

Supplemental Notes:

*The Book
of
Psalms*

*compiled
by
Chuck Missler*

Audio Listing

Session 1: Introduction and Psalms 1 - 2

Session 2: Psalms 3 - 10

Session 3: Psalms 11 - 18

Session 4: Psalms 19 - 21

Session 5: Psalms 22 - 24

Session 6: Psalms 25 - 30

Session 7: Psalms 31 - 36

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Acknowledgments

These notes have been assembled from speaking notes and related materials which had been compiled from a number of classic and contemporary commentaries and other sources detailed in the bibliography, as well as other articles and publications of Koinonia House. While we have attempted to include relevant endnotes and other references, we apologize for any errors or oversights.

The complete recordings of the sessions, as well as supporting diagrams, maps, etc., are also available in various audiovisual formats from the publisher.

Audio Listing

Session 9: Psalms 42 - 48

Session 10: Psalms 49 - 51

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Session 12: Psalms 56 - 60

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Audio Listing

Session 17: Psalms 90 - 100

Session 18: Psalms 101 - 106

Session 19: Psalms 107 - 118

Session 20: Psalm 119 (Pt. 1)

Session 21: Psalms 119 (Pt. 2)

Session 22: Psalms 120 - 134

Session 23: Psalms 135 - 144

Session 24: Psalms 145 - 150 and Review

The Book of Psalms Session 1

Psalms 1 - 2

Introduction

Psalms is Israel's hymnal; it is poetry laced with strong theology. In Hebrew, this book is called *Tehillim* = "Praises." There are 55 psalms addressed to "the chief musician." [Greek: *psalmoi*, "a poem to be sung to a stringed instrument" or *psaltar*, for harp or stringed instrument.]

History instructs; Law teaches; prophecy announces, rebukes, chastens; morality persuades. Psalms is the medicine and succor for the comfort and encouragement of us all. They are written to the individual—all of us, individually. They are musical. Odes = poems to be set to music; lyrics = poems intended for lyre or harp.

The Nature of Poetry

Phonetic Design: Rhyme is the parallelism of sound; rhythm is the parallelism of time.

Conceptual Design: The Parallelism of Ideas

- Comparative; to illuminate.
- Contrastive; antithetic.
- Completive; synthetic.

Selah: a pause to connect ideas.

Parallelism

1) **Synonymous parallelism** is where the second line restates the first: *LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?* (Ps 15:1).

2) **Antithetic parallelism** is just the opposite—the lines are in contrast to each other: *For evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth* (Ps 37:9).

3) **Synthetic parallelism** is where each successive line expands the meaning: *The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether* (Ps 19:8,9).

Sources

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| 73 | David |
| 12 | Asaph, Head of David's choir |
| 12 | Sons of Korah |
| 2 | Solomon |
| 1 | Heman, the Ezrahite |
| 1 | Ethan, the Ezrahite |
| 1 | Moses |
| <u>48</u> | Anonymous |
| 150 | |

A "Pentateuch" of Psalms

There are five divisions, each ending with a benediction: 1 - 41, 42 - 72, 73 - 89, 90 - 106, 107 - 150.

| | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1) | Genesis | About Man | 1 - 41 |
| 2) | Exodus | Deliverance | 42 - 72 |
| 3) | Leviticus | Sanctuary | 73 - 89 |
| 4) | Numbers | Unrest; Wandering | 90 - 106 |
| 5) | Deuteronomy | Word of the Lord | 107 - 150 |

Genesis Section: Psalms 1- 41

- Man in View: *in a state of blessedness, fall, and recovery*
- Perfect Man (Last Adam) — Psalm 1
- Rebellious Man — Psalm 2
- Perfect Man Rejected — Psalm 3
- Conflict between Seed of Woman & Serpent — Psalm 4
- Perfect Man in Midst of Enemies — Psalm 5
- Perfect Man in Midst of Chastisement (Bruising Heel) — Psalm 6
- Perfect Man in Midst of False Witnesses — Psalm 7
- Repair of Man Comes through Man (Bruising Head) — Psalm 8
- Enemy and Antichrist Conflict; Final Deliverance—Psalms 9-15
- Christ in Midst of His People Sanctifying Them to God — Psalms 16-41

Inscriptions

| | |
|----|-------------------------|
| 34 | Without inscriptions |
| 52 | Simple Inscriptions |
| 14 | Historical Inscriptions |

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| 4 | Inscription denoting purpose |
| 15 | "Songs of Degrees" |
| <u>31</u> | Special inscriptions |
| 150 | |

Simple = "A psalm of David"; "A psalm of Asaph," etc.
 Historical = "A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom, his son"
 Purpose = "for the sabbath day" etc.
 "Degrees" = ["Steps" on the Temple? ...clues from Hezekiah]
 Special = Musical instructions, etc.

Special Terms

- *Aiielech-Shahar* The hind of the morning; dawn
- *Alamot* The maidens' choir
- *Al-Tashchith* Destroy not
- *Gittith* Winepresses (Autumn)
- *Jeduthun* Praise-giver (1 of 3 directors of worship)
- *Jonath-Elem-Rechokim* Dove of distant woods (of David in flight)
- *Mahalath* The Great Dancing
- *Maschi* Instruction; understanding
- *Michtam* Engraven; (emphasized; permanent)
- *Muth-labbeyn* Death of the Champion (Should be at end of Psalm 8, not at the beginning of Psalm 9)
- *Neginoth* Stringed Instruments
- *Nehiloth* Inheritances
- *Sheminith* 8th group or division
- *Shiggaion* A crying aloud (grief or joy)
- *Shoshannim* Lilies (Springtime)

Habakkuk's Psalm

- The Superscription (Hab 3:1): "A Prayer of Habakkuk the Prophet, upon *Shigionoth*" (*Shigionoth*: A crying aloud, either grief or joy).
- The Psalm itself (Hab 3:2-19).
- The Subscription (Hab 3:19): "To the Chief Musician upon *Neginoth*" (Stringed instruments).

Hezekiah's Psalm

- The Superscription (Isa 38:9): "The writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness"
- The Psalm itself (Isa 38:10-20).
- The Subscription (Isa 38:20): "Therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, all the days of our life, in the house of YHWH." Note the plural "songs" in the subscription. The occasion was his recovery (superscription).

Other Psalm Groupings

- Penitential Psalms 6, 32,38, 39, 51,102,143
- Hallelujah Psalms 106, 111, 112, 113, 135, 146-150
- Imprecatory Psalms 35, 57, 59, 69, 83, 109, 137, et al
- Imprecatory psalms: Don't confuse forgiving with condoning; act vs. attitude; cf. Paul on Alexander the coppersmith (2 Tim 4:14); Gal 1:8,9, etc. 1st mention: David, Psalm 5:10 "Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels. Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee."
- Acrostic Psalms 9, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145
- Acrostic Psalm 119: 22 sections (for each Hebrew letter); each section of 16 lines in 8 couplets, each couplet beginning with same letter of the Hebrew alphabet

A Caveat for our Souls

- Chewing the cud: The key to (the "clean") sacrifices.
- Analysis paralysis: Can blindfold our souls to the message.
- Prayerful absorption vs. intellectual dissection: A gateway to His presence.

The Book of Psalms

Psalm 1

Contrast: Two Men, Two Ways, Two Destinies

God sees but two persons in this world: the godly, who are "in Christ," and the ungodly, who are "in Adam." See 1 Cor 15:22, 49. Let us look at these two persons.

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

The Counsel of the Ungodly

- (Our spiritual life is a "walk") Eph 4:1,17; 5:2,8,15.
- Who are the ungodly? Those who live as if God doesn't exist.
- It is possible for a believer to walk "in the darkness," outside the will of God? (1 Jn 1:5-7).
- This can have both personal and family implications (should a Christian school be "accredited"?)

The Way of Sinners

- Sin means to "miss the mark." They don't quite live as they should.
- "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (Prov 14:12; 16:12).
- "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts..." (Isa 55:7).

The Seat of the Scornful

Now this is the negative side. This is what the happy man does *not* do. In the next verse we see what the happy man *does* do.

- The scorners are atheists, and in denial.
- They are *willingly ignorant*. They are even blind towards intelligent design, which they ascribe to randomness.
- "Surely He scorneth the scorners: but He giveth grace unto the lowly" (Prov 3:34).

- 2] But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.
- 3] And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

"Chewing the cud"

- *Meditate* pictures a cow chewing her cud: Meditation is to the soul what "digestion" is to the body.
- Joy in the Word of God (Cf. Jer 15:16, Ezek 3:3, & Rev 10:9). The Bible is the most thrilling Book. It's not a burden; it is not boring!

Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Jeremiah 15:16

And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.

Ezekiel 3:3

And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter; but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

Revelation 10:9

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Jeremiah 17:7,8

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

Psalms 92:12-14

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John 7:37-39

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

The Chaff

The ungodly are compared to chaff: they have no roots; they are blown with the wind; they are useless to the plans of God. They are neither beautiful nor fruitful. God is a harvester, visiting the threshing floor and separating the grain from the chaff (Mt 3:10-12; Ps 35:5; Job 21:18).

What a tragedy for people to spend their whole life on earth as chaff and, as far as eternal things are concerned, amount to nothing.

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Matthew 3:10-12

Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.

Psalms 35:5

They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away.

Job 21:18

The Roots Are the Key

When Christians cease to bear fruit, it is because something has happened to the roots (Mk 11:12-13, 20; Lk 13:6-9).

And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it. And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

Mark 11:13, 14, 20

He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

Luke 13:6-9

What kind of fruit are we to bear? (Rom 1:13; 6:22; Gal 5:22,23; Heb 13:15; Col 1:10).

Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

Romans 1:13

“Let” = hindered; prevented.

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Romans 6:22, 23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
Galatians 5:22, 23

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.
Hebrews 13:15

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;
Colossians 1:10

- 5] Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
6] For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Is There a Future Judgment?

Verse 5 informs us that there is: For the believer in Christ, there is no judgment of sin (Jn 5:24; Rom 8:1); for the unbeliever, there is “a fearful looking for of judgment” (Heb 10:27; Rev 20:11-15). When the books are opened, these individuals will be flung to their knees in confession of sin and of the truth of God’s Word and God’s Son (Phil 2:9-11). These ungodly people will never be allowed to enter the heavenly congregation of the righteous, even though on earth they might have been members of religious groups (Mt 7:21–23). When v. 5 says the wicked “shall not stand” in the judgment, it does not mean they will be absent; rather, it means they will not be able to endure the judgment.

Two People

Two men, two ways, two destinies

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.

1 Corinthians 15:21-23

Which one do *you* want to follow? *How* do you go about it?

