A list of some of those blessings which God has made available to men is now to be given. God had preserved the life of the Israelites through many years of persecution on more than one occasion. Rather than allowing them to perish, He poured out all kindness and mercy in abundance. If they had gotten what they deserved, death would have been justified. That sentence had been replaced with divine blessings.

Psa 103:5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The mouth is where the physical appetite is tended to. God had certainly given them that which was needed to prevent starvation. But, again there is more. He had offered them spiritual food through which they could refresh their souls. The mention of the eagle probably points out it's strength and vigor.

Psa 103:6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

Psa 103:7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

We can hardly miss the point that the chapter is first of all aimed in the direction of the Israelites who had been freed from bondservice in Egypt. After leaving that country, they found themselves wandering in a wilderness. God gave them laws from the heights of



Mount Sinai. Then He feed them with manna and guided them by the fire and the cloud. They were not allowed to flounder in ignorance. If they would trust in the Lord, He would direct their steps.

Psa 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Men lose their tempers and act with poor judgment when they are aggravated. Some allow others to dominate them, and only release their anger by cursing the sinner from the background. Some react in quick impulsive vengeance. God never acts in an inappropriate or selfish way.

Psa 103:9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

Often human supervisors are constantly making life miserable for their subordinates by pointing out their mistakes in a way that indicates they actually enjoy find fault. God does not enjoy warning His human creation that they are falling short of His instructions. Neither does He hold anger and wrath forever. When men sin, God makes the sin known. He then does everything possible to encourage repentance. If repentance is demonstrated, the anger is removed from existence.

Psa 103:10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Not a man or woman on earth would be alive today if God dealt with us according to our iniquities. Just how much sin would be necessary to justify Him condemning a soul to eternal separation from His presence eternally?

Instead, He calls upon men to turn from their sins. He will forgive if they will reform. Mercy and loving kindness have then been victorious over His wrath.

Psa 103:11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Heaven is a long ways above the earth. There are three heavens; the one where the birds fly in the atmosphere, the one where the heavenly bodies such as stars exist in the ether, and the one in which God's throne is found. It takes four years for light to reach earth from the **nearest** star, when the light is traveling over 186,000 miles per **second!** In other words, God's mercy is beyond comprehension. We hasten to warn the reader that this mercy is only available to those who are penitent, and who intend to walk in righteousness.

Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Doubling up on the illustrations makes the point impossible to overlook. Just how far is the farthest point in one direction of space from the farthest point in the opposite direction? In spite of some scientific conclusions that space is curved and by traveling consistently in one direction one would finally return to his original location, the point which is being made is that when God forgives sin, that sin is g-o-n-e. It will not be held against us at any future time.

Psa 103:13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.



Psa 103:14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

A human father sees his child as immature. He knows that child can grow in knowledge of what is right and wrong. That father anticipates better behavior from the child as experience and understanding improve. God knows the limitations of humans. He is lenient toward men just as a father is lenient of a two year old child. He made us and knows we live in bodies formed from the same elements found in dust. This is why he extends mercy to sinners.

Psa 103:15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

Men have not been around forever. They were born in a certain time and place. They live for a few year, then wither and die much like the flowers of spring. Thus, men must look to God for direction, and God looks upon men with the patience of a father training his child.

Psa 103:16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

There are some things which do not last. A hot wind passes over the flower. It wilts and dies. Man is much the same. A few blasts of this world's tragedies may well cut him down and lay him in the grave. A few generations and even the tombstone may be replaced by the foundation of a modern skyscraper.

Psa 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

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God has a sufficient amount of mercy to outlast human lives. His mercy has been there eternally. He is ready to forgive whenever men are willing to ask that forgiveness.

**Psa 103:18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.**

The present verse takes care of the idiotic idea that men may sin that grace shall abound. It is those who wish to be true to God with all of the heart, soul and mind, that find the everlasting well of God's grace.

**Psa 103:19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.**

Dear reader, do not make the mistake of thinking that because God's throne is located in the heavens His reign does not reach down to earth. His kingdom has dominion over all creation. He made it and He rules it. This is true from the highest of the heavens to the lowest depths of the created worlds.

**Psa 103:20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.**

There are tens of thousands of angels. These angels appear to be of different ranks. Even the lesser of the angels are more powerful than men. Yet these angels are called upon to bless God. They are expected to do His will. They may be cast down if they refuse.

**Psa 103:21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.**

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We know very little about what is meant by the hosts and ministers who do His pleasure. Whatever their identity, they are to praise Jehovah.

Psa 103:22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

The Lord is God. There is but one God. He is to be blessed by everything within His infinite universe, whether it be angel, man, animal, plant or mineral. When we look at a beautiful painting, we inspect it to see if we can identify the artist who painted it. We honor him for his skill. In the case of the God of heaven and earth we are a part of this Divine Artist. Upon examination, we should glorify our Creator.

Chapter 104

The more language oriented students of the Bible will spend enormous amounts of time on such matters as comparisons of the ancient versions and manuscripts in attempts to prove it's divine source. This is a valid approach, but there is another which farmer boys and automobile mechanics may well find equally convincing, if not more so.

Only the Lord God could have created a system as complicated and yet as interrelated as the universe in which we exist. This psalm spells out the purposes which are built into our "living room."

We do not know either the author or the date of the work. Our best guess is that David or Solomon were the human agents. But, the basic truths presented came through the "Finger of God."

Psa 104:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

There are those who believe psalm 103 and 104 were at one time combines as one. The thrust of both has to do with the reality of God's existence and the concern He has for humanity. The first verse of both of these psalms is the same.

God is deserving of infinitely more praise than we are capable of offering to Him. This first verse speaks of Him being clothed with majesty and honor. Though God is not visible to the human eye, His glory is so evident through the magnificence of His creative works that we can see the clothing, even if we cannot see His form. The body of Christ came into the world that men might have

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some slight idea of what it means to have been created in the image of God.

**Psa 104:2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:**

In the beginning God said, "Let there be light." Time after time, when God was providing His guidance for men, He was surrounded by glorious light. This was true in the giving of the law on Sinai. It was true in the resurrected Christ.

The atmospheric heavens are stretched out over the surface of the earth in such manner as to screen out radiation and various objects which hurtle through space and could cause great damage if allowed to strike either men or beasts.

The reader who is familiar with the days of creation, as given in the first chapters of Genesis will quickly recognize the similarity of these accounts. God created the universe. Let us glorify His name.

**Psa 104:3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:**

When one begins to build, beams are the foundation of the structure. Without beams there is no support for the rest of the building. God's beams were laid in the waters. This probably means more than just the water found today in ponds, lakes, rivers and seas. It could well mean the matter from which the chemical elements were formed.

God is not confined to a finite place in space. He is master of the land, the sea, the air and rules from the third heaven.

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Psa 104:4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

There are heavenly beings who serve to do His will. They are especially important in seeing that His messages are given to men. They have great power to build or cast down. Spirits give life. Fire provides energy. God intends that His angels use such qualities for the well being of His creation.

Psa 104:5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

A foundation prevents a building from being destroyed by winds and floods. The fact that God laid a foundation for the earth simply informs us that He placed it where He wanted it to be in relationship to the rest of the cosmos. It will remain in that position until it has served the purpose for which He made it. Then it will be replaced by the new earth. “Forever” in the present verse is limited to “time.”

Psa 104:6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

In the early part of creation, there was no difference between the water of the seas and that of the atmosphere. The land was entire submerged in this water much as a person would be surrounded by a heavy overcoat. Only the water would have been visible. Even the highest points of the land were covered.

Psa 104:7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.



God did not intend that this be the final arrangement of land, water and air. The dry land was to be a place where certain types of plants and animals could exist. Thus, God spoke and the waters moved according to His command. The Word of God existed from before the creation began. "In the beginning was the Word." That Word speaks with the power of thunder.

Psa 104:8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

How can water go up by the mountains. The normal direction for water is downward rather than upward. What appears to be the case here is that evaporation began to operate. This would be the beginning of the separation of the waters found in the atmosphere from that found in the liquid portions of the globe. Water rose higher to make rain possible. Water flowed downward to form seas, etc.

Psa 104:9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

Does this verse mean that this chapter was written after the flood which covered the earth in the time of Noah? I think not. I believe verse nine speaks of a requirement from God that there be no reversal of the water cycle that the condition might be as it was before the water above the seas was separated from that within the seas. It is most difficult for we who live on this present globe to imagine some of the conditions which existed in the days of creation.

Psa 104:10 He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

The moisture in the air would have fallen to the earth and percolated through the ground until it burst through the openings in the hills as springs.

Psa 104:11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.

This was not all happenstance. It was a part of the plan of God for the existence of the many forms of life which were to live on the land. Liquid water is necessary for life. This made that water available.

Psa 104:12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

Among the creatures who were allowed to survive through the supply of water were the birds which nest in the trees. Even the trees depended upon the appearance of dry land.

Psa 104:13 He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

The “fruit” mentioned here may well refer to only that portion of God’s works which are in the vegetable kingdom. The next few verses would imply that this is the case. The psalmist has spoken of the animal world. Now attention is turned to plants and their products.

Psa 104:14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;

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**Psa 104:15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.**

If the cattle were to survive there must be grass. If men are to survive there must be more than a diet of meat. There are three levels of vegetation. Two of those are mentioned in verse fourteen. The third is considered in verse sixteen. The herbs would be those plants which produce fruit such as cereals crops and garden vegetables. Wine does not necessarily mean alcoholic content. The Hebrew word from which this word "wine" is translated can refer to unfermented grape juice. It is certainly true that fermented wine was used in Biblical times, and that it does have the capacity to gladden the heart. The Bible, however makes it clear that one is not to look into the cup when it foams and he becomes "drunken with wine."

**Psa 104:16 The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;**

In God's wisdom, habitations were prepared for all types of living things. The cedars of Lebanon were noted for their great size. They were also noted for the length of their lives.

**Psa 104:17 Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house.**

The cedars of Lebanon and the fir trees afford both large and small birds with security for raising their young.

**Psa 104:18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies.**

Even the highest hills, with their cliffs and crannies gave homes and playgrounds for a variety of animals. All of God's creation worked together for the benefit of man.

**Psa 104:19 He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.**

The moon does not make the seasons, but from the ancient of days it has been associated with the months. The cycles of the moon, such as half moon and full moon appear with great regularity, and have done so since God placed it in the heavens. The same is true of the sun. Daylight and darkness are so predictable that we know there will be three hundred sixty-five and one fourth days within a year. We can make plans for spring, summer, fall and winter with full confidence that the number of days will also appear with precise regularity. The atheist must believe that all this design and purpose exists by non intellectual means. We cannot accept that hypothesis.

**Psa 104:20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.**

Darkness is actually the absence of physical light. It also serves the purpose of the Creator. There are numerous animals which roam at night. They gain their food by keener eyesight than men have for the dark hours.

**Psa 104:21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.**

This verse informs us that the meat which lions consume is supplied to them by the intent of the Lord.



This has been a source of difficulty for the present writer. Why would God have created a world in which pain must be suffered by some in order that others may be filled. Why are not all animals vegetarian? Did this arrangement come about because of sin? Were certain animals and men intended to be meat eaters from the beginning?

This is one of those questions for which I have not found a satisfying answer. I do not suppose that my failure to find an answer is proof that there is none. One day I hope to meet my Lord face to face. Perhaps then such mysteries may be cleared. That which is revealed belongs to man. That which is secret belongs to God.

**Psa 104:22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.**

**Psa 104:23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.**

When the sun rises, the predatory animals tend to rest while men work. Then when the beasts work, men rest. Man may have brought difficulties to his life by shift work which assigns work during the night hours. Today we find men working during the daylight hours and their wives working during the night. Is this a healthy life style?

**Psa 104:24 O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.**

The psalmist pauses here in awe of the wonders of God's creation. He has covered the land environment. He will now turn to the seas.

The riches mentioned are not necessarily gold and silver. They are the provisions God has made for the existence of His vast variety of plants and animals.

**Psa 104:25 So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.**

The seas are far from empty of life. It has been said that there are more species of life in the sea and on the land. This life ranges from the submicroscopic to the gigantic. The food chains of the ocean are just as complex as those of the land.

**Psa 104:26 There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.**

The ships may well be the very large sea beasts. The leviathan could be the whale, or the alligator. Life is just as well suited for them in the water as it is for the birds and men on the land.

**Psa 104:27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.**

**Psa 104:28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.**

Every organism of the sea and the land is dependent upon the wisdom and power of Jehovah. Their food comes as a result of His open hand. They rejoice when the harvest comes just as men do when the wheat ripens.

It is quite possible that beginning with verse twenty-seven the reference is to all the living creatures which have been spoken of to this point. **All** must wait until the Divine Hand opens a food supply to them.

**Psa 104:29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.**



As long as the hand of God continues to provide food, they may survive. As soon as the food supply is removed, they die. "Bless the Lord O my soul."

**Psa 104:30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.**

We have a crescendo of praise in the last verses of the chapter. The Father, the Word and the Spirit work in harmony during the creative process. The Spirit is the life giving and energizing personality of the Godhead. The Spirit was in the beginning. The Spirit allows the creation to continue. Every good thing in the world has it's origin in the Godhead. That is why it is pleasing to see families bow their heads in thanksgiving three times a day when meals are before them.

**Psa 104:31 The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.**

**Psa 104:32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.**

The power of God may be seen in the trembling of the earth during earthquakes. It can be seen also in the fiery lava which is emitted during the action of a volcano. These are forces which dwarf the powers of mankind even this late in the history of the world.

**Psa 104:33 I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.**

As long as one's heart beats and his lungs draw a breath, the praise should flow upward toward the throne of the Almighty.

Such praise is excellent practice for the pure praise which will be offered by saints and angels when the redeemed are gathered in eternity.

**Psa 104:34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.**

It is all too easy to become bitter in this life. The sweet is mixed with that which is bitter. Then we begin to allow our meditations to cloud our minds with gloom. The Christian must look past the mixture of good and evil which is found in this earthly vale. God has made sweet promises which He will keep.

**Psa 104:35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.**

The presence of evil and wicked men and women in the wonderful home which God has created for us will not always be tolerated. It is not just that the righteous will not have to deal with them any more. It goes farther. Those who would spoil God's creation will be cast into an eternal pit of torment.



## Chapter 105

There can be no doubt that David was the author of these words. Beginning with the seventh verse of the sixteenth chapter of I Chronicles, we find these words.

*1Ch 16:7 Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.*

The text of the chapter in I Chronicles then goes on nearly word for word with these first verses in Psalm 105.

The reader is advised to remember that these psalms were written for the purpose of singing praise to the Lord. They have a quite different style than that of the other books of the Bible. Though this one hundred fifth psalm deals with a summary of much of the history of Israel, it presents that history in brief summary. One can almost hear the voices of the singers as the psalm is read.

It was very important that Israel remind themselves of the faithfulness of the Lord to the promise made to Abraham. In a very special way, God desired to bless all nations through the seed of that great patriarch. He had designated Canaan as a geographical point from which the promise would spread. This psalm follows that promise from Abraham to the return of Israel to that land after the four hundred years of bondage in Egypt. God had not forgotten!

Because of it's condensed form, it makes the providential care of God for Israel stand out clearly. One can see the care of the Lord for His people in practically every line of the psalm.



**Psa 105:1 O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.**

There are two basic commands which are to be respected by God's people in every time and place. They are to thank Him for His wonderful blessings, and they are to cause others to learn of His faithfulness and loving care. His signs, wonders and miracles are one side of that picture. His providential care from behind the scenes is the other side.

**Psa 105:2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.**

The commands of verse one can be at least partially carried out by singing psalms. Normal conversation with both Jews and Gentiles is expected to contain praise to God's majesty.

**Psa 105:3 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.**

The name of Jehovah is a name above all others. Those who have cherished that name have reason to rejoice. Their hearts are to be overflowing with joy at the thought of being His children.

**Psa 105:4 Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.**

Seeking the Lord is not limited to discovering His existence. A person might well know of the existence of a famous person without becoming close friends with that person. The seeking of the Lord, as mentioned in this verse is a constant attempt to be a friend to God.



**Psa 105:5 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;**

Ingratitude toward those things which God has done is unthinkable. Such blessings could not have been provided by any other. The laws which were given to His people give light to their pathway. They are taught what to do and what not to do. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps."

**Psa 105:6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.**

**Psa 105:7 He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth.**

Abraham was the place where the psalmist chose to begin in this account of God's care. Abraham is the father of the faithful. Some of those faithful were his fleshly descendants. Others are the spiritual descendants of that great leader. His judgments did not stop with the Jews. They have spread out through all the earth. Those who do not remember Him with thanksgiving have no excuse for their forgetfulness.

**Psa 105:8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.**

These thousands of generations are not limited to the fleshly seed of Abraham. They include all men and women of every nation who will love Him and obey His commandments. One thousand is but a way of saying He will continue to build His family until the end of the this present world.

**Psa 105:9 Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;**

**Psa 105:10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant:**

All three of the famous patriarchs are now included in the promise. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all received it personally. The covenant might move from a fleshly and geographical base to one of spiritual nature, but it would be honored to the end of time.

**Psa 105:11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:**

Canaan was to be a land passed down from Abraham to Isaac, to Jacob and then to God's chosen people through the ages.

**Psa 105:12 When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.**

It is quite true that at first there were but a few persons in the camp of Abraham. Seventy souls entered into Canaan. Later, there were six hundred thousand men, plus women and children, who returned to Canaan after the four hundred years in Egypt.

Those seventy were not in command of the land at first. They were considered strangers by the Canaanites who inhabited the land.

**Psa 105:13 When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people;**

We would say today that they moved from "pillar to post." It would be some time before they could claim





victory over the idolatrous people who populated the land of promise.

**Psa 105:14 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes;**

Without God's supervision the small band could have been demolished. With God on their side, this was not possible. They survived only because there were special plans for them in the Divine mind.

At one point Pharaoh desired to have Sarai for his harem. God was with Abram and Pharaoh told his men not to touch Abram.

**Psa 105:15 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.**

In the Christian age, God's anointed are those who have united themselves within the body of Christ. They are kings and priests. God will care for them. In Abraham's time he was considered to be a prophet. He was anointed and was not to be harmed.

**Psa 105:16 Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.**

It is a bit difficult to follow the story here because there were two famines. The first caused Abraham to go to Egypt. The second caused Jacob to send his sons to Egypt to obtain food. The account jumps from one to the other so quickly that the reader may become confused if not careful.

**Psa 105:17 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant:**

When the famine in the time of Jacob struck, Joseph had been sold into Egypt as a slave. The Bible claims this was no accident. God sent Joseph there to prepare the way for the entry of the rest of the Israelites who were to follow in their own time.

**Psa 105:18 Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron:**

Who would have dreamed that a young lad of seventeen years who was placed in chains and placed in a prison would rise to a position second only to the Pharaoh? But that is precisely what happened. God had not forgotten His people.

**Psa 105:19 Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.**

Joseph's time in prison was a trial from the Lord. He was being tested to prove and strengthen his faith. When it is said that "his word came" we are to understand that God was the one who caused the dreams of the butler and the baker. This prepared the way for Joseph to move from the prison to the palace.

**Psa 105:20 The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free.**

**Psa 105:21 He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance:**

Not only did the Pharaoh order Joseph released from the prison. He appointed Joseph as a ruler of all Pharaoh's possessions. Joseph had shown such wisdom in his advice to Pharaoh that he was selected to take this high place in the land.



**Psa 105:22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.**

Even the highest leaders of Egypt were to listen to Joseph. They were to follow his instructions during the coming famine. They were to learn from his wisdom.

**Psa 105:23 Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.**

It is strange that many details of the move by Jacob from Canaan to Egypt are not included in the story here. We are only told that they did so.

**Psa 105:24 And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.**

During their stay in Egypt the Israelites increased greatly in number; so much so that they became stronger than those who held them captive. We might also add that this increase in numbers had a part to play in the return to Canaan under the leadership of Joshua.

**Psa 105:25 He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtly with his servants.**

God desired that His people return to Canaan after they had served the Egyptians for some four centuries. Therefore, God caused circumstances to arise which led to hatred so intense that Egypt was happy to see the Israelites leave. They would be glad to see the last of them.

We need to add one more thing here. Jehovah is not a promoter of hatred. He is a God of love. When we are told that God turned the Egyptians hearts to hate the

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Israelites, what God did was to tell the Egyptians to “Let My people Go!” When this was not done willingly, God caused difficulties so severe that the Egyptians came to despise them as a result of the plagues which they knew came on them because of their insistence on keeping God’s people as bondservants. If they had allowed Israel to leave there would have been no need to go through the suffering.

Psa 105:26 He sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he had chosen.

Moses became God’s chosen leader of Israel. Aaron was designated as the High Priest. Together these two served the Lord and His people in moving Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness. God still remembered!

Psa 105:27 They shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

Egypt is the part of the earth where Ham settled, and his descendants multiplied. Shem, Ham and Japheth were the three major classes of persons in the world to this day. Shem was the ancestor of the oriental people. Ham was the ancestor of the negroid people. Japheth was the ancestor of the Caucasian people. Moses and Aaron shewed God’s power in Egypt, which was a part of the land of Ham.

Psa 105:28 He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.

This verse has been the center of controversy. God is the God of light, not darkness. The darkness came as a result of the Egyptians failure to follow the light which

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God placed before them. The question which has been debated is the identity of those who rebelled not against His word. There is a strong feeling that the word “not” did not belong in the original passage, but somehow crept in. In that case, the darkness came because of Egypt’s rebellion. Clearly it was not a result of rebellion on the part of Israel.

**Psa 105:29 He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.**

The reader who is familiar with the record as given in Exodus will quickly recognize that the order of the plagues as listed here is not the same as that in Exodus. The order is not the important point in this psalm. The importance lies in the fact that God used a variety of difficulties for the Egyptians in order to persuade them to let His people go.

**Psa 105:30 Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.**

As a youngster this commentator lived in a house which was infested with rats and mice. They fed off the grain which was stored in the barn. From there they moved into the basement of the house where potatoes were stored through winter. Anyone who has lived in such circumstances will agree that massive numbers of frogs crawling through the living quarters night and day would be most disgusting.

**Psa 105:31 He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts.**

The plagues of lice and flies would have been equally nauseating. We have all seen rotting meat which was

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covered with swarms of flies. Most of us have known of children who came to school with lice in the clothing and in their hair. That would apparently have been only a beginning of the horror produced by special plagues sent by the Lord God.

Psa 105:32 He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land.

Storms were sent with hail and lightning heavy enough to strip the fruit from the vines and trees upon which it grew.

Psa 105:33 He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.

If one wonders how hail could do such damage, we have well documented records of hailstones weighing up to three quarters of a pound. The ones which were dropped on the land of Egypt must have been of similar or perhaps even larger size.

Psa 105:34 He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number,

Psa 105:35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

With one plague following another we can readily conclude what must have been going on in the minds of the Egyptians. There would have been an internal war between whether it was best to rid the land of the cause of the plagues by sending the Israelites away, or whether it would be better to suffer the plagues in order to retain them as servants.

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**Psa 105:36 He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength.**

The capstone of the plagues had been when the oldest male child in each of the families of the Egyptians died, while at the same time the angel of death passed over the houses of the Israelites without such catastrophe. The Israelites were then allowed to leave.

**Psa 105:37 He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.**

The Egyptians were even willing to give the Israelites silver and gold to see them off. This was just since Israel had served without adequate compensation for centuries.

It would be highly improbable that with the number of Israelites who departed, it could be said all were strong and healthy.

**Psa 105:38 Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.**

**Psa 105:39 He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.**

Desert nights are cold while days are blazing hot. The cloud by day protected from the heat. The fire by night would have provided some relief from the chill of the dark hours. At the same time, the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night led them toward their destination of the land of Canaan.

**Psa 105:40 The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.**

We are told here that the Israelites “asked” for food. In fact, they murmured at the kind of food which was prepared for them. God in His longsuffering sent the manna and the quails to “satisfy” them.

**Psa 105:41 He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.**

When the people complained for lack of water, Moses struck the rock and water gushed forth like a river. Moses’ statement, “Must we get you water, you rebels?” was wrong in the sight of God because he took the glory to himself. Even so, the water was given to keep them alive.

**Psa 105:42 For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.**

Yes! God remembered His promise to Abraham that he would provide his descendants a land and would make them a blessing to all nations. All that was happening fit into the keeping of that promise.

**Psa 105:43 And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness:**

**Psa 105:44 And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;**

God’s people suffered much in the times of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and Aaron. But, faith and patience give rise to hope and joy. They sang with joy when became clear that they had been redeemed from the bondage in Egypt. God finally saw to it that they





were able to move back into the land of Canaan which was intended to be their inheritance.

**Psa 105:45 That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.**

They had not been blessed by Jehovah because of racial partiality on His part. In His infinite wisdom, He knew that these were the people through whom Jesus Christ, God's Only Begotten Son, and the Saviour of men from their sins would come into the world.

The commandments had been given on Mount Sinai as a step in the preparation for the earth changing event. All nations would be blessed through the seed of Abraham. From the city of Jerusalem the gospel of Jesus, the Christ, would be preached to Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. There would even be a New Jerusalem into which the obedient could enter when the bondage of sin was broken through the blood of the Lamb of God.

## *Chapter 106*

This is one of a number of penitential psalms. At times Israel realized the nation as a whole had insulted the Lord by failing to do what He commanded to be done, or doing that which He had forbidden. At times the sins were outright rebellion.

The psalmist points out a number of these sins. God's patience and longsuffering is emphasized. The fact that God's longsuffering does not last indefinitely is illustrated by examples of that which took place when the mercy was replaced by His wrath.

**Psa 106:1 Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.**

When it is said that the Lord is good. It means that He is perfectly good. There is no evil in Him at all. Man always has some degree of evil in him. We are told that all men have sinned. The only way that man can be good is to have been cleansed by the blood of the Son of God.

The reason for stating that the Lord is good is to be shown by the examples of longsuffering which are recounted in the chapter.

**Psa 106:2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? who can shew forth all his praise?**

It is impossible for any human to fully declare the wonders and miracles God has seen fit to bestow on mankind. None can offer Him all of the praise which He is due. Every effort to present God in all of His majesty and glory is doomed to failure.



**Psa 106:3 Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.**

To be blessed is to be happy and spiritually healthy. This condition comes about when one follows the instructions of the Lord. The man or woman who acts in righteousness may rest in confidence that all is well with his soul.

**Psa 106:4 Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;**

The psalmist pleads that he be counted as one of those righteous and receive the blessings which have been promised to these faithful servants.

**Psa 106:5 That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.**

The writer of the psalm is not outside the fleshly descendants of Abraham. The next verse will show that to be true. He is admitting that out of those fleshly descendants there will be many who do not receive the promises because of their sinful behavior.

God wishes to be a father to obedient children and grant them an inheritance in heaven where they can be with Him eternally. The inheritance of the land of Canaan was but a type of the New Jerusalem above.

**Psa 106:6 We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.**

The statements above are very, very difficult to make. Those who are rank sinners usually do not even admit that what they have done should be classified as sin. Those who realize they have sinned are ashamed to admit it before others. This psalm is not only going to admit the Israelites have sinned. It is going to list a number of those sins. The chapter is both a confession of long standing sin in the camp of Israel, and an admission that the Lord has been longsuffering far beyond what might have been expected.

**Psa 106:7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea.**

See Number 1. See Exodus 14:9-13.

After having seen the mighty works of God as done through the series of plagues which fell upon the Egyptians, Israel went into a state of panic when they saw the Egyptian army closing in behind them, and the Red Sea ahead. They forgot that God is able to accomplish that which man cannot do. They said it would have been better to serve the Egyptians than to die there in the wilderness.

God was provoked by their failure to trust Him, even after such a display of His power as they had seen.

**Psa 106:8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.**

Although they did not deserve God's help, He had made a promise which would be kept that through Israel

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all nations would be blessed. He did not destroy His people in order that His Word would continue to be held high.

Psa 106:9 He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

Psa 106:10 And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

Psa 106:11 And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.

God commanded and the waters separated, allowing the Israelites to pass through on dry land. When the Egyptians tried to follow, they were drowned as the waters closed back together over their heads.

Psa 106:12 Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.

Psa 106:13 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel:

Just for the moment His people believed in Him and sang praises to His name. Their faith was short lived. They should have been willing to wait for Him to care for them in His own way and time. They did not!

See Number 2. See Exodus 15:22-27; 17:1

Psa 106:14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

Psa 106:15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

As they moved through the desert, they came to a place where there was not water to drink. Again the

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people cried out that they had been brought out of Egypt to die, this time from thirst. Moses was told to strike a rock. When he obeyed water would flow from the rock. It did just as God promised.

But there was more. They complained that they had no flesh or bread to eat. God then brought quail from the sea and manna from the sky. The people received their request, but even while their stomachs were filled, their souls were being starved because they refused to feast on the promises of Jehovah.

Sin Number 3. See Numbers 16:1-35.

**Psa 106:16 They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD.**

**Psa 106:17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan and covered the company of Abiram.**

**Psa 106:18 And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.**

In most positions of authority there are rivals who are jealous. This was true of the leadership of Moses and Aaron. Korah, Dathan and Abiram accused Moses of promising to take them to a land of promise and then failing to keep his promise. They accused the two of seeking their own interests and not having been appointed to the positions of authority by God.

Moses proposed a test by which this could be tested. Each would take a censor with fire and approach the Lord with it. God would then make it clear whom He had chosen and whom He had not chosen. The three accusers were swallowed up by the earth.

Sin Number 4. Exodus 32:1-10.

**Psa 106:19 They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.**

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Psa 106:20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

While Moses was on Mount Horeb (Sinai), he took longer to return than the people should. Aaron called for the people to take the gold they had carried out of the land of Egypt. He then made a golden calf and called upon the people to worship the calf, as if it was a god who had released them from Egyptian slavery.

Psa 106:21 They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

Psa 106:22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea.

Over and over the people forgot what the Lord had done for them in the past. The evidence had been overwhelming; yet they ignored it.

This presents God's people today with a similar situation. The evidences for the Sonship of Jesus Christ are just as impressive as the miracles done in the time of Moses. Even so, atheists mock and Christians abandon their faith. Let us be careful about accusing the Israelites of poor reasoning when we fall victim to the same errors today.

Psa 106:23 Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Moses was such a man. His prayer that God not destroy Israel was heard and God allowed the people to live.

Psa 106:24 Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word:

Psa 106:25 But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.

How many times would God continue to have mercy upon such an ungrateful people? Surely they would ultimately prove that they would never believe His Word.

Psa 106:26 Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

Psa 106:27 To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.

By this time God had determined that He would not allow the vast majority of the Israelites to enter the promised land. Some were to wander until they died in the wilderness, just as they had accused God of doing. The psalmist informs us that when this psalm was written, there were many of them scattered among the other nations.

Sin Number 5. See Numbers 25:1-13.

Psa 106:28 They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

The worship of Baalpeor consisted of sexually corrupt actions. We are talking here about a sex god. Images of the male sex organ were bowed down to and women served as prostitutes. When it says they “joined themselves” the words are to be taken literally. This was adultery of the most disgusting kind.

The people even ate meals devoted to the praise of the



sex god. Rather than serving the Living God, they gave themselves to dead images made by men.

Psa 106:29 Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.

Psa 106:30 Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and so the plague was stayed.

Psa 106:31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

Phinehas actually killed a man and woman who were engaged in sexual intercourse as an act of worship. This action has been recorded and passed on to the generations from his time on that we might know of God's attitude of abomination toward such sin.

Psa 106:32 They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

Psa 106:33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

Since we have already discussed the complaints for lack of water, we will not list this as a separate sin. It is sufficient to note that it was not the striking of the rock by Moses which displeased God. It was that he spoke inadvisably with his lips. He asked, "Must WE get you water?" It was not Moses who made the water available to them. It was Jehovah.

Sin Number 6. See Deuteronomy 7:1-5.

Psa 106:34 They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

Psa 106:35 But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.

The Lord had commanded them to drive out the idolatrous nations which inhabited the land of Canaan at the time they entered. They failed to keep that commandment. The effect could have been that the nations who were practicing idolatry would learn of the beauty of holiness and leave their unholy ways. Instead, the Israelites turned from the way of holiness and adopted the ways of the heathen nations.

Psa 106:36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.

Psa 106:37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

What kind of a parent is it that sacrifices his or her sons and daughters to a false god? It is true that the Lord allowed His Only Begotten Son to be sacrificed on the cross of Calvary for the sins of others, but this sacrifice accomplished the cleansing of penitent sinners. The sacrifices the Moabites made did nothing other than cook their own offspring in the fires dedicated to Molech, etc. These were not true gods. They were devils.

Psa 106:38 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

Psa 106:39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.

The worship of the idolators was not from the mind of Jehovah. It was the product of men's own twisted imaginations.

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**Psa 106:40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.**

**Psa 106:41 And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.**

**Psa 106:42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.**

The Lord became so angry with His own people Israel that He allowed other nations to attack and overcome them.