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Joshua 1:8

The Book of Psalms Psalm 2

Christ in the Psalms

Jesus said that the psalms spoke about Him (Lk 24:44).

| | | |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ps 22 | The Crucified Savior | |
| Ps 23 | The Shepherd | Cf. Jn 10 |
| Ps 40:6-8 | The Sacrifice | Cf. Heb 10:1-10 |
| Ps 110 | The High Priest | Cf. Heb 7:17-21 |
| Ps 118:22,23 | The Stone | Cf. Mt 21:42 |
| Ps 2 | The Coming King | Cf. Acts 4:25,26; 13:33 |

The Messianic Psalms

The Book of Psalms is quoted in the NT more than any other book in OT (even more than Isaiah). Christ’s birth, betrayal, agony, death, resurrection, ascension, coming again in glory, and His worldwide reign—all are pictured in inspired vividness. They constitute irrefutable testimony to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. (Messianic details in Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 87, 89, 102, 110, 118, et al.).

- His Person
 - Son of God 2:7; 45:6,7; 102:25,27
 - Son of Man 8:4-6; etc.
 - Son of David 139:3,4,27,29
- His Offices
 - Prophet 22:22, 25; 40:9,10
 - Priest 110:4
 - King 2; 24; 72; etc.
- To speak in parables 78:2
- Will calm the storm 89:10
- To be despised 2:6; 69:19-22
- To be rejected 118:22
- To be mocked 22:7-8; 89:51-52
- To be whipped 129:3

- To be derided 69:8, 20
- Impaled on a cross 22:ff
 - Thirsty 22:16
 - Given wine mixed with gall 69:20-22
 - Lots cast for his garments 22:18-19
 - Not a bone to be broken 34:21
- To rise from the dead 16:10
- To Ascend to heaven 68:19
- At the right hand of God 110:1; 80:17
- Is the High Priest 110:4
- Will judge the nations 89:3-5
- Reign to be eternal 89:35-37
- Is the Son of God 2:7
- Is the Son of David 110:1 (Mt 22:42-45)
- People to sing Hosanna to him 118:25-26
- Blessed forever 45:1-4, 8, 18
- Will come in glory in last days 102:16-23

The Coming Kingdom

- The Coming of the Kingdom Psalm 46
 - thru Tribulation
- The Range of the Kingdom Psalm 47
 - “all the earth”
- The Center of the Kingdom Psalm 48
 - “Zion”

Psalm 2: The Cosmic War

- The Voice of the Nations 2:1-3
- The Voice of the Father 2:4-6
- The Voice of the Son 2:7-9
- The Voice of the Spirit 2:10-12

The Voice of the Nations (Ps 2:1-3)

- 1] Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?
- 2] The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, “Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.”

(The Holy Spirit is speaking of the kings of the earth...)

“...anointed”: Here it means “Messiah”—that is what it is in Hebrew; in the Greek, *Christos*; in English, “Christ.”

When did this movement begin? Over in the fourth chapter of the Book of Acts, when the first persecution broke out against the church, we’re told that the apostles, Peter and John, after they had been threatened, returned back to the church to give their report. Here is this movement, beginning when Pilate joined up with the religious rulers and Herod in order to put Jesus to death. This is a movement against God and Christ and it is heading for a climax...

And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

Acts 4:24-27

“Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” (Ps 2:2b). What “bands” or “cords”?

- Marriage – Heterosexuality
- Ten Commandments
- The rule of law...The move toward lawlessness... and the man of lawlessness!

The Voice of the Father (Ps 2:4-6)

- 4] He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.
- 5] Then shall He speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure
- 6] Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

(The Father is speaking. His king WILL be set upon the hill of Zion! Another refutation of Amillennialism.)

I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and

a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

Isaiah 45:19-25

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

The Voice of the Son (Ps 2:7-9)

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

The son speaking, quoting the Father...

Resurrection

This verse was quoted by the apostle Paul when he preached in Antioch of Pisidia. This was one of his greatest sermons; and he was talking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Acts 13:33

- 8] Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.
9] Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

"The Rod of Iron"

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Revelation 2:27

And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Revelation 12:5

And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Revelation 19:15, 16

The Voice of the Spirit (Ps 2:10-12)

- 10] Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
11] Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
12] Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

"...kiss": homage (cf. 1 Kgs 19:18; Hosea 13:2).

Unusual is the apparent use of *bar*, an Aramaic word for son. Jerome rendered it, "Give pure (*bar* is a Hebrew word for pure) worship," or "Worship in purity," rather than translating the word as "son."

Psalm 1 began with a beatitude; Psalm 2 ends with one.

- **The Mind (Ps 2:10)**

- "Be wise...be instructed!"
- The "counsel of the ungodly" has led the ungodly astray (Ps 1:1).
- The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God (1 Cor 1:18-31).

- **The Heart (Ps 2:11)**

- "Serve Him!"

- **The Will (Ps 2:12)**

- "Kiss the Son!"
- Reconciled to the world by the Cross (2 Cor 5:14-21).
- Righteousness & Peace (Ps 85:10).
- "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21).

Next Session:

Read (and *meditate* on) Psalms 3 - 10.

The Book of Psalms Session 2

Psalms 3 - 10

Psalms: A Caveat for our Souls

- Chewing the cud: the key to (the “clean”) sacrifices.
- Analysis paralysis: can blindfold our souls to the message.
- Prayerful absorption vs Intellectual dissection: a gateway to His presence.

Psalms 3-7 form a bridge, a stairway between two Messianic psalms. Psalm 2 is the prophetic rejection of God’s anointed, and Psalm 8 is His ultimate victory as Man. In these five psalms we have the record of Israel’s trials, sorrows, confusions, problems, and sins. We also see their confidence in God, the promises of God, and their prayers for deliverance.

Alternative Interpretations

- The *primary* interpretation: the personal experience of David.
- The *direct* application to the Godly remnant in the nation of Israel during the Great Tribulation
- There is also a *general* application to God’s people everywhere at any time in the history of the world: *If we look at the psalms from this point of view, they will become more meaningful to us!*

Historical Background: 2 Samuel 15-18

This psalm came out of the personal experience of David. It tells us what went on in the heart of David when he had to flee from Jerusalem when Absalom, his son, rebelled against him.

He had become an outcast and a fugitive from his own city, Jerusalem, which is called the city of David. He had been driven from the people he ruled. Absalom, his own son, was in rebellion against him and seeking his life. Absalom’s intention was actually to put his father to death. Your heart cannot help but go out to David during this heartbreaking experience.

As David fled, the enemy was on the sidelines cursing him. Abishai, one of his mighty men said, “Let me run a spear through him.” David said, “Oh, no.” The prophet Nathan had told David that God would punish him for his sins:

Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour....

2 Samuel 12:11

Why? Because David had sinned greatly, and he was not going to get away with it. God had forgiven David and restored him, but David had to reap the results of his sin; and it is in his own son’s rebellion that he reaped it.

David’s Family Problems: 2 Samuel 12-14

- Death of Bathsheba’s 1st son.
- Rape of his daughter, Tamar.
- Slaying of his sons: Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.

David’s enemies have increased on all sides; for. “... The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom” (2 Sam 15:13).

Absalom was an attractive young man, a clever politician who promised the people things he would not have been able to deliver. During Absalom’s rebellion there were many others who rose up against David. (2 Sam 15:12,13; 16:7,8; 17:11). He went out of Jerusalem barefoot and weeping, passing over the Kidron. It looked as if there was no help for him at all.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 3

[A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.]

- 1] LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.
- 2] Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

Psalms 3-5 may all fit the events of 2 Samuel 15 -18. (As may Psalms 42, 43, 61-63, 143.)

“Selah”: Used 71 times in Psalms; three in Habakkuk 3.

סֵלָה Selah

It is commonly assumed that this refers to musical instructions; however: *selah* is to connect *subject matter*, not music. It connects the end of one strophe with the beginning of the next; it is the connecting of the two

subjects together—sometimes synthetic; sometimes antithetic; concerned with truth, not tunes. The word *selah* comes from two roots:

- If derived from *salah*, “to pause,” it is not the instruments of music which are to pause while voices continue to sing; but it is our hearts which are to pause and to note the connection of precious truths.
- If derived from *salal*, “to lift up,” it is not the instruments which are to lift up their sound in louder degree, but our hearts which are to be lifted up to consider more solemnly the two truths which are thus connected.

- 3] But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.
4] I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

He affirms his trust in God, nevertheless. God was his “shield.” He trusted God’s promises (2 Sam 7). God would “lift up his head” and restore him to his throne (Ps 27:6; 2 Sam 15:30). God was still on His throne!

- 5] I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.
6] I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.

The Lord works on our behalf even when we sleep (Ps 121:3,4; 127:2). This is a morning psalm; Psalm 4 is an evening psalm on the same events (Ps 4:8). Psalm 5 may fit this as well (Ps 5:3, 8-10).

Mornings are Special

- Abraham Gen 19:27; 21:14; 22:3
- Moses Ex 24:4; 34:4
- Joshua Josh 2:1; 6:12; 7:16; 8:10
- Samuel 1 Sam 15:12
- Job Job 1:5
- Our Lord Mark 1:35

- 7] Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.
8] Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

Some translations view this as a prayer in both the present and future tense. [His enemies are seen as a pack of animals “who needed their teeth broken.”] Jonah quoted verse 8 in the fish (Jonah 2:9); David (having used brilliance in his opposing of Absalom) refused to take any credit.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 4

[To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David.]

Neginoth (songs with instrumental accompaniment) is found in the titles of 53 psalms; rendered “stringed instruments,” Hab 3:19). The “chief musician on Neginoth” is the lead of that part of the temple choir which played on stringed instruments.

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

“enlarged”: רָחַב *rachab* = set in a broad place.

“distressed”: צָרָה *tsar* = pressed into a corner; a tight place.

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

“leasing”: כָּזָבָה *kazab* = a lie, untruth, falsehood, deceptive thing. The rebels were not following the God-appointed leader; they were victims of lies and deceit.

- 3] But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.
4] Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.
5] Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.
6] There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.
7] Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.
8] I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

“peace”: שְׁלוֹמִים *shalom* = peace, completeness, soundness, welfare, health, prosperity, adequacy for life.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 5

[To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.
2] Harken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.
3] My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

This may also fit the events of Psalm 3 & 4. (cf. Ps 5:3, 8-10). In any case, it suggests a flight from Jerusalem (vv.4-6, 9-10). It, too, is a morning psalm.

Preparation

אַרַךְ *arak* “direct”: to arrange, set or put or lay in order, prepare, order, ordain, handle, furnish.

- Arranging sacrifices on the altar Lev 1:8
- Arranging wood on an altar Gen 22:9
- Placing shewbread in Tabernacle Lev 24:8
- Setting meal before guests Ps 23:5
- A soldier ready to receive orders

When you are to meet a top person, you don’t go unprepared...

- 4] For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.
- 5] The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.
- 6] Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

There is no such thing as “abstract evil,” except in dictionaries and philosophy books. Evil is not an abstraction: it is a terrible force, wrecking lives and capturing people for hell.

- 7] But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.
- 8] Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

David prayed for guidance...

- 9] For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.
- 10] Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

David prayed for justice. Anyone who resents this kind of praying can’t pray “Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

If we are troubled by this, perhaps we don’t hate sin enough to get upset at the wickedness and godlessness around us. We have gotten too used to the darkness...

Imprecatory Psalms (Ps 6, 12, 35, 37, 58,59, 69, 79, 83, 109, 139, 140)

- Enemies were rebels against the Lord.
- The Covenant People were protected under conditions of obedience (Lev 26, Deut 27-29; Cf. Gen 12:2,3).
- A battle between good and evil has been going on since Genesis 3—and we can’t remain neutral in this battle

Compare:

- Jeremiah (Jer 11:18f; 15:15; 17:18; 18:19f; 20:11f);
- John the Baptist (Mt 3);
- Jesus (Mt 23);
- Martyrs in heaven (Rev 6:9-11);

- 10] But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.
- 11] For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 6

[To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.]

Sheminith: “8th” = an octave?

- 1] O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.
- 2] Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.
- 3] My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

“vexed” = 17th century more vehement: “faint, weak, troubled, terrified.”

“How Long?” This phrase shows up 16 times in the Psalms...

Penitential Psalms (Ps 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143)

- Suffering under God’s discipline.
- Our choices (Heb 12): despise it; resist it; collapse under it; or accept it and submit and pray that the lessons not be wasted
- And that it is “undeserved” (Mt 5:11,12 ; 1 Pet 3:13-17).

- 4] Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies’ sake.
- 5] For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

The Old Testament view of afterlife was limited (2 Tim 1:10).

- 6] I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.
- 7] Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.
- 8] Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

“Depart from me” Cf. Mt 7:23, Lk 13:27: seems quite final.

- 9] The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.
- 10] Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 7

[Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.]

Cush the Benjaminite was among evil men from King Saul’s tribe who spied and spread vicious rumors for pay and approval (2 Sam 22-24, 26).

Shiggaion: only here and in Hab 3:1: “to wander, cry aloud.”

- 1] O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:
- 2] Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.
- 3] O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;
- 4] If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)
- 5] Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.

David had two opportunities to kill Saul and refused to do so (1 Sam 24, 26): no personal malice...

- 6] Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded.
- 7] So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.
- 8] The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.
- 9] Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.
- 10] My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

- 11] God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.
- 12] If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

Only the Lord can truly vindicate: Rom 12:17-21.

- 13] He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.
- 14] Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.
- 15] He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.
- 16] His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.
- 17] I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

יהוה עליון = YHVH El Elyon, The Most High.

Retributive Justice

- Saul wanted to kill David; *He died by his own sword.*
- Pharaoh ordered male babies drowned in the Nile; *His army drowned in the Red Sea*
- Haman built gallows to hang Mordecai; *Haman himself was hung on it.*

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 8

[To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.]

Gittith: a winepress. Possibly a reference to a vintage tune. This is one of the “Nature” Psalms (Ps 8, 19, 29, 65, 104). It is also a Messianic Psalm (Ps 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 87, 89, 102, 110, 118, et al.) and is quoted as such in Mt 21:16; Heb 2:6-8; 1 Cor 15:27; and Eph 1:22.

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

“Our Lord”: a three-fold profession: One God; created all people; His people (the Jews) in particular are “the sheep of his pasture” (cf. Ps 135:5; 147:5)

- 2] Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

Quoted by Christ after cleansing the Temple (Mt 21:16). The cry of baby Moses brought Egypt to her knees; the baby Samuel brought David to the throne; a babe in Bethlehem brought salvation to the world.

3] When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

If the stars come out only once in a century, people would gaze at them all night.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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

Answered in the Last Adam. [Enosh & Adomah: weak & earth-born.]

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

Not little lower than the animals (“science”): little lower than God!

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

7] All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

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

Dominion was lost by the first Adam; regained by the Last Adam!

Matthew Fontaine Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury was born in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, in 1806. As an avid Bible reader, he was struck by the reference in Psalm 8 to “the paths of the seas (Ps 8:8).” He also noticed that Isaiah wrote of a “path through the mighty waters (Isa 43:16).” The pursuit of this enigma became Maury’s lifetime quest.

He entered the Navy in 1825 as a midshipman. By 1842 he was placed in charge of the Depot of Charts and Instruments, out of which grew the U.S. Naval Observatory and Hydrographic Office. To gather information on maritime winds and currents, Maury distributed to ship captains specially prepared logbooks from which he compiled pilot charts, enabling him to shorten the time of sea voyages. In 1848 he published maps of the main wind fields of the Earth. Maury was ultimately able to produce charts of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, a profile of the Atlantic seabed, and the first modern oceanographic text. He is internationally recognized as the “Father of Oceanography,” and Maury Hall at the U.S. Naval Academy is named in his honor. All because of a *remez*, a hint of something deeper, in a verse of the Psalms.

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

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Hebrews 1:13-14

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Romans 8:29

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? 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: 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. 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.

Hebrews 2:6-9

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians 15:27-28

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Ephesians 1:20-23

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:1-2

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 9

[To the chief Musician upon Muthlabben, A Psalm of David.]

Muth-labben: (muth-le bey) death to the one coming between (1 Sam 17:4, 23: Goliath “man between two hosts” = “champion”).

Some believe it should be at end of Psalm 8, not at the beginning of Psalm 9.

- 1] I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.
- 2] I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.
- 3] When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

“...El Elyon”: same name Abraham used after the victory over the Kings Gen 14.

- 4] For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.
- 5] Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.
- 6] O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.
- 7] But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

Justice and judgment: parallel passage, Isaiah 25:1-5. To blot out name (Ex 17:14; Deut 25:19; 1 Sam 15; Cf. Deut 9:14; 25:19; 29:20).

- 8] And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.
- 9] The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.
- 10] And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.
- 11] Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

Paul quotes verse 8 on Mars Hill in Athens: Acts 17:31. Times of trouble (verse 9) = “times of extremity.”

- 12] When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.
- 13] Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:
- 14] That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

Inquisition for blood: an official investigation for guilt.

- 15] The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.
- 16] The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.
- 17] The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

“Higgaion” could mean meditation; or a solemn sound in accompaniment.

- 18] For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.
- 19] Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.
- 20] Put them in fear, O LORD: that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah.

Man = enosh: weak, frail man. Something sinners won’t admit, as we’ll see in Psalm 10.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 10

The problem in Psalm 9 is the enemy invading from without; while the problem in Psalm 10 is the enemy within.

- 1] Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?

The age-old paradox: why do the wicked prosper? Cf. Job, Jer 14, et al.

- 2] The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.
- 3] For the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.
- 4] The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.
- 5] His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.
- 6] He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.
- 7] His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.
- 8] He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor.
- 9] He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.
- 10] He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.
- 11] He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.

Beliefs of the Wicked

- “There is no God” 10:2-4
- “I shall not be moved” 10:5-7
- “God doesn’t see me” 10:8-11
- “God will not judge me” 10:12-13

- 12] Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.
 13] Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it.

Four Rebuttals (Ps 10:14-17)

- God sees what is going on 10:14
- God Judges sin 10:15
- God is King 10:16
- God defends His people 10:17

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

This answers vv.8-11, that the Lord pays no attention to what the wicked are doing...

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

This answers the false claim of vv.12-13.

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

This answers the false notion of vv.1-4: God rules over all.

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

- 18] To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.

The wicked boast (vv.5-7) that they will not be moved; but God has other plans for “those who dwell on the earth” (the frequent phrase in Revelation!). Romans 8:28, et al.

Next Session

Read (& meditate on): Psalms 11 - 19.

The Book of Psalms Session 3 Psalms 11 - 18

Preview

- Psalms 9 & 10: Satan’s man, characterized by pride, boasting, and self-sufficiency.

- Psalm 11: The testing of the righteous.
- Psalm 12: The godly in the midst of godlessness (and the ultimate godlessness of the Great Tribulation)
- Psalm 13: The plight of God’s people in the Great Tribulation.
- Psalm 14: The depravity of man in the last days, with his atheistic attitude and his rebellious ways.
- Psalm 15: Those who shall enter the kingdom.
- Psalm 16: The Song of the Resurrection.
- Psalm 17: A Prayer of David.
- Psalm 18: A Prayer of Deliverance.
- Psalm 19: The Creation.

David’s Crises

- David was often in danger:
 - In the court of Saul (1 Sam 19:1);
 - In the wilderness being chased by Saul;
 - During the rebellion of Absalom.
- Wise moves:
 - He hid in the wilderness 10 years
 - He abandoned Jerusalem and took refuge over the Jordan
- Here he did not flee his post, but remained on duty, trusting that the Lord would protect him.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 11

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?
- 2] For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.
- 3] If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

“Flee” (verse 1) is in the plural: it refers to David and his court. His advisors told him to flee (as a bird), but he refused. They lacked faith that God would see him through.

“...lo” (look—verse 2): by sight, the threats were visible and real...

“Foundations” (verse 3): Make sure the foundations are right; constant examination (Cf. Rev 2 & 3)...

- 4] The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD’S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

The Lord is still in charge: “try” = testing metals by fire. Our trials work for us, not against us: 1 Cor 4:7-18.

- 5] The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.
- 6] Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.
- 7] For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

To “see His face” implies access (Num 6:22-27).

David’s Imagery for Judgment

- Fire & Brimstone (Gen 19:24; Isa 30:33; Rev 9:17).
- Scorching wind (Ps 18:4-19).
- Poisonous cup (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17,22; Jer 25:15-17; Ezek 38:22; Rev 14:10;16:19; 18:6).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 12

[To the chief Musician upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.
- 2] They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.

The faithful cry out due to the apparent dearth of faithful leaders (1 Kgs 18:22;19:10,18; Isa 57:1; Micah 7:1-7). Double-speak from double hearts! Political correctness...

- 3] The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:
- 4] Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?
- 5] For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

Flattery is manipulation.

- 6] The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.
- 7] Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.
- 8] The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.

His words are pure; flawless; can be relied upon. He exalts His Word even above His Name (Ps 138:2). The things that God abhors have become “exalted” in our entertainments

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 13

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?
- 2] How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

David shares his feelings, his foes, and his faith. “There is one step between me and death” (1 Sam 20:3). “My times are in your hands” (Ps 31:15). Feelings are deceptive and undependable (Jer 17:9).

- 3] Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;
- 4] Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

People might underestimate God, and think He couldn’t fulfill His promises...

- 5] But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.
- 6] I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

“But”: the transition from fear to faith; from questioning to claiming. God’s people live on promises, not explanations. Salvation = Yeshua!

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 14

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.
- 2] The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

The “Practical Atheist”

- Their Proud Attitude Ps 10
- Their Deceitful Words Ps 12
- Their Corrupt Deeds Ps 14
- (Psalm 14 is duplicated in Psalm 53, with two small changes.)

The “Fool”

“Fool”: from a Latin word, “bellows”: suggesting full of hot air. [April 1st is “Atheist’s Day.”]