**Psa 106:43 Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.**

**Psa 106:44 Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:**

After they chastised them for their folly, they would cry out for mercy. They remembered Him only when they were under the whip. Over and over again He gave attention to their pleas. He had a good reason for acting in this way. He had made a promise to Abraham. He was determined to keep that promise.

**Psa 106:45 And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.**

God does not sin. When men repent, it is because they have sinned and have decided they were wrong. When God repents it simply means that He has decided to turn from one plan of action to another. In the present case, He

allowed them to be punished by being taken into captivity. After a time the captors did take pity on them and allow them to return to Canaan. Cyrus, the Persian king gave an edict that they might go back to their own land.

**Psa 106:46 He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.**

Cyrus was not alone in his pity. There were other times when Israel suffered under the domination of other peoples. God arranged a number of times for their return.

**Psa 106:47 Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise.**

These last verses are proof that at the time the psalmist wrote, there were many still scattered among those who were not of the chosen nation. The psalmist pleads with God to bring them back that they may offer thanksgiving and praise to His mercy and long suffering.

**Psa 106:48 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.**

The psalm ends as it began. The glory, the power and the honor belong to Him.

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Chapter 107

Psalms 107 follows the two just before it to a certain extent. It tells of Jehovah's willingness to redeem men from situations into which they have gotten themselves through ignoring His Word.

There are two quite different ways of looking at this psalm. Some apply the majority of what it presents to the attitude the returnees from Babylonian captivity either did have, or should have had. Others see a much broader application, applying to those of all ages and all situations in which men have been redeemed from both material and spiritual disasters into which they have fallen through rebellion or carelessness.

The approach taken in the present comments will include the return from Babylonian, but will see it as but one of the many occasions in which the Lord has rescued men from both temporal and spiritual bondage. There are four different metaphors used to illustrate the one theme of man's need for God's grace, and the expectation of God that thanksgiving will be offered for that grace.

Psa 107:1 O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

What a wonderful thing it is that the Lord does not destroy man for the sins which he commits. If He did so, there would not be a person alive who had passed the age of accountability. Are you genuinely sorry for the sins you have committed? If so, God stands ready to forgive you. This does not mean you will suffer no ill effects from what you have done. The material and emotional conditions which follow such sins may still be felt, but the spiritual death which is the wages of sin can be eliminated. The victory over the bondage of Satan is

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a source of great relief. God is due one's deepest praise and thanksgiving.

**Psa 107:2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;**

Not only should those who have been redeemed from the guilt of their sin thank God for their redemption. They should be so overjoyed that they will wish to share the good news with others. Perhaps they too may be in need of relief. Do not fail to tell of your good fortune. God will be pleased. Others may find freedom along with you.

**Psa 107:3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.**

This third verse speaks in the past tense. It is not will gather. It is has gathered. There is, however, the strong possibility of a prophetic note. In other words, God has gathered and will continue to gather men from all quarters of the globe.

This verse is the main reason why we should see the chapter as having to do with far more than the return from Babylonian captivity. Babylon was situated northeast of the promised land. The redeemed in this verse came from all four points of the compass. The apostles were told by the Lord to preach the gospel to all nations. Peter was told to go to the house of Cornelius, who was a Gentile. God has gathered followers from all directions in the past. He will continue to do that in the future, if the redeemed tell others of their great blessings.

**Psa 107:4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.**

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The lost are wandering and trying to find their way by directing their own steps. As long as they do this, they will feel the loneliness of spiritual separation from that which is good and holy. One can be in the midst of a room full of drunken alcoholics who are singing bar room songs, and still be wandering in a solitary wilderness.

The Israelites who wandered for forty years in the wilderness felt their need for a continuing city. The captives in Babylon were in one of the most advanced civilizations of their day. Yet they had lost sight of God's chosen city of Jerusalem.

Psa 107:5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

The lost may become literally hungry and thirsty, so much so, in fact, that they starve to death. The Israelites who wandered in the desert were seriously afraid that they would die until God provided food for them. But, the reader must not lose sight of the greater danger of starvation of the soul from failing to nourish one's self by feeding on the "Bread of life." The body may actually be fat, and the soul starving.

Psa 107:6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.

It was their own fault that they were in such horrible circumstances. Though this was the case, when they cried out for help from the Lord, it was provided. Their attitude should have been one of immense gratitude for their delivery.

Psa 107:7 And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

It is not necessary that wander far from the fold of God. The Great Shepherd of the sheep calls for the sheep to follow Him. They need not suffer from lack of rich pasture. They need not fall victim to the wild beasts who would feast upon them. If they will follow the leadership of the all knowing, all powerful God, they may find that continuing city in heaven.

Psa 107:8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Psa 107:9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

These two verses will be found after each of the four examples of God's willingness to redeem the lost. If men will praise God for His merciful blessing of redemption, He will fill their spiritual loneliness and hunger.

Psa 107:10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;

Now we have come to the second example. This time it deals with those who find themselves in prison. They are in the darkness of the prison cell. They are in chains and behind bars. Death looms in the near future. Is there any hope of escape?

Psa 107:11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:



It was not the fault of the Lord that these miserable prisoners had found themselves in such distress. They had fought against His wisdom. They had looked with contempt upon His commandments. Now they were suffering the consequences.

This was true of the prisoners in Babylon. It has also been true of masses of persons through the ages. The Devil finds no greater satisfaction than to persuade men to defy the Word of God. He can then make them prisoners in the darkness which could last until they find themselves in the fire of hell.

Dear friend, you may sit in the darkness of bondage to the Devil while sitting on a park bench on a sunny day. Do not let it happen.

Psa 107:12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help.

Service to a slavemaster is not pleasant. No doubt the Israelites in Egyptian bondage knew this. The captives in Babylon would have agreed with them. When the truth which makes men free is abandoned, they will ultimately become the slaves of the most hideous slavemaster of all. (See John 8:31-32.)

Joh 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

Joh 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Psa 107:13 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.

Just as the Lord had rescued the one who wandered in the wilderness of sin, hungry and lonely, He also heard the cry of the prisoners chained and sitting in darkness facing probable death.

Psa 107:14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

Jehovah delivered those captives in Babylon from the darkness of their prison cells. He caused the prison doors to be unlocked and the shackles to be removed from their hands and feet.

But far more important, God has provided a way by which all men can break free from the chains of darkness which Satan uses to reserve his prisoners as they await the second death.

Psa 107:15 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Psa 107:16 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

We have come again to the verses which conclude one of the four examples of God's willingness to come to the aid of penitent souls. He cuts the gates and bars of the devil's prison and allows men to go free.

Psa 107:17 Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

Here is example number three. This is the person who is suffering affliction, but who will not go to a source of healing. Sin has brought him to the brink of destruction.



His body is diseased and his soul is starving. Still, he refuses to recognize the cure.

Psa 107:18 Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

The meat spoken of here is spiritual in nature. The Word of God is the Bread of Life. It is steak for the soul. By refusing to feed upon the Word, men walk ever close to the gates of death which, when locked behind them, shut out all possible hope.

Psa 107:19 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

If such persons will examine themselves that they become aware of the danger in which they have placed themselves, they have the opportunity to cry out for salvation from their wicked ways. God will hear if they will turn toward righteousness.

Psa 107:20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

Psa 107:21 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Psa 107:22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

We could list many, many references from the Bible records to verify the truth of these concluding verses of the third example. Is the reader tired of reading the same

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words, repeated over and over. Let us hope not. This is God's method of pointing out the importance of what He is saying.

The sacrifice of thanksgiving is in prayer and service to the Lord. As long as men attempt to direct their own steps, they will fall. If they will place their hand in that of the Lord, they may be led to avoid the stumbling blocks which Satan would love to make them his own.

**Psa 107:23 They that go down to the sea in ships,  
that do business in great waters;**

Here is our fourth and last example. God rescues from a stormy sea. There is a tempestuous sea surging around us in this world. Jonah found himself in just such danger long ago. Jesus was sleeping in a boat while his disciples were fearful for their lives. The high seas have claimed the lives of many a sailor. Those of days gone by had very good reason to fear the pounding waves of a wind driven sea. They felt the greatest of relief when they arrived in the harbor after surviving the waves.

**Psa 107:24 These see the works of the LORD,  
and his wonders in the deep.**

Such sailors had the chance to see real horror. The present writer has never been exposed to such fear. The only time he was ever associated with the high seas was while in the passenger section of a large commercial airplane where the sailing was as smooth as silk. From the descriptions given by those who have survived such storms, it is the best advice to avoid an experience such as these verses present.

**Psa 107:25 For he commandeth, and raiseth the  
stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.**



God has the power to control the waves of the sea. Through His Son, Jesus Christ, He calmed those which arose on the Sea of Galilee. It was so serious that his disciples woke Him, informing Him that they were all about to perish.

**Psa 107:26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.**

The large ocean liners of the present day do not present the hazard that the smaller vessels of the past did. The waves pitched those smaller boats up on the peak of a wave until they could look down into the valley of water which lay just in front of them. Then they would be plunged downward into that valley with indescribable fear that drowning was just ahead.

**Psa 107:27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.**

These sailors who were admired for their bravery on most occasions. That bravery left them when the waves pitched them around like a child's toy. They could not maintain their balance. They could see no hope. To be at one's wits end is to be unable to find an answer to a situation which threatens to destroy.

**Psa 107:28 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.**

Sometimes when men come to the realization that their case is impossible for them to bring to a satisfactory end, and that there is no one else to whom they may

appeal for help, they are forced to admit there is a God and that He has an answer!

**Psa 107:29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.**

Jehovah has both the power and the wisdom to rescue His own from the rolling waves. What a contrast that is, when the dangers are turned back and safety replaces them.

**Psa 107:30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.**

The reader has probably faced the pounding waves of this tempestuous world. They come from several directions. Sometimes it is the death of a loved one. It can be a financial crisis when a job is terminated. It can be a disease which leaves one paralyzed or crippled. A fire may destroy all of one's personal belongings.

God can help! No matter how high the waves, He has the power to see one through them. Sometimes it will be done in this life. Other times it must wait until physical death brings an end to the suffering. There is no need to collapse. There is spiritual hope.

**Psa 107:31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!**

**Psa 107:32 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.**

The refrain is repeated at the end of this third example. The expected response from the redeemed is

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that they are to glorify the Lord for His goodness. He must receive praise for His willingness to help when sin appears to be completely overwhelming.

Psa 107:33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;

Psa 107:34 A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

God can lift up the lowly, and He can bring down the haughty. It is possible for Him to turn sources of water dry that once fertile areas become desert. This was apparently the case with Babylon. The water of the Euphrates River flowed through that famous city. Today there is no city of Geographical Babylon. The Euphrates does not flow through it any more. God can change the wealth of the rich into poverty in a short period of time.

Psa 107:35 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.

Just as God can cause well watered land to become dry, He can cause water to spring up and make dry ground fertile. He is the master of ocean and skies.

Psa 107:36 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;

As God blesses men they may find food for their stomachs. They may build cities in which they can feel secure. They can share their well being with others.

Psa 107:37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.

Psa 107:38 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, and are called according to His purpose. There may be exceptions to this rule in the physical realm. There are no exceptions when the eternal realm is considered.

Psa 107:39 Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

Do the blessings last forever? Much of the answer to this question lies in the continual service those who have been blessed offer to the One who redeemed them. If praise and thanksgiving are ignored, they may well find themselves back in the midst of bondage, disease and sorrow.

There is much reason for the United States of America to pay serious heed to the truth of this portion of the Word of God. The nation has risen from pioneers who were blessed in their labors as they praised the God of heaven. There has been shocking change! Entertainment now takes priority over worship. Sexual corruption runs rampant over the land. This cannot continue without disastrous results. No nation is immune to the revealed will of the Lord. Saluting the flag will not be enough.

Psa 107:40 He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.

Long ago Nebuchadnezzar was a very powerful man who forgot God. He finally found himself out in the pasture eating grass like the cattle of the field.



Psa 107:41 Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.

Just as certainly, He can comfort the broken hearted and give strength to the weak. David was but a lad. With God on his side, he succeeded in defeating a giant. The faithful shall overcome.

Psa 107:42 The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

When the righteous come to understand that God is with them, they will sing praise and thanksgiving to Him. They will let others know of their joy.

Psa 107:43 Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

Solomon once said that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The truly wise are those who discover the grace of the Lord and observe His will that they may have the hope of glory in this life, and the realization of that hope when this life is completed.

Chapter 108

There has been much criticism of this psalm in that it is made up of verses from two others which were apparently written before it. It is likely that David wrote the original words, which are found in Psalm 57 and 60. Someone else then found them appropriate at the time Israel was ready to move back into the land after the seventy years of captivity in Babylon.

Since comments have been given in the two sources just mentioned, we will not spend as much time on the material this time. But, we do not wish to just dismiss it is insignificant because it has been repeated. There is a reason for the repetition. We will respect that reason.

Psa 108:1 O god, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.

The psalmist declares that he has fixed his heart upon the Lord. He will let his affections be known by singing praises. God's glory is reflected in the glory of those who see fit to praise Him. God glorifies His faithful. They should give glory back to Him.

Psa 108:2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

In the time of the psalmist, the psaltery and the harp were accepted as accompaniment to the singing. He vowed to rise up when the birds met the break of day and join them with his own talents.

Psa 108:3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

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It was not just in Canaan that the praises would ring out. They would carry the greatness of God to many other peoples also.

**Psa 108:4 For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.**

**Psa 108:5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth;**

Far above the greatest of men, God's glory and truth are most evident. It is but right that men who are dependent upon the Creator should express their appreciation of His greatness to Him, and to all who will listen to their song.

**Psa 108:6 That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me.**

Sincere praise to the Lord will assure one that in times of conflict, the Divine Arm will be supporting them. All foes will meet defeat when men choose to ally themselves with the righteousness of Jehovah.

**Psa 108:7 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.**

King Cyrus had issued a decree that Israel was to be allowed to return to the land of Canaan. The psalmist saw this as the decision of One much greater than Cyrus. Since God was on the same side as Israel, the psalmist had perfect confidence that the enemies would be unable to withstand the returnees.

Shechem and the valley of Succoth were on the east side of the Jordan River. That land would be taken.

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Psa 108:8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;

Judah was the tribe from which the Lord Jesus Christ came. Judah would prevail.

Psa 108:9 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.

With the power of Jehovah supporting them, the Moabites and the Edomites were no more of a threat than a washpot for cleansing the feet. The Philistines would not be capable of standing before those who were marching back into the land which had been promised to them by the Lord.

Psa 108:10 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

Psa 108:11 Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?

The strong city of Petra was carved into cliff sides. It was highly defensible. Yet with God leading Israel they would be capable of taking it. They could not do it alone, but with the arm of the Lord as a companion, they need have no fear.

Psa 108:12 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.

Even with the help of other strong men, the task of taking the land back would have been impossible. God would more than make up for any deficiencies which might have caused their defeat without Him.



**Psa 108:13 Through God we shall do valiantly:
for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.**

Most of God's people today will view this chapter with mixed feelings. It is an uplifting chapter in that it gives praise to God for His help in time of need. At the same time, it speaks about a fixation of victory over enemies in what seems to be a repulsive scene. The New Testament urges God's people to do everything possible to solve their animosities in some manner short of bloodshed.

We must remember that the time when David wrote the original words found in Psalms 57 and 60, and also later in the time of the return of Israel to retake Canaan after the Babylonian captivity, gruesome scenes were more prevalent than today. We ought to bow our heads and pray that peace might take the place of spears, cannons and nuclear weapons.

Chapter 109

We have come to one of the most difficult chapters in the entire Bible. Critics of the inspiration of the Scriptures have cried out, "Contradiction!" They feel that the tone of the chapter is exactly the opposite of that found in the teachings of Jesus Christ. They also point out that if David was the author of the psalm, it is completely opposed to his attitude toward Saul when Saul was doing his best to kill David and David extended mercy to him when he had the opportunity to eliminate him but only cut off a piece of his garment.

More than one commentator has thrown up his hands and said the mystery of the chapter was too deep to comprehend, and that the truth would only become evident in the afterlife.

I shall try to be as honest as I know how. There is no need to cover up one's inability to explain every word in the Book of God. No man dead or alive can claim such skill. It is my belief that when the psalm is properly understood, it may be of great help to any godly person who has suffered the arrows of gossip and slander.

The title given by the ancients to this psalm credited it to David, King of Israel. It is likely that this was the case. Still, it is wise to remember that these titles were attached by men. The psalm itself does not claim David as the author.

Psa 109:1 Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;

The psalmist pleads for God to take action. He does not criticize God for failure to act. He is only calling for Him to intercede. He has praised God in the past and



has reason to believe the hand of the Almighty will not be withheld in the present situation.

Psa 109:2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

There are those who have opened their mouths against him in deceit and lies. It is not easy to be abused by malicious gossip or outright lies. We have a hard enough time maintaining godliness without having someone manufacture falsehoods about us. Most readers will have had to endure some of such untruths being passed around. It is not probable that they have come close to suffering the hideous conditions related in this psalm. (See Gal. 6:7.)

Psa 109:3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

Does this not sound familiar to the reader who is familiar with the treatment given the Son of God while He lived His life in the flesh? The scribes and Pharisees should have rejoiced to listen to the teachings of the Christ. Instead, they opposed Him and accused Him of being evil. Even Absalom, David's own son was guilty of these words of hatred. (See 2 Sam. 15:1-6.)

Psa 109:4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.

Jesus had done wondrous miracles in their presence. His teachings had never seen an equal in the history of

the world. In spite of His having left the throne room of the Godhead to suffer and die for sinners, his foes set themselves up against Him every step of the way. (See Rom. 12:17-21.)

Psa 109:5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

Our Lord taught that men should return good for evil, not evil for good. These adversaries were determined to destroy His influence that they might go on living in glory and pleasure at the expense of those who truly wished to please Jehovah. (See Matt. 5:44-47.)

Psa 109:6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

This verse sets up a court room scene. The one who has ignored the rights of others is to have a judge who cares nothing for his welfare. He is also to have the great accuser appointed as his defense attorney. This would leave the wicked at the mercy of those as wicked, or even more so than themselves.

There is a strange change at this point in the psalm. The pronoun “they” which had been used up to this point now becomes “him.” This causes some to hold that the horrors called for in the verses following were spoken by the enemies of righteousness rather than by David.

The upcoming words do not sound like Jesus teachings or example. He prayed from the cross, “Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.” David did not normally wish to bring destruction upon those who had betrayed him.

These words sound more like those of one who has been pushed to the limit and is not acting as he normally

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would. I personally believe the one speaking is David. First, we recall that old testament teaching was “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” The author of this psalm was not living under the pronouncement of Christ that men are not to render evil for evil, but are to pray for those who despitely use them.

Also the Bible does not cover up the weaknesses of even it’s heroes. Noah sinned. Peter sinned. Abraham sinned. The list can be extended. David himself showed a serious lapse of character in taking Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, and then sending Uriah into the heat of battle where he could be killed.

I believe the most probable explanation is that David had reached the breaking point with respect to the abuses, and he felt the Lord would perhaps intervene to protect him from further suffering. The Bible does not say these cursing of enemies was right. It only presents the picture of the psalmist’s feelings.

We should also be careful about accusing David of calling for personal vengeance. At no point do the words indicate that all of this should be done for personal revenge. He is very willing to place the matter in the hands of the Lord and to be satisfied with the Lord’s decision as to that which should be done. The cursings only lay the case before the One who has said, “Vengeance is mine. I will repay.” (See 2 Cor. 11:14-15).

**Psa 109:7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.**

The “he” of this verse is representative of *all* of those who would pour such abuse upon God’s righteous as those pictured in this psalm. One who has acted in the way the foe of righteousness has done deserves to be condemned.

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The only difference any prayer that he would offer should make would be to add to his sin. (See Prov. 28:9.)

Psa 109:8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

This verse seems to be quoted in Acts 1:20 where Peter said,

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 bishopric let another take.

Judas had betrayed Christ under the same type of circumstances which David was laying out in the present psalm. Judas had spent about three years as a close companion of Christ, and then had betrayed Him for a mere thirty pieces of silver.

Many see the psalm as including prophecy of the betrayal of our Lord. But it may just be that Peter referred to it as an example of the kind of abuse which has all too often fallen upon the holy from the hands of the

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wicked. Judas served as a prime example of the type of behavior the persecutor of the psalmist had demonstrated.

**Psa 109:9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.**

This is the point in the psalm where the difficulty of determining how the statements fit in with the overall attitude of the Christian age. Does this seem cruel to the children and the widow of the wicked man who has been killed because of his evil deeds? We do not know the character of either the widow or the children. They may have followed the same despicable way of life as their father and husband had. Even if that is not the case, the widow and children might still be far better off without his evil influence.

**Psa 109:10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.**

This sounds like the psalmist has gone farther than God would approve of. We should not wish for innocent children to become hungry beggars because their father was wicked. I point out, however, that they may not have been as innocent as we have a tendency to presume. Later, the widow is referred to as a sinner.

**Psa 109:11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.**

We are told, "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." If the wicked take pleasure in forcing others to give up their possessions to them, then it seems just that they might

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experience the same kind of suffering which they have forced upon others.

Psa 109:12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

Since the extortioner has had no mercy upon others whose possessions he has taken, nor had compassion on their hungry offspring, let his own children be left begging.

We ask the question, “Does this reflect the attitude Jesus taught His followers to pursue?” Jesus taught we should pray “for” our enemies, not “against” them. (See Ex. 22:25-27.)

Psa 109:13 Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

Psa 109:14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

Psa 109:15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

The extended family of the Jews in the time of David was precious to the father of that family. A father wished to have many children. He also desired that those children carry on his name and his achievements. The prayer here is not aimed at the children. It is intended as a way of cutting off the influence of the family as a whole.

Note that it is “fathers” rather than “father.” The family had passed sinful actions down through generations in the past. Those sins were not to be forgotten. The psalmist

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was praying that the Lord now allow such influence to continue.

**Psa 109:16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.**

Rather than helping the poor, the foe of righteousness took advantage of them. He made their lives even more difficult and care absolutely nothing about the broken hearts which resulted. (See Matt. 18:23-35.)

**Psa 109:17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.**

God sometimes dealt with sinners in ways which resembled their own values. If one despised the promised land, let him die in the wilderness. If he loved adultery, let his own wife be unfaithful to him.

In the present case, the sinner refused to bless others. Then let no blessing fall upon him from the hand of the Lord.

**Psa 109:18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.**

The one being described in this psalm had figuratively put on cursings of others as if it had been an overcoat. He was completely wrapped in it. If he loved cursings so much, let cursings come into his very soul. Diarrhea is not a pleasant matter. When the bowels exit like water, a man is sick. The bones are supposed to be the support

of the body. If the bones become as flexible as oil, a man would be helpless.

**Psa 109:19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.**

Let such a person be clothed with misery. Nor should he see any relief from the suffering. His condition should be the exact opposite of the one who is clothed in white linen and robes of righteousness. He wishes to warm himself with the clothing of the Devil. Let him roast in the devil's oven. (See Matt. 7:1f)

**Psa 109:20 Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.**

The reader is reminded by this verse that the psalmist is not desiring that he, personally, might cause these cursings to occur. He desires that they come from the hand of the God of heaven, who will do that which is just. The psalmist does wish for God to see that such justice is administered. (See Rom. 12:19.)

**Psa 109:21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.**

He prays for mercy on himself, not mercy for his abuser. He claims that by rewarding the foes of those who are holy with their just dues, God will protect His own name. He cannot defend himself. He begs the Lord to execute perfect responses to the wicked who fight against Him.



**Psa 109:22 For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.**

Maybe it would be advisable to try to put ourselves in the position of the author of the psalm. Does one need to be penniless, to be poor. Does one need to be at death's door to be needy? If it was David who was writing these words, he could hardly have been poverty stricken and needy in the sense we would normally use these words. But most certainly, he had suffered at the hands of those who relished seeing him in misery. As a result, his heart was broken. His spirit was bowed down.

**Psa 109:23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.**

The writer pleads his own condition as without hope unless he receives help from above. He feels that he is going downhill just as a shadow disappears when it becomes shorter and shorter until it is gone. He feels like a tiny insect such as a locust when the wind carries it along with no ability to control it's own movements.

**Psa 109:24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.**

His sees himself as weak from lack of food, whether from fasting and loss of appetite, or from shortage of food we are not told. He has become emaciated and hardly able to stand on his feet. His strength is gone. (See 2 Sam. 12:21-22.)

**Psa 109:25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.**

His condition was so horrible that those who looked at him just shook their heads. This does not appear to be his foes as much as it is anyone who passes by. (See Isa. 53:4.)

**Psa 109:26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:**

**Psa 109:27 That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it.**

He wants those who persecute him to see that the Lord has come to his side. When they have seen God's hand lifting him up from his sad state, they may then understand that God would not allow a continuation of their abuses. Not only those who abused him would come to know of their sins; those who passed by and saw the change for the better in his condition would learn to lean upon the arm of God.

**Psa 109:28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.**

While the enemies are calling for curses upon him, let God counter by giving blessings in place of curses. If there is to be shame, let that shame be upon the evildoer and not upon the friend of Jehovah.

**Psa 109:29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.**

These wicked ones have clothed themselves in sin. Let them be clothed in confusion. Their faces need to be covered as one who has come to know shame.

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Psa 109:30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

All of the difficulties which the persecuted suffer will not turn their affections from God. They will praise Him in adversity. They will praise Him when they have been lifted up from that adversity. In good times and in bad, He is worthy of praise. To Him be the glory and honor.

Psa 109:31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

The lowly may find themselves at the mercy of those who would push them farther down. They need not give up hope. God will stand at their right hand. Earlier the psalmist called for Satan to stand at the right hand of the wicked while they faced a judge who was deceitful. This is quite a contrast. The Devil be with those who love him. God be with those who love Him. (See Matt. 28:20 and 1 Cor. 10:13.)

Chapter 110

After studying one of the most gruesome chapters in the entire Bible as we looked at psalm 109, we have the joy of seeing the great contrast between that chapter and the one at hand. Psalm 110 is as majestic and hope filled as any. Enjoy it!

This psalm is the most quoted of any passage of either the old testament or the new. We find references in some twenty different places. Not only the number is impressive; the importance of the material quoted is equally grand.

This psalm points to the elevation of Jesus Christ to the right hand of the Father in heaven, as King of kings and Lord of lords. It sees this Messiah King as also a Priest without beginning or end. It describes the nature of His subjects and their willingness to serve Him. It explains the establishment of His Kingdom, then follows it's growth and ultimate victory over all enemies.

Psa 110:1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

This very first verse is a puzzle to some readers. Are there multiple Lords? Why does the verse speak of "The" Lord and then "my Lord?" The reason this is done is that there are two different Hebrew words translated here. One is "adonai." The other is "Yahweh." The adonai Lord is the Son of God who came to earth to establish His kingdom and qualify as a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. The yahweh Lord is the Father who was willing to allow His Son to come to earth to achieve those goals. Now the Father is welcoming the Son back to the throne room of heaven to take His seat at the right hand

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of the Father. The portion of the Son's work which was to be accomplished on earth has been finished. The Son will from this point on rule over the Kingdom which was set up through the cooperative efforts of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus quoted the first verse of the psalm in Matthew 22:43-45 and pointed to David as the author.

*Mat 22:43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,*

*Mat 22:44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?*

*Mat 22:45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?*

Jesus had been dealing with those who were set on denying His Messiahship. He had asked those Jews who refused to believe in Him whose son the Messiah was to be. They quickly answered that He was to be the "son of David." Jesus had then asked them how it was that David could call Him Lord. The answer to that question is that Jesus Christ was David's Lord many centuries before He entered into the flesh and became a descendant or "son" of David. The Jews were unable to answer Christ's question without admitting the true meaning of the old testament prophecy that the Messiah would be both the Lord of David and the son of David.

Thus the Father invited the Son to take His seat on the throne of glory and rule over His newly established domain.

**Psa 110:2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.**

This second verse tells of the beginning of the King's influence and of its spreading influence among men. Christ's rod, or scepter of authority would be the gospel which he had taught while existing on earth. (See Isaiah 2:3.)

*Isa 2:3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

The rod of Christ's strength was to go forth from a beginning point in Zion (Jerusalem.) That is what was happening. The prophecy was being fulfilled with the seating of the Son of God upon the heavenly throne. The gospel would be preached first at Jerusalem, and then would spread to every nation on earth.

Would that gospel meet any resistance. It most certainly would; but that resistance from its enemies would not defeat it.

**Psa 110:3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.**

The subjects of King Jesus would not be forced into loyalty to Him. They would be given the opportunity to choose whom they would serve. Those who willingly offered to serve would be accepted. Those who rejected the gospel would be allowed to do so.

The dew of the morning would be that which fell from heaven in the early morning of the day of His power. It would come in the day of youth, which would be the time



in which the Kingdom was young and vigorous. We also refer the reader to the newness of life which is enjoyed by those who have repented and been washed clean by the blood of the Lamb. It would be according to the beauty of holiness in that the King would be holy. The law which ruled the subjects would be holy, and the subjects of the King were to be made holy through the power of the blood of Christ. That which is holy is beautiful to behold.

**Psa 110:4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.**

This second part of the psalm declares the New King to be not just a King ruling from the heavenly throne, but also the High Priest of this realm. Jesus was to be a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. This mysterious High Priest enters the records of the Bible without any record of his beginning. Just as mysteriously, he leaves the scene without any record of his disappearance. Abraham paid tithes to him, as recorded in Genesis 14.

God had sworn, or made a solemn promise that Christ was to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek. The promise had no conditions. It would be brought to fulfillment.

There are several ways in which the High Priesthood of Christ would be after the order of Melchizedek. First, it had no beginning. Christ was in the beginning with God. Second, it had no end. Christ will serve as High Priest until the Kingdom has been return victorious to the Father. Thirdly, both Melchizedek and Christ was priest and king. Burton Coffman gives a further list on page 308 of his second volume on the book of Psalms. The seventh chapter of the book of Hebrews provides valuable material for such a comparison.

**Psa 110:5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.**

Those enemies of the Kingdom of Christ and the Word of the gospel will be defeated. The day of His wrath certainly has to do with the final judgment, but it may not be limited to that day. The King who sits at the right hand of the Father on the throne of heaven will prove to be stronger than any earthly potentate. The continuous battle which is fought between the power of God and the powers who serve the Prince of Darkness will be won by the Prince of Peace and His subjects.

**Psa 110:6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.**

The battle will result in the death of many enemies of the gospel. Some of them will be rulers over vast numbers of men. The heathen are those who refuse to live by the laws of the King and His Kingdom. Such foolish persons are doomed to defeat.

**Psa 110:7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.**

Now what does this final verse of the chapter have to say to us? It declares that the victory will not be easy. There will be many difficulties in the way. Christians will be martyred. They will be persecuted and tortured. There will be disease, poverty and famine. It will be necessary to witness foolish men marching straight to the fires of hell without being capable of turning them from such a horrible destiny.

The soldiers of Christ will tire. They will have to pause



to refresh themselves before continuing the conflict. But God will see that no power will be able to overcome those who earnestly persevere. (See Rom. 8:34-39.)

*Rom 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

*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 111

The present psalm is classed with others which are called 'hallelujah' psalms. These are psalms which begin or end with the word hallelujah, which means 'praise the Lord.' This is also said to be an acrostic psalm. The verses of such psalms begin with each letter of the alphabet. The first line of this one is the only line which does not follow that pattern. From the second line to the last the acrostic nature is evident.

The author of the psalm is not certain. The time is thought by many to be not too far after the release from captivity. The basic theme is exhortation to praise Jehovah. There are three divisions. The first is a call for others to praise Him. The author immediately follows this with a promise to do as he has urged others. The second division give the reasons why God should be praised. The third division points out that fear and praise of God is the beginning of wisdom. All else is folly.

**Psa 111:1 Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.**

The author of the psalm calls for those who will hear him to praise the Lord. This is what life is all about. The praise is due Him. It must not be withheld.

Then the type of praise is declared. It must be done with the whole heart. Half hearted praise falls far short of what is deserved. The author makes a solemn promise that he will follow the path he has urged others to take. He will not just praise God in private. He will be proud to offer his praise in assembly or congregation of God's people. God has blessed him publicly. He is happy to praise in the same way.

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Psa 111:2 The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

God's works are of varied nature. They can be seen in the wonders of His creation. The heavens and the earth declare His glory. The present writer has spent a lifetime in the study of natural science. If the people of the day in which this psalm was written had reason to glorify the Lord for his works when they had no microscopes or telescopes, how much more reason to praise Him today.

It is one of the joys of living that we are given the opportunity to survey the results of His artistry. We have still not plumbed the depths of those wonders. Those who come after us will also take pleasure in searching out the evidences of God's power and intellect.

Psa 111:3 His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

God's work shows His character. He is honorable. He is glorious. He is righteous. If one challenges these statements on the basis of the presence of disease and death in the universe, we answer that these are the consequence of misguided spiritual foes of God, and not of God Himself. If His will had been followed from the beginning, pain, tears, sin and death would have been unknown.

Psa 111:4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.

The Lord did not intend for his creatures to take His love for granted. He expects those who enjoy the benefits of His providential care to express their thanksgiving by both word and deed, both in our walk and in our talk.

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**Psa 111:5 He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.**

He provided manna for those in the wilderness under the command of Moses. This was accomplished through miracles. He does the same for men today through natural means. Not a one of us could provide food, clothing, shelter or companionship if we had to do so without His oversight. He has made promises in every age. Those who have respected His words have found Him to be dependable. He keeps those words.

**Psa 111:6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.**

This verse may very well refer to His having made it possible for His people to conquer the land of Canaan in the days of Joshua. It might be wise however for the faithful to realize that eternity may be involved. Fathers sometimes deny lazy and foolish children a part of what would normally be their inheritance and divide it among those who have proven upright and energetic.

**Psa 111:7 The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.**

God may be depended upon for keeping His promises. He may also be depended upon for rewarding and punishing impartially. The faithful will be rewarded. The wicked will be punished. There will be no mistakes.

**Psa 111:8 They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.**



Men's words often fail. This is partially because they do not have the power to enforce them. It can also be a result of lack of foresight in viewing the consequences of the commands. God's instructions are harmonious with truth, and they are never destructive to the righteous.

**Psa 111:9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.**

Here we have the second type of the works of the Lord. This is His work of redemption. He created the universe in perfection. When evil entered it, He found it necessary to offer a way to counteract that evil. He is holy from the creation to the end of the world. He has said for us to "Be ye holy for I am Holy." This principle will never fail.

Not only is God's name holy; it is reverend. Men have no right to claim others should call them *reverend*. This is a characteristic of God, not men. It speaks of a respect and fear which is due to God only.

**Psa 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.**

There have been many brilliant minds in the history of civilization. As far as factual knowledge is concerned such individuals sometimes look upon less gifted persons with disdain. This is a tragic mistake on their part unless their brilliance has led them to Fear God and keep His commandments. That plan is wisdom in action. Atheism and the spurning of the will of Jehovah is deadly!

## *Chapter 112*

Psalm 111 and Psalm 112 are sometimes called twin psalms. They are both hallelujah psalms. They are both acrostic. They both deal with the relationship between God and man. Psalm 111 spoke of the goodness, righteousness and just nature of God. This psalm 112 deals with the expected similar characteristics in God's children.

**Psa 112:1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.**

The man who is too proud to offer praise unto his own Creator has reached a highly dangerous precipice. He had better take heed lest he fall. If and when he falls, both he and those who surround him will observe a disaster.

The wise man, as pictured in the previous psalm, will fear God and keep His commandments. No only will that wise man fear and keep God's commandments; he will take delight in doing both. We sometimes hear men take pride in being employees of a particularly good company or a particularly good supervisor. Such work is not drudgery, it is a pleasure. It is just so with the Lord.

**Psa 112:2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.**

We have seen two different interpretations of the word 'his' in this verse. One referred it to the seed of God. The other referred it to the seed of the wise man who keeps God's commandments. It seems to us that the verse is talking about the children of the God fearing parent.



It is *not* true that every God fearing parent may be blessed with blessed and upright children. Even God's own children are sometimes far from being upright. The verse is speaking in general terms. The children of the parent who fears God is much more apt to do so himself or herself. Such blessedness will also be of advantage to the generation of the world who live in the same time and place in which they live.

**Psa 112:3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.**

We are not necessarily considering material wealth and riches here. Spiritual riches are vastly more precious than material land, gold or livestock. But, just as in the preceding verse we must remind ourselves that we are speaking of generalities. It is true that the Christian is more likely to use the material blessings which are placed under his supervision more wisely than the man of the world.

Even if the man of the world is so bent upon building a large bank account, etc. the Christian has treasures laid up in heaven where thieves do not break through and steal. The righteousness of the Christian is far more enduring than any vaporous collection of worldly goods.

**Psa 112:4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.**

God is light, and they who are children of God partake of that light. It is never spiritually dark in the dwelling of the upright. He is like his God in that he is gracious, compassionate and righteous. Jesus is the light of the

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world. His brothers and sisters reflect that light in their own lives. The darkness will never swallow them up.

Psa 112:5 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

The good man who fears Jehovah will not be self centered. He or she will ever be observant of the needs of those around them. Being prudent in his actions he will be more apt to have put up a small amount which can be used to help another in the time of need. Sometimes he will offer help as an outright gift which he knows will never be returned. Then again, he may only lend to one who is needy with the expectation that his assistance will be returned after the one who received it has found better circumstances and is able to pay off the loan.

Such loans will be made with care, after having analyzed the situation carefully. It is not a blessing in the sight of God to cast pearls before swine.

Psa 112:6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

The righteous person may be forgotten in the pages of the history books. But he will never be forgotten in the book of life which God holds in His possession. The mark on humanity that the good man makes will never be erased. It will transcend times itself.

Psa 112:7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

Will the upright person be shaken from his faith in the reality and integrity of the Creator. No, he will not. No matter what news of disease, death, natural disasters



or economic collapse is brought to his ears, he will trust God to see that all things work together for good to God's beloved.

As an example of how this can be applied, there are many middle aged men and women who suffered a broken heart over having to give up a boy friend or girlfriend whom they thought at the time would be a perfect mate. Then having found the wife or husband whom they did finally marry, it is realized that they should have trusted the Lord.

Psa 112:8 His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.

Is the Christian to be vengeful and delighted that others have been cast into hell fire for their wickedness? We hardly think it would be a source of satisfaction to watch others scream in the fires of hell. Yet God knows what should be done in all cases. Satan and his followers must be separated from that which is righteous, and that separation must be everlasting. The good person will find peace is knowing the forces of evil have been defeated. And they will be!

Psa 112:9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

Just as his Father in heaven has dispersed His good things upon the poor on earth, the righteous man will follow His example. This insures that the impact which he made will always have it's effect. He has placed his arm beside that of the Mighty Arm of the Lord. His accomplishments will stand forever as being honorable and enduring.

Psa 112:10 The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

The wicked, who have sought only for that which is temporary will find themselves looking at the vast difference in their own end when compared with that of the righteous. They will be able to do nothing to change things at that point. They will have made their choices. They will have chosen the things which will pass away and be destroyed. They will be destroyed along with them.



Chapter 113

We have six psalms in a row which are known as “hallelujah” psalm. They are all psalms of praise and are said to have been sung at all of the major feasts of the Jews. The apostles refer to these psalms when they record that a hymn was sung after the Passover feast just previous to the crucifixion. That could have been any of the six.

These psalms are so straightforward that extensive comment is out of order. It is wise to refrain from running numbers of cross references to elaborate upon them. The present psalm calls for men to praise God. It tells why this praise is to be offered and it spells out the hope men have that the Lord will hear even the least of us.

Psa 113:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

Praising the Lord can take to avenues. It can be songs of witness to others about the great and wondrous things He has done and the greatness of His character. It can also be in the form of prayer, as we speak directly to Him in thanksgiving or acknowledgment of His greatness.

The name of a human is normally dear to him. When someone damages his good name he does not appreciate the lack of respect. We often do things that justify criticism of our names. That is not so with Jehovah. He has never, and will never, do anything that would justify negative criticism. His name is a name above all names. Let us hold it high and give it the honor which it deserves.

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**Psa 113:2 Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.**

When should praises be offered to the Lord. The answer to that question is that they are to offered now. They are to be offered tomorrow and the next day until time has ended and eternity has replaced it. Forevermore has no end. There is no in season and out of season for such praise.

**Psa 113:3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name is to be praised.**

A good time to praise God is when one wakes in the morning. It is God who has provided the day which lies just ahead. Another good time is at breakfast. He has provided the food which nourishes our bodies. Yet another appropriate time is when we are busy at the work of the day. He is the one who gave us the health to do that work. This list could go on and on, but we will close it by saying a good time to praise God is when one lies down to pillow his head at night. God is the one who has made every opportunity of that day possible.

**Psa 113:4 The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.**

Shall we praise the government of our nation? God is infinitely higher than all nations. If there are other inhabited worlds, He is also high above them. His presence and glory extend beyond the heaven of heavens. The glory which can be seen by the best of our telescopes is but a sample of that which lies unseen as yet.



**Psa 113:5 Who is like unto the LORD our God,  
who dwelleth on high,**

The question in this verse answers itself. There is none on earth, within the earth, or above the earth that is comparable to the Creator. What is man that God is mindful of him? It is enough that man is made in the image of God. That fact alone lifts man to spiritual heights, even if his limits set a great distance between himself and the perfection of his Creator.

**Psa 113:6 Who humbleth himself to behold the  
things that are in heaven, and in the earth!**

Men of reknown very often make themselves inaccessible to those of lesser stature. Only a select few may be permitted to enter into their presence. God does not consider Himself to great to be approached. He humbles Himself to the point that all things in heaven and on earth are precious in His sight.

**Psa 113:7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,  
and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;**

Dear reader, do not overlook the tremendous message of this verse. If you were out somewhere and found a person searching through a manure pile for the necessities of life, what would your attitude toward that person be? The poor sometimes live in huts which have no floors. Are they too lowly to receive the attention of the Lord? This verse says they are not. God will hear and answer the prayers of men from those who search through the dunghills, from those who live in palatial mansions.

**Psa 113:8 That he may set him with princes, even  
with the princes of his people.**

Who in the record of God's book moved from a lowly position to one in the company of princes? May I suggest David, who was a shepherd lad and then became king of Israel. And even more glorious is Jesus Christ who was born in a manger and now sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

**Psa 113:9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.**

It is interesting that the psalm closes with a note of the blessings God can heap upon the woman who has been barren. Our minds go back to Hannah who prayed that she might have a child, and was made joyous by the birth of Samuel who became one of the great men of all the ages. Most women look forward to bearing children and being responsible for bringing life into this world. The answer to their prayers is God's way of honoring those prayers. Both mothers and fathers should praise Him for the children they are given for a time.

There is not a man or woman who ever existed that did not have a reason to lift up the voice in praise to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.



## *Chapter 114*

This is another of those called “hallel” psalms. These were sung at the major feasts of Israel. They uphold the holiness of God’s character and the infinite power of His outstretched arm. Man has great need of recognizing the vast difference between his own limitations and the unlimited power and wisdom of his Creator. This psalm does a magnificent job of pointing out God’s greatness.

### **Psa 114:1 When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;**

God’s people entered Egypt as a family. They exited that country as a nation of over two million persons. During the period of their slavery they managed to maintain their own Hebrew language. They were able to commune with the Egyptians, but they still retained their own pattern of speech.

When they had spent the amount of time God knew would be required to prepare them for leaving Egypt and moving toward the promised land, He allowed circumstances to arise which would permit their separation from the domination of Pharaoh and his people. God knows when and how to motivate the actions which bring about His long range goals.

It is important that we note the similarity between the entire chapter before us and the experiences of an individual as he or she is delivered from the bondage of sin, travels through the wilderness of this present world, and crosses over the Jordan of death. The chapter as a whole is a type or shadow of things to come under Christ.

### **Psa 114:2 Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.**

This verse is using Judah and Israel as synonyms.



Judah was the name of the most prominent tribe of the twelve tribes of Israel. Israel was composed of Jews. The name 'Jew' was derived from the word 'Judah.'

A sanctuary is a place of security. A bird sanctuary is a site where birds are protected. God's sanctuary for His people was the nation of Israel. It was also His dominion in that He was the Ruler of the nation.

**Psa 114:3 The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back.**

The sea which saw God's dominion was the Red Sea which parted and allowed the Israelites to cross over on dry land. At the entry into Canaan, the waters of the Jordan River were held back from above and the people were again allowed to cross over.

The same God who created nature is capable of supernaturally interposing in it's laws and modifying them at His will.

**Psa 114:4 The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.**

When Israel reached Mount Sinai, thunder shook the earth. According to this verse, the entire mountain trembled as God prepared to deliver the law to Moses. The reader will have experienced something similar when thunder rattles the window panes of his dwelling. On the occasion of the giving of the law, the whole area trembled at the presence of the Almighty.

**Psa 114:5 What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?**

The psalmist asks a very valid question. What had caused this irregular behavior of the Red Sea, the Jordan River, and the area of Mount Sinai?

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Psa 114:6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?

Psa 114:7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

The answer is obvious. Such events do not take place without supernatural intervention. A force greater than nature had interposed to cause these wondrous miracles.

It would be wise of men today to do just what verse seven commands. The earth and all who dwell upon it should tremble at the presence of the God who is able to do such wonders.

Psa 114:8 Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

We have still one more wonder which must be added to those previous. This same Lord who caused the sea and the river to part and allow Israel to cross, and who caused the earth to tremble when the law was given at Sinai, caused water to come forth from flinty rock when Moses struck the rock with his rod. It is true that water sometimes flows from crevices in masses of hard rock. But, dear friends, the amount of water which came forth at this time was sufficient to supply the thirst of over two million persons, as well as the livestock which was moving along with them.

As a conclusion to this chapter we remind ourselves that at the time of the end, this present heaven and earth are to be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth. That will be no more difficult for the Lord than were the wonders reviewed in this impressive chapter. Will we be on the side of the Lord and find these powers working for us, or will we be opposed to the Lord and find His wrath being vented upon us?

Chapter 115

Commentators normally wish to present the circumstances of the psalm in the introduction. It is almost universally admitted that we cannot know the author, the date or even the exact circumstances which inspired the writing of this one.

It does seem to pertain to a time in which Israel had suffered some serious setbacks, such that the enemies felt they could mock them and ask why their God Jehovah did not come to their rescue. The answer is confidently given in the truths the psalm present.

Psa 115:1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

There were times in which the great men of Israel were quite willing to have glory attached to their name. Solomon did not hesitate to receive the praises of the people. As this present psalm is written the plea is that if God will make His presence known to the pagan idolators who were making fun of them, they would be most delighted to give Him all of the glory.

Psa 115:2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?

It was ridiculous that the non-believers in Jehovah would ask such questions as, "Where is their God now?" It was clear to anyone who was willing to look at the facts of their history that the Lord had been with them continuously. Just because He had not caused great miracles to take place at the time of the writing, did not give foolish men ammunition to shoot at them.

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**Psa 115:3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.**

There was no doubt in their minds that Jehovah had been, was at the time, and would be in the future, looking down upon His people and caring for them in harmony with what He knew was best for them and for the future of His people.

**Psa 115:4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.**

After all, which was the better, to have an invisible Spirit for a God, or to have one made of wood, metal or stone? The idols of the idolators were made by the labor of their own hand. Jehovah is a God who has always existed. There was no need for human hands to make Him. It was He who had made man.

**Psa 115:5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:**

The makers of the idols had formed mouths for them. Those mouths could be seen, but they could not speak. Jehovah had spoken in thunderous tones on Sinai even though no one was able to see His mouth.

**Psa 115:6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:**

The idols had ears carved on the sides of their heads. That was absolutely meaningless. The prayers offered to the idol gods bounced off their metal ears without a single word having been heard.

**Psa 115:7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.**

The idols had hands formed like the hands of the humans who made them, but the hands of the idols could not even make an idol, to say nothing of the creation of a universe.

The idols had carved feet, but could not walk an inch. In fact the idol of Dagon could not even get up off the floor when it was toppled over.

The idols could not utter a single word. Their throat, mouth and lips were as silent as the wood, metal and stone from which they were made.

**Psa 115:8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.**

There were two groups of foolish persons who worshipped the idols. One group was the one that carved them out. The other group was that which bowed down in worship before them. Nothing could be more ridiculous than a man bowing down in prayer before a piece of gold, silver or other material substance. To trust in such was to ignore all the common sense which the True God had placed in the heads of the worshippers.

**Psa 115:9 O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.**

It might not be possible to turn the pagans from their worship of idols. But Israel must worship the Lord their God and Him only must they serve. When the time was right for Him to step in as their Helper, He would be there. He had said that if they would be His people, He

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would be their God. The nation of Israel as a whole must place their trust in the Lord.

Psa 115:10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

Particularly the house of Aaron must trust in the Lord. These were the group from which the Levites and the priesthood had arisen. Of all men, these persons must show their dedication to Jehovah, who had been so dependable in the past.

Psa 115:11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

Three times in three verses someone has been told to trust in the Lord. First it was the nation of Israel. Then it was the house of Aaron and the priesthood. Third, it was any who had feared God and attempted to serve Him in spirit and in truth.

Psa 115:12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

Psa 115:13 He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great.

The psalmist urged all who would to serve and worship the Lord. Then they would be able to watch for His blessings. He would not play favorites as men often do. The great and the small alike would be treated fairly. He was capable, and He was willing to come to the side of any who placed their confidence and faith in Him.

Psa 115:14 The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

Israel need not worry about the mocking words of those who wished to see their God. The mockers would be able to see the blessings which fell upon His faithful followers. It would not be that present generation alone who would be blessed. As their faith was passed on to their children, those children would also share in the blessings.

Psa 115:15 Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.

Those who worshipped idols were expecting help that would never be supplied. Their idols were powerless. They had been made by men. The Lord whom Israel worshipped was from everlasting unto everlasting. There was no need for Him to be made. He was the great I AM. He was the one who MADE, not the one who was made.

Psa 115:16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

Even the farthest reaches of existence belong to the Lord God. He has control over them. He has granted men the right to live upon their earth for a short time. They have some control over it, but their are still responsible to Him.

Psa 115:17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after that the judgment. When the spirit of man leaves the body



in death, that body goes down in silence to the grave. The faithful will be given new spiritual bodies at the resurrection, and then the praises will continue.

Psa 115:18 But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

In the meantime it is the responsibility and privilege of every man and woman to bless the Lord and praise Him in preparation for that time when His faithful will honor Him without end.

Chapter 116

This psalm is one of the very finest examples of gratitude and thanksgiving which one can find anywhere. The author is extremely conscious of the things the Lord has done for him. He promises he will do all within his power to demonstrate that gratitude. He will live as God would have him live. He will let others know of God's wondrous works. He will attempt to be faithful unto death.

There are multiple suggestions as to the identity of the author. The two most common are David who is thought to thank God for escaping from the dangers he faced from Saul, and even from his own son Absalom, and those who were able to return from the captivity. There are a couple of clues which deserve attention. The first is that Jerusalem is mentioned in the last verse as the place the author has longed for. The second is the fact that it seems to have been quoted by both Peter and Paul in reference to the resurrection of Christ. (See Acts 2:25 and Acts 13:35-36.)

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 13:35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to 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:

Because of the above references the present writer will accept David as the author of the psalm. That does not prevent us from seeing a possible application of the attitude expressed in the psalm to the lives of God's children at any time in history.

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**Psa 116:1 I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.**

Any person who realizes God has heard his prayers and answered them would have to be a very calloused individual to take any other position. We would fasten our affections upon a fellow human who did for us that which we could not do for ourselves. It is but reasonable that our hearts go out to the Lord for His answers to our requests.

**Psa 116:2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.**

When a small child approaches his or her parent with a request, the parent will sometimes bend over to a position which allows the child to whisper in their ear. The parent is more than pleased to grant the wish of the child if he knows that wish is beneficial to all concerned. God is waiting for His children to make their requests known to Him, even though He knows the nature of their prayer before it is expressed.

Because David had experienced the protective care of God in allow his life to be preserved from those who would take it, he promised to continue his dependence upon God until the end of his days.

**Psa 116:3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.**

Death is perhaps the most sobering thought one may consider. It is not pleasant to contemplate the misery which so often accompanies the departure from the land

of the living. In addition, there is the fact that one will be moving into an unknown realm. The pains of hell could very well have been mental anguish in contemplation of possible punishment for sin.

**Psa 116:4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.**

David realized that he had no personal solution to his problems. He needed One who was far more intelligent and powerful than he. Thus, he turned to the Lord for deliverance. Without that avenue there would be nothing but grief. With that avenue there was hope.

What a wonderful thing it is to know God has promised to hear the prayer of a penitent sinner! He will not only hear. He has bent His ear toward us in anticipation of hearing such a prayer. He knows far better than we just how serious it is to find one's self condemned to hell with the prince of darkness.

**Psa 116:5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.**

Three tremendous words are found in this verse. One at the beginning. One in the middle, and one at the end. God is gracious in that He has offered us infinitely more than we deserve.

He is righteous in that no person should fear the future as long as that person holds to God's hand. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

He is merciful in that when humans have gotten themselves into the mire of sin as a result of their own independence, He will forgive them when they return to Him and beg for pardon.





**Psa 116:6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.**

The “simple” are not the mentally retarded. They are the humble who hunger and thirst after righteousness. The haughty and proud do not turn to God because they see themselves as quite capable of caring for themselves without assistance.

David had left the sheepfold and had become very well known by his people. Because of jealousy he was persecuted by those who should have shared in his success. He had been forced to flee for his life. When he reached that condition, he found that he could turn to the Great Shepherd of men’s souls for safety.

**Psa 116:7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.**

The troubled soul longs for the peace and rest which lies out of reach. When David saw what had been done on his behalf by the God of heaven, he commanded his soul to be calm. God had smiled upon him. If God was for him, no other could destroy him.

**Psa 116:8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.**

Death, tears and falling; these are three terrifying experiences. The psalmist had been in close company with all three. Still, Jehovah had warded off death. He had dried the many tears. He had picked up David when he stumbled and set him on his feet.

Surely the reader has shared in the thoughts of the author of the psalm. Little children think about dying and discuss it at the bedside with their parents. Grown men

and women weep until there are no more tears and the eye sockets are dry. We find ourselves too weak to stand by our own strength. Where are we to turn? To the same place the psalmist turned. The Lord is our refuge.

**Psa 116:9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.**

The psalmist made a vow. He would walk before the Lord while he was still living. This statement can be taken in two ways. First, every one of us must walk in the sight of God every day of our lives. Every thought, every word, every step is seen by the Omniscient and Omnipresent Lord of heaven and earth.

But the psalmist was doing more than making an observation that God is the all knowing observer. He was making a solemn promise with God as his witness, that he would not stray from the straight and narrow way of righteousness.

**Psa 116:10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:**

What was it that he believed? It was that he could trust in the Lord. As a result of that confidence, he had caused both God and men to see the fruit of that belief. He had found that his confidence in men was insufficient. Men were not trustworthy. He had suffered much at their wicked hands.

**Psa 116:11 I said in my haste, All men are liars.**

He had somewhat hastily concluded that placing confidence in men was like walking in quicksand. All men are deceptive and undependable.

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It is true that all men lie at times. It is not true that all men are deceptive all of the time. The difference is that God is dependable one hundred percent of the time. He never lies. "Let God be true and every man a liar."

Psa 116:12 What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?

When the psalmist considered the many blessings which had come to him from the hand of God, he asked a question which every man should be asking. Was there anything he could do in return? If one is asking how God can be fully repaid, the answer is that there is no way. The blood of God's Perfect and Only Begotten Son was offered that men might live eternally in the presence of their Creator. That debt can never be balanced.

Psa 116:13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

If one is asking what God will accept as pleasing to Him, this verse gives the answer. God has held out to man the cup of salvation. Reach out and drink from it my friend! Call upon the name of the Lord and offer yourself as a living sacrifice. Serve Him. Glorify Him. Lead others to Him.

Psa 116:14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

It is not enough to make a private arrangement with God which is kept a secret between the two of you. God's faithful are expected to wish with all of their heart that as many others as possible might share in the blessings He offers. If we are ashamed of Him, He will also be ashamed of us. That will not be a happy ending.

Psa 116:15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

But what if a person does find it necessary to lay down his very life while serving the Master? That will never be forgotten. A life sacrificed in behalf of God and His glory is more precious to Him than all the gold in this world. He will remember and reward when time has been replaced by eternity.

Psa 116:16 O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

Anyone who is ashamed to be a servant of the Lord is entirely too proud. The author of our present psalm had been made to know that it would be a privilege to not only be a servant to God, but to be a child of His servant.

Does the reader have a mansion waiting for him or her? There are many mansions in the Father's house. There were slave owners in the deep south who lived in sparkling mansions with pillared porches and gleaming walls. Oh how some of the slaves who worked in their cotton fields must have wondered what it would be like to spend just a single day of life sitting in the parlor of one of those mansions, eating at the table or sleeping in one of the soft beds!

Friends, we have something even finer to look forward to if we hold tight to our confidence and do His will. He will release us from the bondage of Satan and open the door to heavenly glory. We shall hear the words, "Enter in, faithful servant."



Psa 116:17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

What a small thing to please God. He desires our thanks. He wants us to call upon Him and shout out His name to other travelers in this sin stained world. If that too much to expect? Surely not.

Psa 116:18 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

In Israel's time the nations around were to be shown that there is no other true God. Him and Him only was to be served. The promise must be made to serve Him. Then the promise must be kept so that those who are watching may also give Him glory. "Go therefore and teach all nations. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

Psa 116:19 In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

The courts of the Lord's house are those places where one can be ready for constant service. They are also places where the Lord can offer His blessings to His servants.

Chapter 117

This Psalm is the shortest chapter of the entire Bible. That does not mean it is the least important. The sentiment expressed by these two short verses is of monumental importance. What a tremendous blessing it is to share in the wonders described below.

Psa 117:1 O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

Psa 117:2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

This psalm is used by premillennialists to support their conviction that Jesus Christ is coming back to establish an earthly kingdom, at which time all nations of the earth will praise Him and praise His name for one thousand years.

The psalm does not say this. It is a call for all men to praise God. It is not a prediction that they will honor that call. Those with wisdom will praise Him. Those who are foolish will not. He has prepared during the Mosaic dispensation for the establishment of the Kingdom on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of the book of Acts. He does not have to establish the Kingdom after that date. It has been accomplished.

Before that time, the focus was upon the fleshly descendants of Abraham. After that time all nations are invited to enter into the spiritual Kingdom of Christ.

Dear reader, this psalm is applicable to men of every nation from the time of the events of the second chapter of Acts until the judgment day. Every man, woman and child of today is invited to sing His praises. His merciful

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kindness can be seen on every side, in space, in the atomic realm and in the wonders of this amazing creation.

The Word of the Lord endures forever. He is there for you at any time and in any place. The time will come when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, but that will be when the Son of God comes back in judgment. Then the wicked will come to realize what they have despised, and the righteous shall be caught up together to meet Him in the air.

Praise Him today and rejoice with Him eternally.

## *Chapter 118*

The one hundred eighteenth psalm is generally thought by Bible students to have been sung by a procession of Jews, moving toward and into the city of Jerusalem after deliverance from their enemies. This writer finds it hard to accept this explanation. It has altogether too many Messianic overtones. In our estimation it is a psalm written by David at the time of his exaltation to the throne of Israel.

Repeatedly, David is a type of the Christ. The careful reader will see parallels between the delivery of David from Saul and other enemies, and his crowning as king of Israel, to the deliverance of the Lord Jesus Christ from those who did their best to eliminate Him, yet later heard the words, "He is risen."

**Psa 118:1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.**

This first statement is a general statement advising all who will to offering thanksgiving to the Lord. It would apply to those of any generation from the beginning of time until time is no more.

God is good. There is no evil in Him. All men have sinned, but all men have fallen short of the perfection of God's goodness. It is right that men express their gratitude for His goodness and His mercy toward men who were made in His image, but who always find themselves in need of His willingness to forgive them. We have the promise that such mercy will never be withheld from those who are penitent.

**Psa 118:2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.**

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The general statement is now made more specific. The nation of Israel is called upon to praise God for His everlasting mercy. How many times did Israel corrupt themselves by entering into idolatrous worship and committing all manner of sins against the Lord! They were sent into bondage and then would be delivered from their captors, only to repeat the folly.

Psa 118:3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

The house of Aaron was the source of the priesthood. These had also taken advantage of those who brought sacrifices. They had offered unclean sacrifices. They also had much reason to declare their gratitude to God for not destroying them utterly.

Psa 118:4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

The fear of the Lord and the keeping of His commandments go hand in hand. We have now gone full circle since verse one. Any and all who are willing to fear God and keep his commandments are obligated to declare the wonder of His continued mercy toward those who fall short.

Psa 118:5 I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.

The “I” in this verse fits David’s circumstances very well. Many times he had been in great distress and his freedom had been restricted because of those who sought his life. At times like this he would pray to the Lord and he consistently received an answer to those prayers.

But we must also recognize the similarity to Christ’s

distress at the time He was taken to the cross. He prayed, “My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken me?” He also received an answer to his prayer and is now in the large place of the throne room in heaven.

Psa 118:6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

David could never have slain Goliath without the help of the Lord. There were a number of other times in which what seemed to be impossible odds had to be overcome. He had great confidence that if God was with him, he could not be defeated.

Psa 118:7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.

Not only did God help David personally, He aided those who were assisting him. As a result, those who were intent on killing him found it to be impossible. After Saul was dead, David lived on and replaced him on the throne of Israel.

Psa 118:8 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

Some men are wise. Some men are strong. Some men are wealthy. Some men have great influence. The problem is that every one of these characteristics can be distorted to oppress others and not to aid them. In each of these areas the Lord is perfect. There are times when the wisest of physicians can no longer help. There are times when the enemies of men are too powerful for other humans to match them. There are times when gold and silver are no more than shiny metal as far as delivering



one from disaster. The wealthiest of men cannot pay to have a fatally sick child healed.

Men are often untrustworthy and selfish. God is neither. Yes, it is far better to place one's trust in God than in man.

Psa 118:9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

Princes command large forces of subjects. That means nothing when they have arrayed themselves against God's faithful. Powerful princes fought against David. They also attempted to destroy the Son of man. Both David and Christ won the victory.

Psa 118:10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.

David fought against the Philistines, the Ammonites, the Moabites and the Edomites. With God on his side, he was successful against each of them. David did not intend to say he would destroy his enemies without aid. It was in the name of the Lord that this would be accomplished.

Psa 118:11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

The repetition of the words of the previous verse only serve to make the statement more emphatic. There was much reason to be concerned in the face of such a host of foes. Yet he knew he could depend on the help of the Lord.

Psa 118:12 They compassed me about like bees: they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

Anyone who has ever found themselves in the midst of an angry swarm of bees will appreciate the truth of these words. David's enemies did not come at him from a single direction. They were found on every side, and they had painful stings.

But with the help of God, he would prevail.

Psa 118:13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

The word "thou" indicates that David had aimed these words directly at his enemies. They might push and thrust at him with all their might. They would not defeat him. They would have to defeat the Lord, and that could not be done.

Psa 118:14 The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

Psa 118:15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

It is not just David who may depend upon the Divine right hand. The powerful hand of God is ready to reach out for all of the righteous, and against all of the wicked. He is the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of the wicked.

David was ready to sing of God's mercy, power and goodness. His God would never fail him. The tabernacles of the righteous refers to any point at which the righteous reside or worship.

Psa 118:16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

Some see the "right" hand of the Lord as being a righteous hand and never evil or wicked in any sense. It is much more probable that it is spoken of as the right hand

because that is the hand most persons use rather than the left. The message of the verse is that God's hand is worthy of praise and is ready to help those who depend upon Him.

Psa 118:17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

Of course David did die. He was correct, however in saying he would have time to live and declare the wondrous works of his Lord. Those declarations are found in the many psalms of praise which he wrote.

Psa 118:18 The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

We must agree that God chastened David sufficiently to let him know his sins could not go unnoticed. The death of his baby by Bathsheba, and the rebellion of his son Absalom were the source of many tears.

Psa 118:19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:

He could see the gates of righteousness, just as one might see the gates of the city of Jerusalem. He was ready to walk through those gates into the city of God. He anticipated praising the Lord and living in harmony with His will.

Psa 118:20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

It is the present writer's belief that the Messianic prophecy rises to the top here and Christ comes into view. David probably did not know that the words he was writing and singing pointed to the victory of the Son of God over all of the opponents of righteousness.

Nevertheless, they did. The gates of the New Jerusalem are unlocked with the keys of the Kingdom of God.

Psa 118:21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

Who was it that the psalmist was ready to praise? It was one who had offered him salvation. God was the one who had offered that blessing. He provided that salvation through the Rock of ages.

Psa 118:22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

Psa 118:23 This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

No believer in the truth of the Holy Scriptures can deny that these two verses present God's own Son as the building block upon which salvation has been erected. We need only to look at Matthew 21:42 for proof.

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

Psa 118:24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

The word "day" here is yom. It is often translated as a twenty-four hour day, but it goes farther. It can mean a week, a month, a year or an age. The day in which Jesus Christ was resurrected from the grave and enthroned at the right hand of the Father in heaven was a most glorious time.

David could rejoice when he had overcome his enemies and became king of Israel. Jesus and His followers can rejoice at His victory over sin and death.

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**Psa 118:25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.**

**Psa 118:26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.**

We can pray with David for the Lord to send spiritual prosperity to all of those who have entered into the kingdom of God and have taken upon themselves the Lord's name and who share the blessings of His family.

**Psa 118:27 God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.**

In the days of David, the sacrifices were sometimes tied to the horns of the altar to keep them from running away. Today, the Christian is tied to the altar of God by the bond of love. We must love Him who first loved us.

**Psa 118:28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.**

How easy it is for men to praise human accomplishments. Yet how difficult it is for some of those same men to recognize God's accomplishments and give Him the exaltation and praise which He so richly deserves!