כְּסִיל *kesyl*: dull, stupid fellow, simpleton, arrogant one;

אֵוִיל *ewiyil*: foolish; of one who despises wisdom; of one who mocks when guilty; one who is quarrelsome, licentious;

נָבָל *nabal*: lacking moral sense.

A man named Nabal was one who refused to help David (1 Sam 25); not necessarily lacking normal intelligence; a lack of moral sense in the heart, not a mental problem in the head.

- 3] They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- 4] Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.
- 5] There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.

Paul quotes this in Romans 3:9-26; all are of a fallen race...willful ignorance = 2 Pet 3:5; Rom 1:18-28. God is the general and refuge of the righteous.

- 6] Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD is his refuge.
- 7] Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

Romans 11:25-31. Thy kingdom come! (“Captivity” = restore the fortunes of...)

Psalm 14 identified two groups: “the workers of iniquity” (Ps 10 & 12) and “the generation of the righteous”—the believing remnant (Mal 3:16-18). Psalm 15 is not a prescription for being saved, but a description of how saved people ought to behave if they would please God and fellowship with Him.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 15

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?
“...dwell”: שָׁכַן *shakan*: to settle down, abide, dwell, tabernacle, reside.

Obedience of the Righteous

Rabbis taught 613 commandments; Psalm 15 brings them down to 11: Cf. Isaiah 33:15,16; Micah 6:8; and, Habakkuk 2:4.

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.

Isaiah 33:15,16

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Micah 6:8

Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

Habakkuk 2:4

- 2] He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

Three Basic Areas of Life

- Blameless Character
- Righteous Conduct
- Truthful Conversation (these 3 covered in verse 2)
- Applied specifically and practically (verses 3-5)
 - Integrity: Blameless Character v. 4
 - Honesty: Righteous Conduct v. 5
 - Sincerity: Truthful Conversation v. 3

- 3] He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.
- 4] In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.
- 5] He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Integrity: “Blameless Character”

- What we are determines what we do or say (Isa 33:14-16; 58:1-12; Jer 7:1-7; Ezek 18:5-9; Hos 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Mt 5:1ff)
- Blameless (not sinless) soundness of character, integrity, complete loyalty to God. Ex: Noah (Gen 6:9) and Abraham (Gen 17:1).

Honesty: “Righteous Conduct”

- David’s “sins in good standing” (v.5).
 - Exorbitant interest (Ex 22:25; 23:7,8; Lev 25:35-38; Deut 23:20)
 - Accepting bribes (Ex 23:8; Deut 10:17,18; 27:25; 2 Chr 19:5-7)
- Politics: “the conduct of public affairs for private advantage”

Sincerity: “Truthful Conversation”

- Truth is the glue that holds society together.
- The *Most Painful Sin*? Gossip! It is a form of betrayal and a direct violation of a commandment (Ex 20:16! cf. Lev 19:16; Pro 11:13; 18:8; 26:22; 20:19; 26:20, 21...). Quietly, its venom does its silent work, undermining confidences, betraying relationships, spreading unseen injustices, invisibly promoting misunderstandings and dis-trust...

...he that doeth these things shall never be moved.

And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master; thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

Mark 12:28-34

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 16 (A Michtam)

All “michtams” end on a happy and triumphant note. [A golden jewel? A special treasure?]

Michtam

- A very personal hymn of joy.
- Matches David’s response to the covenant (2 Sam 7:18-29).

- Messianic: Quoted by: Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2:25-28) and Paul at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:35).

[Michtam of David.]

- 1] Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.
- 2] O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee;
- 3] But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.

Seeking a good relationship...

- 4] Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink of-ferings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.
- 5] The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.
- 6] The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

A good companionship... separation from an inhospitable world...

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

Night school: (nights are plural)

- 8] I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
- 9] Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

The future is your friend when Jesus is your lord.

The Song of Resurrection

- The Life of Christ v.8
- The Death of Christ v.9
- The Resurrection of Christ v.10
- The Ascension of Christ v.11

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

Psalm 16:10 was quoted by Peter (Acts 2:22-31) and Paul (Acts 3:26-39).

Resurrection Body:

- Real and substantial Luke 24:39
- Ingested food Luke 24:36-42
- Appear, disappear Luke 24:28-31
 - Pass through locked doors John 20:19-29

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

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 17

[A Prayer of David.]

- 1] Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.
- 2] Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

One of five psalms identified as “prayers.” (Cf. Hab 3:1, Ps 72:20). Of a dozen words for prayer, this one, *tevilla*, can mean “to intervene.” There are three pressing concerns and three major requests. Each opens with addressing the Lord.

Psalm 17

- Vindication: “Examine me” v. 1-5
 - Protection: “Keep me” v. 6-12
 - Salvation: “Rescue me” v. 13-15
- 3] Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.
 - 4] Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.
 - 5] Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Vindication: “Examine me.” David had a good conscience toward God. No matter what Saul did, he had not spoken evil of the king, etc. (Twice he could have killed him; he never resorted to violence...)

- 6] I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech.
- 7] Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.
- 8] Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

Protection: “Keep me.” Although a master military technician, he knew without God’s help he could not escape (v.7 is reminiscent of the Song of Moses, Ex 15:1-19).

“...apple of the eye” = pupil of the eye (Heb. “little man of the eye”)
“...wings”: mother hen protecting her young; cherubim in the Holy of Holies...

- 9] From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about.
- 10] They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.
- 11] They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

“...fat”: hearts calloused by disobedience; insensitive to others; also, a selfish and worldly lifestyle (Ps 73:1-9; 119:70; Isa 6:10).

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

Twice Saul threw a spear at him; 4 times sent soldiers to capture him...

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

Third request: Salvation: “Rescue me.”

- 14] From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.
- 15] As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Difficult translation (v. 14): David’s enemies would be satisfied only in this life, leaving their wealth to their children; David’s glorious future life and resurrection is portrayed in v. 15.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 18

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said...]

- 1] I will love thee, O LORD, my strength.

רחם racham: to love deeply, have mercy, be compassionate, have tender affection.

Written when David was made king over all of Israel (2 Sam 5, 8, 10)
Another version is in 2 Sam 22; with allusions in Ps 116. This psalm opens (v.1-3) and closes (v.46-50) with a doxology. [Racham is related to the word for “womb”; mother/baby, father/son, Lord/Israel, etc.]

- 2] The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.
- 3] I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.
- 4] The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.
- 5] The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.
- 6] In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.
- 7] Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.
- 8] There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.
- 9] He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet.
- 10] And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.
- 11] He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.
- 12] At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire.
- 13] The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.
- 14] Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.
- 15] Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.
- 16] He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.
- 17] He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.
- 18] They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

Ten years of exile were ended.

- 19] He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.
- 20] The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.
- 21] For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.
- 22] For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.
- 23] I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.

- 24] Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.
- 25] With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;
- 26] With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.
- 27] For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.
- 28] For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.
- 29] For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.
- 30] As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.
- 31] For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?
- 32] It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.
- 33] He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.
- 34] He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.
- 35] Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.
- 36] Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.

God was preparing for service: Joseph, 13 years; Moses, 40 years; Joshua, 40 years.

- 37] I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.
- 38] I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.
- 39] For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.
- 40] Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.
- 41] They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.
- 42] Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.
- 43] Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me.
- 44] As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.
- 45] The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.
- 46] The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.
- 47] It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me.
- 48] He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.
- 49] Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.
- 50] Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

Paul quotes this in Romans 15:9, applying it to Jews praising God to the Gentiles; and in Romans 15:12, announcing Jesus Christ reigning over both Jews and Gentiles (Cf. Isa 11:10).

Next Session

Read (and meditate on): Psalm 19 – 24.

The Book of Psalms Session 4 Psalms 19 - 21

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 19

Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing wonder and awe, the more often and the more seriously reflection concentrates upon them: the starry heaven above me and the moral law within me.

Immanuel Kant
Critique of Practical Reason, p.2

I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalms and one of the greatest lyrics in the world.

C.S. Lewis
Reflections on the Psalms, p.63

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

1] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.

There are 1.6 million species of fungi; 10,000 species of ants; 300,000 species of flowering plants; 4,000-5,000 species of mammals; and, 10,000 species of birds...

Edward O. Wilson, biologist

Our Astonishing Universe

Yet, these numbers pale into insignificance when compared with the stars in the heavens...

- There are probably more than a hundred billion (10^{11}) galaxies in our observable universe.
- Typical galaxies contain ten million to one trillion (10^7 to 10^{12}) stars, all orbiting a common center of gravity.
- Most galaxies are several thousand to several hundred thousand light years in diameter and are usually separated from one another by distances on the order of millions of light years.

What is the “Glory of God”?

- His Creation?
- His Redemption?
- Which is Greatest? Compare the space devoted to it in the Bible or what it cost the Father.
- When Paul preached to the Gentiles, he began with Creation (Acts 14:14-18) and *then* went to the Gospel (Acts 17:22-31).

Signs in the Heavens: The Mazzaroth

- All the stars have a name (Ps 147:4; Isa 40:26).
- Zodiac: Ζωδιακος, from *Sodi*, “the Way.” These 12 signs are the same in all ancient nations of the world: Chinese, Chaldean, Egyptian, etc.;
- The Temple of Denderah, 2000 B.C.

Signs of the Zodiac (with Their Decans)

Sphinx = “to bind closely together”: head of woman, body of lion => Virgo to Leo?

- **Virgo, the Virgin**
 - Coma, the Infant, the Desired One
 - Centaurus, the dart piercing a victim
 - Bootes, the Great Shepherd and Harvester
- **Libra**
 - Crux, the Cross
 - Lupus or Victim, pierced to death
 - Corona, the Crown
- **Scorpio**
 - Serpens, the Serpent
 - Ophiuchus, wrestling with the Serpent
 - Hercules, the Mighty Man
- **Sagittarius**
 - Lyra, an Eagle holding a lyre
 - Ara, the Altar
 - Draco, the Dragon, the old Serpent
- **Capricornus**
 - Sagitta, the Arrow
 - Aquila, the Eagle
 - Delphinus, the Dolphin

- **Aquarius**
 - Picus Australis, the Southern Fish
 - Pegasus, the Winged Horse
 - Cygnus, the Swan
- **Pisces**
 - The Band
 - Andromeda, a woman in chains
 - Cepheus, a Crowned King
- **Aries**
 - Cassiopeia, a woman enthroned
 - Cetus, the Sea-Monster, bound by the lamb
 - Perseus, armed and mighty man
- **Taurus**
 - Orion, a glorious Prince
 - Eridanus, Orion's River
 - Auriga, the Shepherd
- **Gemini**
 - Lepus, the Hare (or Serpent)
 - Canis Major, Sirius, the Great Dog
 - Canis Minor, Procyon, the 2nd Dog
- **Cancer**
 - Ursa Minor, the Lesser Sheepfold
 - Ursa Major, the Greater Sheepfold
 - Argo, the Ship
- **Leo**
 - Hydra, the Fleeing Serpent
 - Crater, the Cup (of Wrath)
 - Corvus, the Raven, Bird of Doom

Ex: Virgo, the Virgin

Alpha Star is called Spica (ear of corn):

- Hebrew: Tsemech (branch).
- Arabic: Al Zimach (branch).
- Egypt: Aspolia (the seed)

Of the 20 Hebrew words translated “branch,” only one of them (*tsemech*) is used exclusively of the Messiah (4X) Jer 23:5,6; Zech 3:8, 6:12; Isa 4:2. The Promised Seed of the Woman (Gen 3:15) with a branch in her right hand, ears of corn in her left (Jn 12:21-24).