**Psa 118:29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.**

Once more the last verse of a psalm is an echo of the first verse. The entire psalm lies between these two verses

as if they were quotation marks.

Dear reader, take the advice of the psalmist. Give the Lord thanks. His goodness and mercy will never fail you.





## Chapter 119

The one hundred nineteenth psalm is magnificent wordsmanship. The poet and the musician will most certainly appreciate it's beauty. One does not analyze it as much as one feels it. The book of Romans lends itself to logical investigation. This chapter of psalms appeals to the emotions.

The psalm has one hundred seventy-six verses. These verses are found in clusters of eight verses. Each of the eight verses in any one cluster begin with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet. There are twenty-two of these clusters.

One writer has suggested that the content was written by David as a sort of diary dealing with his thoughts about the relationship between man and God, and that the reason for the discontinuity in the psalm is due to having recorded his thoughts on a day to day basis. I tend to agree with this position.

### ALEPH

**Psa 119:1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.**

**Psa 119:2 Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.**

The full and happy life comes about by walking with God. Keeping one's self unpolluted from the world leaves one with a clearer conscience and a stronger body than would be the case if the law of the Lord is ignored or defied.

Anything that is worth doing is worth doing with the whole heart. This is especially true regarding the service

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of our Creator. If the word of the Lord is taken into the heart, it will find it's way back out through the hands, the feet and the tongue.

It is nearly impossible to miss all of the synonyms which are used in this psalm to refer to the same body of knowledge. In this one verse we find both the words "law" and "testimonies." The list can be extended to at least seven of these terms which are used many times. Following is a list of the eight with the number of times each is found.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| 1. Word | 39 times |
| 2. Law | 25 times |
| 3. Commandments | 23 times |
| 4. Testimonies | 23 times |
| 5. Statutes | 22 times |
| 6. Precepts | 21 times |
| 7. Judgments | 18 times |

There are others which are not a common, but are still synonyms for the Word of the Lord.

8. Truth
9. Way
10. Righteousness

Psa 119:3 They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

All men commit some iniquities. The good man is never proud of his sin. He seeks to identify it and erase it from his daily living. He searches for truth, putting into action when he discovers it.

Psa 119:4 Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently.

Psa 119:5 O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

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Only diligent attention to God's statutes and precepts will allow man to keep them. Every righteous man looks back upon the mistakes of yesterday and prays that he may improve upon his spiritual purity. The godly will do all within their power to see that they do not wander aimlessly through life, but follow the straight way which leads to the gates of heaven.

**Psa 119:6 Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.**

Righteous men feel shame as soon as they realize their sin. The wicked only feel shame when they feel the arm of the Lord falling upon them in wrath.

**Psa 119:7 I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.**

It is a blessed thing when God provides man with righteous directions for life and then judges them in perfect judgments. We should praise Him for both providing the directions and for His assignment of punishment and rewards.

**Psa 119:8 I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.**

The Lord may at times depart from one for a time as a means of bringing him to an understanding of the importance of avoiding sin. The author of this psalm was praying that when this happened, God would not completely abandon him.

## BETH

**Psa 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.**

Young men, and young women also, are filled with passion and vigor. It is highly important for such young people to begin life's journey with a strong commitment to the way of the Lord. Satan has a way of using every blessing the Lord has provided to men and distorting it into a weapon of wickedness.

**Psa 119:10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.**

**Psa 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.**

We are pilgrims and strangers in this world. Without strict attention to the map which has been given to us, we will stray from the good way. We will be attracted to such wayward paths as gold, silver, entertainment and prestige. Then when life has reached an end, we will be shocked to find we have wasted our energies on the things which can be seen and have neglected the unseen things which offer bliss, or damnation.

**Psa 119:12 Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.**

Yes, Jehovah is blessed. Those who learn of His **of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.**

Honest prayer to God will result in greater understanding. The man who reads without seeking

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Divine help will never discover the wealth of truth within the Bible.

Then, when the man has obtained understanding, it will be only natural to wish to share it with others. God's works are easy to talk about when we have sensed their greatness.

Psa 119:13 With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

Psa 119:14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.

It is not just the Lord who speaks. It is every wise and faithful follower. In every age, the command has been given to the righteous to teach others the truths which are so precious to them. Added to this is the fact that we cannot afford to teach only those judgments and testimonies we find pleasant and easy. We are to teach all of them.

The man who is rich in silver and gold, knows where he obtained it. The wise spiritual man will know where he obtained his spiritual riches. They are far more valuable than a mountain of gold.

Psa 119:15 I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

Psa 119:16 I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

One does not meditate by flipping the pages of the Bible. Meditation is concentrated attention. The psalmist promises that he will take the proper amount of time to carefully consider the jewels of wisdom the Lord has made available through the law, the prophets, the gospel and the teachings of the apostles.

How pitiful that any person would find it difficult to spend time in spiritual meditation! Few of us find eating ice cream distasteful. The taste of the bread and the water of life should be so all consuming that we will never be satisfied with just a taste.

GIMEL

Psa 119:17 Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.

The only reason death should strike fear into the servant of God is the temporary pain of those last days, or perhaps the goodbyes that will be said to loved ones. Life should be beautiful in that it offers the chance to serve our Heavenly Father. This is followed by the departure of the spirit from the body. Then God's faithful will wake to even greater service.

Psa 119:18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Men all too often walk around with 20/20 physical vision, but because they will not open their eyes, they live in spiritual blindness. The prayer to open our eyes should be on the lips of every person on earth. Those of us who are nearing the close of life can testify that time spent gazing into the law of God reveals additional glory with those passing days.

Psa 119:19 I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

Psa 119:20 My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.

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A stranger is unfamiliar with the territory in which he finds himself. He must ask those who know more than he does about the pitfalls. In the case of God's spiritual map, we have aid from a perfect source. It was He who created this heaven and earth. He has given us a perfect set of directions. Like the psalmist, we should feel a great longing for such truth.

**Psa 119:21 Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments.**

God is not willing that any should perish. The proud and the humble alike are offered His statutes. The proud reject them and are cursed because of that rejection. The humble hunger and thirst after righteousness. They are pleasing to Him and receive showers of blessing.

**Psa 119:22 Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.**

Would not the reader like to be able to state what is said in this verse. I have been faithful. I have obeyed the will of the Lord. The promise is that those who live in such manner will not be seen with contempt and reproached by the Heavenly Father.

**Psa 119:23 Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.**

The opposition will be there. Even the civil dignitaries will sometimes be found speaking out in mockery against the servants of the Most High. That will not prevent such a servant from feasting upon the Word of God.

**Psa 119:24 Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.**

The lover of God will seek out the precepts of the Holy Scriptures even more diligently than the scholar seeks out the finest instructor available. As he meets these precepts, he will tell others.

## DALETH

**Psa 119:25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.**

It is not the body that is said to be cleaving unto the dust. It is the soul. When man recognizes he has lowered himself to the point of being no more able to lift himself out of his sad condition, he will be more apt to call upon the Lord. God has promised to give strength and life through His Word. He will keep that promise.

Not only has God promised, in His Word, to give life and strength, He has made that Word available in order that we do not have to struggle on without help.

**Psa 119:26 I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes.**

He has surveyed his life and found both strengths and weaknesses. These have been confessed to God. God has attended to his prayer. He will teach, if we will learn.

**Psa 119:27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.**

Honest prayer to God will result in greater understanding. The man who reads without seeking Divine help will never discover the wealth of truth within the Bible.

Then, when the man has obtained understanding, it will be only natural to wish to share it with others. God's

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works are easy to talk about when we have sensed their greatness.

Psa 119:28 My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

He is back to the idea expressed in verse one. We might say his heart was heavy. The only hope of decreasing the weight of the burden was to hear and obey the will of the Lord.

Psa 119:29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.

Psa 119:30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.

The Word of God speaks of two widely different ways. There is the way of lying and deception. There is the way of truth. It is necessary for the faithful servant of God to abhor deception and cling to the truth. Satan is the father of liars. Sin entered the world through his lies in the Garden of Eden. It has spread to every portion of the globe and to every age of man's history.

The lies can only be discerned with the help of God's Word. It defines both lies and truth. We must search it deeply to enjoy the freedom it can give.

Psa 119:31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

If this is David, it is hard to see how he could make the statement that he had always stuck to the testimonies of the Lord. Yet, it is true that an overall look at his life shows sorrow over sins. It also shows a great hunger and thirst for the Good Way. God can cleanse the soul, that

it need not grovel in the mud and mire. The guilt can be removed.

Psa 119:32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

There are four words that describe the reaction of man to exposure to God's truth. One can *sit* and ignore them. One can *stand* and prepare for action. One can *walk* in the paths of righteousness. One can *run* briskly away from sin and toward the Lord.

HE

Psa 119:33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.

Every verse of these eight calls upon the Lord to do something. The psalmist is well aware that he is not able to do those things which he calls upon the Lord to do. If God will teach him, he promises to put that teaching into practice as long as he lives.

Psa 119:34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

This present writer will not hesitate to give attention to thoughts which have already been presented in the psalm. If the Lord feels these thoughts bear repeating, we will follow that example. The psalmist again requests that God give him understanding of the law. Of course God only gives such understanding when man reaches out eagerly for it. When a man reaches out eagerly and promises to keep God's law with all his heart, God will grant the request.

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**Psa 119:35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.**

The most effective supervisors of men are those who inspire the workers to take pride in their work. Such workers do not work because they are forced to. They work because they take satisfaction in the outcome of that work. God is the Master Supervisor. If man will allow it, God will make the keeping of the commandments a delightful experience.

**Psa 119:36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.**

**Psa 119:37 Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.**

Covetousness looks upon the world as a source of self satisfaction. It does not look upon others as persons to be loved. It looks upon them as possible servants to their own pleasure. God's testimonies will reduce covetousness and magnify love.

It has been written that the eyelids are among the most important organs men have. When that which is not only worthless, but spiritually damaging confronts the eye, the eyelid can be closed and the temptation rejected.

**Psa 119:38 Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.**

**Psa 119:39 Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.**

The fear spoken of here is that of respect. We do not fear God with a fear which paralyzes. We fear Him with

a fear that pulls us away from sin. That kind of fear is a wonderful aid. We should certainly try our best to develop it.

**Psa 119:40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.**

The body without the spirit is physically dead. The body without the Spirit of God is spiritually dead. The Spirit of God is intimately connected with the Word of God. The one who spends time with the Word of God gives God the invitation to bring him to spiritual life.

VAV

**Psa 119:41 Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word.**

There are many mercies extended from God to man. We are provided with food, clothing and shelter which we have not earned. We insult the Lord repeatedly, and then receive forgiveness when we are truly penitent. Not the least of these mercies is that of salvation. The sacrifice of God's Only Begotten Son is more mercy than we shall ever extend to our fellow man. God promised it would come through the prophets of old. He did not fail us.

**Psa 119:42 So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.**

The Christian is to always be ready to give an answer to him that asketh for the hope that lies within him. This should not be difficult. Both nature and the Book of God are overflowing with answers to the questions of the sceptic and the atheist. The experiences of being a child

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of God are difficult to relay to others, but they support the promises God has made.

Psa 119:43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

How could the Word of truth be taken utterly out of the mouth? If one failed to read God's testimonies it would not be long before there would be little in the heart or the mouth. The one who searches the Book of God normally does so in order to find hope of life beyond this one. That hope will be retained through study and application.

Judgments are evaluations of one's guilt or innocence. The Bible allow the reader to learn of his or her own spiritual condition.. It then tells how God will deal with each man's condition when life is over.

Psa 119:44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

The psalmist made the Lord a promise to obey His law forever. This is a grave promise. Forever is a long time! The wiles of Satan and his angels are persuasive. This kind of promise requires help in it's performance. The help is there for the one who makes honest request for it.

Psa 119:45 And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

As long as man walks in the straight and narrow paths of righteousness, he will free himself from the bondage of sin. Jesus Christ said, "The truth shall make you free." From birth onward, man desires to be free. The small

child throws a tantrum when it is held back from doing it's will. We allow the child freedom as we find it to be mature enough to use that freedom correctly. The same is true with the Heavenly Father and His children. When we learn the truth and walk according to that truth, we will come to experience the nature of true freedom.

Psa 119:46 I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

The prestige of those who hold high position in human government will not intimidate the witness of the man of God. We are not to fear those who can kill the body but not the soul. The world may try with all it's might to embarrass the Christian for refusing to share in the drinking, the corrupt conversation and the perversions it sees as "living it up." The Christian will not hesitate to make it known that he knows what real life is.

Psa 119:47 And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

Psa 119:48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

Extend a piece of candy to a small child and watch it raise it's hands toward the candy. God's commandments produce a similar reaction in those who truly understand how wonderful they can be to the spiritual taste. As the child relishes the taste of the candy in it's mouth, the lover of God's Word lingers over the Bread of Life.

ZAYIN

Psa 119:49 Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

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The Word of God and the hope of man are very much intertwined. The Word speaks of hope for the future. Having experienced the realization of some of that hope, the man or woman of God turns back to the Word for added hope. Thus the cycle goes on and on. God makes promises. Then He proves His dependability through the fulfilling of those promises. This was particularly true in the case of the young shepherd boy who received revelation from God and then passed those truths on to such as those who read those words today.

**Psa 119:50 This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.**

Affliction is a plague of all sorts of men. Some find comfort from their affliction in one source, some in another. The rich man points to his wealth. The drunkard points to his beer. The theatre goer points to a comedian. Each seeks comfort in his own way. The Christian seeks his comfort in the Word of the Living God. The real hope of comfort lies in the promise of eternal life for the faithful. There is an invigoration experienced in this life which comes into being by placing the precepts of Jehovah into action. But, there is a far greater comfort promised after the judgment if one finds the door of heaven unlocked.

**Psa 119:51 The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law.**

Many of the Lord's people can testify of the truth of this verse. The psalmist was not alone in suffering the ridicule of the ungodly. Between the drawing power of the pleasures of sin, and the doubts Satan produces in the hearts of his prospects, the Christian must determine

he will keep God's law in spite of these forces. He will not be turned either to the right or the left.

**Psa 119:52 I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.**

It is not possible to hide from the Lord. The proof of this fact is found by looking at the punishments dealt to the Egyptians, to the Caananites and the world of Noah. In each case the lover of God was saved from the effects of God's wrath. David had devoted himself to an obedient life. He took comfort in the conviction that God would act in his own case as He had done in numerous occasions of the past.

**Psa 119:53 Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.**

Reflection upon the fate of the rebellious is enough to strike horror into the thoughts of the righteous. Hell is pictured as a lake of fire. To think of a lost soul being cast into such suffering with no hope of an end is enough to draw gasps from the lips of even the most hardened. It is tragic that more of those who are headed straight down that road of horror will continue to follow it in spite of all that has been done to rescue them.

**Psa 119:54 Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.**

The writer of this psalm was probably David. He loved the facts, commands and promises which were presented through the Word of God. Sometimes are problems are so pressing we cannot sing. But when the joys overcome the tears, let us raise our voices in songs of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord who has made such possible.

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Psa 119:55 I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

David reflected upon the name and character of Jehovah both day and night. What comes to the mind of the reader when he wakes in the middle of the night? Those are times when the inner thoughts of the heart burst to the front. The one who loves and keeps God's law will ponder the blessings and the cursings reserved for the sheep and the goats who will be separated from one another when time dissolves into eternity.

Psa 119:56 This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

The sinner allows one sin to lead to another until life is a dreadful chain which holds him in bondage.

The godly allow one righteous deed to lead to another until life becomes a ladder leading up to heaven.

HETH

Psa 119:57 Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.

We think of a portion as some part of either food or drink which has been placed before us for consumption. In the case of the psalmist, that which had been placed before him was the Lord Himself. Because he found great satisfaction in the portion which had been served to him, the psalmist had determined to allow the Lord to direct his life.

No wiser decision can any man make. God does not mislead those who will turn to Him. He pleads with us not to attempt directing our own ways. We are to trust in Him, and He will direct our steps.

Psa 119:58 I entreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.

Has the reader noticed the number of times the writer of the psalms mentioned the “whole heart?” It is worthless to make a half hearted commitment in response to the love of God. His promise is that if that is done He will save us when we cry out, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.”

Psa 119:59 I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

If only all men would pause to think on their ways and follow the evidence to the end of those ways, the church of Jesus Christ would grow by leaps and bounds. The majority act without thinking ahead. The day will come when they will wish with the “whole heart” that they had looked to the end!

When David thought back over his early life, he recognized his footsteps were lead him to a chastisement which he would shrink from. Therefore, he made the decision to turn around in his tracks and walk with the Lord instead of against Him. We must understand that the taste of heaven here on earth should only spur us on to the full meal with awaits those who have truly hungered for it and kept the way carefully.

Psa 119:60 I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

The vision of eternal reward and punishment should be sufficient to bring a very quick and definite decision to honor the Word of the Lord. A man would hurry to



obtain it if he were informed there was a great financial treasure hidden in a place which was shown to him on a map. God has made such a map available. The one who turns up his nose at the treasures of heaven is a very foolish man indeed.

Psa 119:61 The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.

The bands of the wicked are found in the chains which wickedness wraps around the one who allows his soul to approach it too closely. The chains all too quickly entangle him and rob him of blessings. The psalmist rejoices that he did not allow himself to continue in the rejection of the Word of God.

Psa 119:62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

In the very midst of the night, some wake with screams of fear upon their lips. Because the righteous person has been careful to avoid the pitfalls of the devil, he can wake at midnight and give thanks to the Lord who has been merciful to him. He need not fear God's judgments because those judgments will be made in accordance with a righteous life.

Psa 119:63 I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

Evil companionships corrupt good morals. Holy companions lend spiritual strength to those who associate with them. When in the company of evil persons, it is far more tempting to do evil. In the company of the righteous, evil ways are more apt to be avoided.

Psa 119:64 The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.

What a beautiful verse this one is! If only we will open our eyes to the merciful ways of the Lord which have been demonstrated through history and are found wherever the honest heart will see them, we would find it difficult to choose any other reaction than to cry with the psalmist, "Teach me thy statutes."

TETH

Psa 119:65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

God has promised to look after his own. This first verse verifies that fact. The psalmist states that just as the Lord had promised, He had cared for him.

We will find this theme running throughout this set of eight verses.

Psa 119:66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

There is confidence that since the writer has believed God's commandments and respected them, he can call upon the Lord to teach him and lead him farther. The one who despises the will of the Lord need not expect to receive such favors. He will either remain in a stagnant state, or will become spiritually corrupt.

Psa 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.



One would not expect a person who had been afflicted and punished to consider the affliction a beneficial blessing. This writer did think it was just that. He had sinned against God before he was afflicted. The affliction caused him to realize the need to change his ways and bring them into harmony with God's commandments. As a result, he was acting righteously.

Psa 119:68 Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

The statutes of the Lord were now recognized as beneficial. They were not a burden to be avoided, but were something to be sought out. He requests that a greater knowledge of those statutes be taught to him.

The thrill of learning that which is uplifting is an experience to be repeated. There is little but pity toward those who have not discovered the pleasantness of learning to do good.

Psa 119:69 The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart.

The proud of heart who hate the precepts of Jehovah are apt to also hate those who keep them. One of the ways they show this hatred is to manufacture lies about them. This behavior will not discourage the true servant of God. He will continue to follow the path which God has made evident. He will not depart from it as a result of persecution.

Psa 119:70 Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law.

Fat on the physical heart is often deadly. It leads to heart attacks and physical death. Fat on the spiritual

heart is even more perilous. It leads to laziness and lack of spiritual exercise which can lead to spiritual death and eternal destruction in the lake of fire.

Psa 119:71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

Has the reader ever experienced the correction of the Lord? There are two completely different ways to react to such correction. One can stiffen the back and pour out cursings and accusations concerning the cruelty of the God who dealt out the correction. Or one can say along with the psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn to behave."

Psa 119:72 The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

The thousands spoken of in this verse no doubt refer to thousands of pieces of gold and silver. This would be a considerable fortune. Yet the law of the Lord is far more precious than earthly fortunes of any size whatsoever. The eternal company of the saints and the angels is worth more than any amount of silver and gold.

VOD

Psa 119:73 Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

The psalmist has grasped the truth that men are created to be godlike. The Lord made man in His own image and expects him to grow in the grace and knowledge of He who created him. I believe David was



the writer of this psalm. He desired that God assist him in fulfilling his obligations by making it possible for him to understand the Father's will.

Psa 119:74 They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

He knew he could be an inspiration to others who seeking to please God, in that when they saw him and the hope he had, they would follow his example. It is usually easier to reach a goal if we find others walking with us.

Psa 119:75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

David knew he had gone astray in the past. He had been made painfully aware of the fact through the afflictions which had come upon him. He admitted that God's judgment on his sins was just and merciful. It was not because God enjoyed seeing him suffer. It was that the discomfort would make a better man of him.

Psa 119:76 Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

Ultimately he realized the corrections which he had endured would work to his comfort, as a result of the rewards which lay ahead if he remained true.

Psa 119:77 Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.

He felt that the punishment had served its purpose. He was asking that the Lord not take his life. He wanted Him to know it was a pleasure to discover and do the divine will.

Psa 119:78 Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.

Those who persecute the children of the Lord have need to be ashamed. Those proud enemies of God, who were satisfied only in seeing the godly suffer, should turn from their hatred. They had made a strong effort to destroy his faith, but he would not allow it. He cherished the precepts presented by his Maker. As long as he persisted in the course of righteousness, he need not worry about further shame on his own part.

Psa 119:79 Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

A promise was being made to the Lord that David was eager to teach any who would listen to the testimony he offered. A choice is allowed to men. They may fear God and keep His commandments, or they can choose to turn a deaf ear and move onward to eternal destruction.

Psa 119:80 Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

We are reminded of Joshua's statement urging Israel to choose whom they would serve. You will recall that he said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

KAPH

Psa 119:81 My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.

David was not saying that he was about ready to give up. He was declaring that the pursuit of the right way

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had proven to be wearisome. Yet, he continued in the quest. The promises the Lord had placed before him were a source of great hope. If he would do his part, he was confident and filled with hope that his eternal destiny would be far more pleasant than the persecution he had endured was difficult.

**Psa 119:82 Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?**

He had attempted to see to the end of the road, but no man can see that far as long as he remains within the limitations of this body of flesh. The only way the hope can be realized is through the inspired Word of the Living God.

Oh, how he wished to pass through the trials and move on to the promised land of endless day! Was it possible that some degree of relief could be had while he still resided in the flesh?

**Psa 119:83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes.**

The bottle he was speaking of was not a bottle made of glass. It was made of animal skin. If such a bottle was placed too close to the fireplace it would turn black and would become brittle. He felt that he was in somewhat the same condition. In spite of that, he would not turn back from God's pathway.

**Psa 119:84 How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?**

How long would he have to wait before the Lord evened the score. His enemies had caused him great

anxiety. Surely the time would come when their sins would bring spiritual stripes upon them.

**Psa 119:85 The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.**

There is a kind of pride which men and women should cherish. We should be proud of a task well done. We should be proud of our spouses and our children. But false pride causes men to think higher of themselves than they have right to think. It will prevent them from recognizing their true reason for existence, which is to fear God and keep His commandments.

**Psa 119:86 All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.**

**Psa 119:87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.**

The psalmist was confident of the dependability of the Lord's commandments and His promises. If God would help, he would try with all his might to follow the divine instructions. He had endured much opposition from the proud and haughty, but he had constantly kept his eye on the goal.

**Psa 119:88 Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.**

To "quicken" is to give energy and life. The man who cherishes the law of the Lord may find the real meaning of life. The winebibber and the fornicator may falsely conclude that they are "living it up." They are not. They delude themselves. The one who is really living is the person who has determined to honor the testimony which the Lord speaks.



This marks the halfway point in our discussion of this lengthy chapter of the Bible. What a contrast it is between the one hundred seventeen Psalm which has only two verses, and this one which has one hundred seventy-six!

The basic message of this present psalm is the importance of the Word of God, and the need for man to love and obey that Word. We look forward to searching out the blessings in the rest of this great chapter of the Bible.

### LAMED

**Psa 119:89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.**

God is Ruler of both heaven and earth. When the heaven and the earth of this planet earth have passed away, God will still be Ruler. It is man's responsibility to hear and obey. As long as this is the case, man will reap the rewards that only Jehovah can make available.

Many men may not realize God's rulership, That will only work to their own disadvantage when this world gives way to the next.

**Psa 119:90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.**

Man may be undependable, but the Lord is not. He will keep his promises when time shall be no more. It is He who framed the earth, the stars and the planets.

**Psa 119:91 They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.**

Even when men disregard and disobey the Word of God, the heavens and the earth continue in existence through Jehovah's wisdom and power.

**Psa 119:92 Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.**

The man who delights in keeping God's law will reap everlasting life. The one who rejects it will find himself in the fire of hell.

**Psa 119:93 I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.**

Every man and woman alive should echo the words of the psalmist. God does not speak idly when He presents His will to man. To forget His precepts is to commit spiritual suicide. It is to invite the words, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. I never knew you."

**Psa 119:94 I am thine, save me: for I have sought thy precepts.**

Does the reader not look forward to hearing those precious words, "Enter into the joys of they Lord." No one can expect to hear the words above if that person disdains the will of the Almighty. One who does do so will awake to find just how stupid it was to insult the Ruler of the universe.

**Psa 119:95 The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I will consider thy testimonies.**

What a terrible thought it is to ponder the attitude of the rebellious. It is bad enough that they care nothing



for their own destiny. They must lie in wait to take God's faithful along with them to the place where tears never cease. The man or woman of God must determine to avoid such a destiny at all costs.

**Psa 119:96 I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad.**

Even when men have become proud and have ignored the Word of God, there is still the possibility of return to grace. God's offer of salvation reaches out to all who are ready to repent of their sin and be perfect through the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. Remember dear reader. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

**MEM**

**Psa 119:97 O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day.**

Law is a very interesting concern. Many persons abhor any thought of restrictions by the law. This holds true with both civil law and divine law. If the traffic law specifies twenty-five miles per hour in a given zone, such a person is not satisfied without driving at some speed above that. The same principle holds true with respect for divine law. If divine law commands that "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain, such persons must demonstrate their independence by using blasphemy whenever they choose.

David had ignored divine law when he took Bathsheba in an adulterous relationship. Words he penned later indicate that he regretted having done that. At this point he makes it clear that he loves God's law.

That is the way it should be. Law is not intended to

reduce men's freedom. It is meant to increase it. Law provides order. Order increases freedom. This is true of both civil and divine law. The statement of this verse is beautiful. Men should love, cherish and respect divine law as a privilege rather than a restriction of personal freedom.

**Psa 119:98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.**

Those who disregard the commandments of the Lord are acting foolishly. The wise person will bend an ear in the direction of God's holy Word in order to survive in a world where confusion abounds. The only way in which one may survive is to seek out God's law and walk in harmony with it constantly.

Death is the last enemy. Even that enemy may be overcome if one loves and keeps God's Way.

**Psa 119:99 I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.**

This may sound boastful, but the psalmist is correct when he makes the statement that he has more understanding than his teachers. The reason he is correct in the statement is that he has based his behavior on the principles which God's perfect mind has presented to man. He meditates on those principles and he utilizes them in his daily life.

The student who loves God and keeps God's commandments, is wiser than the teacher who bypasses them.

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**Psa 119:100 I understand more than the ancients,
because I keep thy precepts.**

The psalmist refers to the wise men who had gained reputations for their ordered thought. By basing his life on the principles God laid out in the Holy Scriptures, he had achieved greater real understanding of right and wrong than those who had placed their dependence upon the wisdom of men.

**Psa 119:101 I have refrained my feet from every
evil way, that I might keep thy word.**

**Psa 119:102 I have not departed from thy
judgments: for thou hast taught me.**

One cannot but wonder if these are the words of David. His irresponsibility in his early life certainly did not fit well with the description in this verse. He had not kept his feet from every evil way. He had departed from the judgments God had taught him.

We must either see the words of this verse as being penned by someone other than David, or we must view them as truths he had gained by bitter experience as he transgressed God's law in his early days.

**Psa 119:103 How sweet are thy words unto my
taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

The writer has discovered the desirability of feasting on the Word of God! The law of God is not bitter. It is sweeter than honey. Those who despise God's precepts make a serious mistake. They will find that the end of their folly is unpleasant beyond the ability of our words to portray it.

Oh, that every man might come to realize the beauty of this truth early in life, and treasure it in his mind until earthly life is replaced by eternity.

Psa 119:104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

When we mortals put all of the experiences of men of all the ages together, we must admit that the total of all human experience is just the beginning of the wisdom of the Eternal God.

But is there not pleasure in following our fleshly desires? Yes, there is momentary pleasure. But when an eternal existence in heaven is compared with the seventy or so years one might wallow in the lying promises of Satan, heaven comes out far, far ahead.

NUN

Psa 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Satan is the prince of darkness. Christ is the light of the world. The Word became flesh and dwelt among men as the Son of God. Thus Christ's teaching are the light which allows men to find the pathway of righteousness. Without that Word man is lost in spiritual night.

Psa 119:106 I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

The type of swearing we speak of here is not using the name of the Lord in vain. It is the type of promise which is made in court to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The person who determines to be

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godly must promise that he or she will walk in spiritual light and will do that which God commands.

**Psa 119:107 I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.**

These words were probably penned by David. He suffered much from his enemies. When matters became so dismal that he might rather die than live, David could cry out to Jehovah and plead for a quickening of his spirit in order that life would seem worth living.

**Psa 119:108 Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments.**

The writer begged God to receive his promises and his praises. A response to this might well be that God would offer an even finer understanding of why and how to keep the divine commandments. Man is unable to direct his own steps. He must have the spiritual light which only the Godhead can provide.

**Psa 119:109 My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.**

When it is said that the writer's soul is continually in his hand, he means to say that it is quite possible that he could be careless enough to through that life away by ignoring divine truth. He is asking God not to overlook the fact that he has not done that. He makes his decisions with a constant eye upon that which pleases his Maker.

**Psa 119:110 The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.**

It had not been easy to be true. Satan and his helpers are always ready to catch man unaware and to plunge him downward into the darkness. The psalmist is happy to have resisted most of the onslaughts which were meant to destroy his soul.

**Psa 119:111 Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.**

A heritage is something valuable which is passed down from ancestors to their descendants. God is our Heavenly Father. His directions for living are given to each of us that we might find life rich and full. When those directions are followed, the heart will rejoice in the knowledge that all is well with one's soul.

**Psa 119:112 I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.**

We are told, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." It is not always easy to keep God's commandments. Thousands of martyrs have been murdered for having maintained their faith rather than denying their Lord. They will be richly rewarded for their loyalty. God is watching. He knows both our minds, our words and our actions. He will not forget His promises.

## **SAMEK**

**Psa 119:113 I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.**

Vain thoughts are those which are empty and useless, or downright damaging, to the person and to the progress

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of the Lord's work. This would include blasphemy, atheism, divisive presentations, etc.

In contrast, the psalmist declares his admiration for the law of God. When one loves something that person does everything within his power to promote it's welfare and progress.

Psa 119:114 Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

There are many times when one needs a hiding place from the storms of life. Satan has many darts and arrows. On occasion they come flying from every direction. Both the hiding place and the shield allow protection from such destructive weapons.

The Word of God offers optimism during such times as could be overwhelming without it. The promises of eternal victory are absolute necessities.

Psa 119:115 Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

The righteous individual will make it clear that such efforts on the part of Satan and his allies will be warded off. Those who would injure the spiritual health of God's children must be made to realize the waste of time they face. The whole duty of man is fear God and keep His commandments.

Psa 119:116 Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

The promise is made very clear in the Bible that Jehovah will support His followers. He created them to

be with Him for ever and ever. The person who would lose confidence in such promises and lose their hope of heaven are truly hopeless. If men will not be ashamed of God, He will not be ashamed of them.

Psa 119:117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

Satan is too powerful for humans to oppose without the assistance of Jehovah. This does not imply that we are hopeless. With God as our Helper we can secure our safety by living according to the precepts which He has presented to us through the written word.

Psa 119:118 Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood.

Repeatedly, over the entire history of man, God has punished those who turn away from Him. At the same time He has protected those who love Him and keep the commandments. All the enemy has to look forward to is an eternity of misery. In contrast, the man of God who remains true to Him has the promise of joy forever.

Psa 119:119 Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

When one refines valuable metals, the dross is that which has been separated from the pure metal. The dross is discarded as useless. The faithful look forward to being told to enter into the joys of the Lord. The wicked are without hope and will be told to depart from the presence



of all that is worth having. God's family in heaven will consist of those who have loved His facts, commands and promises while they were living in the flesh.

Psa 119:120 My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

The one who devotes his life to the pleasures of the flesh, and shuns service to the Lord, is mocking the perfect model in whose image he has been created. This is pure folly. The righteous will honor the will of the Creator. They will strive constantly to learn His will and see that their lives are not such that they will be cast into the fires of hell.

AYIN

Psa 119:121 I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.

David had tried very hard to see that his decisions had made life fair and satisfying to others. He had judge without partiality. The wicked had been punished. The oppressed had been relieved.

It seemed only right to him that he could call upon the God of heaven to do the same for him. There were those who would enjoyed seeing him made miserable. With the help of God, he could survive their attacks.