Ex: Libra, the Balances

- Hebrew: *Monzanaim*, the Scales, weighing.
- Arabic: *Al Zubena*, Purchase, redemption.
- Coptic: *Lambadia*, Station of propitiation.
- Latin: *Libra*, Weighing.
 - Alpha: *Zuben al Genubi*, Price deficient (Ps 49:7; 62:9).
 - Beta: *Zuben al Chemali*, Price which covers (Rev 5:9).
 - Gamma: *Zuben al Akrab*, Price of the conflict! (towards Centaurus & and Victim slain).

The Message

- **Virgo**
 - The Seed of the Woman
 - The Desire of Nations
 - The Man of Double Nature in Humiliation
 - The Exalted Shepherd and Harvester
- **Libra**
 - The Price to be Paid
 - The Cross to be Endured
 - The Victim Slain
 - The Crown Purchased
- **Scorpio**
 - The Conflict
 - The Serpent's Coils
 - The Struggle with the Enemy
 - The toiling Vanquisher of Evil
- **Sagittarius**
 - The Doubled-Natured One Triumphant
 - He Gladdens the Heavens
 - He Builds Fires of Punishment
 - He Casts down the Dragon
- **Capricornus**
 - Life out of Death
 - The Arrow of God
 - Pierced and Failing
 - Springing up Again in Abundant Life
- **Aquarius**
 - Life-waters from on High
 - Drinking in the Heavenly Food
 - Carrying the Good News
 - Bearing aloft the Cross over the Earth

- **Pisces**
 - Multiplication of Redeemer’s People
 - Upheld and governed by the Lamb
 - The intended Bride bound and exposed
 - The Bridegroom exalted
- **Aries**
 - The Lamb found worthy
 - The Bride released and making ready
 - Satan bound
 - The Breaker triumphing
- **Taurus**
 - The invincible Ruler come
 - The sublime Vanquisher
 - The River of Judgment
 - The all-ruling Shepherd
- **Gemini**
 - The Marriage of the Lamb
 - The Enemy trodden down
 - The Prince coming in Glory
 - His princely following
- **Cancer**
 - The Possession secured
 - Lesser fold: the Church of the first born
 - Greater fold: Israel
 - Safe folding into a Everlasting Kingdom
- **Leo**
 - The King rending
 - The Serpent fleeing
 - The Bowl of Wrath upon him
 - His carcass devoured

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Psalm 19

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.
- 2] Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.
- 3] There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

Everyone is without excuse!

- 4] Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.

Romans 1:20

But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Romans 10:16-18

Psalm 19:3 is quoted by Paul as the reason Israel had no excuse for the rejection of the Gospel!

Eternity in Their Hearts

- Phillip Brooks gave the first instructions about God to Helen Keller, who was blind and deaf;
- She replied that she had always known there was a God but didn’t know what His name was;
- Our Task is to tell the world that His name is Jesus (Acts 4:12).

- 4] Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,
- 5] Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
- 6] His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

“...line” = “sound” in LXX. Some translators: “influence”...

“...from the end of heaven...unto the ends of it”? Sunrise and sunset?

The Milky Way is a typical spiral galaxy of ~400 billion stars, with a central bulge and extended disk. Diameter is about 100,000 light years; 28,000 light years from the Galactic Center.

Photosynthesis

Photosynthesis is the process by which green plants and certain other organisms use the energy of light to convert carbon dioxide and water into the simple sugar, glucose. All life derives from Light (1st quote...).

Photosynthesis means “To build with light”: plants are sugar factories, producing millions of new glucose molecules/second. Most plants produce more glucose than they use and store it as starch and other carbohydrates in roots, stems, and leaves. Each year, photosynthesizing organisms produce about 170 billion metric tons of extra carbohydrates, about 30 metric tons for every person on earth.

Brilliant autumn colors are due to the presence of accessory leaf pigments that normally assist the plant in photosynthesis by capturing specific wavelengths of sunlight. These pigments, called carotenoids, become visible when the leaf dies in the fall.

Something More

Following the fall of man, creation has been subjected to futility and bondage (Gen 3:17-19; Rom 8:20-22). To reveal Himself more clearly, the Creator has given us His Word. His Word is pure (Ps 119:140; Prov 30:5). God puts His Word above His Name! (Ps 138:2). When speaking of creation, David uses Elohim. But of His personal revelation, His Word, seven times David uses the covenant name, YHWH.

- 7] The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
- 8] The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
- 9] The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

Law: *The Torah of the Lord is perfect* [Torah = instruction, teaching...] It is complete, flawless: it never needs revision. The testimony of the Lord is sure: Judgment is coming. The commandments reveal that.

Statutes: Detailed instructions for daily life. The NT epistles repeat 9 of the 10 commandments (omitting 4th), and give application (Eph 4:20-32).

Commandment: That which is appointed; warnings of life and death (Deut 30:15-20).

“The Fear of the Lord”: to teach “fear” is to teach His Word (Ps 34:11; Deut 4:9-10).

“Judgments”: Ordinances, verdicts. We need to understand His righteousness, and our need for His grace. To know the warning and not heed it is sin (James 4:17).

Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Romans 7:12-14

- 10] More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
- 11] Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.
- 12] Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Do we desire His Word above all else? How else can we rise above our fallen nature?

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

What is [the?] “Great transgression?” The rejection of the remedy God has provided: Jesus Christ. “Knowing” (creation, His Word, et al) is not enough: we must have a relationship with Him.

Sinners were guilty even though they were ignorant of what they had done (Lev 5:17). The OT made provision for sins of ignorance (Lev 4; Num 15:22-29); however, there was no atonement for presumptuous sins (Num 15:30-36; Deut 17:12,13).

- 14] Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my Redeemer.

🔪 *Goel* Redeemer: Lev 25:25; Num 35:11-34; The Book of Ruth; Isa 43:14.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 20

Psalm 20 is a prayer before a battle; Psalm 21 is the praise after the victory. In verses 1-5, the people pray for their king. (Deut 20:1-4 required the officers and soldiers to first dedicate themselves to the Lord.) God was never ashamed to be called the God of Jacob...

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;
- 2] Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion;
- 3] Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

Whose sacrifice? (Heb 5.) This is Messianic!

- 4] Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.
- 5] We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.
- 6] Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

David did more than just worship: he also sought the Lord's will concerning the strategy for the battle (cf. 1 Sam 23).

The key verse. "... Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always ..." (Jn 11:41-42). Christ is probably the only One whom the Father always hears and always answers.

The King was the Focus

- The king was the life and breath of the nation (Lam 4:20).
 - The king was the lamp of Israel (2 Sam 21:17).
 - The king was the special target of the enemy (1 Kgs 22:31).
 - God's covenant with David assured him of victory over his enemies (2 Sam 7:11). David was a picture of Jesus Christ, our commander, and whose victory is assured.
- 7] Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.
 - 8] They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.
 - 9] Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31). The law of warfare mentions horses and chariots (Deut 20:1-4; cf. 32:20; 2 Sam 10:18.) "Save, Lord" is *Hosanna* in the Hebrew. The King of Glory is above all else.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 21

A praise and thanksgiving after victory (this seems to parallel Psalm 20...) "Salvation" = deliverance, victory.

Messianic Psalm?

This is not on the list of Messianic Psalms, nor is it quoted verbatim in the NT as referring to Christ. Israel, from the beginning, held this psalm as speaking of the Messiah: The *Targum*, the Chaldean paraphrase of the Old Testament, and the Talmud teach that the king mentioned in this psalm is the Messiah. The great Talmudic Rabbi Solomon Isaaci, known as Rashi, born in A.D. 1040, endorsed this interpretation. But Rashi but suggested that it should be given up because of Christians making use of this psalm as an evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.

Liturgical Churches

This psalm is used by the liturgical churches that observe certain days such as Ascension Day. They use this psalm as commemorating the Ascension; that is, the return of the Lord Jesus to glory and His presence there as our Great High Priest.

Each Jewish Monarch was but a feeble type of Israel's true King; and all the hopes and aspirations of pious hearts, however, they might have for their immediate object the then reigning Monarch, whether David himself or one of his sons, still looked beyond these to Him, who should be David's Lord as well as his son.

Dr. J. J. Stewart Perowne

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!
- 2] Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

In Heb 12:2 it was said of the Lord, "... who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame,"...and He ascended into heaven..."and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

- 3] For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.
- 4] He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.

- 5] His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.
- 6] For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

“prevent” = to see to it beforehand” (Ps 59:10; 79:8). This sounds almost like a second coronation (cf. 2 Sam 7: 6, 13, 16, 29; Lk 1:30-33).

- 7] For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.
- 8] Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.
- 9] Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

Those who have rejected Him are His enemies. This verse is clear. Fire is fire, and judgment is judgment.

- 10] Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.
- 11] For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

- 12] Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.
- 13] Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.

“Those who honor me, I will honor” (1 Sam 2:30). This is a glorious psalm of the Ascension of Christ. What is your relationship to Him today? If He is not your Savior, if you have not trusted the One who came down here to die, then judgment is coming upon you someday.

Next Session

Read (and meditate on) Psalm 22 – 24.

The Book of Psalms Session 5 Psalms 22 – 24 The Shepherd Psalms

- **The Suffering Savior** **Psalm 22**
– The Good Shepherd John 10:1-18
- **The Living Shepherd** **Psalm 23**
– The Great Shepherd Hebrews 13:20,21
- **The Exalted Sovereign** **Psalm 24**
– The Chief Shepherd 1 Peter 5:4

The Savior’s Cross; the Shepherd’s Crook; the King’s Crown.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 22

“The Suffering Savior”

This doesn’t seem to relate to any identifiable occasion in David’s life. *It’s a description of a criminal being executed!* Numerous quotes confirm that it’s Messianic (all four Gospels; Heb 2:10-12). David was a prophet (Acts 2:30).