Psa 119:122 Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

To be surety for him was to see that those who oppressed him were prevented from harming him to the extent that he was unable to continue ruling Israel toward enriched lives both spiritually and materially.

Psa 119:123 Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

He had in a sense been straining his eyes looking for divine aid. It was needed badly. He needed the evidence of Jehovah's willingness to providentially guide his life in righteous ways.

Psa 119:124 Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.

It is always wise to pray that the will of the Lord stand guard over all requests. David was quite willing to let God make the decisions as to what should be done. He was aware that his own judgments could only be right when they were in harmony with the mercy and truth of the Eternal God.

Psa 119:125 I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

If only all of the present political leaders of the world could come to the realization that they need the understanding of God's mercy and truth if they are to properly perform their duties!

It is only too true that power corrupts. But with the correct attitude, it is possible for humility to reign in the heart of a ruler. David was merely a servant in the hand of God. He knew he needed both God's word and His wisdom to fulfill his own responsibilities.

Psa 119:126 It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law.

The statement in this verse that it was time to work that the law of the Lord not be laid aside was David's



confession that he was unable to reign without help from above. He was ready to make the proper use of all truth which was provided for such use.

Psa 119:127 Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

The statement that we should “Buy the truth and sell it not” is one that all men should hold dear. All else becomes worthless when the commandments of the Lord are spurned. Gold and silver can be stolen. Material possessions can be removed from our lives in a moment’s time. The value of God’s commandments will continue into the endlessness of eternity.

Psa 119:128 Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.

God is the Judge of right and wrong. Proper thoughts, words and deeds are to be determined by the Word of God. Anything which conflicts with His truth is wrong. If one hates something, he will make an attempt to put distance between that thing and himself. If he esteems something, he will attempt to draw closer to it. Hatred of the false ways of the world will result in isolating one’s self from them.

PE

Psa 119:129 Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

The keeping of God’s commandments is best accomplished through a spirit of admiration for them. Keeping the commandments through a spirit of

intimidation does point one in the right direction, but it is a second choice. Love, respect and admiration for God's truth is first.

Psa 119:130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

Is the present reader somewhat more cautious in the midst of darkness? Normally the answer would be "Yes." There are dangers in the darkness which can be seen clearly in the light. When God's Word is allowed to enter into the mind of a man, a large portion of such danger can be avoided.

Physical darkness and spiritual darkness are similar in that they hide the danger until one stumbles over it. God's Word allows one to see the pitfalls which Satan would place in our way.

The simple, as spoken of in this verse are not the mentally handicapped. They are those who have not yet seen the light.

Psa 119:131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

There are disagreements as to the message in the verse above. There are at least two reasons why a person might pant. Within the context of this present section of the text, it could very well be like the open mouth of the baby bird which waits for the food which it's mother is ready to offer. However, it could also mean that the one doing the panting is like a person running from those who were causing oppression.

This present commentator is of the opinion that David is saying he hungers and thirst for the spiritual nourishment God's truth offers. We could all profit by



feeding upon the Word of God. We could all profit by calling upon God for providential help when Satan's forces threaten our safety.

Psa 119:132 Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

The study of the Word of God reveals a long history of mercy and grace which flows from the throne of God to those who serve Him. David was calling upon the Lord to continue that history in his own case. He was in need of help. He declared his love for God. He claimed the promise of God to give grace and mercy to His children.

Psa 119:133 Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Can one be certain in our own day that God will order our steps that we may avoid sin? The Bible states that this can be brought about by exposing ourselves to the will of God as revealed through the words of the written word. We need not resign ourselves to a life controlled by our lust and pride. The Word and the divine Hand will give us victory.

Psa 119:134 Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

God had a part to play. David had a part to play. If God would provide His instructions to David during the attacks of those who hated him, he promised God that he would honor those instructions at all times.

Psa 119:135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

A shining face is one of approval. The prayer of David was that his life was such that God would look upon him with pleasure. Then, as God provided guidance, David would cherish that guidance and keep the commandments.

Psa 119:136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

Tears flowed down David's cheeks like rivers when he observed the disrespect men showed for the law of the Lord. He could envision a far better world if men would keep those laws. When we see men breaking God's commandments, we also grieve.

But, it is not always grief over the other man's sins which should bring tears flowing down our cheeks. Our own sins should do the same. Let us put the word "I" in place of "they" and make a personal application. **They** need to keep God's laws. **I** need to keep them also.

SADE

Psa 119:137 Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments.

One need never fear that placing his or her life in the hands of Jehovah will result in unfair treatment. The righteous God will dispense righteous judgments. Both His rewards and His punishments will be executed in a manner which will serve His own glory as well as the welfare of the individual. Sometimes the chastisements may be difficult to bear, but they will always be intended to do good and never intended to do evil.

Psa 119:138 Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.

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When the God of heaven and earth speaks, the reader or the hearer may be confident in placing his or her confidence in that word. His facts are true. His prophecies are sure.

**Psa 119:139 My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.**

The very fact that David's dedication to the Word of God was so evident caused his enemies to hate him. They despised God. They despised those who loved God as David did.

**Psa 119:140 Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.**

The hatred of God's enemies would not cause David to abandon the truth. He recognized the beauty of its purity. He would withstand the attacks of the foes of righteousness. His love for God far outweighed the fear of the foe.

**Psa 119:141 I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts.**

Much of what David wrote in the psalms was related to the times of pursuit by wicked men. It would hardly do to use the words small and despised during the time of his reign over Israel. It was quite accurate to use these words while he was hiding in caves.

At the same time it would be well for all of us to remember that regardless of our position of prestige among men, we are still finite when compared with the infinite Lord of the universe. Thus, it is a mark of true wisdom to hear and obey when He speaks.

**Psa 119:142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.**

Jesus Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." He was the Word become flesh. In Him we have tasted the eternal righteousness. In Him we have a demonstration of truth in action. Between the written Word in the Holy Scriptures, and the Living Word who said, "Come, follow me," we have no excuse for spiritual ignorance. God and truth are unchanging.

**Psa 119:143 Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are my delights.**

The life of the godly is a life of mixed experiences. On one day life may be filled with sorrow and disappointment. On another day, one may find exquisite pleasure and joy. But God's truth will ever be there to comfort on the days with burdens, and to offer even sweeter joy on those days of an exalted spirit.

**Psa 119:144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.**

May each of us share the prayer of the psalmist that we also might have understand of God's righteous testimonies and truthly life. There is a great difference between merely existing, and in living the full and wondrous life God intended for all of those who have been made in His image. How can we afford to deny ourselves such spiritual riches when they are extended to us?

## KOPH

**Psa 119:145 I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.**

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Whole hearted religion is the only kind that man should consider. Half hearted religion is displeasing to God. It is usually evident to men. It leaves the soul limp and lifeless. Whole hearted religion gives God glory. It inspires those who observe it in action. It opens the soul and invites the Lord to pour in even greater blessings.

Psa 119:146 I cried unto thee; save me, and I shall keep thy testimonies.

The psalmist realized the need for the help of his Maker. He was in danger which he could not completely ward off. Let us apply the situation to our own experiences. Life is filled with obstacles to true happiness. We have disease. We have drought and famine. We have dealings with those who care very little about taking advantage of us. And in addition to all of these, we have the danger of the loss of our soul. We most certainly should feel the need to cry out, "Lord save me, and I will keep Thy testimonies.

Psa 119:147 I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

The one who truly realizes the importance of communion with the Lord will awaken in the earliest hours of the day with a prayer upon his lips. The word "prevent", as used here means to come before. Even before the dawn of the day, the psalmist appealed for the help of his God, and so should we!

Psa 119:148 Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

Just as the day of the God fearing person begins with a prayer, it is in order to close the eyes with a prayer.

Meditation in the truths which God has made available to us is the very finest medicine one can take for the health of the soul. We should meditate upon the Word of God both day and night.

Psa 119:149 Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness: O LORD, quicken me according to thy judgment.

We have received the promise of God that if we love him and keep his commandments, He will hear and answer our requests in prayer. They may not always be answered in the precise way we have asked, but they will be answered according to His knowledge of what is best for us.

Psa 119:150 They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

These are probably the words of David as those who hated him pursued him. They were bent on doing damage. In acting as they were, they had made the decision to walk after their own ways rather than after the will of the loving God.

Psa 119:151 Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth.

Even though the enemy was in hot pursuit, David was confident Jehovah was aware of all that was taking place. He would see that all things worked together for good. His commandments and promises were dependable. Even if the enemy should prevail and take one's life, the Lord had the power to raise that one to a higher eternal existence where sin is found no more.

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**Psa 119:152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.**

This is an inspired man telling of his faith in the Word of the eternal God. He is absolutely certain that the truth which has been revealed to him will stand when time has melted away into that realm where time shall be no more. God hath spoken. Let all the earth keep silence before Him!

### RESH

**Psa 119:153 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.**

The afflictions which David was undergoing were a result of Saul's persecution. At this point in time David felt that he was trying to live according to the precepts of God's law. Even when he had gone wrong, he had repented of his sins. He now feels that he may call upon the mercy of the Lord to relieve him of at least a portion of the grief he suffers.

**Psa 119:154 Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.**

David knew he was unable to frame his case in the best words. He needed help. The Lord had promised such help to those who were penitent of their sins and who were dedicating themselves to God's service. To quicken him was to give him the strength to survive the afflictions and prove his faith by obedience.

**Psa 119:155 Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.**

David was seeking for God's law. He wished to know it and keep it. The wicked had no such intentions. They cared nothing for the instructions of the Lord. They would defy rather than obey. They could hardly expect help from the Divine hand.

**Psa 119:156 Great are thy tender mercies, O LORD: quicken me according to thy judgments.**

The plea for quickening is repeated time after time. No man can stand in the face of the power of the devil without the strength which comes through the Word of Jehovah. When the curses and the blessings of keeping or defying the law are given full consideration, the only reasonable pathway is the one marked out by the Word of the Lord.

**Psa 119:157 Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; yet do I not decline from thy testimonies.**

David was presenting his case before the throne of God. He had retained his faith in spite of some serious failures. He felt that his earnest pleas would fall on a sympathetic ear. Much of the persecution he was undergoing was caused by his dedication to the truth as presented in the Word. Surely Jehovah would recognize his willingness to serve and would relieve him of at least a portion of the anguish.

**Psa 119:158 I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.**

When the faithful man or woman of God sees the insolent way in which the deliberate sinner challenges the

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commandments of the Lord, it causes grief in his heart for both the cause of God, and also for the sinner himself. It is no satisfaction to the faithful that the rebellious will find a place in everlasting fire. It is painful to even contemplate such agony, in either one's self or in another.

Psa 119:159 Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.

What an enjoyable experience it is to see those who love to serve their God! Even when the martyrs were being fed to the lions, some of them broke out into songs of praise. The Son of God served His Father in heaven through love, not fear. Perfect love casteth out fear.

Psa 119:160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

God is not a liar! His precepts and commandments have been absolutely dependable from the creation to the present. They will continue to be dependable until eternity swallow up time. No man ever made an error in placing his life in the hand of the One who created us. He will provide direction. He will see that those who follow such direction are treated accordingly.

SIN, SHIN

Psa 119:161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

The word "princes", as used here does not necessarily mean sons of a king. It can also mean men who stand out



among other men in having prestige and power. Some of the men under the authority of Saul would have fit the description. Without any other motive for causing David difficulty, other than seeing him as a possible rival, they had caused him much misery.

This could have caused him to falter in his dedication to the Lord. It did not. He continued to hold up the Word as a lamp and a light.

Psa 119:162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

Usually the word “spoil” has an unpleasant odor about it. We see images of those who have defeated an enemy ransacking their dead bodies to find valuables which they can pocket and call their own. As David used it here, it only meant that he considered the Word of God to be a valuable possession which he gained through serving the Father in heaven against the Satanic forces. We might go back to our childhood days and recall the magic of the term “buried treasure.”

Psa 119:163 I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.

The two words used here to describe David’s disgust for lies multiply the force of one another. God’s Word is truth. Lies were to be hated. God’s truth was to be loved and cherished.

Psa 119:164 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

The loyal man or woman of God does not pray just once or twice a day. Prayers rise from their lips without



consideration of any specified time. It is certainly true that upon rising in the morning and falling into bed at night we are apt to pause for a time to speak with God. But seven is a symbol of completeness in the scriptures. Seven times indicates the type of attitude the New Testament calls prayer without ceasing.

Psa 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

There is a peace which passes understanding. How can one being pursued as David was at times, envision great peace? Yet it seems he did find just such in his life. To be offended was to turn away from that which caused loss of confidence. God's faithful are capable of withstanding heart rending experiences without losing trust in Him.

Psa 119:166 LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

Did David have the right to make the statement found in this verse? He had sinned most grievously at times in his life. But, he would not stay down. He knew deep in his heart that there was a right way. His conscience told him when he had sinned. No man of God, other than the Only Begotten Son, could ever make the statement that they had kept God's commandments without a single failure.

Psa 119:167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

David could say he had not given up to the prince of darkness. He had been wounded on occasion and had walked hand in hand with the devil. He had not been

made a permanent captive. He had tried valiantly to please the Lord. He had considered the Word of God as a precious treasure.

Psa 119:168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.

He knew there was excellent reason for following the will of Jehovah. First, the love of truth would cause him to hunger after it. Second, the thought of bringing the wrath of Jehovah, who could see all things, down upon his soul was a fearful thought. He had both positive and negative reasons for honoring God's will; his love for God, and the fear of God's wrath.

TAV

Psa 119:169 Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word.

It would not be hard to see David as walking off into the darkness of sin while thinking of his unworthiness to even approach the throne of God. That would have been fatal. He had again and again pleaded for a quickening which would lift him from the darkness and illuminate his way through the power of the Word. The understanding would have been of two kinds. He needed the understand of God's truth. He also needed for God to understand his need and help him. There is reason to believe both of these were granted to him.

Psa 119:170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

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If David had been forced to wait until he deserved a hearing from God, he might never have been given an audience for his plea. He did not depend upon his own worthiness. He placed his dependence upon the promise that God hears the prayer of a penitent sinner.

**Psa 119:171 My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.**

Can one really read the Bible with an open mind and fail to see the light of God's glory? I challenge the reader to deny this truth. There is no other book in the entire number of world libraries which begins to equal that book. God's perfections may be seen in every chapter. Sometimes the lips speak silently with only the man and his God hearing. At other times the praises ring out before hundreds of others to invite sharing of the beauty of holiness.

**Psa 119:172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.**

Man will never go wrong in reading the map which leads to heaven. Nor will he ever be sorry that he has offered the Word of God to others that they might feed on it's spiritual nourishment.

This is one reason the present writer has spent many, many hours in writing these comments upon that precious Word. The latter years of one's life should find him doing something which will lead to happiness in others. I have found no better way to do that!

**Psa 119:173 Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.**

Like a two year old child David stumbled at times. Do not all of us do the same? We know the truth, as presented in the Bible, will lift up the fallen. Much as the hand of the two year old is held by the hand of the earthly father, the hand of the wisest of men must be held by that of the Heavenly Father. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. As for me and my house we will hold to the hand of the Almighty.

**Psa 119:174 I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.**

At times we long for the lusts and pleasures of the flesh. At other times we long for the taste of the bread of life and the living water. David had found the Word to be delightful food for the soul. He took great pleasure in feeding upon it.

**Psa 119:175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.**

God had promised that He would give life to those who sought His help, and who praised Him for providing it when it came. David wanted God to know he loved Him. He would hear and obey that which God had placed before him.

**Psa 119:176 I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.**

David was the shepherd boy who had learned first hand about the sheep that went astray. Sometimes the sheep would be attracted to some dainty morsel while the

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rest of the flock went on their way. It would be necessary for the shepherd to leave the ninety and nine and go find the one which was lost. He was persuaded that when he had gone astray, God would have even more concern for him than he had shown for the unfortunate lamb.

We have come to the conclusion of this tremendous chapter of the Word of God. We hope the reader has enjoyed it as much as this commentator has enjoyed it. We pray that our comments have neither added to the perfection of God's truth, or subtracted from it. What we have striven to do is to aid in understanding what God has presented. To Him belongs the glory.

Chapter 120

This is the first of fifteen psalms which have been labeled as “Songs of degrees.” These titles were probably not given by the psalmist, but were added at a later time. Several suggestions have been made as to the reason for these titles. One is that they were meant to be sung by steadily rising volume of the voices of the singers. Another is that they were sung one by one as the singers moved from one of fifteen steps up the throne area.

The psalms are attributed to several different authors. Among these are David, Solomon, Ezra and Haggai. The facts are that such attributions are guesswork. There is reason to believe they were not written by the same person, but vary in content and style as would be the case if more than one author was involved.

The thoughts expressed leave the impression that someone had been slandered under conditions in which it was impossible to reply to the slander except to appeal to God to see that justice was done. Such would have been the case during the Babylonian captivity, or could have been true of David during such times as he was being pursued by Saul.

**Psa 120:1 In my distress I cried unto the LORD,
and he heard me.**

The distress was a result of malicious words spoken against the author. Though the victim or victims could not defend themselves, they did have the chance to plead with the Lord to relieve the distress. The prayer was offered and the Lord was ready to hear and answer it.

Let us not confine the lesson of the psalm to the Israelites in Babylon, or David while fleeing from Saul. Almost any one of God’s faithful can sympathize with



the psalmist. We have all suffered at one time or another as a result of accusations which were leveled against us falsely. We also had the opportunity to reach up to the Lord for relief.

Psa 120:2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

We should mention that this matter of lying lips, deceitful tongues and those which are unbridled can be a two way street. Although the main thrust of the present psalm is appeal to the Lord as a result of being victimized by others, James warns the man or woman of God about the danger of being on the offensive side of this sin. The children of God must not only be able to maintain their faith under the pressure of vicious gossip. They must be able to harness their own tongues and words in order that they not damage the lives of others.

Psa 120:3 What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?

What can the victim do when slandered. At times the evil words are spoken outwardly and openly. At other times they are spoken in whispers behind the back. One cannot take a knife and cut the offending tongue from the offender. One cannot return the words to the throat of the one who has spoken them. Is there an answer?

Yes there is! "Vengeance is mine saith the Lord, I will repay." The eyes of the Lord are always open to the actions of men. The ears of the Lord are always open to their words. He can see that all things work together for good to those who love and serve Him.

Psa 120:4 Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

Are the sharp arrows of the might the words of the slanderers who are strong enough that the victim cannot retaliate? Or are they the punishment which the Almighty can aim in the direction of those who intend to harm His servants with their lies? The latter seems the more likely truth expressed in the present psalm. Coals of juniper were particularly long lasting. They remained hot long after the flame which ignited them was no longer visible.

Psa 120:5 Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!

No one seems to have a very confident explanation of the location of Mesech or Kedar. These may be certain lands in which the Jews were held in captivity, or they may be symbolic of life surrounded by those who do not hesitate to speak of one in derogatory terms.

Psa 120:6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

It is a miserable feeling to find one's self in the constant company of others who are determined to create division. To such persons, peace is boring. They must have friction in order to feel that life is exciting. War and conflict are as natural to them as breathing. It really does not concern them that others may be damaged permanently by their carelessness.

Psa 120:7 I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.



Dear reader, this world is altogether saturated with the hatred of the “father of liars.” Satan will one day be cast into a lake of fire along with those who believe and love the lie. Then those who speak in favor of peace will find that the arrows of the Mighty One will have removed war from their presence. Let the peacemakers be patient, for they shall see God.

Chapter 121

This psalm is well known as “The Traveler’s Psalm.” The traveler is the one who places his trust in his Creator. He knows that the One who created him can also watch over him, provided he truly desires that supervision. He also knows that such care will not fail throughout the entire journey of life.

Psa 121:1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

Those in the part of the world where the psalm was written placed their temples on high places. They had no difficulty in finding these hills. The center of God’s worship was located on Mount Zion in the city of Jerusalem. Yet, those who worshipped Him were well aware that their source of help was not the tabernacle or the temple. It was Jehovah.

There is an interesting consideration with respect to this first verse. Is it one simple statement by the psalmist, or it is a statement, followed by a question? If it is one statement, it is saying that the traveller is looking toward the hills of Jerusalem where the high priest appeared before the ark of the covenant to intercede for the people. If it is both a statement and a question, it is saying that though the heathen lift up their eyes to the hills where there idols were worshipped, he knew that the hills were not sufficient to oversee his life. He would look further.

Psa 121:2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

In either case, he concluded that it was only the Lord who made this universe that could provide and protect in every circumstance of life.

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**Psa 121:3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.**

**Psa 121:4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.**

In the rugged country of Palestine, the foot can very easily stumble over rocks and crevices. That is not just true in that land. If we make a spiritual application, the foot can slip by treading too close to the temptations placed in one's way by the devil.

The older reader will almost certainly have noticed that the feet have greater tendency to stumble in those latter years of the journey of life. God will not allow the man or woman of faith to stumble and fall if they will make a valiant effort to avoid the pitfalls of Satan and walk in the way of the Lord. It is true that grandfather may fall in the bathroom and break his hip. It is not true that the dedicated Christian will fall into the traps which Satan sets for him.

But perhaps this could happen when God is not watching! No. No. A thousand times No! God knows the hairs of the head and the plight of every sparrow. He does not need sleep.

**Psa 121:5 The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.**

The Bible is full of support for the truth that the Lord is our keeper. Just as a shade tree is capable of shielding one from the damaging effects of the sun, the Lord is capable of protecting His own from the heat of trials and tribulations.

**Psa 121:6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.**

This, of course, is not a literal statement. It reveals the constancy of God's care. The sun governs the daylight hours. God will protect the faithful during those hours. The moon governs during the hours of darkness. God is just as willing and capable of protecting us through those hours.

The word "lunacy" comes from the ancient belief that one may become moonstruck and thus become caught up in mental difficulties such as depression or hallucination. In the present writer's opinion, this verse is pointing out the unbroken care of our God through every day and night, and through every hour of life.

**Psa 121:7 The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.**

The body is subject to many different kinds of dangers. But, the soul is in far greater danger than the body. One's body may be overcome by disease or other fatal problems. If God is protecting the soul, the death of the body may be no more than passing through the gate from time into eternity.

**Psa 121:8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.**

The Lord will protect in both the night and the day. He will protect the footsteps of those who carefully try to walk in the way He has laid out for them. This is true in every righteous thought and deed.

If this psalm was written from a slave camp in Babylon, we can understand why the truths stated would have been enormous comfort to those who wondered if they would ever be released from their bondage. If it applies to God's own in every time and walk of life, we can be just as encouraged, regardless of any effort on the part of Satan to cause spiritual damage or even spiritual death.

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Chapter 122

If this present psalm is devalued by arguments as to whether it was written by David, or by someone at a later date, and if the debate continues by fussing over whether it was the expression of Jews who were attending the major feasts at the city of Jerusalem, or rejoicing at the sight of the city after returning from Babylon, then one of the most beautiful of all the psalms is lost. It has tremendous meaning for God's people in the day of David, in the day of return from Babylon, or in the days of the Christian age.

**Psa 122:1 I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the LORD.**

Originally the psalm expressed the joy of a Hebrew person who was on the way to the city of Jerusalem where the house of God, or center of worship was located. If it took place at one of the major feasts at which the Jews were expected to be present in that great city, we can feel the heartbeat increase at the thought of meeting with others at one of these occasions. If it was the feelings of Israel upon returning from Babylon, we can rejoice with them as they catch sight of the precious city.

Either way the spiritual application to meeting at the house of the Lord on the first day of the week in the Christian age can become an inspiration to the faithful in these latter days. One does not have to travel for hundreds or thousands of miles to feel the thrill of enjoying fellowship with brothers and sisters at the Sunday worship gatherings.

But we can take the matter another giant step. One day each of us will leave this lowly land of sin and sorrow

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and will cross over into the promised land of heaven where the New Jerusalem glistens in the light of the everlasting day.

**Psa 122:2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.**

Those who made the pilgrimage from distant parts of the land to gather inside the gates of earthly Jerusalem must have had a sense of coming into the more direct presence of the Lord as they planted their feet on the soil inside the city. A similar feeling must have been shared by those who left the bondage in Chaldea and returns through the authority of the edict issued by Cyrus, allowing them also to join together in happiness at the entry into the holy city.

Just as surely, a Christian should look forward to coming together on the first day of the week in the house of worship and thank God for the chance to be with brothers and sisters in the Lord.

**Psa 122:3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:**

The Hebrews of the early days were scattered either throughout the land of Canaan, or perhaps even so far as Babylon. Upon coming back into the city of God once more, they felt the closeness of others who worshipped the Only True God. This was worth more than silver and gold.

If the present day congregations of the church are compact in their unity as they work together, these citizens of the New Jerusalem may feel the same anticipation as those of old. Then, of course, there is the vision of that Heavenly New Jerusalem where love,

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joy and peace prevail. It is also compact and minus any divisive frictions which Satan might have invented.

Psa 122:4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

The testimony of the Lord makes reference to the tables of the law which regulated the actions of God's people. There was good reason to rejoice in that men had the light provided by the Word of God to guide them in serving Him. The tribes of Israel were bound together partly by the possession of this testimony. Thanks giving was in order.

But is it not true that the Word of God is the very center of Christian gatherings on the day of worship? The Bible is the testimony of the Lord today. Praise God for His everlasting love.

Psa 122:5 For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

The elders of the people of God made major decisions in the city of Jerusalem. Those judgments maintained justice among the people. It was a precious privilege to be able to appeal to those who were permitted to supply their wisdom in the will of the Lord for guidance in living together.

In the church today, there are elders who have the supervision of the flock of God. It is not a burden to serve under the authority of these elders. It is a blessing to enjoy their experience in pleasing God.

Psa 122:6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

The love of the people of Israel for the city of Jerusalem was directly related to the happiness and prosperity of that people. As long as peace prevailed, happiness would abound. And do not miss the point that prayer makes a difference in peace and unity.

Psa 122:7 Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

It appears that the walls of Jerusalem were intact at the time of the writing of this psalm. That does have some bearing on the date. There were long periods of time in which the walls were dilapidated. At such times the palaces were not prosperous.

Psa 122:8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.

It is not just the individual who profits when peace reigns. The entire family of God enjoys the benefits of cooperation. Regardless of the time or place, one of the most important duties of the man or woman of God is to pray that peace prevail and that the service of God move forward smoothly.

Psa 122:9 Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

Here is a prayer of unselfishness. Love is the desire for the well being of those who are loved. Some see the above words as only relating to kings. It is not so. Every servant of God can pray this prayer for unity in God's household. Then they must back up that prayer with wholehearted words and deeds.

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## *Chapter 123*

There are just four verses in this psalm. That is no indication of the spiritual importance of the passage. It gives great comfort to God's people who are distressed by those around them, and who see them as uneducated and feeble minded. It is actually the scornful and pride filled who have not grasped the true values of life.

**Psa 123:1 Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.**

A similar verse had appeared not long before this one. In that verse the psalmist had written, "I will lift mine eyes unto the hills." This time he leaves out the hills and speaks of lifting the eyes to He who dwells in the heavens. The idolators around him were lifting up their eyes to the idols which were placed on the high places of earth. Jehovah dwells in the third heaven, which is infinitely higher than the highest mountains on the earth. The sun god and the moon god were located 240,000 miles and 93,000,000 miles from earth. The spirit of Jehovah exists on earth and beyond the farthest galaxies of the created heavens.

**Psa 123:2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.**

Those who served human taskmasters watched for the slightest hint of whatever their master wished to be done. They wasted no time in obeying him. It was the same with the maidservants. They kept a close watch on their mistresses in order that they could obey their every wish. Pleasing the master and the mistress was vitally important to their own welfare.

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Psa 123:3 Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

Do these servants say they have utter contempt for those whom they serve, or are they saying they have suffered all of the contempt they are able to bear as their masters and mistresses have considered them less than the worms on the ground? The latter explanation seems to fit the entire tone of the passage better. Israel had suffered sorely at a number of times when their enemies captivated them and forced them to do hard labor, and looked upon them mockingly because of Israel's inability to resist.

Most of us would rather take physical abuse than to find ourselves belittled by those who are of lesser character than ourselves.

Psa 123:4 Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

The Bible does not use the word "proud" in a positive way. Pride is constantly considered as a device of the devil. There is a sense in which men should have pride. The pride which is produced by the knowledge that one has used the blessings God has placed in his control in a way that would please Him have a perfect right to be proud, provided they do not look down upon others with scorn.

The kind of pride which displeases God is that which goes side by side with the lust of the eye and the lust of the flesh. It is the kind of pride Satan delights in seeing used to downgrade the godly. Often the proud are both lazy and insolent. Sometimes their wealth has resulted from cruelty toward others.



Chapter 124

Like so many of the psalms, this one shows no specific evidence of the author, or the time in which it was written. A large number of sources do not claim David as the writer. It is only called "A psalm of degrees."

The information contained in the psalm indicates a time when the psalmist was extremely grateful to God for rescuing Israel from grave danger. This means that much of what is said can be applied to present day servants of the Lord. We also are subject to many dangers. We to must depend upon God for help. If we do not turn to God, we will be destroyed by the tidal wave of evil which Satan has aimed in our direction.

Psa 124:1 If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say;

It is not just an individual among the Israelites who offers the praise to God which follows. The rescue was that of the entire nation.

Without the help of the Lord, all would have been lost. What was true at the time these words were written is just as true today. Two sides have been waging spiritual war from the time of the Garden of Eden to the very day when the reader scans this psalm. Either of these forces is far stronger than any man or any nation. But, with God on our side, we may have confidence that any enemy may be defeated. It will take time and dedicated effort, but it can be done.

Psa 124:2 If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

The threat was not from earthquakes, disease or inner temptations, as much as it was from wicked men. Take

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note that it was “men” who rose up against them. When the spies surveyed the land of Canaan when Israel came to the borders of that land, they reported the presence of giants. There are giants in every age. They may not be eight feet tall, but they do have gigantic influence which allows them to strike fear into the hearts of righteous. We may not be able to avoid the fear. We can defeat it when God is on our side.

**Psa 124:3 Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:**

The strength of the spiritual enemy is so great that without Divine help, we could be swallowed down in one gulp. Nuclear weapons and germ warfare are available to evil men in the present day. Let us pray that God will be with us. Let us also prove by our words and deeds that we understand our dependence upon Him. There is a victory for the servants of the Lord.

**Psa 124:4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:**

Our first reaction when reading this verse is to think of the crossing of the Red Sea or the Jordan River. If God had not controlled the surging waters of those two places, Israel would have been drowned. With His help they survived and the foe was eliminated.

**Psa 124:5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.**

If God had not intervened, Israel would have either been killed by those who were bent on murder, or they would have had to march into the water in front of them.

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The soul mentioned here is the entire person. Hope was gone without the arm of the Lord.

Psa 124:6 Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.

Those who pursued them were as vicious as wild animals who tear the flesh of their prey into pieces when can then be devoured. That was not allowed to happen.

We pray that the reader has heard of the fact that the Devil goes about like roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Psa 124:7 Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

A bird which has been caught in the snare, or net of the fowler, is beating it's wings in desperate but useless efforts to break through the cords of the net. Once trapped there is almost no possibility of escape. When our hope is based on the strength and wisdom of the Lord, the man of God can escape and flee to safety.

Psa 124:8 Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

The one who brought heaven and earth into being is capable of seeing that any portion of it that truly desires to be of service to Him will be lifted up from the rolling waves which could otherwise drown him.

Chapter 125

This is another psalm among those called “Psalms of degrees”, or “Psalms of ascent.” They are thought to have been sung by those who were approaching Jerusalem for the major feasts held there. Although Jerusalem was not located on the very highest mountains of the area, it was at a considerable elevation above the lowlands of Canaan. Many of the pilgrims attending the feasts would have had to ascend by degrees to arrive at the city.

The author of the psalm is uncertain. David is often given credit for psalms which have no specified author. Some, however, think it fits better after the return from Babylon when certain rebuilding was being done.

Psa 125:1 They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

Mount Zion was one of four mountains which supported the city of Jerusalem. Also, there were mountains such as the Mount of Olives which were even higher than Mount Zion. There were valleys between Zion and these nearby mountains, for example the Kidron valley.

The security provided by these surrounding mountains provided a good figure of speech for the security provided by the Lord for His people.

Psa 125:2 As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

The apostle Peter was once compared to foundation rock upon which the church was to be built. Christ is called the “Rock of Ages.” There is a stability about the

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Lord and His faithful followers which is solid as the rock of Mount Zion. God surrounds His people with His protecting care even as the surrounding mountains made the city of Jerusalem much more difficult to invade.

**Psa 125:3 For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.**

There are two quite different senses in which the “rod of the wicked” may be understood. The rod of the wicked could be the rod of power by which they would force others to follow their directions. The rod of the wicked could also be speaking of the rod of punishment which God would apply to the wicked as a result of their rebellion. I prefer to consider it as the rod of authority which the wicked would lay upon the backs of those whom they were able to control.

It is not true that the righteous will never feel the rod of the wicked. But, note that the word used in this verse does not say the rod will not at times strike the righteous. It says that rod will not “remain” on them. God does not allow the righteous to be burdened with more than they can bear.

**Psa 125:4 Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts.**

The psalmist is calling for God to do no more than He has promised more than once. He has said He will be men’s God, if they will be His people. The good and upright in heart may claim that precious promise.

**Psa 125:5 As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with**

**the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel.**

This last verse is describing the condition of what we often call “backsliders.” They have at one time declared their loyalty to God and His Way of life. Later, they find the baubles of Satan more attractive the way that leads to life eternal. Such pitiful creatures will be led out at the final judgment with those who never pledged themselves to obedience. Those who maintained their faith unto the end will be led to the spiritual Mount Zion.

It may take some time, my friends, to climb the ascending way which ends at the throne of God. It may be done by small degrees. But do not give up. God will protect you on the way up. He will welcome you into that city which will never be shaken.



## *Chapter 126*

This is a psalm of joy and hope. Thousands of Christians have been made lighter in heart as they sang the song, “Bringing In the Sheaves” which is based on the last few words of the psalm.

Almost without doubt it was originally written to be sung by those who had been released from the Babylonian captivity. However, that fact does not prevent those of us who live in the Christian age from seeing similar joy in release from the bondage of sin.

Read it. Meditate on it. Rejoice in it.

**Psa 126:1 When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.**

When the Medo-Persians overcame the Babylonians the captives from the land of Israel had no reason to think this would bring about a brighter day for them. They had labored under great hardship for some seventy years. Why would this new government treat them any better than had the previous one? They were in for the surprise of their lives. Cyrus, King of Persia issued a decree giving them permission to return to Canaan and even furnished financial aid to accomplish it.

This was more like a dream than reality. Sometimes our dreams come true when we maintain our faith in the Lord. After the initial shock they realized that this was the work of God. With God nothing is impossible.

**Psa 126:2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.**

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The joy which the Israelites felt was so great that their singing and laughter could hardly be overlooked by those who had seen them laboring with heads down and hearts heavy.

The conclusion among even the heathen had to be that the God these slaves worshipped had come to their aid. He had made the impossible possible.

Psa 126:3 The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

The reaction among the Israelites was just what it should have been. There was great gladness. That was not the end. They praised and gave thanks to God for doing such great things as they had experienced. They were about to go home.

Psa 126:4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

Just how great had the change been? It was comparable to the change in the dry conditions of the southern part of those eastern lands when the rains came. The beds of the streams in the south part of the land were no more than depressions in the sand before the rains. One could hardly imagine refreshing rivers of water flowing in them and bring the dead countryside to life. Nonetheless, that is what took place. Dead dreams turn to living hope. The fate of Israel had seen a similar change.

Psa 126:5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

How many gallons of tears must have been shed as the slaves who were far away from home sowed the fields



of the Babylonians. Those tears and prayers had now changed from sadness to great joy.

Farmers of every age know the depth of meaning here. It is not easy to prepare a field and sow it. There is no harvest to be seen at that time of year. There is only back breaking labor while one turns the ground and pulverizes it to a proper condition for receiving the small amount of precious seed which will be sown without knowing whether the coming season will bring loaded wagons or empty granaries.

There is but one way to go. Work, pray and hope. That is what the Israelites had done. But hope had grown very dim. It had reached the stage of disappearance. Now all that had changed from the darkness of midnight to the sunshine of a bright new day.

Psa 126:6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

The Lord had kept His promise to be with those who place their dependence upon Him. They could not have dreamed of experiencing what had taken place. Only with the help of the Lord could it have happened. The seed of tears had been changed to sheaves of joy.

We cannot leave this psalm with making application to the lives of men and women all these centuries later. There is a tremendous message here which Knowles Shaw recognized and incorporated into the well known hymn, "Bringing In the Sheaves."

There are multiplied millions of men and women today who are living in bondage to the snares of the Devil. Some go on their way not even recognizing the freedom which they are missing by yielding to the temptations which ensnare them. Others know very well that they

are in misery, but refuse to appeal to the only source of escape. Many of them will die in the midst of their tears rather than reaching up to take the hand which God offers if they will only take it. If they were to take that hand, the tears could be turned from misery to joy.



Chapter 127

As is the case with many of the psalms, we have no way of knowing with any great degree of confidence who was the author, or what was the occasion of writing. The strongest suggestion is that David wrote it for the consideration of his son Solomon.

It has been used as an opening in the Bible when certain presidents of the United States were sworn into office. Their hand was placed upon the psalm as they assumed that awesome responsibility.

Psa 127:1 Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

The “house” mentioned in this first verse could have application to a number of different human endeavors. It could be the erection of a home for one’s family, or some other building. It could be a business or project of one kind or another. One thing it certainly means is the building of a family.

The person who fails to realize that none of these achievements can be accomplished effectively without God’s help is making a serious mistake. Any effort which ignores the importance of the Lord is laboring under a severe handicap.

A city which does not live by the principles the Lord has provided for mankind may never have enough secret service men to prevent infiltration by its enemies.

Psa 127:2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

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It is not wrong to work long hours as long as one gets sufficient rest to maintain his health. But, it is all vanity if the labor is not targeted in the direction of service to Jehovah. Nor does it work to one's advantage to worry constantly over real or imagined problems which arise. God intended that man use the daylight hours for productive work, and then make use of the dark hours of the night for sleep. He has promised that if one will seek first the kingdom of heaven, all things will work together for good. Admittedly there are times when the mind seems glued to our problems or plans. We should work diligently to avoid letting these matters ruin our faith or our health.

**Psa 127:3 Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.**

A heritage is something which comes to us from some source other than ourselves. There are couples who would give much money to be able to bring a child produced within their own bodies, into their home. They can much more fully understand the truth of this verse than can those whom God has seen fit to award such an inheritance.

The population explosion has caused many to feel that children are a handicap. The feeling is that there are enough persons on earth today. Also a woman who is expected to give proper care to several children in the home is not able to work and provide an extra income for the family. With prices soaring, it may be felt that bring a child into the world is too expensive.

It would be well to realize that God gave a command to the first man and woman to multiply and fill the earth. God wants a family in heaven. We are expected to help in making that a reality.





**Psa 127:4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.**

A man of war finds that his children are able to stand by his side in the midst of conflict. This is especially true if those children are born early in life. Thus they will be helpful when their father is still able to stand before the foe.

**Psa 127:5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.**

Let us make a spiritual application of these last verses. We are in a war today with the forces of Satan. That war needs valiant soldiers. A man can live a faithful life for many years, but the time comes when age brings a decrease, or even an end to his vigor. At that point he will be proud to have children of faith who will be able to stand beside him in that battle, or someday take his place in the front line.

The gates of the ancient cities were the sites where foes often had to be met. Today the gospel armor must be put on to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. It is important that parents help children to be well armed with the greatest sword of all, the sword of the Spirit.

## *Chapter 128*

What a wonderful thing it is to have a close relationship with the Father in heaven! A family that has established such a relationship has increased their chances for happiness many times. We do not have the large families today which were seen in the times of Moses or the times of Jesus Christ. Yet the principle holds just as true today as then. This present writer's mother was one of ten children. They were a loving and caring family. God intends that this be the case in every age. This psalm draws a beautiful picture of satisfying family life now, as an introduction to the perfect love which will prevail in the heavenly places.

**Psa 128:1 Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.**

Blessed means happy. God promises to see that those who walk according to His commandments shall be happy. Does this mean they shall not be persecuted? Not at all! It means the Lord will do His part to see that the person will be led in paths of righteousness, and that such an ambitious man or woman will be rewarded for his or her labors. This will tend to be true in this present world, and if not true in this world, it will be true in the world to come!

**Psa 128:2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.**

“I want to be a worker for the Lord” is one of our favorite children's songs. What is more is that we never

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outgrow the need to voice these sentiments in our words and our actions. No man who diligently tried to serve God with all of the heart, mind and soul was sorry in an eternal sense.

Psa 128:3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

It is sad today that there are many couples who would rather not produce children at all. Certainly it is true that there are those who are biologically unable to do so, but a dining room table with a mother, father and several children seated around it in loving care is a pleasant sight in the eyes of the Lord.

Psa 128:4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

In the congregation where this writer now attends there is a couple who have just in the last few days gone to Russia and received permission to bring a precious eight year old girl to live with them for a period of three years. They fully anticipate that the child will be given permission to permanently stay in their home if all goes well. Imagine the satisfaction which can come to both the youngster and those who nourish here both physically and spiritually!

Psa 128:5 The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

Although the words of this verse were originally addressed to those who lived in the land of Canaan, the

truths are just as true for those today who live in the spiritual Holy land. One who cares as the words of this present verse indicate, will not fail to catch the favorable attention of the eternal Father

Psa 128:6 Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.

God is love! Those who demonstrate love for their children and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord are promoting happiness in the family from generation to generation. They are also encouraging peace and happy relationships among the nation, whether it be ancient Israel, or the entire Kingdom of God in the present day.



Chapter 129

The people of Israel were not viewed affectionately by those nations around Canaan. Repeatedly they had attempted to make like miserable for the Israelites. This psalm speaks of the failure of such enemies to quench the progress of God's chosen nation. They had tried diligently to destroy Israel from the face of the earth, but were not successful.

The furrows plowed upon the back referred to the stripes which were cut into the flesh of many of God's people. Such attacks did not succeed in eliminating them. God saw to it that the cords that cut their backs were removed. God's chosen will live on!

Psa 129:1 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:

From the time the nation of Israel entered the land of Canaan, they were treated with disdain. They had to fight to enter and control the territory. The hatred was unnecessary. There was room in the land for those who already lived there and for the people of God. It is true that God commanded Israel to drive the Canaanites out of the land, but this would not have been necessary if the attitude of the Canaanites had been in spiritual harmony with the will of Jehovah.

Psa 129:2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.

All of the efforts of the Canaanites to prevent the entry of the Israelites were doomed to failure. If God's people work in harmony with His plans for mankind,

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they will be ultimately victorious, either in this world, or the world to come.

**Psa 129:3 The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.**

It is believed that the long furrows had little to do with the turning of the ground. They were furrows in the flesh of the ones who were beaten with whips. Israel's foes were confident that could turn the back by torture. That strategy did not succeed.

**Psa 129:4 The LORD is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.**

It is highly doubtful that the cutting of the cords was literal. It can just as easily be pictured as the disappointment which those who tried to use torture as a weapon. The Lord saw to it that such forceful and unmerciful actions failed. It is not easy to defeat the purposes of God.

**Psa 129:5 Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.**

May the reader give careful attention to the lesson stated in this verse. Fighting against the children of God is a losing battle as long as His people are true to Him. The enemies will ultimately be defeated.

**Psa 129:6 Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up:**

The plea here is that those who were persecuting Israel might not be allowed to continue in the discouragement



of God's people. As grass on the flat topped houses of that region of the world would have its growth halted by the withering beams of the sun, these enemies of God were to be halted before they succeeded in their purposes.

**Psa 129:7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.**

The one who cut grass expected to collect it by the handful. The one who harvested the grain would gather it by the armload and press it into a bundle by holding it against his chest. Any efforts to hinder the progress of God's people were to be unsuccessful.

**Psa 129:8 Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the LORD be upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD.**

Although those who poured out cursings upon God's faithful did their best to destroy their efforts and humiliate them, the prayer was that such attempts to halt the purposes of the Lord and His faithful would be short lived. Those who were passing by were unwilling to pronounce blessings upon the Israelites. The prayer of the Israelites was that such hindrances might quickly come to a halt. They were convinced that the righteous would be blessed not cursed.

## *Chapter 130*

What a wonderful thought it is that God's standard is perfection, and yet that He is willing to forgive the penitent sinner when that sinner falls short of the perfection called for. The present psalm spells out God's mercy and longsuffering in such a clear manner that it cannot be misunderstood. Is the reader proud of that combination of a target of perfection, and at the same time a love which surpasses understanding.

No author is named. No specific time is given. The writer could have been Nehemiah. It could have been David. It could have been Asaph. Of one thing we can be certain; the author recognized two great truths. First, all men are sinners. Second, God is not willing that any should perish without the opportunity of repentance.

**Psa 130:1 Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.**

There are several kinds of depths. One can drown in the depths of the sea. One can be injured so seriously that he is incapable of ever caring for his own needs. One can depart so completely from the standards of righteousness that God has held up before us that there appears to be no hope of finding a way of escape. The last of these three seems to be the reason for the cry of the writer of this psalm.

I do not believe he is writing in general terms of the nation of Israel as a whole. I believe his plea is due to a realization that he deserves to be separated from that which is holy. There is but one solution. That remedy is found at the foot of the throne of the Lord. That is the point from which his case is presented.

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Psa 130:2 Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

God has promised to hear the plea of a penitent sinner, unless that person has demonstrated such instability or rebelliousness that his case has proven unworthy of attention.

Psa 130:3 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

The one who is praying pleads that there is no one who could stand in judgment if no plan for salvation from sin had been given. It is true that without the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, there would be no remission of sin. This person is praying in a time when sins were rolled forward to the perfect sacrifice which was made on the cross of Calvary. We must thank God that He loved us enough to offer His Son, and that His Son loved us enough to allow Himself to be offered.

Psa 130:4 But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

What a beautiful little three letter word begins this verse. "But" God has offered forgiveness, if we will turn from our sins, then love and obey Him. The fear which is to be felt in response to God's forgiveness is not that which freezes one in his tracks and leaves him paralyzed to inaction. It is the kind of fear which leads to faithful obedience lest one plunge himself deeper into the despair from which the Lord offers to release him.

Psa 130:5 I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

Both the Lord and the sinner wait. The sinner waits for the instructions needed to return to the favor of his God. His God waits for the penitence of his creature.

Psa 130:6 My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning.

There are night watchmen who look forward to the first dim rays of the sun as dawn approaches. Their attitude is just a sample of the longing God's own in pre Christian times should have had for the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, and the present day for the haven of heaven where no night comes.

Psa 130:7 Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

Yes, there is mercy, there is hope, and there is the possibility of redemption from the endless night of an eternal hell. B-U-T, this is never an excuse for deliberately feasting on the pleasures of sin for a season. That season could very well turn into an eternity of inconceivable agony.

Psa 130:8 And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Israel of old could rest in the assurances of the prophets that God was going to send a Redeemer. Israel of the Christian age can be thankful from the bottom of our hearts that the promise has been kept through perfect life and sacrifice of the Christ.

The use of the masculine pronoun "his" is most
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interesting. Surely God does not have iniquities. Israel is often referred to by the feminine pronoun, “her.” Nevertheless, we all understand who was to be redeemed. It was God’s own, in times of yesterday, and also in the present time. There is a spiritual war going on between the forces of Satan and those of Jehovah. On many occasions in the life of men, Satan prevails. That does not have to be the end of the matter. Through God’s plan of redemption the sinner may cry out from the depths, “Lord, hear my voice!”

## *Chapter 131*

This psalm is one of the most pleasant in the entire collection. There is a considerable difference in commentators general understanding of all portions of the three verses. This present student of the holy scriptures will present what he believes to be the thrust of the psalm. The reader is encouraged to investigate other possible explanations. David, the king of Israel is given credit as the author by those who assigned uninspired headings to many of the psalms.

**Psa 131:1 LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.**

This first statement is of great interest. It is quite possible for one to be overly proud of being humble. We do not wish to let that type of pride contend with the pride which comes from achievements which are admired by others.

Assuming David to have been the author of this psalm, we can point out certain events in his life which demonstrate a selfishness which grows out of pride. He had little respect for Bathsheba or he would not have used her as he did. The other side of the issue is found in his decision not to murder Saul, but to cut off a piece of his garment.

It may be that David is saying he is not consumed with ambition for power. Certainly he was overtaken by lust, but he felt that deep inside he respected the authority God had assigned to the governing rulers. God was the supreme Ruler of the entire creation. David would sincerely try to obey the civil power. If he did not

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do so, it was due to a short term weakness rather than a rebellious heart.

Psa 131:2 Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.

A child that is being weaned is in the process of finding out that one does not always get what he or she wants in this life. David had learned that he was unable to live without the help of the Lord. A lad does not defeat a bear and a giant through personal power alone. The great lesson he had learned was that men are dependent upon God just as a child must become content when weaned from the mother's breast. He would make a genuine effort to do that which was pleasing to Jehovah, and then rest his future in God's wisdom.

Psa 131:3 Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever.

David also recognized that not only his own future was dependent upon the wisdom, glory and honor of God; that of the entire nation was in the same condition. We must agree with him. The fate of every man on earth, and also every nation on earth hangs on the success of that person or nation in walking in harmony with the Divine Word. That was true in David's day. It is just as true today. We are all to be content with God's will, just as a weaned child must be content to lie in the warmth of the mother's arms and depend upon her loving care.

Chapter 132

The writer of this psalm was not David. Note that the pronoun switches from the third person to the first person as he moves from verse one to verse three. It was most probably written by David's son, Solomon, as he meditated on the building of the temple and upon the future of the people of God. He is asking God to remember how David attempted to serve and glorify Him, even though David did sin grievously in the case of his adultery with Bathsheba. Solomon desires to continue the plans for a suitable temple which David promised to Jehovah.

Psa 132:1 LORD, remember David, and all his afflictions:

To "remember" is not just to bring to back into mind. The prayer here is that God respond to David's desire to build a suitable temple for the worship of the One and Only True God.

We tend to remember the glorious achievements of David rather than the many difficulties he faced during his reign as king of Israel. David's life was one of conflict and tribulation. He came through those trials with the reputation of being one "after God's own heart."

Psa 132:2 How he sware unto the LORD, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob;

Men of spiritual stature are hesitant to make large numbers of vows to the Lord. The vows they do make are made with full intention of keeping them. David had made just such a vow. He realized he was expected to keep the vow to the very best of his ability. David had found himself in the midst of war for a good portion of his life. God declared that David's desire to establish a

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permanent location for the worship of God would not be granted to him personally, but that David's son would be allowed that privilege.

**Psa 132:3 Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;**

**Psa 132:4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids,**

**Psa 132:5 Until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.**

David's solemn vow was that he would not rest comfortably until he had found such a place. God must have a place for His ark to rest before David could lay his body to rest.

**Psa 132:6 Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.**

Not only was it necessary to find a place to build the temple, it was necessary to bring the ark to that place when the temple was prepared. I believe the verse does not say he found it at Ephratah. It says he heard of it while at Ephratah. It had been with the tribe of Ephraim for several centuries, from the time of Joshua to the time of Samuel. David investigated its whereabouts and found it in the fields of Kirjath-Jearim.

**Psa 132:7 We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool.**

The writer of the psalm offers a prayer to God with a request that David's goal be reached. If that is granted, there will be great joy in Israel as the people worship at the feet of the Lord in his temple on earth.

**Psa 132:8 Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength.**

The call is for God to take pleasure in the worship of His people and bless them for their dedication.

**Psa 132:9 Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.**

The writer continues to make requests. God's priests were not always as righteous as they should have been. The prayer is that this condition be improved to such an extent that the priests be gloriously arrayed in a complete covering of righteous thought and action. This would lead to shouts of joy among the people.

We do well to remember that Christians are a "Royal Priesthood." Every Christians is expected to be clothed in righteousness, and all Christians should be let their joy be made known. Let us be careful about shouting just to make a noise. Let us be careful about just mumbling words of praise unto God. Shouting and solemnity both have their place in Christian worship. It is a mark of wisdom to find the correct balance.

**Psa 132:10 For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.**

Who is this "anointed" from which the psalmist pleads that God not turn His face away? Do the following verses not identify this "Anointed" as the fruit of David's body? David's immediate descendants were not as faithful as they should have been, but there is one who has been perfectly faithful; that is Jesus Christ. God would turn His face away from the prayer of David, nor would He turn His face away from His Son, the King of kings.

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Psa 132:11 The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.

David was not the only one to make a vow. God Himself had made one. From among David's descendants God would set one upon the throne of this universe. The most natural thing to do here is to go to the first chapter of Matthew for the truth of this statement. However; Matthew does not give a lineage from David to Christ. Luke gives the information we need to verify the present verse. Mary, Jesus mother, was a descendant of Nathan, who was one of David's sons. (See Luke 3.)

Psa 132:12 If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

Thus David did have one descendant who kept God's covenant to perfection. That was Jesus.

Psa 132:13 For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.

Physical Zion was to be the location of the temple built by Solomon. Spiritual Zion, the church of our Lord, is the location of the temple promised here. It is located in the New Jerusalem which came down from heaven. The bodies of Christians make up the temple of God in the Christian age. God dwells within that spiritual temple.

Psa 132:14 This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

Psa 132:15 I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.

The language in these last few verses of the chapter are figurative. Jesus Christ is the bread of life. He will provide the spiritual nourishment needed by the faithful.

Psa 132:16 I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

Christ also provides the spiritual clothing cherished by those of the temple, which is also His bride. The saints of God are covered with salvation and joy. They need never be ashamed as long as they do not shed that clothing. They have abundant reason to be happy.

Psa 132:17 There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.

This verse is a gem when we reach into it's heart. A tiny male fawn has no horns. There comes a time when small "buds" begin to appear, similar to the change which takes place in male humans when the voice changes. God was promising that the day would arrive when David, through Christ, would become very influential. That promise has been kept.

Psa 132:18 His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

While the seed of David's body would be clothed with righteousness and wear a glorious crown, his enemies will be destined to shame. Dear reader, choose you this day whom you will serve. Will it be the one who can provide white garments of righteousness? Or will it be the one who leaves you naked in spiritual shame?



Chapter 133

Blessed unity! How the faithful long for it. How difficult it is to reach! Even within the Godhead itself there are three and yet the three are One! Even so, it should be within the family of God. There is no way the human mind can grasp the picture completely. We shall have to leave this world and move on to the one to come if we expect to enjoy it's wonders.

Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

When brethren in the Lord live as they should in the relationship with both the divine and the human portions of life, every aspect of life becomes much more precious. Worship becomes a time of joy and fellowship. Caring for others becomes as natural as breathing. The goals and purposes of life become much clearer. The strength to meet problems is available.

It is just the opposite when friction disrupts that unity. Tears flow. Doubts arise. Heaven seems too far away to ever arrive there. This present writer has seen both sets of circumstances in congregations where he has served. When there is true unity, heaven seems to be just out of sight. When friction and jealousy prevail, the agony of hell seems present in every footstep.

Psa 133:2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

When kings and priests were anointed, oil mixed with sweet fragrances was poured out upon the heat

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of the one being anointed. It sometimes flowed down over the clothing until it reached the lower edges of the garments.

**Psa 133:3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.**

It is said that even in the arid regions of Palestine, the dew which appeared on Mount Hermon was heavy enough that the clothing might be semi-saturated in the morning if one slept outside.

The blessings of a life of holiness are refreshing. They give vitality to the life of the children of God. Not only does this earthly life take on far greater meaning; after these few short years on the present earth, one can look forward to life everlasting in the new heaven and the new earth where tears, and sorrow will have been replaced with unspeakable happiness in the midst of the family of the God of Love.



## *Chapter 134*

Brevity is not necessarily directly related to the value of content in the psalms. This psalm has several interesting points of interest. One is the number of times the word “Lord” is used in these three short verses. It is wonderful to know that our welcome is never worn out when we call upon the Creator to communicate with Him. Despite the fact that there are many millions on the same prayer line, that line is never so busy that He will not hear.

**Psa 134:1 Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.**

Who are these servants of the Lord who stand watch in the house of the Lord? Are they those priests who in the long ago remained awake to see that all went well in the temple during the night hours? Can there be a lesson here for Christians in our own age who find themselves awake and in need of approaching the Father in heaven for spiritual strength?

And how does one bless the Lord when He is the giver of all good and perfect gifts? This last question may be a little easier than the ones previous. To bless is to give something to another which will lead to satisfaction and pleasure. When those who offer praise and thanksgiving in the midst of the night make contact with God, He will be blessed. Is this not a satisfying thought for any of God’s faithful?

**Psa 134:2 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.**

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The lifting up of the hands was a common action among those who wished to offer such praise in Biblical days. It was as if the person blessing the Lord was attempting to reach up to His heavenly throne. We find it hard to condemn those who might wish to lift up hands to Him in any age.

At the same time, it is not necessary to literally lift up the arms toward heaven when communicating with Him in prayer. There are those lying on a sick bed who could not muster the physical strength to raise their arms from their sides. God will hear their prayer just as surely as He will those who are able.

Those who were referred to as in the house of the Lord by night were likely servants who were assigned to those night hours. This was a fine way to make valuable use of the quietness of the night.

**Psa 134:3 The LORD that made heaven and earth
bless thee out of Zion.**

There are two Zions. One was the site of the temple in the days of Solomon. The other is the Church of Jesus Christ our Lord today. If one calls upon Him in sincerity, truly wishing to honor Him by keeping His commandments, that soul will be heard. The matter of blessing is a two way street. God desires the praises and blessings which we humans are able to offer to Him. When He finds that we are appreciative of the what He has already done for us, we may rest assured that He will return our blessings with those which He is able and willing to offer us. All kinds of blessings flow from His bountiful hand into the lives of those who love and obey Him.



Chapter 135

The chapter before us this time is largely made up of fragments of other psalms or books of the Bible. Because of this it has been said to be like a new bouquet of flowers collected from various locations. Yet this new arrangement within itself makes a beautiful display of the truths which can come together in so many useful ways.

It is a psalm urging those who love the Lord to let their love be known, along with the reasons for holding to tightly to that love.

Psa 135:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise him, O ye servants of the LORD.

This is classified as one of the “Hallelujah” psalms. It both begins and ends with the encouragement to praise the Lord. Actually the English words come from two Hebrew words “Hallelu—Jah.” The first urges one to praise. The second tells the object of that praise. It is to be Jah or Jehovah who is to receive the praise.

It is truly difficult to see why any who have the least knowledge of the greatness and goodness of our God could fail to praise Him.

Psa 135:2 Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God.

There were three main divisions of the temple area. There was the Most Holy. There was the Holy Place, and there were the courts surrounding the temple. All who gathered in the area were given the encouragement to



add their own praise to the rest. This would include the priests and Levites and also those who had gathered in the outer courts.

The situation is somewhat the same today. We have evangelists, elders, deacons and members of the Lord's church in general, all of whom have reason to open their mouths in praise, honor and glory to Jehovah.

Psa 135:3 Praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant.

The first reason for praise is that He who created all things is good. There are great masses of people who worship vanities which only bring vexation of spirit. It is not so with Jehovah. He is interested in the goodness of His people and takes pleasure in them when they strive to develop the same qualities which He possesses.

Psa 135:4 For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.

A second reason for praising Jehovah is that He chose the tribe of Jacob as a beginning point for the development of the spiritual kingdom which He has brought into being at present. His people have always been a very special treasure to Him. He expects one day to have His faithful gathered together with Him in the heaven which He has been preparing for them.

Psa 135:5 For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.

The greatness of Jehovah is yet another reason for praising Him. The false gods of the idolators are useless

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in bringing blessing to their lives. There is but one True God who can offer those who serve Him the good things which can please both Him and those who love Him.

**Psa 135:6 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.**

In the beginning of the creation it was announced that all things were good! That which was above the earth, that which was on the land, that which was in the seas, and that which lay buried beneath the surface of the earth had been created in perfection.

**Psa 135:7 He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.**

The various cycles were set in motion, such as the water cycle. The lightning, the rain and the wind all came into being for special purposes.

The vapors ascending from the ends of the earth simply refers to the evaporation of water from the oceans, seas and lakes. This rain then descends in such manner as to cause the growth of plant and animal life.

**Psa 135:8 Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.**

**Psa 135:9 Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.**

The ten plagues which were sent upon the Egyptians came from the hand of Jehovah. They were sufficient to cause the Egyptians to not only let them go from the state

of bondage; they asked them to go before any further disasters came upon the people of Egypt. That was also good reason to praise the God of Jacob.

**Psa 135:10 Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;**

**Psa 135:11 Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan:**

The land of Canaan was promised to Israel. The Amorites, the Philistines, the kingdom of Og, as well as others were to give place to God's chosen ones. This was not because Israel was such a righteous people. It was because the people of Canaan were idolators and were evil in many other ways. God could foresee a heavenly kingdom ahead through the blessing of Israel, whereas no such kingdom could be expected from the development of the nations the Israelites displaced.

**Psa 135:12 And gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.**

A heritage is possessions which are passed down from generation to generation. God offered such a heritage to Israel first, and then in a much more glorious way replaced the earthly heritage of Canaan by the promise of the new heaven, new earth and heavenly Jerusalem which will last in eternity.

**Psa 135:13 Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations.**

Jehovah's name, and His people will pass through time and into eternity. His name and His memory shall never

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be forgotten. As long as the souls of men continue to exist, either on earth or in heaven, God will be glorified.

Psa 135:14 For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.

Those who choose to love the Lord and keep His commandments will be given special care. They will be judged as to their behavior. They will be led and corrected as their sins and shortcomings are pointed out to them. As they attend to the corrections God brings to their attention, He will forgive them and turn from possible punishments which might have been suffered by them.

Psa 135:15 The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

What folly it is for men to take gold, silver, copper, stone and clay, mold it into figures before which they can kneel down and offer praise. The work of men's own hands is vain and empty of power. If superhuman help is needed, it most certainly must come for God's hand, not from that of idols carved out with chisels, etc.

Psa 135:16 They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

Psa 135:17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.

The idols cannot speak. They cannot see. They cannot hear. They have no breath of life. Solomon called them vexation and vanity of spirit. The fear of Jehovah and the keeping of His commands is the whole duty of man.

Psa 135:18 They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.

Men tend to become like that which they worship. Dollars in the bank, acres and mansions, athletic gold medals, fornication and other such goals are worthless in terms of eternal happiness.

Psa 135:19 Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

Psa 135:20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

Psa 135:21 Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

The psalm closes as it began. Bless and praise ye the Lord. Security in eternity should be the long range goal of every man. All else is just a preliminary.



Chapter 136

We have here what some might consider a very boring chapter of the Bible. That is only true if the mercy of God is boring. Every verse of this chapter has two parts. The first part tells of God's guidance of His chosen people as they moved from bondage in Egypt, to the promised land. The second part of each verse underlines over and over that God extended mercy to them every step of the way. They did not deserve the wondrous things He provided for them.

It is just as true with those who live thousands of years later. Each and every one of us has been a sinner. We do not deserve the hope and care which He offers us as we move through the wilderness of this present life toward the promised bliss of heaven. It is because of His love and mercy that we can come back time after time and ask for His forgiveness in order that we may continue on the way to the heaven of heavens.

Psa 136:1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

This psalm is but one example of a favorite theme in the Holy Bible. God is looking forward to having His faithful family with Him when this earth has been replaced by one of far greater glory. He sees our stumbling feet and if we are penitent of our sins, He is ever ready to lift us up and continue His blessings. Our prayers of thanksgiving should forever show our gratitude.

Psa 136:2 O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psa 136:3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

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Jehovah is the Maker and Sustainer of the universe. Any man made idol is constructed of the materials which the Lord brought into being in the beginning. Whether the gods men worship are their bank accounts, their own bodies, nature as a whole, or some other substitute for the Lord of all, these substitutes are dependent upon Him for both existence and continuance; and that which is dependent upon something else is not God.

**Psa 136:4 To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.**

**Psa 136:5 To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.**

Oh yes, men may accomplish some wondrous things. Yet every achievement of man is completely dependent upon the mental processes of the brain with God provided. Every heavenly body, regardless of it's size or distance from we who live on this planetary system, was created by His Word and His mighty outstretched arm.

**Psa 136:6 To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.**

This seems to be a strange thought. The Bible speaks of waters above the earth, waters upon the earth, and waters under the earth. Those waters under the earth may be far more extensive than just a spring here and there. The word which is translated as "waters" may have reference to the liquid portions of this globe which are thought to be molten from the heat and pressure of the miles of surface materials which overlay them. Even in this age of scientific investigation, we have an enormous amount of research left to be done.

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Psa 136:7 To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:8 The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:9 The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.

The great lights are obviously the sun, moon, planets and stars. Man can still only stand in amazement at the masses and distances of these objects in space. They were not put in their positions and motions as a child might build a toy windmill from tinkertoys. They serve an eternal purpose determined by the all knowing mind of the Lord of the heavens.

Psa 136:10 To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:11 And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:12 With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Egypt was a type of the bondage of sin which holds all men captive until they are released by the merciful hand of the Almighty. As Israel was released from the servitude in Egypt, those who will follow the Way which God has provided in these latter days, will find release from Satan's clutches.

Psa 136:13 To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:15 But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.

The same One who overcame the forces of gravity to grant Israel a path through the Red Sea and caused their foes to be drowned in the waters which closed in upon them is just as anxious for those who are tired of the bondage of Satan to be released from his power. As men repent of their sins and are buried in the water of baptism, the sins are removed from their souls and they begin to move forward through the wilderness of life.

Psa 136:16 To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Nor does God abandon His people while they strive to move from sin to salvation. He provided manna from heaven and water from the rock to guarantee their survival during that journey. He has promised to provide the necessities of life to His followers today.