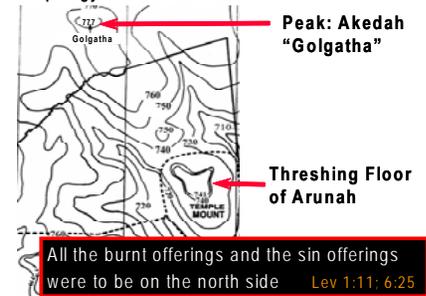
Structure

- **Prayer & Suffering of the Cross** **vv. 1-21**
– Abandonment by God vv. 1-5
– Despised by the people vv. 6-11
– Condemned by the law vv. 12-21
- **Resurrection and praise** **vv. 22-31**
– The Great Assembly vv. 22-25
– The Glorious Kingdom vv. 26-29
– The Generations to Come vv. 30-31

Levitical Locations

- On the north side:
– Burnt offerings (Lev 1:11);
– Sin offerings (Lev 6:25);
- Outside the camp (Lev 4:12, 21; 16:27):
- “Without the gate” (Heb 13:12);

Topology of Mount Moriah



Psalm 22

[To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.]

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

Aijeleth Shahar (or Hash-Shahar): “the doe of the morning”; “help at daybreak”? (a familiar tune?). These were the opening words annunciated at the cross (Mt 27:45,46; Mk 15:34) and the only time He didn’t call Him “Father!” He couldn’t: He was in *our* shoes!

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Matthew 27:45-46

- 2] O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.
3] But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.
4] Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.
5] They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

Why Was God Absent?

- “I am not alone because the Father is with me” (Jn 16:32);
- Dying for the sins of the world (1 Jn 2:2; 4:14);
- *Made sin* for us (2 Cor 5:21);
- Made a curse for us (Gal 3:13).

In some inexplicable way He experienced what condemned lost sinners experience “away from the presence of the Lord” (2 Thess 1:9; Mt 25:41). Compassion, justice, and the sacred covenant were strong arguments for God’s intervention—but He was silent.

- 6] But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.
7] All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,
8] He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

A worm: a creature of the ground, helpless, frail, and unwanted. (A forgotten “I AM” statement!...) Terribly disfigured by His enemies (Isa 52:14; Isa 49:7, 50:6; 53:3; 69:9; Rom 15:3).

“Trust” is used 4X in vv. 4, 5, & 8 (Cf. Mt 27:39, 43,46; Mk 15:29; Lk 23:35,36; Ps 139:13-16).

Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, “Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.” Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, “He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.”

Matthew 27:38-43

And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Luke 23:39-43

- 9] But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts.
10] I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly.
11] Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.
12] Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.
13] They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

Bashan (Land of the *Rephaim*): Some suspect this may include demonic allusions... Cf. Og, King of the Giants; Nephilim... Gilgal Rephaim...etc.

Post-Flood Nephilim: רִפְאִים Rephaim

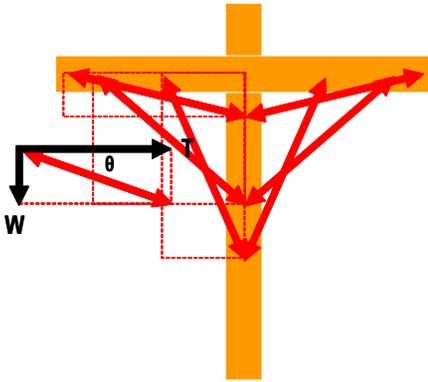
- “...also after that...” (Gen 6:4);
- *Rephaim, Emim, Horim, Zamsummim* (Gen 14, 15);
- Og, King of Bashan (Deut 3:11; Joshua 12);
- Arba, Anak & his seven sons (*Anakim*), encountered in Canaan (Num 13:33);
- Goliath and his four brothers (2 Sam 21:16-22; 1 Chr 20:4-8).

- 14] I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.
15] My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16] For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

Clearly, a man being crucified: stripped of his clothing, placed on a cross (excruciating = Latin, *crux*), nails driven in hands and feet. Dehydration, intense thirst, suffocation. Invented by Persians, 90 B.C.; [cf. “gallows” = impaled, in Esther...]; widely adopted by the Romans.

Tension Multiplier Effect



Due to the pain endured by the weight of the body hanging from the nails, which damage the medial nerves and tear at the tarsals, the respiratory torture, the cramping, the pleural effusions, concluded that “death by crucifixion was in every sense of the word excruciating, literally ‘out of the cross.’”

“On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, March 21, 1986

17] I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.
18] They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

John 19:23-24

How many soldiers? Four.

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record

is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

John 19:31-37

Not the normal Shabbat, but the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (Mt 28:1 is actually in the plural: “when the Sabbaths were past...”)

In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

Exodus 12:46
cf. Num 9:12; Ps 34:20

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me [the one whom] they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Zechariah 12:9, 10

A 35-page paper by Dr. William Welty was just published on the erroneous (and inconsistent) rendering of “et asher” in the Jewish Publication Society’s 1917 publication of the Tanakh: the 158 other occurrences argue against the traditional Jewish rendering, “because they have thrust him through.”

19] But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.
20] Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.
21] Save me from the lion’s mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

“darling” = one and only one.

“Unicorns” = For many years it was thought that the unicorn was a mythical animal, but recent investigation has revealed that it was an animal a size smaller than the elephant, very much like the rhinoceros, sometimes called a wild bull.

22] I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.
23] Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

The turning point in this Psalm: From prayer to praise; from suffering to glory. Having “endured the cross,” He now “enters into the joy that

was set before him” (Heb 12:2). He had prayed to be delivered out of death, and that was answered. (Heb 5:7).

- 24] For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.
25] My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

His work on the cross was accepted, proven by His raising from the dead (Rom 4:24,25).

- 26] The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.
27] All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.
28] For the kingdom is the LORD’S: and he is the governor among the nations.

The idiom of a Messianic feast (Isa 25:6-9):

And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 25:6-9

- 29] All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.
30] A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.
31] They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.

כִּי עָשָׂה: “He Hath Done This”

כִּי is prefixed to sentences depending on an active verb, applying to it the place of an accusative: thus, constantly, completed.

“It is finished” (Jn 19:30); τετέλεσται = finish, complete, end.

“Paid in full” (Col 2:14).

An eternity resolved in three hours...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 23

“The Living Shepherd”

Shepherds

- Abel, the first martyr (Gen 4:2).
- Moses spent 40 years caring for his father-in-law’s sheep.
- David served his father as a shepherd.
- God as a shepherd (Gen 48:15; 49:24; Ps 80:1; 95:7; 100:3; Isa 40:11; 49:10; Jer 31:10; Ezek 34:11-15; Mt 10:6; 15:24; Mk 6:34).
- Messiah as a shepherd (Ezek 14:16,23; Mic 5:4; Zech 13:7; Mt 2:6; 26:3; Mk 14:27; Jn 10).

Sheep

Sheep are defenseless; they are prone to get lost and need almost constant care. You can’t drive them like cattle: *they must be led!* They are known by name (Jn 10:1-5)...and they’re not very bright...

The Great Shepherd

- The Great Shepherd who cares and equips us (Heb 13:20,21).
- Great High Priest who ever lives to make intercession for us (Heb 7:25).
- He died for the sheep (1 Pet 1:18,19).
- Father gave them to Him (Jn 17:12).
- And He’s lost none! (Jn 18:9).

Psalm 23

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Verb is a participle: “is shepherding me”: guarded, led, provided food, rest, rescue, care if bruised, etc.

- 2] He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

“...beside the stilled water” (sheep won’t drink from fast flowing streams).

“Lead” = lead gently. “Paths” = well-worn ruts. [Avoid strange teachings: Heb 13:9]

- 3] He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4] Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

The central verse: personal pronoun changes from “he” to “thou.” David is not speaking about the shepherd, but to the shepherd! He is beside us, leading and calming our fears.

“...rod”: cudgel, for defense; “...staff”: crook, to assist individual sheep, for counting or examination.

- 5] Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

“Table”: a synecdoche for a “spread”: food, provision... Oil was used to soothe end-of-day bruises, etc.

- 6] Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The OT equivalent of Rom 8:28. [This is not a reference to the Temple: the king did not live in the Temple. David looks ahead to eternity in the Father's house—forever (cf. Jn 17:1-6).] The shepherd would also block the doorway during the night (Jn 10:7-9); cf. Rev 7:17.

Psalm 23

- The Lord is my shepherd.
- I shall not want (I shall lack nothing).
- He maketh me to lie down in green pastures (I shall not lack provision).
- He leadeth me beside the still waters (I shall not lack peace).
- He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness (I shall not lack guidance).
- Yea, thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil (I shall not lack courage of the dark hour).
- Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me (I shall not lack true comfort).
- Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies (I shall not lack protection, preservation, honor).
- Thou anointest my head with oil (I shall never lack joy).
- My cup runneth over (I shall never lack fullness of blessing).
- Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life (I shall not lack Divine favor during my earthly life).
- And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever (I shall not lack a heavenly home when my earthly tour is over).

Pilate's Epitaph

And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

John 19:19-22

John tells us that Pilate personally wrote it: in Hebrew for the Jews; Greek as the common language; Latin as the official language of Rome. Pilate answered them in the perfect tense: “What I have written will always remain written.”

The Jews The King The Nazarene Jesus

HaYehudim v Melech HaNazarei Yeshua



ישוע הנצרי ומלך היהודים

Yeshua HaNazarei v Melech HaYehudim. An acronym on YHWH! [Remember, Hebrew goes from right to left.] If Pilate had rewritten it in the manner they had requested, it would not have spelled out the Name of God. Did Pilate realize this? Was it deliberate?

Did he do it just to upset the Jewish leadership, realizing they had delivered Him up for envy? (Mt 27:18). When they requested a special guard for the tomb, he also responded with an enigmatic remark, “Make it as sure as you can.” (Mt 27:63-66.) Was he really surprised when Jesus was resurrected after 3 days? One wonders. [See also, acrostics in Esther, etc. See *Beyond Coincidence* briefing, et al.]

Seven Compound Titles

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| <i>YHWH-jireh</i> | The Lord will provide | Gen 22:14 |
| <i>YHWH-rapha</i> | The Lord that healeth | Ex 15:26 |
| <i>YHWH-shalom</i> | The Lord our peace | Judg 6:24 |
| <i>YHWH-tsidkenu</i> | The Lord our righteousness | Jer 33:16 |
| <i>YHWH-shammah</i> | The Lord ever-present | Ezek 48:35 |
| <i>YHWH-nissi</i> | The Lord our banner | Ex 17:15 |
| <i>YHWH-raah</i> | The Lord our shepherd | Ps 23 |

Psalm 23

- The Lord is my shepherd *YHWH-raah*
- I shall not want
 - I shall lack nothing *YHWH-jireh*
- He maketh me to lie down in green pastures
 - I shall not lack provision *YHWH-jireh*
- He leadeth me beside the still waters
 - I shall not lack peace *YHWH-shalom*
- He restoreth my soul
 - I shall not lack restoration *YHWH-rapha*
- He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness
 - I shall not lack guidance *YHWH-tskidkenu*
- Yea, thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil
- Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me
 - I shall not lack courage *YHWH-shammah*
- Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies – I shall not lack protection, preservation, honor *YHWH-nissi*

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 24

“The Exalted Sovereign”

Antiphonal Psalm?