Psa 136:17 To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:18 And slew famous kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:19 Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:20 And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:21 And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Without the help of the Lord, Israel would have helpless before the might of Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan. Such opponents were defeated through the power of Jehovah. God had a plan for those



who worshiped Him. Any who fought against that plan were destined to be overcome.

There are no organizations in the world at any age which can stand when God determines that their time of opportunity for repentance has come to an end. Do not fight against God's children. You will lose!

Psa 136:22 Even an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever.

That which had been under the control of the enemies of God was delivered into the hands of Israel in order that God's family might have an inheritance on this earth. That inheritance was to make a way for men to pass on to an inheritance which does not fade away.

Psa 136:23 Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Psa 136:24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever.

God's kingdom is made up of the humble and lowly. That does not spell defeat. Those who exalt themselves will be brought down. Those who humble themselves and ask for the help of the heavenly Father will be lifted up and live forever.

Psa 136:25 Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psa 136:26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

The food chains of this earthly globe are God's way of seeing that life can be continued. He deserves our continual thanksgiving for providing the necessities of

this present live. But even more wonderful is His merciful provision of the spiritual necessities which prepare us to hear those words, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the glories of the Lord.”



Chapter 137

The present psalm is one of the favorites of many people who spend large amounts of time with the Holy Book. Christians often wonder why there are so many griefs to bear in this earthly life. Does God not know of the trials one faces? Yes, He most certainly does. But He has His own reasons for allowing the difficult conditions to continue as they do. One very strong possibility is that the faithful are being tested to determine whether they should remain in the company of the saints when time turns to eternity. Chapters like this one should give inspiration to God's children to move onward and upward to the land that is fairer than day.

Psa 137:1 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

The tone of this psalm is much different than that of most of the others. Most are filled with praise and hope. This one is filled with grief and weeping. Yet it has been assigned by Bible class teachers many times for memorization.

The author is unknown. The psalm was probably written either near the end of the Babylonian captivity, or shortly afterward. It is a historical psalm which looks back on some very unfortunate days in the lives of the people of Israel. God's people do have reason to weep while here on this earth. Sometimes it is not as a result of their own sinfulness. Other times it is a direct result of ignoring the truths God has placed before them. In this case, it became necessary when Israel fell into idolatry. God allowed them to be removed from Jerusalem the plunged into the midst of idolatry so deep that they turned

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from that type of life when they were permitted to return to their beloved city.

**Psa 137:2 We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.**

**Psa 137:3 For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.**

The harp was a favorite instrument among God's people of that time. At that time it was approved of God as an accompaniment to the voice of the singers. The joy that had been in the hearts of Israel as they praised God demonstrated itself through many of the psalms. This time they had been far removed from the vicinity of Mount Zion and the temple. They had been made slaves to the Babylonians and were settled in the area of the rivers or canals of that empire.

They were being mocked by their captors and ridiculed by requests that they sing their songs of worship as a means of entertainment for the Babylonians. Some see these requests as genuine and think that the Babylonians truly wanted to hear the songs which these prisoners loved so dearly. I do not believe this for a moment. They would have been laughing at the Israelites while the songs were being sung.

**Psa 137:4 How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?**

Dear reader, those of us who are Christians today sometimes find ourselves surrounded by strangers who have little but ridicule for God's faithful. The feelings



one has in such an environment will not last forever. One day in the New Jerusalem, the joy will be full and complete once more.

**Psa 137:5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.**

**Psa 137:6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.**

The hand was used to play the harp. The tongue was used to sing God's praise. Rather than use the hand and the tongue for the satisfaction of those who wished to ridicule them, they would rather lose the use of the hand and the power of speech.

God's city was to take first place in the hearts of the captives. No other activity or thought would be allowed to crowd out the memories of their precious city in Canaan.

**Psa 137:7 Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.**

The Edomites were descendants of Esau. Throughout the years they had been foes of the Israelites who were descendants of Jacob. It was no different now. They stood on the sidelines and called out for the complete destruction of the city which was so beloved by their despised kinsfolk.

The word "remember" as it is used here is a word indicating a desire for God to take vengeance on the Edomites who would have liked nothing better than for Jerusalem to be leveled to the ground.

**Psa 137:8 O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.**

The daughter of Babylon would be those who delighted in seeing the children of the Israelites killed. The daughter of Babylon would be the one who gave birth to the oncoming generation. As Israel's children had been killed by the Babylonians, a blessing is called for upon those who treat the Babylonian children as those of the Israelites had been treated.

**Psa 137:9 Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.**

One of the means by which a conquering nation insured that those they had defeated would not rise to fight back in the future was to kill the children who would otherwise grow up to take vengeance. The Babylonians had dashed the babes of the Israelites against the stone walls and murdered them. The call here is that the same treatment be given to the Babylonians by someone who would have the ability to do the same to their youngsters.

A word needs to be added here concerning the difference in attitude allowed in the pre-Christian age and that of the Christian. Jesus at one time said that the time had been when God's people were to hate their enemies and love their friends, But that Christians are commanded to love even their enemies. The attitude of love is that of desiring the well being of those who are loved. Jesus gave His precious life for sinners in anticipation of their conversion. We should be willing to follow His lead. Then, if the lives of those who sin do not change, God will deal with them as He knows best.



## Chapter 138

What a contrast we have here between psalm 138 and 139. The former was largely gloom and doom. This one is filled with confidence in the mercy of God and the hope which lies in the future for the one who humbly glorifies His Word and His name.

The psalm is listed among those of David. Some are not satisfied with this assignment since David died before the temple was constructed by his son Solomon. There are two possibilities here. One is that the word which is translated as temple can be applied also to a tabernacle. The second is that David may have had the temple in mind before it was actually constructed.

This uncertainty may be bypassed by a consideration of the obvious truth which is contained in the text of the psalm.

**Psa 138:1 I will praise thee with my whole heart:  
before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.**

It is difficult to enter into the minds and hearts of others who have gathered in assemblies which have been called for the purpose of worshiping Jehovah in spirit and in truth. Yet we can conclude from the tone of numerous scriptures that God knows there are many who come before Him in a half hearted manner. The author of this psalm makes the promise that he will not be guilty of half hearted worship. All of us should praise God with the spirit and with the understanding.

But why is the word “gods” used rather than the singular word God. There is but One God, and Jehovah is His name. Note that the verse does not say the psalmist will sing praise “unto” these gods, but “before” them. This allows the understanding that these could either be

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idols which the heathen praised, or perhaps even men who called for men to worship them as though they were gods. In that case, the verse would mean that the man of God glorified the True God before those who assumed the title of god without the right to do so.

Psa 138:2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

It is not wrong to speak of the tabernacle as the temple of God. The word “temple” may refer to any house of worship. The tabernacle, though not a permanent house built upon a foundation, was nevertheless a house for the ark which was a meeting place for Jehovah to commune with the high priests.

The church is the temple of God in the Christian age. There is no specific location toward which the Christian might turn as in the days of the Mosaic age.

Very little is more precious to the saints of God than the privilege of praising God’s name and glorifying His Word. The Word of God presents the name of God as a name above all other names. The love for the Word of God will cause man to come to greater and greater realization of His divine nature. It is then most natural to magnify His name above all else.

Psa 138:3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

God never fails to hear the prayer of those who are faithful to Him. He will bless such persons with that which they truly need. They may not receive exactly what

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they want, when they want it, but their prayer will be answered as God's infinite wisdom sees best. He will give both opportunity and strength to promote His purposes among men.

**Psa 138:4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.**

There will come a time when every knee shall bend and every tongue shall confess Jehovah to be the One and Only God of heaven and earth. Let each of us pray that we shall not wait until the resurrection of the dead in the final judgment to make that confession. That would be the greatest disaster any will ever experience. Let us praise His name and obey His Word while there is yet time.

**Psa 138:5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.**

The truth that God is the Highest of the high should cause men to humble their spirits and sing of His ways. Those who understand will make melody in their heart unto the Lord. They will devote their lives to His service. They will take Jesus invitation to "Come follow Me" with honest intentions to walk with Him.

**Psa 138:6 Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.**

**Psa 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.**

It appears according to this verse that the troubles through which the psalmist walked were those brought on by enemies. Since the psalmist was trying to walk with the Lord, he was convinced that those who were his enemies were also the enemies of the Lord. God's mighty right hand would be used to defeat the attempts of the enemies to destroy him.

There is no force in heaven or on earth which is strong enough to ultimately destroy the children of the Living God. There may be temporary setbacks. There will be no permanent destruction of the soul of the righteous.

**Psa 138:8 The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.**

My dear reader, are you perfect? The word perfect indicates completeness without flaw. God had a reason for allow each and every one of us to come into being. If we are willing to trust in His love for us, we will strive with all of our heart to allow Him to direct our paths. If while doing that, we stumble and fall on our face. He will listen to our cry for help. He will never forsake the work of His hands until it has accomplished that for which He made it. Work and pray in order that God may perfect that which concerns you! If so, He will not abandon you.



## *Chapter 139*

As one reads through the books of psalms, there are so many rich spiritual experiences that time after time it is tempting to state that the one under observation is the greatest of all. This is a futile exercise. There are so many gems that one can hardly say which one sparkles the brightest. This one most certainly finds its place among the spiritual mountain peaks of the greatest book in the world. It tells of God's omnipresence. He is everywhere at once. It tells of His omniscience. He is all knowing. It tells of His omnipotence. He is all powerful. Not quite as obvious, but certainly in the background, is His omnibenificence. He is perfectly righteous.

The present commentator will not take sides on the issue of whether or not David is the author of the psalm. The truths presented have been extremely important to God's people in a variety of times and places. They will continue to serve this same purpose.

The student of the scriptures is challenged to exert every fibre of his being to digest these truths. They are the backbone of the body of food for the soul which God has seen fit to set upon His banquet table. Join with us as we feast upon the bread of life.

**Psa 139:1 O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.**

My friend, there is One who knows you even better than you know yourself. You may have human acquaintances who know you much better than others do. You have none who know you as God does. He has known you from the beginning of time. He knows you perfectly at present. He even knows what you are going

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to do before you do it. He is both eternal and all wise. Nothing is hidden from His all searching eye.

Psa 139:2 Thou knowest my downsitteing and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

The author of the psalm realized full well that every action, no matter how insignificant it might seem is a part of the record which Jehovah has observed. Our whereabouts make no difference at all in God's ability to be aware of them. Every time we rise in the morning and lie down in our bed in the evening, He knows. He does not have to be visible to us or standing by our side. He is completely aware of every thought and every action.

Psa 139:3 Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

He is in front of us. He is behind us. He is on our left, on our right, above and below.

This has both advantages and disadvantages. He knows our needs as well as our opportunities. He can respond to our call for help. But at the same time, He knows of our thoughts, words and deeds which are opposed to His holy will. Thus He can both reward and punish to perfection. It is advisable that every man keep such realities constantly in mind and make certain that His mercy will be extended rather than His wrath.

Psa 139:4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

How many times we sin with our tongues. Sometimes these sins are gossip. Sometimes they are outright lies.

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Sometimes they are blasphemy and cursing. The reader must not assume that these are all sins of his neighbor, but not of himself. What he must do is assume that God knows of them and does not approve of them. Let us repent and determined to do better in the control of our spoken words.

**Psa 139:5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.**

How close is God? He is close enough to lay His hand upon me at any time. The facts are that He has done this time and time again. Each of us has been spiritually spanked and spiritually blessed in accordance with our use of words. If we will but pay attention to His providential guidance, life will be far more enriching.

**Psa 139:6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.**

The wisest man who ever lived must echo the words of this verse. The proud and haughty will fail to recognize the infinite gap between their own knowledge and that of the Lord of all the universe. They will attempt to direct their own steps. After Solomon had experimented with practically every phase of life which might be listed, he gave the conclusion of the whole matter. "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

**Psa 139:7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?**

**Psa 139:8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.**

God give both a question and an answer to that question in the very plainest of words. The question is “Where can I hide from God?” The answer is “Nowhere!” Can one escape from the view of God in an airplane or a rocket ship? No! Can one hide from Him in the cave or in the grave? Again, the answer is “No!”

**Psa 139:9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;**

**Psa 139:10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.**

Perhaps I might take sight upon the east where the sun arises and go to the farthest reaches of the earth. He will know of both my location and my sins from sea to shining sea. His hand will be there to lead me if I will but reach out for it. It will also be there to chastise me if that is what is needed. I am to Him as an infant babe in the arms of it’s mother.

**Psa 139:11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.**

What a tremendous difference exists in human ability to see, and that of the Lord our God. Humans are limited to areas where light penetrates. Where there is no light, there is no sight.

**Psa 139:12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.**

God has no such limitations. The sins of the night are just as easily seen by Him as are those committed in the middle of the brightest day. There is a day coming

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where the sun never sets. We had best pray that we are in heaven at that point rather than in hell. That will only happen if we prove to our Maker that we have chosen light over darkness during our time of testing here on earth.

Psa 139:13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

What are these reins which God has possessed or controlled from the time before our birth? Vine's Expository Dictionary states that the kidneys were thought at one time to be the seat of human will and emotions. Today we would be more apt to use the word "heart" rather than reins.

The heart of the teaching here seems to be that God was able to direct the development of every human from the time of conception, or perhaps even before that, while the materials which compose the physical part of the body were still lying as chemicals in the earth. We will go on to note that it is primarily the wonders of the physical body which are discussed.

Psa 139:14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

As the science of medicine progresses, the wonders of life are found to be more and more exciting. There was a time when physicians thought the womb of the mother was but a cradle for the development of the infant. The semen of the father was assumed to have all of the characteristics which determined the qualities of the newborn infant.

Our understand is vastly different today. We now believe the mother furnishes a supply of DNA from

the egg cell which she contributes; and that the father contributes DNA through the sperm cell which unites with that egg. The total DNA is made up of some forty-seven or forty-eight chromosomes which are composed of a string of genes. The instructions for the development of the babe in the womb of the mother, as well as in the life after birth are dependent upon the information held in these genes.

The situation is astronomically more complicated that what was believed to be true one hundred years ago. We are only beginning to understand the degree of complication. Our efforts thus far to control the development of the embryo have mostly just shown us how much danger is involved in these experiments.

Oh yes, we are wonderfully and fearfully made. God's wisdom is unfathomable.

Psa 139:15 My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

What then is meant by saying God knew these secrets when we were being formed in the depths of the earth? May I suggest that God knew the end from the beginning at the time when Genesis 1:1 tells us "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The chemical substances of which every babe ever born is composed were brought into existence as a part of the earth at the time. It is not impossible that the carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and other chemical elements which make up our own body were at one time a part of another human. If that is true, God brought those chemicals into existence and He knew precisely how they would be utilized until the end of time and the resurrection of new spiritual bodies.

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The reader will realize that I am trying to see as deeply into the meaning of the verses at hand as I find possible. Please forgive me if I have gone astray.

*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. (Verse 6)*

**Psa 139:16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.**

Just as an author might create an outline of a potential book, or a builder might develop blueprints for an upcoming structure, God knew from well beforehand just what type of individual would be born.

**Psa 139:17 How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!**

God's ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. This verse indicates that there are also far more of God's thoughts than those of men.

**Psa 139:18 If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.**

A favorite way of biblically speaking about large numbers is to talk about them in comparison to the grains of sand. Going to sleep does not mean separation from the eyes of God. When we awaken, we will find that He is still there! We still have the burden of unrepented sins, or the soul which has been washed white.

**Psa 139:19 Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.**

Some see a sizable change at this point in the psalm. It has been suggested that these last verses have been attached from another psalm. I think that is not the case. The entire psalm has explained the enormous responsibilities of men as they think, speak and act before the eye of an ever present Lord. These verses confirm the previous warnings. God knows us. He will destroy the wicked. No person will escape His punishment for sin.

**Psa 139:20 For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.**

The name of the Lord is precious to Him. He does not take lightly the rebellion of those who use that name in vain. Filthy stories and the use of the words “Christ, God, damn,” and others of like nature are not to be spewed out of the mouth, or even allowed to cross the mind unless they are used with reverence.

**Psa 139:21 Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?**

Are we to hate our fellow man? Is not God a God of love? Can we love our enemies and hate them at the same time? Those who take the name of God in vain, and who do not hesitate to disobey His will, have souls just as precious to God as those of His faithful. He commands that we love our enemies in the same sense that He loves His. The hatred is to be one directed at the sins of the man or woman rather than at the soul. If that soul turns to God, His love will be extended to it. He expects us to act in like manner.

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Psa 139:22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

These present verses then declare that the enemies of God are to be our enemies. As long as they persist in defying His will, they must expect both His opposition and that of His friends.

Psa 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

Psa 139:24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

It takes considerable courage to invite God to search to the very bottom of our soul. David had the courage to fight a lion, a bear and a giant. But his courage was tested even more when Nathan told him he was the man who had stolen his neighbor's ewe lamb.

We must not be afraid to face up to the challenges of Satan. They are strong and powerful, but we must choose every day whom we will serve. We cannot hide from God. We should not want to.

Chapter 140

This psalm is one of those asking for the Lord to protect the author from evil enemies. The majority of the commentators believe the author to have been David, and the occasion for writing being his persecution by either Saul or David's own son Jonathan. In the course of writing this material on the book of Psalms, we have learned to be somewhat more cautious than most of those making comments on authorship.

The titles of the psalms are thought to have been added long after the psalms were originally written. The title of this one ascribes it to David, but it might very well fit others just as well as they fit him. The present day reader might find that some of the thoughts presented fit his own situation closely.

One caution is in order. The curses which are asked for in this work are not asked in such manner that the author himself was necessarily to be the one to take vengeance on the enemies. He only asked that the Lord see justice done. He was willing to let the Lord determine how and when this was to be administered.

Psa 140:1 Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man;

The present reader may very well have experienced just such feelings as the author of this psalm expresses. Let us consider such an example. A principal of a small two teacher school in the country has the responsibility of collecting lunch money from the children and paying the bills for food, etc. He finds it necessary to fail one of the children in his classroom. Before the child has hardly had time to take the report card home, the principal finds that he has been accused of pocketing some of the money and

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not using it for school functions. Soon the rumor begins to circulate through the entire community that the principal is dishonest. The reader can anticipate what kind of friction and damage may be done by such an evil rumor.

This first verse goes much farther than just rumors. It refers to the “violent” man. This would be a person who was not satisfied to spread rumors. He would like nothing better than to either do physical injury to a good person, or see that such damage was done. David certainly faced such dangers from violent persons, but many others have shared David’s feelings and anxieties.

**Psa 140:2 Which imagine mischiefs in their heart; continually are they gathered together for war.**

These wars often begin as thoughts in the imagination of those who would see damage done. The thoughts then grow into vicious words. The words inspire deeds which ought never to have even entered the mind of the man of violence.

**Psa 140:3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders’ poison is under their lips. Selah.**

The tongue of certain serpents are forked. When the serpent senses danger he opens his mouth and darts his tongue in and out. In some of these snakes there are poison sacs which can inject deadly fluids into the flesh of their foes. Verse three compares this with the poison which the thoughts, words and deeds of wicked persons can inject into the lives of innocent followers of righteousness.

**Psa 140:4 Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from the violent man; who have purposed to overthrow my goings.**

On many occasions, the righteous victim of such slander is unable to defend himself. Help is needed from

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a source far more capable of providing an antidote for the venom being spewed out. The author of the present psalm requests that the Lord step into the case and do for him that which he cannot do for himself. He feels that he may be destroyed unless help is forthcoming.

Psa 140:5 The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set gins for me. Selah.

Cords, snares, nets and gins are all means of trapping a victim without his being aware of the danger which is just ahead. The wicked man loves to work undercover. The truth is that no sinful action is unknown to the Lord. He is familiar with every thought, even before it becomes words and then ripens into evil deeds.

Psa 140:6 I said unto the LORD, Thou art my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

It is necessary to sometimes cast one's troubles in the direction of the powerful mind and hand of the Lord. If the one offering the prayer is in harmony with the will of God, he may have confidence that God will see all things work together for the good of both the one offering the prayer, and the Kingdom of Christ.

But woe be unto that man who has caused the prayer to be necessary. That person will find his purposes opposed by the same forces which brought the entire universe into existence. Even that one who stands by and enjoys the suffering of God's precious children will feel that agonies of the Divine hand.

Psa 140:7 O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

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If the author of the psalm is David, he had good reason to remember how God had covered his head in the day of battle. He had not been killed by the bear, the lion nor the giant. He could have confidence that the same protection would be available again.

**Psa 140:8 Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves. Selah.**

The proud and haughty are selfish. Their interests are self centered. When they do achieve their wicked goals, they become even more bold and set out to see just how much power they can exert in order to impress others. Sadly, they are calling the attention of the Almighty to their way of life. He has expressed His feelings about such wickedness in no uncertain terms.

The meek shall inherit the earth. He is able and willing to humble the proud and to uplift the needy. When this earthly globe has served it's purpose, the sinner will reap his crop. He that has sown misery will reap misery. Those who have humbled themselves in the service of Jehovah will find themselves enjoying the pleasures of heaven which will never end.

**Psa 140:9 As for the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.**

**Psa 140:10 Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.**

The writer of the psalm pleads with God to see that the poison released by the wicked will cover them. Note that he has just thanked God for covering his own head with protection in battle. Now he expects God to cover the head of the serpent with coals of fire which will last forever. Is

it the fires of eternal hell that are being discussed. This would be about the same as one who was so angry with another that he would tell him to “go to hell.” We do not have that kind of authority, but GOD DOES.

**Psa 140:11 Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.**

The plea is that the evil person be prevented from completing the damage he has set out to do. He is to be hunted down by the same miseries which he has planned to pour out upon others. If the evil person is permitted to achieve his goals, he will become even more wicked.

**Psa 140:12 I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.**

The psalmist is confident that in the end the poor and oppressed will be lifted up and rewarded for their perseverance if they continue in the way of the Lord. It may look like eternity during the time on this present earth. It will BE an eternity of genuine joy when the battle has been fought and the victory has been won.

**Psa 140:13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.**

When the final judgment has been made the seed which the righteous have planted along the way of life will also be reaped. This time the harvest will be a source of the greatest thanksgiving conceivable.

Please, dear reader, do not limit the promises of this psalm to David in the long long ago. Apply the principles to your own life. Serve the Lord. Then let Him determine the proper rewards and punishments.

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Chapter 141

The psalm at hand fits nicely into the same pattern of the one just before it. The psalmist is asking God to help him in dealing with others who would do him harm. It seems that he is mostly concerned about reacting to things which are said to him. He does not wish to become angry when his friends correct him. He does not wish to accept flattery from enemies who are trying to deceive him.

The matters dealt with in the psalm certainly fit the plight of David when he was being persecuted. That does not guarantee that he was the writer. The practical lessons found in the chapter should be taken very seriously by practically any faithful servant of the Lord. We all have need to correctly evaluate the words which are spoken to us by both fellow Christians who share their thoughts with us, and also those who would attempt to sway us by flattering words.

Psa 141:1 LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

God has given us assurance that when the person of faith comes to Him in prayer, He will hear and answer their prayers according to His will. This first verse almost sounds like a command to God. It is not that. It is a plea based upon God's stated willingness to help when called upon. In this case the prayer is urgent.

Psa 141:2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

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A lamb was sacrificed both in the morning and the evening as part of the daily routine of the Jews. Along with the body of the lamb, an incense which added a sweet smell to the rising fumes from the meat was added to assure God's pleasure in the sacrifice.

It is quite possible that the author of the psalm was not in a situation where he could be present at the altar, but he wished to have his prayer and the lifting up of holy hands to be received in place of being at the altar personally.

This matter of lifting up hands toward heaven is a delicate subject. It can be done earnestly and with great sincerity. It can also be done as an emotional display which is expected to impress any onlooker. The first is in order. The second is hypocrisy.

**Psa 141:3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.**

David, like most of the readers of this psalm, needed to react properly to those who associate with him. He wished for the words of his mouth and the meditations of his heart to be acceptable in the sight of Jehovah.

Make no mistake. The Lord can help one to think and speak in a righteous manner. We need His help and He is delighted when we ask for it.

**Psa 141:4 Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.**

The wicked works and the dainties offered to one by evildoers may attract one for the moment. But in the long run they are deadly poison. One must pray constantly that he be led away from the pleasures of the world and

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not feast upon those things which will separate us from fellowship with our Maker.

Psa 141:5 Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.

Verses five, six and seven are considered by commentators to be extremely difficult to understand. Some have even been so fearful of misusing these verses that they have avoided discussing them.

It is the present writer's opinion that an honest attempt should be made to discover the truths laid out. We will therefore give what we believe to be the meaning and then request the reader to give diligent attention in order that if we are incorrect, any error might be found and rejected. We are not trying to impress the reader. We are trying to find the truth and give proper attention to it.

The smiting of one by the righteous is not intentional damage. It is the attempt on the part of the righteous companion to help his faithful brother to turn from error. It is all too easy for one to retort when his sin is pointed out to him. We must avoid losing our temper when we are bluntly told we are sinning. The one who warns us of such danger is doing us a favor. We should take the warning and change our directions.

Ointment placed upon the head was intended to make the user more acceptable to those with whom he associated. The correction of a righteous companion should accomplish the same goal. When such correction is made, God will be pleased.

Psa 141:6 When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.

Who are the judges that are overthrown? What are the stony places which lead to their overthrow? I am not certain, but will offer what I believe to be the answer to both of these questions.

The judges would be those who offered the words of correction to the one who was in need of them. All men find themselves in stony places many times. These are the places in life where one is likely to stumble and fall. If, after the righteous offer a warning to us and tell us of our errors, we then take offense and hope they will suffer, we do them an injustice. When the one who has told us our lives need to be changed finds himself or herself in difficult situations, we must offer our own help to them rather than enjoying their hardship. Our prayers should be with them, not against them.

Psa 141:7 Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.

It is quite true that the faithful may sometimes feel that they are close to death's door. The enemies of the righteous would like nothing better than to see the true servants of the Lord cut into pieces and strewn in a graveyard.

Psa 141:8 But mine eyes are unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.

The psalmist realized that pitiful situations are not to be cured by cursing the Lord. He would lift his eyes toward heaven and trust God to be with him every step of the way. Should we not do the same?

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**Psa 141:9 Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.**

God can, and will, oversee the lives of those who turn to Him for aid. The snares and traps which the wicked would use to cause the faithful to share in their own fate are very real. Prayer to the Lord is the finest means of avoiding such catastrophe.

**Psa 141:10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.**

Should one really pray for the destruction of the wicked? Are we not to pray for them which despitefully use us? Such is certainly true in the present Christian age. Still, there was a time when the “eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth” medicine was prescribed. That day has gone. We cannot pray that God save the wicked in their sinful condition. We certainly can pray that they will see the error of their ways and turn from them.

## *Chapter 142*

We have here another of the sad psalms with which one who is subject to depression must be careful. Words such as “cried”, “complaints”, “trouble” and “persecutors” are an indication of the general tone of the message.

The ancient title attached to the psalm attributes it to David while he was hiding in a cave. This is probably correct. There were two occasions in which David hid in a cave to avoid those who were bent on doing him harm. One took place at the cave of Adullam. The other at the cave of Engedi. It may be that the Lord allowed David to suffer some of these hardships to help him understand his need for dependence upon Divine guidance. At least this seems to be the effect which it had upon his attitude.

**Psa 142:1 I cried unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.**

The statement that David “cried” with his voice implies that it was not just a mental prayer which he offered. It was one which was audible to his own ears. It is sometimes useful to pray aloud. God does not hear the audible prayer any better than He does one which is silent. But there is a closer sense of communion with God when the prayer is pronounced aloud. We do not pray in order for God to know of our needs. He is aware of them at all times. Our prayers serve the purpose of an opportunity to relieve our consciences and bolster our faith.

**Psa 142:2 I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.**



When we are drowning in troubles, it does help enormously to “pour” them out before the throne of He who has indicated His constant willingness to come to the side of His troubled children. Does a man of the stature of David find it necessary to pour out troubles? Absolutely! This is one of the advantages of spiritual fellowship with both God and our partners in faith. Just sharing our needs with others can ease the burden which otherwise might well be too heavy to bear.

**Psa 142:3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.**

When it appeared that there was no hope of escape from those who were persecuting him, David knew that Jehovah was perfectly conscious of just what was happening to him. Even though he seemed to be at the mercy of his enemies, he knew God could provide the way out.

**Psa 142:4 I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.**

He had given up on receiving help from his fellowmen. He looked toward his right hand, where one would ordinarily find one who would plead his case. There was no one there. After searching in every direction he concluded that no man cared for his soul. Certainly, if they did, they were too cowardly to let their care be known.

**Psa 142:5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.**

The word “cried” could possibly be considered no more than a silent plea for God to give attention to his situation, except for the fact that in the first verse of this psalm, it is said that he cried “with his voice.”

The Lord was his only hope of salvation. When all others had forsaken him, he felt that he could find a hiding place in the Divine hand. If there was still a future for him in the land of the living, that future would depend upon help greater than humans would provide.

**Psa 142:6 Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.**

For a part of the time that David was pursued by Saul, he had a small band of four hundred who offered their support. But when one considers the entire military might of the nation, with it’s king at it’s head, David’s foes were much to powerful for him to defeat.

**Psa 142:7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.**

This last verse does not indicate that David had been imprisoned behind metal bars. He was unable to go about freely in the land. His prayer is that somehow God would find a way to rescue him. He still held to his hope that God would make it possible for him to praise His name in the presence of righteous persons instead of being surrounded by those who desired to take his life. Of course, his prayer was answered. He became one of the recognized heroes of faith in the Old Testament times.

Even more, the Son of God descended from his seed.





## Chapter 143

We have read much of what is written in psalm in others of the book. This has caused some to claim that the present psalm was not authored by David, but was pieced together from several others. Others give this as strong evidence that David was the author. My own conclusion is that it sounds this much like David, it probably was. May I add that many of the prayers offered in congregational services contain large numbers of similar statements although many different individuals are wording the prayer. David was in dire circumstances many times. He would have prayed much the same sentiments in similar circumstances. We also sing the same hymns over and over. This does not take away from the value of what is being said.

If David is the writer, the occasion is very likely the persecution he suffered at the hands of his unruly son Absalom.

**Psa 143:1 Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.**

I will assume David to be the author. If so, he approaches the throne of the Lord only as a result of his belief that God is both faithful and righteous. God promises to hear the prayer of a penitent sinner. He will honor that promise. Because God is righteous, He will promote righteous requests. David does not feel justified in pleading innocency. He does have confidence that God will hear his prayer and grant him mercy.

**Psa 143:2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.**

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He requests that God not respond to his requests as a judge would do in a courtroom. If that were to be the case, neither he nor any other man could have hope. All men have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Some are not ashamed of their sins. David is.

Psa 143:3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

There are three possibilities as to the identity of the enemy. It could have been Saul. It could have been Absalom, or it could have been others who had seen an opportunity to decrease his influence in the kingdom. In any case the enemy had trampled all over him. His condition was so serious that he felt as if he was passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

Most of the commentators have suggested that the darkness of which he spoke was due to hiding in caves where it would be difficult to find him. It is not out of place to see both physical darkness and mental depression as playing a part in his feeling a kinship with those who had been already passed from this life long before his own dark days.

Psa 143:4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

The inner man had reached a point where he was begging for help which he could never provide for himself. Was it possible that the Lord would look down upon him with forgiveness and make a way of escape?

Psa 143:5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

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His mind traveled back to those days when God had stood beside him in his trials. He uses three powerful mental activities to declare his confidence that if he could make things right with God, he would receive the help he so badly needed. He remembered. He meditated. He mused. These are words which indicate a very intense degree of concentration on what God had done before, and could do again if He chose to.

**Psa 143:6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.**

David had lived in a land where there were very dry areas. They became so dry that when a rain came, it would quickly soak into the ground and it would seem to be crying out for more. He felt that his soul was in somewhat similar condition. He reached up toward the Lord with a thirst which only the “water of life” could quench.

Selah is a word meaning it is time for a pause to reflect.

**Psa 143:7 Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.**

The conditions had become so serious that if the Lord did not intervene, David could well find himself in the darkness of the grave itself.

**Psa 143:8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.**

It had perhaps been many days since David had awakened in the morning with joy and confidence in what

would take place during the upcoming daylight hours. The word “trust” is one found often in the Word of God. God knows far more than we do about the paths of action which we should take. Again I mention one of my very favorite verses. “It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps.” In a state of confusion wisdom calls for one to “Trust in the Lord and He shall direct thy paths.

**Psa 143:9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.**

**Psa 143:10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.**

It is interesting that the psalmist did not ask God to make His will known. He asked that God teach him to “do” that will. That may well have been what was happening at the very time. Certainly the outcome of David’s experiences had taught him the importance of subjecting his own will to that of the Lord.

**Psa 143:11 Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name’s sake: for thy righteousness’ sake bring my soul out of trouble.**

His plea now is that if the Lord will step in and deliver him from his enemies, it will work to the glory of the Godhead. David was placing God’s pleasure ahead of his own welfare. He would do all he could to assign the honor, the glory and the power to Jehovah.