- Levitical Chorus vv. 1, 2
 - Leader questions v. 3
- Levitical Chorus vv. 4-7
 - Leader questions v. 8a
- Levitical Chorus vv. 8b-9
 - Leader questions v. 10a
- Levitical Chorus v. 10b

Traditions

- Associated with David’s bringing the Ark of the Covenant (and the Mercy Seat) to Jerusalem: 2 Sam 6; 1 Chr 15;1-16:3.
- Sung in Herod’s Temple every Sunday.
- Some connect with the Triumphal Entry.
- Early church assigned it to Ascension Day (40 days after Christ’s Resurrection)

Psalm 24

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

The Earth is the Theater of the Universe; the scene of the greatest drama ever played. He chose a planet, a people, and a land; and there sent His Son to live, to minister, to die, and to be raised from the dead so that sinners might be saved.

- 2] For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Waters: Gen 1:1, 6-7,9; 49:25; Ps 104:5-9; 136:6; Ex 20:4; Deut 33:13.

- 3] Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

Revelation 5:2,3

- 4] He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.
- 5] He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- 6] This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.
- 7] Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8] Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.
- 9] Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
- 10] Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.

Why twice? Sung that very Triumphal Entry morning, but rejected. Rejected the first time; victorious on the second? Isa 63; Rev 19; Zech 12-14. [Cf. Stephen’s outline in Acts 7]; Also: Ascension & Return? 5x: “King of Glory”; 300x: “Lord of Hosts” (Armies)..

The Shepherd Psalms: Review

- **The Suffering Savior** **Psalm 22**
 - The Good Shepherd John 10:1-18

- **The Living Shepherd** **Psalm 23**
– The Great Shepherd Hebrews 13:20,21
- **The Exalted Sovereign** **Psalm 24**
– The Chief Shepherd 1 Peter 5:4

Next Session

Read Psalms 25 – 30 (14 times each)

The Book of Psalms Session 6 Psalms 25 - 30

The preceding psalms have been dramatic and sensational. The next 15 are more personal, quiet and intimate. They are less familiar, but they have much to say to us. They are applicable to the past, present and future.

A Devotional Paradigm

- Past – David’s predicament and motives.
- Present – How this impacts Israel (and ourselves) *today*.
- Personal – How does this impact *you* today?

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 25

In form, this psalm is a broken acrostic: Two letters are missing; one is established only by altering the punctuation of the Hebrew text as we have received it; and v. 22, referring to Israel, lies outside the scheme altogether. [This brokenness reflects the way troubles break the pattern of life itself.]

- 251 מלאספ תתו לךרד אלדך יהנה נפשו אשא:
- א 2 אלהי בך בטחתי אל-אבושה אל-יעלצו איבני לי:
- ג 3 גם פל-קנוד לא יבשו ובשו הבוגדים ריבם:
- ד 4 דרכך יהנה הודיעני ארחותיך למדני:
- ה 5 הרריבני באמתך ולמדני כיהאפה אלהי ישע אוחק קויתי פל-תיום:
- ז 6 זכר-דחמך יהנה וחסדך כי מעולם תמה:
- ח 7 חטאות נעורי ופשעי אל-תזכר כחסדך זכר-ל-אתה למען טובך יהנה:
- ט 8 טוב-יושר יהנה על-כן יורה חטאים בדרךך:
- י 9 ידרכך עניים במשפט וילמד עניים דרכיך:
- כ 10 כל-ארחות יהנה חסד ואמת לנצח בריחו ועדתיו:
- ל 11 למען-שמך יהנה וסלחת לעוני כי רבי-הוא:

- מ 12 מידה האיש ירא יהנה יורנו בדרך יבחר:
- נ 13 נפשו בטוב תלון וזרעו ירש ארץ:
- ס 14 סוד יהנה ליראיו ובריתו להודיעם:
- ע 15 עיני תמיד אליהנה כי הוא יוציא מרשת רגלי:
- פ 16 פנה-אלי וחקני כירחיד ועני אני:
- צ 17 צרות לבני הרחובו ממצוקותי הוציאני:
- ק 18 קאה עניי ועמלי ושא לכל-חטאותי:
- ר 19 ראה-אויבני כירבו ושאנת חמס שנאוני:
- ש 20 שמרה נפשי והצילני אל-אבוש כיהסיתי בך:
- ת 21 תסד-יושר יצרוני כי קויתך:
- 22 פדה אלהים את-יושראל מפל צרותיו:

Other acrostic psalms are: 34, 37, 111,112,119, 145.

Psalm 25

- Prayer vv. 1-7 – Meditation vv. 8-10
- Prayer vv. 11 – Meditation vv. 12-15
- Prayer vv. 16-22

Life is Rough Road

The Psalmist cries out to God for wisdom as he makes decisions (v. 4-5). He is surrounded by enemies (v.2) who hate him (v.19), lay traps for him (v.15) and want him to fail (v.2,3,20). He knows he is a sinner and doesn’t deserve God’s help (v.7,11,18), but he relies on the goodness and mercy of the Lord.

David succeeded in his journey because he held to three unwavering assurances:

- 1) The help we need comes from God (vv. 1-7);
- 2) Our God can be trusted (vv. 8-14); and
- 3) Trusting God brings us victory (vv. 15-22).

Have you ever been in a place where everything seemed to be failure rather than success? You did not want to go down in crushing defeat, either in your personal life, or your business life, or your home or church life. “Let not mine enemies triumph over me.” What a prayer! Is this how you pray?

Psalm 25

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.
- 2] O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.
- 3] Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

Shame is their fitting reward.

Our Help Comes from God

This is a prayer that reveals the dependence that David had upon God. One day Israel will also realize this. The time will come when that remnant of Israel will find themselves in a position where there is no one upon whom they can depend but God. And it is good for us to come to that place also. Woe to the warrior that discards his shield!

- 4] Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.
- 5] Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

“...way” appears four times in this psalm; “path” once. Moral, providential, and mental forms of guidance are all precious gifts of a gracious God to a teachable people. But, are you a receptive student? Four times in these two verses, David applies for a scholarship in the college of grace.

- 6] Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.
- 7] Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

In courts of law, much is made of precedents. An unchangeable God is the most effectual argument to remind us of ancient mercies and His eternal love. Are you a candid confessor?

Our God Can Be Trusted

There are two ways a man can go. He can go God's way or his own way. God gives us a choice. We can walk in the path of our choosing. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov 14:12). What a glorious thing it is to be able to call out to God and ask Him to show us the way we should go.

When you pray, fix your eyes, as David did, on the fact that God is good, upright, willing to instruct sinners, loving, faithful, and forgiving. What confidence we can have in prayer, not because we pray well, but because of the nature of the God to whom we pray.

- 8] Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.
- 9] The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.
- 10] All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.
- 11] For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.

The psalmist reiterates his prayer for instruction in the true way (cf. vv. 4-5) and pardon (cf. vv. 6-7) for his afflicted soul, but now his prayer is grounded on the revealed character of the Lord.

- 12] What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

He who fears God has nothing else to fear.

- 13] His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.
- 14] The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.

Confidential intimacy. Belief precedes “seeing,” not the other way around. Neither natural wisdom nor strength can force the door into this inner chamber. [He who does not know the meaning of this verse will never learn it from a commentary.] God's secrets: Amos 3:7; Gen 18:16f; Jer 23:18,22; Prov 25:2. God's Plan for our lives: Jer 29:11; Ps 16:11; 139:13-16; Eph 2:10.

Trusting God Brings Us Victory

The enemies to conquer (the dangerous enemies outside, and the distressing emotions within):

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| – Danger | v. 15 |
| – Loneliness | v. 16 |
| – A broken heart | v. 17 |
| – Regrets | v. 18 |
| – Fear | v. 19-20 |
| – Despair | v. 21-22 |

- 15] Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

A net is the common metaphor for temptation.

- 16] Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.
- 17] The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.
- 18] Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

The ground of a quarrel is always in ourselves; when that is removed there is nothing to prevent our full enjoyment of communion with God. When the sea is at its lowest ebb, the tide must surely turn.

- 19] Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.
- 20] O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.
- 21] Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.
- 22] Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

Verse 22 breaks away from the acrostic pattern...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 26

Psalm 26 is a strong affirmation of integrity and a prayer that God would recognize it. No time in the life of David clearly presents itself as an occasion for this passage. The psalm is similar in many ways to Psalm 25, but Psalm 26 does not include a prayer for pardon. The psalmist here declared that he kept separate from sinners, and identified himself with the worship of the Lord. On the basis of this, he prayed with confidence that the Lord would spare him from a fate like that of sinners.

Three Requests

- Vindicate me v. 1
- Examine me vv. 2-8
- Redeem me vv. 9-12

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.

“Vindicate” means “give me justice, defend my reputation.” David was a man of integrity (Ps 7:8; 25:21; 41:12; 78:72). The Lord affirmed this Himself (1 Kgs 9:4,5). When your character and conduct are attacked, it isn’t wrong to vindicate yourself, as Paul did (2 Cor 10-12) or ask the Lord to vindicate you. We aren’t just defending ourselves; we’re defending the name of the Lord whom we serve (Ps 23:3; 25:11).

- 2] Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

Honest words of a real man of God. “...reins” [kidneys] = the seat of emotions; heart the place of moral decision.

- 3] For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.
- 4] I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.
- 5] I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked.

As Psalm 1 put it, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful” (v. 1).

- 6] I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:
- 7] That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Balanced life

David hated sin, but loved the things of God: In walking (v. 1, 3, 11), standing (v. 12) and sitting (v. 4) he kept himself from evil. David became a measuring stick for the kings who followed him. Every king was judged by whether or not he walked in the steps of his father David. If he followed David’s example, he was accepted and proclaimed a good king.

- 8] LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.
- 9] Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men:
- 10] In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.

Sheep and goats and the tares and wheat may be mixed today, but the day is coming (soon) when God will separate them; and the wicked will perish (1:4-6; Matt 7:21-23; 25:31-46).

- 11] But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.
- 12] My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

David is on level ground; he will not waver.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 27

Three Fears

- Fear of Circumstances vv. 1-6
- Fear of Failure vv. 7-10
- Fear of the Future vv. 11-14

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

- 2] When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

“Of whom shall I be afraid?”: John Knox said, “One with God is a majority.” When Cromwell was asked why he did not fear anyone, he said, “I have learned that if you fear God, you have no one else to fear.”

- 3] Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.
4] One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

Psalm 26, 27, and 28 reveal David’s love for God’s sanctuary (which in David’s day was the Tabernacle on Mt. Zion.) [God would later provide the plans and the materials, but Solomon would build it. (1 Chr 22, 29-29.)]

- 5] For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.
6] And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

It is not faith that keeps one secure, but the Lord in whom that faith is reposed.

Rapture Hints in OT?

- Psalm 27:5
- Isaiah 26:17-21
- Zephaniah 1:18-2:3

Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen. Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

Isaiah 26:17-21

Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD’S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land. Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD’S anger come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’S anger.