**Psa 143:12 And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant.**

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This last verse sounds quite unlike the Son of God who looked down from the cross and cried out “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. There is more to consider. God had made promises to His people that He would destroy the enemies of righteousness. David was not appealing to an opportunity to personally take vengeance. He was asking for a faithful and righteous God to keep His promise.

Chapter 144

This psalm is very closely related to psalm number eighteen. Yet, there are enough differences to make a serious study of this one even though having done so with the other.

There is general agreement that David, the King of Israel is the author. The occasion which seems to be the best fit is the time shortly after the rebellion of his son Absalom had been put down. David was grateful to God for having allowed peace to gain a foothold in Israel. He gave thanks for past blessings and requested that God continue to bless and keep His chosen people.

Psa 144:1 Blessed be the LORD my strength which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:

God had thoroughly blessed him in many ways. He had been victorious over a bear, a lion and a gigantic man. He readily admitted that he could not have accomplished this without divine supervision.

At that stage in the relationship of God with mankind, war and physical fighting were in the forefront. It would be so pleasant to be able to claim, all these centuries later, that war and fighting had been replaced by peace and love in the brotherhood of men. Sadly, that claim cannot be made. There are still wars and rumors of wars. That fact does not excuse the Christian from doing everything possible to spread peace, as Christ Himself encouraged.

Another thought is that there are two types of warfare. In one case the battle is fought with bombs, airplanes and tanks. In the other, the basic weapon is the Word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit. The spiritual war is of far greater importance.

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**Psa 144:2 My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.**

If one takes away the Lord from David, he removes both his defensive helps and also those used in offense. God had been his fortress, tower, shield and deliverer. But, He had also been the power which had allowed David to subdue Absalom and others who had tried to take his throne.

**Psa 144:3 LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!**

When man looks at himself in comparison to ants and other creatures at that level of life, he is tempted to think of himself very highly. This haughty spirit should evaporate rapidly when a comparison is made between himself and the infinitely wise and powerful God of heaven. (Compare Hebrews 2:6-9).

*Heb 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?*

*Heb 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:*

*Heb 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.*

*Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

**Psa 144:4 Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.**

Vanity is “uselessness.” Man is here but for a moment and then passes away, as steam does from a boiling teakettle. A man should be careful not to think of himself more highly than he has reason to. I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me. Without Him I can do nothing. David understood this truth from many varied experiences.

**Psa 144:5 Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.**

The potential for danger was still present even though a major battle had been won. There was still going to be a strong need for help from heaven. When Moses was on Mount Sinai the mountain belched out smoke at the time the ten commandments were given. God was ready to lead the Israelites through the wilderness and give them victory over both the desert and the foes who would stand in their way.

**Psa 144:6 Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.**

Lightning and thunder serve to remind man that there is a source of power far greater than himself. David wanted to make certain that such power would be with him in the future as God’s hand had been with Moses.

**Psa 144:7 Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children;**

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What are these great waters from which he prays that God's hand will deliver him? They are not the waters of the Red Sea nor of the Jordan. They are the floods of enemies who would like to drown Israel and cause her to disappear from the earth.

Psa 144:8 Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

David was well aware that making treaties with certain non-Israelites was dangerous. They would hold up the right hand and swear their support. They would make it appear that they were extending the right hand of fellowship, when they were actually preparing for treachery. Their promises were absolutely undependable.

Psa 144:9 I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

The new song which David promises to sing unto the Lord is one of joy and thanksgiving. David was known as the "Sweet Singer of Israel." He received this recognition because of his ability with both his voice, and the harp of ten strings.

Every man or woman who has been granted the freedom from sin which the blood of the Son of God provides, should sing a similar sweet song.

Psa 144:10 It is he that giveth salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

David is talking in the first person here. He refers to God's deliverance from those who tried so intensely

to dethrone him. Those enemies' swords had failed to accomplish the destruction they strove for.

Psa 144:11 Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood:

Here is that right hand of falsehood again. David is not the only one who has needed to ask for deliverance from those who would pretend to be helpers and then out to be villains. In the present day one can find this type of treacherous appeal in the mailbox. Some are becoming enormously wealthy by presenting themselves as God's greatest gift to mankind. When all is said and done, it is found that they were self serving liars.

Such things can happen from the sale of real estate to the decreasing amount of toothpaste in the same sized tube. David's prayer is that the younger generation will grow up to be virtuous and dependable.

Psa 144:12 That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:

This verse is a bit vague, but I believe we can cut to the heart of it. The sons needed to grow up tall and healthy that they might serve God with vigor. Their daughters were the support of the home. The prayer was that they might be both beautiful and as stable as the cornerstones of great buildings. Both sons and daughters would then give honor to the Lord.

Psa 144:13 That our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may

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**bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:**

There may be a translation problem in this verse. Sheep would not normally give birth to their young in the streets of a city. This should not detract from the thrust of the verse. David is praying for the plenteous reproduction of the livestock. God could bring this about.

**Psa 144:14 That our oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets.**

He adds the request that the oxen which were used to pull carts and plow fields would be equal to the needs placed upon them.

Perhaps the last portion of this verse is not closely related to the first part. The breaking in is thought to have to do with enemies breaking through from the outside, or vandals among the people themselves as stealing others possessions.

The going out is considered to be the sending out of armies to fight against opposition which was gathering to invade.

**Psa 144:15 Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD.**

Note the overall picture drawn here. The children grow up healthy. The livestock multiply readily. The peace is not broken by thieves or invading armies. There is no need to send out soldiers to fight and risk their lives against other tribes or nations.

Jesus Christ is known as the "Prince of peace." If

humanity would accept His teaching and His example, the vision given in Revelation 21:1-5 might come closer to reality.

*Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

*Rev 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

*Rev 21:3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

*Rev 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

*Rev 21:5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*

This present writer dreams of singing that “New Song” David spoke of. Let us do all we can to sing the new song on earth, and then follow it up along with David and the faithful of the ages in the New Heaven and New Earth.



## Chapter 145

The one hundred forty-fifth psalm reminds this writer of the simple but beautiful prayer which many children are taught to say at bedtime.

“God is great.

God is good.

Let us thank Him for our food. Amen.”

This is supposedly the last of the psalms written by the hand of David. It, as the last five following it, are almost pure praise of the Lord. Just a quick reading will persuade the student of God’s Word that no man is capable of offering praise which matches the greatness of Jehovah.

This chapter is also the last of the alphabetic psalms. Each verse in the original Hebrew begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In other words, it praises God from A to Z. The strange part is that there is no verse beginning with the letter *nun* which is one of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. There are only twenty-one verses in the psalm, while there are twenty-two letters in that alphabet. Was it left out by a copyist somewhere along the way, or Did God have some special reason for omitting it? We do not know!

**Psa 145:1 I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.**

The first and the last verses of the psalm are almost the same. David gives the purpose of writing it.

It is to “extol” or hold up the name of the Lord as both God and King of the universe. He does not plan on ceasing to praise the Lord in this present world, or in the world to come. When he moves from time into eternity, he will sing God’s praise.

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Psa 145:2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

Did David stop with his own praise. I think not! He wished for all men of all time to join him in such songs of joy. It was a privilege he did not wish for any man to bypass.

Psa 145:3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

The present day scientists who attempt to search out the wonders of nature have found out many remarkable evidences of the intelligence which brought the universe into existence. It is absolutely inexcusable for them to hold to atheism. Just as they have been amazed by the stupendous truths already discovered, it is certain that men will continue to uncover the mysteries which lie hidden and still to be revealed. The greatness of God is undeniable to the truly intelligent and the truly honest minded person.

Psa 145:4 One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

When one discovers that which is truly exciting, he cannot wait to let others know of it. Of all the exciting things which men have ever experienced, the actions of works of the Lord are the most wondrous. How could any person or any generation be so callous as to keep such knowledge secret and fail to declare them to both their own generation and to that which will replace them?

This writer has spent many, many years declaring the wonders of nature in science classrooms. But, the opportunity to teach Bible classes and praise the God of



heaven is more exciting. This commentary set is evidence of that fact.

Psa 145:5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

Part of the time the psalmist speaks to God. Part of the time he speaks to others about God. Here he is making a promise that he will tell what he can about God's majesty. God stands higher than word can describe. The psalmist also intends to deal with those amazing things which God has done through His unlimited power.

Psa 145:6 And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.

The word "terrible" usually is used in the English language to describe something which produces terror. The commentators have usually given examples of such acts of God which struck terror into men's hearts. He cast Adam and Eve out of the garden. He caused the flood to destroy all men upon the earth except Noah and his family. He brought the ten plagues upon the land of Egypt. He caused 185,000 Assyrians to be killed in a single battle.

We could go on, but to list more might even cause the reader to become numb of mind and forget that God had declared He will cast the vast majority of mankind into eternal fire. All of these could be included in the category of "terrible" actions.

However, it is possible that the word terrible, as it is used here is an introduction to the greatness of God which is to be described in the verses which follow.

Psa 145:7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

God is GREAT. Just how great is He. I do not know, nor do you. We can only do our best to walk along the shore. The water is too deep for us to swim.

Two words are used here which should draw our attention. The first is “memory.” We can only tell others about God through the memory of what He has done. The second is “sing.” The psalms were written to be sung. God’s people today are to “Sing and make melody in their hearts when they remember His grace and goodness for all these centuries in the history of man.

Psa 145:8 The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

To be gracious is to give to others more than they deserve. Oh how gracious God has been to men! He could have eliminated man from existence upon the earth when He allowed Adam and Eve to continue. He could have destroyed any man or woman of the age of accountability for having disobeyed His instruction for living. Let us list the four attributes of God in one, two, three, four fashion to emphasize the richness of this single verse. God is:

1. Gracious
2. Compassionate
3. Patient
4. Merciful

He expects his followers to demonstrate the same characteristics if they wish to continue in His image.

Psa 145:9 The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Yes, truly the Lord is good to all. Every breath which is taken is a blessing from the Lord. Every spoonful of food, every sight we see, or every sound we hear are

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a result of his providence. The word “all” will be used several times before we reach the end of this psalm. God is far more concerned over the welfare of His creation than one would be if he had been the architect of the Empire State Building or the Eifel Tower.

**Psa 145:10 All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.**

Some of God’s works may not wish to praise Him. They may hold back any words of the lips which would tend to give him praise and honor. The fact remains that they are fearfully and wonderfully made, whether or not they will confess Him as their Maker.

Some of His saints bless Him with considerable hesitancy, as if they were ashamed to admit His greatness in front of other persons. Others bless Him most bountifully and let all the world know of their adoration and respect.

**Psa 145:11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;**

The Kingdom of God has already been established. There are those who will disagree and contend that we must wait for Christ’s return before the Kingdom comes. They point to the Lord’s prayer and tell us that since we are to pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” the Kingdom is still in the future.

If one fails to see the connection of the two adjoining statements in that prayer, he might take that position. But let us look carefully at that portion of what Jesus taught men to pray. His advice was to pray “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” The Kingdom has been established and has been on earth

since the day of Pentecost pictured in the second chapter of Acts. The prayer is intended to ask God that the Kingdom may continue to grow until what is done on earth matches the harmony with God's will, as found in heaven itself.

**Psa 145:12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.**

The obligation the saints of God have is to preach the gospel to the world that men may know of the glory of the Kingdom. And of course that is what Jesus commanded his apostles to teach all men.

**Psa 145:13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.**

Now that it is established, God's Kingdom will never fall. It will be victorious over Satan and all those who make the disastrous mistake of following after the pleasures of this world. Individual Christians may fall and never rise to righteousness again. But the Kingdom as a whole will endure forever.

**Psa 145:14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.**

Vast numbers of persons who have stumbled under the temptations of the devil have never arisen again. That is the fault of our Creator. Any who will admit their condition and ask for forgiveness may reach up to take His supporting hand and move forward. Those who have fallen into discouragement after trying to bear up under

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terrific burdens can also be assured that He will hear their cry for help if they but voice that cry.

Psa 145:15 The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Psa 145:16 Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Those who patiently continue to believe in the love of God and trust in His providential care will never be sorry in the end. It may require very great patience to let God act when and how He sees best. It will be worth the wait.

Psa 145:17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

The verse which we mentioned as being missing in the original Hebrew is so similar to this verse seventeen that it is believed that may be the reason it is missing. There is no man who is truly righteous and perfectly holy. God is both righteous and holy. Any suffering which exists in this world is a result of sin at some point, committed by either Satan or men. If there had been no sin, there would be no suffering. My suffering may be a consequence of someone else's sin, but pain, sorrow and death have entered into this world because God's directions have not been followed at some point.

Psa 145:18 The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

Not everyone who calls upon the Lord will find Him nigh unto them. It is only those who call in truth who will find Him rejoicing in their call. Those who wish to

walk in the ways of the world, and then when they find disaster has overtaken them, will discover that God's ear is open only to those whose ear is open to Him. If you wish for Him to hear when you call upon Him, be sure to walk close to Him every step of the way.

Psa 145:19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Now it is true that Job was a righteous man, and that he was one who feared the Lord. Job endured a large amount of tribulation through loss of property, sickness in his family and other problems. There was a righteous reason for this. Job was being used by the Lord to prove to Satan that there are those who can endure faithfully unto the end. Job's reward far exceeded his losses.

Psa 145:20 The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

This writer was bedridden for six months at the time he was twelve years old. He was not allowed to leave the bedroom other than to eat meals and use the bathroom. Could God use a situation like that to advance His cause on earth. Most certainly he could and did. One of the things which took place at that time was the visit of an older friend who embarrassed me by kneeling at the side of my bed and offering a prayer on my behalf. I recall meditating upon what he had done after he left. He made a very strong impression on a young lad who later preached the Word of God. That visit was very likely a part of God's way of preserving one whom He loved and wished to use in the future. I thank Him for loving me.

Yet there is another side to the verse being discussed.



God will destroy those are determined to live in wickedness. We could give examples of cases just as impressive here as those one just described. God will use you if you will allow it. He will destroy you if you persist in fighting against Him.

Psa 145:21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

Can the present reader echo the words of this verse? We are told that certain Hebrew worshipers are expected to memorize this entire psalm and repeat it three times each day. Praise and bless God's Holy name in this life. Then you will be able to join in with the heavenly chorus which lives with praise on their lips for ever and ever.

Chapter 146

The entire book of Psalms concludes with five of what are termed “Hallelujah” psalms. The word means “Praise ye the Lord.” The present psalm begins with that word and also concludes with that same word.

There is an abrupt change from the majority of those which make up most of the book. The sadness has nearly disappeared. The attacks from enemies has taken a far less prominent place.

There is a joy and gladness which lifts the soul of the reader, and most certainly lifted the spirits of those who first read it in the past. It points out the folly of placing one’s trust in the wisdom and power of men, and the wisdom of serving and glorifying the original source of eternal life.

**Psa 146:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD,
O my soul.**

When the Bible speaks of the soul as it does in this verse, it refers to the entire depths of one’s being. Sometimes it is stated as the whole heart, soul, mind and strength.

This present writer once received a letter from an atheist who had heard him make a statement about the desirability of being in heaven in eternity. The unbeliever said he did not wish to flitter and flutter around the throne of God for ever and ever. He could hardly think of a more boring way to use his potential than to praise God without interruption.

I must whole heartedly reject his line of reasoning. The praise of God is far more than flittering and fluttering around. It is certainly true that one praises God through the joy of singing and testifying to others of the greatness of the God of heaven. But, it is also true that one praises and honors Him by obeying His will. There are

responsibilities which those who have proven themselves faithful on earth will be assigned in eternity. It is highly possible that the reason they have not been spelled out for us in the Bible is that as mortals here on earth we are incapable of understanding their spiritual nature.

Psa 146:2 While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

Some of God's saints have wonderful voices. Others do not. One may have a fine voice at the age of thirty, and find that at the age of seventy he or she can no longer reach the highest or lowest notes of the hymn. Some may be handicapped to the extent that they cannot speak an understandable word. This does not mean they cannot sing praise to the Lord. They can still make melody in the heart. Let them take pleasure in doing so.

Then when this life is replaced with that which is eternal in heaven, the praises may flow forth freely.

Psa 146:3 Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

One of the basic principles of godliness is that one help his fellowman. How then can God make the statement that we are not to put our trust in others because they can offer no help?

The answer is that the help mentioned here is the help which lasts forever. The only way that humans can offer that kind of help is in passing on the Word of God to those who need it. There is no prince among men who is powerful enough to guarantee eternal salvation, apart from the obedience to God's instructions.

Jesus is at times considered to be the "Son of man." As the term is used in this verse, it is not talking about

Christ. It is speaking of mortal humans. Jesus had a Divine Father, though he was born of a human mother. He was not just a son of man. He was also the Son of God. No man can offer that which the Spirit of God can provide.

There are many examples of the reason for distrusting princes. If one wishes a list, we have Herod, Cyrus, Caesar and others who either failed to respond in time of need, or persistently opposed the servants of the Lord.

Psa 146:4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

It is true that when die, their bodies return to the dust from which they came. But, it is also true that the spirits return to God. There is some type of consciousness between death and the resurrection. (See Luke 16:20-26).

Luk 16:20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

Luk 16:21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

Luk 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

Luk 16:23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Luk 16:24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

Luk 16:25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Luk 16:26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from

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*hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.*

Does this mean that judgment occurs for an individual before the time of the general resurrection? One of the complicating factors in understanding this puzzle is the difference between time and eternity. We live on earth in time. Eternity includes past, present and future.

**Psa 146:5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God:**

The God of Jacob is the same as that of Abraham and Isaac, all of which received the promise of One who would come to offer salvation to men.

**Psa 146:6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:**

He is the same God who made heaven and earth and all that is in them. He has made the promise given to the patriarchs, and He has the willingness and the ability to see that the promise is kept.

**Psa 146:7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:**

He is the God who knows of the discomfort of the oppressed. He will see that justice is done, either in this world or the next.

He gives food to the hungry. His statement is, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." We can safely apply this verse to both physical stomachs and starved souls.

**Psa 146:8 The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:**

It is interesting that there is no direct reference to the opening of blind eyes in the Old Testament. This only underlines the miracles of the Son of God. Yes, He caused the physically blind to see, but He was even more concerned about those who are spiritually blind and cannot see afar off.

**Psa 146:9 The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.**

The strangers were not simply those with whom one was not acquainted. They were often in the same class as the widows and orphans who were in desperate need of daily nourishment. Sometimes directly, and sometimes through hands of His faithful children, God has given relief to the poor and needy.

In contrast, He is not in sympathy with the cause of the wicked. Instead of helping them, He overturns their plans, leaving them perhaps rich in this world's goods, but poverty stricken when it comes to eternal joy. Some of the most prosperous of men who lay on their death beds pathetically confessed that their lives had been wasted. Now they had no hope.

**Psa 146:10 The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.**

Zion was the location of the tabernacle and the temple in times of old. Today Zion is the church of the Living God. He shall reign until every generation of mortal men has passed. It is He who deserves all the praise and honor which we can offer Him. We can only wish that we had understood Him more completely, and obeyed Him more fully.

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Chapter 147

These last five psalms are composed of nearly pure praise. It has been remarked that the vast majority of the hymns which are sung in worship services are instructions for praise rather than actual praise. Take for example the hymn titled “Fear not, Little Flock”, is intended to cause men to lean upon the Lord in order that their souls may be whiter than snow. In contrast, the hymn titled “Holy, Holy, Holy”, is a song of pure praise.

This psalm was probably written at the time of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem after the Jews returned from captivity under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. There was great happiness as a result of coming back to the land of Judea from which they had been separated for many long years. The author is not known.

Psa 147:1 Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.

It should never be a chore to sing praise to our God. We must admit that there are times when hearts are too heavy to open the mouth in joyful exultation, but under most conditions it should be both pleasant and a natural part of Christian fellowship.

Does this mean whistling or humming such praises is forbidden? We have heard the saying that, “Whistling girls and crowing hens always come to some bad end.” This writer recalls with great happiness the opportunity of hearing a very godly woman whose heart was so full of love for the Lord that it would often break out in low whistling or light humming of the hymns she carried with her as she cooked meals and washed clothes.

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**Psa 147:2 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.**

This is one of the verses which lead us to conclude that the present psalm was written at the time of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem upon return from captivity.

This verse introduces a main theme of the psalm. God has loving concern for those who are downtrodden but who are ready to call out sincerely for His help. Israel had been thoroughly chastised by the bondage they had endured. God cared enough to bring them back to their beloved city of Jerusalem. They were thankful for what He had done.

**Psa 147:3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.**

There are numerous situations which can cause broken hearts. Loved ones may be lost. Possessions may be stolen. In the present case the broken hearts were a result of having seen the ruins of the city and the realization that if they had not sinned through participating in the idolatry of the heathen with whom they had intermarried, this would not have happened.

Earthly physicians may possibly cure the physical heart. Only God can heal a heart which has been scarred with sin.

**Psa 147:4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.**

Just how much can God perceive concerning the needs of men? If He is able to number the stars and if He is able to know of every sparrow that falls, He is capable of



knowing every need of every man or woman in the whole of creation.

It would be quite a feat to number and name every star. With the aid of present day telescopes it has been estimated that the number of stars which can be seen reaches as much as ten million. This writer, when just a lad decided to see if he could count to one million. Needless to say he did not succeed. If one counted continuously at the rate of one count per second for eight hours each day, he would reach one hundred million in about ten years; that is, he would if he did not go completely insane at the end of the first week!

In addition, we have no idea how many stars lie outside the range of our finest telescopes. The God we worship knows and could name every one.

**Psa 147:5 Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.**

This is truly a valid conclusion after considering the information just seen. The power and the understand of Jehovah are unlimited.

**Psa 147:6 The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.**

With such a God, we have no doubt that He can bring down the most haughty of the wicked, and lift up the most helpless of the humble. He has promised that such will be the case if the haughty do not repent, and the humble do reach out for His mercy.

**Psa 147:7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:**

**Psa 147:8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds,**

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who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

The use of the harp was pleasing to the Lord in the time this psalm was penned. He also tells us in the book of Revelation that harps will be found in heaven. He does not tell Christians during the new testament age to use such instruments. He does specify that they are to make melody in the heart.

Psa 147:9 He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

The robins in your front yard have food to eat. The ravens are meat eaters. They also have food. Animals of every sort have such provisions. Man lives in a physical body which requires a variety of meat, vegetables, fruit, etc. They are all available. They did not arrive through the minds of men. Their original source is the mighty hand of the Lord.

Psa 147:10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

Men depend upon the strength of horses in both war and agriculture. They take much pride in these animals. They also praise the physical appearance of great athletes and handsome models. God care much more for the spiritual attractiveness of those who worship Him. All of us have seen handicapped persons who were examples of faith and godly character. Such may be looked upon with pity be men. It is not so with God.

Psa 147:11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

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Those of whom God is proud are those who show respect for His commandments, and who realize their needs can be filled by His mercy and grace. Fear without hope is petrifying. Hope without fear is but a nightmare.

**Psa 147:12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.**

**Psa 147:13 For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.**

The Jerusalem of old rising again from the ruins was to bring forth the praises of God's chosen people. As they saw the bars of the gates built back to secure the city from those who hated them, praises should have risen from their throats. When they saw children being born and beginning to grow up healthy, Those praises should have been multiplied.

**Psa 147:14 He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.**

They could look out over the crops in their land and see the abundance of fine food which could use to keep their stomachs full and their lives prosperous. The crops were not just existent. They were of the finest quality.

**Psa 147:15 He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly.**

All of nature is in the hand of the Lord. It was so in the creation, and it continues to be so. The cycles of weather are under His control. To say that His Word runs swiftly is to say there is no force which can stand in the way unless He permits it.

**Psa 147:16 He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.**

**Psa 147:17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?**

Even the snow and ice of the winter season has it's reason. We are told that the snow of the winter has a function in causing nitrogen to accumulate in the soil, providing for the growth of grass and other plant life.

But why is the question added asking who can stand before His cold? The answer may be that God sometimes tests the faith of His servants, as He did in the case of Job. The land of Judea is very hot in the summer season and can also be very cold in the winter. Sizable numbers of persons have been known to perish from the cold in a single winter in that land.

**Psa 147:18 He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.**

When the time is right, at the command of God the ice and snow melt and the spring rains begin to fall. The streams flow freely. The vegetation turns from brown to green.

**Psa 147:19 He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.**

No nation on earth has had the opportunities that Israel has had. The physical descendants of Jacob carried the promise and the law down through the centuries. They were to be the channel through which the new covenant would be presented to every nation on the face of the earth.

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Today the church is the Israel of God. It also is charged with the spread of His will unto others. His statutes and judgments must be made known. In the judgment all nations will be examined and judged by their response to the pattern of life which has been laid out before men by His Word.

Psa 147:20 He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

How much Israel should have glorified the Maker of all things! He had blessed them with uncountable blessings. The same can be said of God's kingdom today. Who is it that can truly "Count his many blessings?" Yes, praise ye the Lord!

Chapter 148

Burton Coffman, in his commentary on Psalms says this psalm is so overwhelmingly clear that it needs no comments to assist the reader in understanding it. We feel much the same way about it, but feel that a minimum of remarks are in order.

The psalm calls for everything in existence, from the highest heavens to the dust of the earth, to unite in one grand united offering of praise to the Most High. The chapter is the inspiration for the hymn written by William J. Kirkpatrick entitled, *Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah*. The majority of Christians throughout the earth could sing the song without the book.

Psa 148:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

The word “praise” is used three times in this first verse, then nine more times within the fourteen verses of this psalm.

There is nothing higher the Jehovah. He is infinite. All else had a beginning and is subject to Him.

Psa 148:2 Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

One angel was capable of destroying an entire Assyrian army in a single night, yet the Lord has authority over ten thousand times ten thousand of them.

Psa 148:3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

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Moving to the lesser heaven where the sun, moon and stars are located, they are also to join in the praise. Can they make an audible cry? If not, they cry out of His glory through the wonder of space, time and matter.

**Psa 148:4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.**

**Psa 148:5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.**

The apostle Paul said at one time that he had been caught up into the third heaven. Supposedly this was the site of God's throne. The waters that are above the heavens indicates that the word "heavens" here in the plural, means the heavens below the upper levels of the atmosphere where the clouds contain water vapor.

**Psa 148:6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.**

Not only did the Lord create these heavens; He sustains them until time ends.

**Psa 148:7 Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:**

The word "dragons" is not to be taken as a reference to the mythical beasts that the brave knights were said to have slain. These dragons are the dangerous animals which terrify men. The Devil is associated with the word "serpent" both in Genesis and numerous times in the book of Revelation.

The most powerful beasts of the sea are commanded to offer praise to the only True God. Thus that which has

life, above the earth, on the earth and in the depths of the sea is under obligation to acknowledge the superiority of Jehovah the Lord.

**Psa 148:8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:**

**Psa 148:9 Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:**

**Psa 148:10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:**

God has control of the weather patterns. The highest mountains and the lower hills do not have life, but they magnify and praise the Creator who designed them.

Both plant life and animal life, including the wild and the tame, the ones that fly and the ones that creep on the ground, were made by Him. They give witness to His power and intellect. There is no place where their voice is not heard.

**Psa 148:11 Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:**

There is not a man on earth who does not owe his very existence to the Lord. One can move from pauper to president. Not one of the most powerful on earth would have food, clothing or shelter were it not for that which comes from the divine hand.

**Psa 148:12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:**

**Psa 148:13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.**

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From the babes in arms to the strong and beautiful youths and to the old and wrinkled; all have utter dependence upon Him. That dependence should be acknowledged in glorifying His name.

Psa 148:14 He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

God created all things to give Him glory and praise. That purpose was not selfish. Whenever any object, whether man, animal, plant or mineral, fulfills it's purpose, that will be noted by the eye and the ear of the Lord. Dear reader, you may rest assured that the praise you offer to Jehovah will make you a happier soul, particularly in the life to come.

Chapter 149

This psalm has two divisions. The first five verses invite the saints of the Lord to sing a new song. The last five verses discuss the victory which is to be had over the enemies of God and His faithful.

There are sizable difficulties in determining the time of writing and also the nature of the victory which is promised to the Israel of God. Some think the psalm was written at the time of the entry of Israel into Canaan under the command of Joshua. Others believe it was written after the return from Babylonian captivity when the temple was being rebuilt. Another group feels that it has application to a victory by spiritual Israel (the Church).

Along with the large amount of contention over the above listed differences, there are two great thoughts that must not be lost in the search for the truth. (1) God has given victory after victory to His people in the ages past. (2) God will see that His saints will sing a new song of joy, and the foes of righteousness will be defeated.

Psa 149:1 Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.

As is the case in the last five psalms, we begin with a "Praise ye the Lord."

This praise is to take the form of a new song of joy and thanksgiving for His wondrous miracles, His goodness, His mercy and His justice. The praise discussed in the previous psalm was called for from everything in heaven and earth. This one aims particularly as the congregational worship. It is to be a time of greatest happiness for those who worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Psa 149:2 Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

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**Psa 149:3 Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.**

There was a Zion of old which was a part of the city of Jerusalem where the temple stood. There is a new Zion in the Christian age which is spiritual and extends to the ends of the earth.

There have been earthly kings who fought against everything God planned. The present spiritual King, Jesus Christ, who is the King of kings is One who was willing to die upon the cross to lead His subjects to glory.

If this new King does not deserve the praise of every man, then there is no victory over death and no hope of heaven. Where the timbrel and the harp were used as instruments of praise in Israel of old, the heart and lips are such instruments under Christ.

**Psa 149:4 For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.**

Women like to be beautiful. Men are not as much concerned over their beauty. But, the beauty spoken of here is independent of a fine figure or a smooth complexion. It is that inward beauty with which God adorns the saved. All else fades into the background when the beauty of holiness takes the stage.

In addition to their spiritual beauty, they are given a promise of inheriting the new earth.

**Psa 149:5 Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.**

The joy of those who find victory in the army of salvation will be so great that their praises will flow from their lips both day and night.

**Psa 149:6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;**

They shall move across the field of battle with high praise of the Most High issuing from their mouth and the two edged sword of the Lord in their hand. Their foes will be rendered helpless before them. They have every reason to be confident. If they do not win today, they will win tomorrow or at the last day.

**Psa 149:7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;**

**Psa 149:8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;**

Those who lead the fight against God's spiritual King will be bound by the power of the gospel of Christ. Neither their kings nor their princes will escape the judgment to come. Satan and his angels will find that their forces amount to nearly nothing when they are met by the two edged sword and the blood of the Son of God.

**Psa 149:9 To execute upon them the judgment written: This honor have all the saints. Praise ye Jehovah.**

The judgment written is that which God Himself has declared will be the ultimate fate of the wicked.

Spiritual Israel will have the opportunity to share in the glory of the defeat of the Serpent who has been bent on poisoning God's own from Eden until the end.

**Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah**

*Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah;  
From the heavens praise His name;*

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*Praise Jehovah in the highest;
All His angels praise proclaim.*

*All His hosts together praise Him;
Sun and moon and stars on high;
Praise Him O ye heaven of heavens;
And ye floods above the sky.*

*Let them praises give Jehovah;
They were made at His command;
Them forever He established;
His decree shall ever stand.*

*From the earth, O praise Jehovah;
All ye floods, ye dragons all;
Fire and hail and snow and vapors;
Stormy winds that hear His call.*

*All ye fruitful trees and cedars;
All ye hills and mountains high;
Creeping things and beasts and cattle;
Birds that in the heavens fly.*

*Kings of earth, and all ye people;
Princes great, earth's judges all;
Praise His name young men & children;
Aged men and children small.*

The Chorus

*Let them praises give Jehovah;
For His name alone is high;
And His glory is exalted;
Far above the earth and sky.*

~ William J. Kirkpatrick

Chapter 150

We have come to the last of these five hallelujah psalms, and also to the last psalm of the entire one hundred fifty in the collection. It is a sort of crescendo suitable to close out the book as a whole. It calls for men and women to praise the Lord in every way at their command.

Psa 150:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

We are to praise God in His sanctuary, but where is that sanctuary? Is it the ancient tabernacle? Is it the temple which replaced the tabernacle? What is more likely is that His sanctuary is in the highest of the heavens, for that is where His power is centralized. He exists everywhere and at all times, but the third heaven seems to be special to Him.

Psa 150:2 Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

He is to be praised for His omniscience, His omnipotence, His omnipresence, and His perfect goodness. He is to be praised for creating us, for forgiving us and for guiding us to heaven. Both His actions and His nature call for all of the praise we can offer.

Psa 150:3 Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.

We now have a list of musical instruments which were to be used as accompaniments to the voice in the days of the old testament. There were wind instruments,

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percussion instruments and stringed instruments. Commentary on this list of instruments should not focus upon what the precise characteristics of each instrument were. The emphasis should be upon the fact that God wished for a wide variety of them.

**Psa 150:4 Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.**

**Psa 150:5 Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.**

Just as the Lord's Supper has replaced the feasts of the old testament, and the sword of steel has been replaced by the Sword of the Word of God, the worship which now pleases God includes vocal singing with nothing said in the new testament about musical instruments in worship until they are used in heaven.

**Psa 150:6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.**

Since previously even the vegetable and mineral world were to praise Him, we take this to mean every human is expected to praise and glorify His name.

**HALLELUJAH!**

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