Zephaniah 1:18-2:3

- 7] Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
8] When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

David’s confidence in the Lord didn’t prevent him from being concerned about himself. “Face” means access. When the Lord’s face “shines upon us” (Num 6:22-27) it means He is pleased with us and will help us.

- 9] Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.
10] When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.
11] Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

This verse has been misunderstood by critics. Even Delitzsch suggested that this verse could have been written by someone else. The reason that possibility is considered is because David’s father and mother did not forsake him. Actually, “When” = “Had...” or “If...”

- 12] Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.
13] I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.
14] Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 28

This wonderful little psalm contains a cry—David is in trouble here. Links between this psalm and 26/27 suggest that David is still in the same life-threatening situation. And it is also prophetic of Israel during the Tribulation. It is a prayer for judgment upon his enemies and praise for the deliverance he knows will come. This psalm is actually preliminary to the next one.

- The Problem of Unanswered Prayer vv. 1-5
- The Joy of Unbounded Praise vv. 6,7
- The Promise of Undeserved Blessing vv. 8,9

The psalmist was convinced that the Lord would distinguish him from the wicked when He overthrows them and would preserve him from his distress. Therefore he prayed that the Lord would save and shepherd His people. This psalm is a companion to Psalm 26, but here the danger was imminent.

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.
- 2] Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.

The “holy oracle” was the mercy seat, which was in the tabernacle.

- 3] Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts.
- 4] Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

Not personal revenge; but a call to God to fulfill His covenant to bring righteousness and peace to the land. “Let them reap what they have sown.”

- 5] Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.
- 6] Blessed be the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.
- 7] The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.
- 8] The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.
- 9] Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

“...feed” = to shepherd. Cf. Ps 23. “lift up” = to carry like a child.

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young” (Isa 40:11). “Salvation of the Jews” – Jesus (Jn 4:22).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 29 “The Storm Psalm”

This is a nature psalm. Cf. Psalm 8: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,”

which is a psalm to be read on a good clear night. Cf. Psalm 19, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.”

- “The psalm of seven thunders.” — Delitzsch
- “This psalm is elaborated with a symmetry of which no more perfect specimen exists in Hebrew.” — Ewald

Seven times the voice of the Lord is mentioned (Cf. Rev 10:4). Now we come to a psalm that describes a storm: the gloom of the tempest, the clap of thunder, the flash of lightning, and terror on every side.

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.
- 2] Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 3] The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters.

Seven times the voice of the Lord is mentioned (Cf. Rev 10:4). Now we come to a psalm that describes a storm: the gloom of the tempest, the clap of thunder, the flash of lightning, and terror on every side.

The Storm

- At sea, with power and majesty vv. 3, 4
- Comes ashore to the north (Lebanon) vv. 5–7
 - *Sirion*, Mount Hermon, in the anti-Lebanon range, at 9,000 ft (2,774 m) the highest in Israel.
 - Even the solid fabric of the world seems to rock under the impact of the storm.
- Sweeps to the south (Kadesh) vv. 8, 9
 - *Kadesh*, in the extreme south of Judah (Deut 1:19, 46)

- 4] The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.
- 5] The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
- 6] He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.
- 7] The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire.
- 8] The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

Thus the whole land, from end (5) to end (8) is dominated, not just by the storm but by what the storm symbolizes, the voice of the Lord. To

many a storm is a storm, but to those to whom the Lord has revealed himself, it is a display of one aspect of his glory.

- 9] The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.
- 10] The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.
- 11] The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

The epilogue is the last two verses...

Jewish worshippers read Psalm 29 in their synagogues in their celebration of *Hag Shavuot*, Feast of Weeks. Many churches use Psalm 29 in their celebration of Pentecost (Acts 2:2: "A rushing mighty wind," "tongues of fire," etc.).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 30

A Psalm of Thanksgiving

This psalm opens and closes on notes of thanksgiving: verses 1, 2 and 4, 11.

- A New Victory
– From Death to Life vv. 1-3
- A New Day
– From Night to Morning vv. 4-5
- A New Heart
– From Pride to Humility vv. 6-10
- A New Song
– From Mourning to Rejoicing vv. 11-12

[A Psalm and Song at the dedication of the house of David.]

"...house" = Dedication of either a) his palace (2 Sam 5); or b) the Temple (1 Chr 21:1-22:1; 2 Sam 24).

- 1] I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.
- 2] O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.
- 3] O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.
- 4] Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.
- 5] For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

- 6] And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.
- 7] LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.
- 8] I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.
- 9] What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?
- 10] Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.
- 11] Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;
- 12] To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

Next Session

Read (and meditate on) Psalms 31-36.

The Book of Psalms Session 7 Psalms 31 – 36

The next 10 psalms are personal, quiet and intimate. They are less familiar, but they have much to say to us. They are applicable to the past, present and future.

A Devotional Paradigm

- Past – David's predicament and motives.
- Present – How this impacts Israel (and ourselves) *today*.
- Personal – How does this impact *you* today?

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 31

This psalm is about trusting ("taking refuge") in the Lord, no matter how difficult the circumstances might be. David is surrounded by subversive, whispering campaigns and wicked conspiracies.

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.
- 2] Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.
- 3] For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.

Quoted in Psalm 71:1-3 (untitled, probably also written by David).

“Let me not be ashamed”: Repeated in v.17. How can a righteous Lord permit wicked people to prosper and overthrow His anointed King? Such a thing would make David ashamed. He begged God to act speedily (Ps 69:17; 70:1,5; 71:12; 141:1; 143:7).

“...thy righteousness”: God doesn’t lower His standards to save sinners.

- 4] Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.

He needed guidance to avoid traps; “thou art my strength” affirms his faith, for his own strength had failed (v.10).

- 5] Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

Quoted by our Lord (Luke 23:46; Cf. Stephen, Acts 7:59). “Commit” = deposit in trust.

- 6] I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.

Enemies trusted lying vanities, worthless idols. Quoted by Jonah in his prayer (Jon 2:8).

“In Thee Lord do I put my trust” (Ps 31:1)

- Cardinal John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester (1535)
- St. Francis Xavier (1552)
- Mère Angélique Anauld (1661)

“Into Thine Hand Do I Commit... (Ps 31:5)

- Our Lord on the Cross (Luke 23:46)
- Stephen, 1st Martyr of the church (Acts 7:59)
- Polycarp, being burned at the stake in Smyrna
- St. Basil (379)
- St. Augustine (430)
- Charlemagne (814)
- Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (1170)
- John Huss (1415): “I commit my spirit into Thy hands, Lord Jesus Christ. Unto Thee I commend my spirit whom Thou hast redeemed.”
- Jerome of Prague (1416)

- Christopher Columbus (1506)
- Martin Luther said: “Blessed are they who die not only for the Lord, as martyrs; not only in the Lord as believers, but likewise *with* the Lord, as breathing forth their lives in the words, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.”
- And many others...

- 7] I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities;

As the Lord saw the affliction of His people in Egypt (Ex 3:7,8).

- 8] And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.

The hand of the enemy was against him; but he was in the hand of the Lord (John 10:27-30) Delivered from a “tight place”: Cf. 18:19,36; 4:1.

- 9] Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly.

When David was in trouble, he prayed.

- 10] For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.
- 11] I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.
- 12] I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.

Even David’s best friends and neighbors didn’t want to be seen with him.

- 13] For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

“Fear (terror) on every side”: 6X by Jeremiah. If this is connected with Absalom’s rebellion, even Ahithophel, David’s wisest counsellor, deserted the king and followed Absalom (Cf. 2 Sam 17).

- 14] But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God.
- 15] My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

Our “times” (circumstances) are in His (crucified) hands, indeed (Rom 8:28).

Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.
— William Shakespeare

16] Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.

The face of the Lord did, indeed, shine upon David (Num 6:22-27).

- 17] Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.
18] Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.
19] Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!
20] Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

Another hint of hiding them in a secret place (Cf. Ps 27:5)?

21] Blessed be the LORD: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city.

The “Besieged City”

“...a strong city” = “a besieged city” (NIV, NASB) may connect this volatile situation with David’s experience at Keilah (1 Sam 23:1-15) or Ziklag (1 Sam 30). Or more probably with Absalom’s rebellion (2 Sam 15-18). The “besieged city” could refer to Jerusalem. After fleeing Jerusalem, David made Mahanaim his headquarters (2 Sam 17:24,27).

22] For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

At some point, he may have been ready to give up.

- 23] O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.
24] Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

After it was all over, he spoke to the people and gave God the glory for delivering him.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 32

Penitential Psalms (Ps 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143): Suffering under God’s discipline. Our choices (Heb 12) are to 1) despise it; 2) resist it; 3) collapse under it; or 4) accept it, submit, and pray that the lessons not be wasted. Galileo, imprisoned by the Inquisition at Rome for asserting the Copernican System, was enjoined, as a penance, to repeat the Seven Penitential Psalms every week for three years.

David wrote it after confessing to God his sins of adultery, murder, and deception (Ps 51; 2 Sam 11-12). In Ps 51:13 he vowed to share what he had learned from this costly experience and this psalm appears to be part of that promise. It is more of a *maschil*, rather than a penitential psalm.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

Psalm 51:12-14

A Maschil Psalm (Ps 32,42,44,45,52-55, 75,78,88 89,142)

- *Maschil* = “A skillful song,” “a song of instruction”
- “Instruction” (v.8)
 - Cf. Dan 11:33, 25; “wise”: 12:3, 10
 - “Understanding”: Mt 24:15; Rev 13:18
- A musical direction, now lost?
- Jewish: at close of *Yom Kippur*
- Church Calendar: Ash Wednesday

Four Basic Facts about Sin and Forgiveness

- The Blessing of Acceptance vv. 1, 2
- The Folly of Impenitence vv. 3, 4
- The Way of Deliverance vv. 5-7
- The Joy of Obedience vv. 8-11

Martin Luther loved best the *Psalmi Paulini*, “The Pauline Psalms”: 32nd, 51st, 130th and 143rd. Paul quoted them in Romans 4:6-8 as part of his argument for salvation by grace alone, apart from the works of the law.

Psalm 32

[A Psalm of David, Maschil.]

- 1] Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
- 2] Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

The first beatitude in Psalms (Ps 1:1) was for the obedient; this second beatitude is for the forgiven...

Vocabulary

- Transgression “Crossing over the line”
- Sin “To miss the mark”
- Iniquity “Twisted”
- Guile “Deception”
- Forgive “To remove a burden”
- Impute “To put on account”

These will be repeated in verse 5. Transgression is a form of rebellion against God. Sin means to not live up to God’s standards. Iniquity describes what happens to the inner character of the sinner. Forgiveness is pictured by the Scapegoat on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:20-22; Ps 103:12; Joh 1:29). Impute is a bookkeeping term. When we confess our sins, God cancels our debt; no longer on the books.

The Folly of Impenitence (Ps 32:3, 4)

- 3] When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.
- 4] For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

Chronologically, David’s experience with forgiveness came long after he had committed his sins and covered them up for almost a year (vv.3-5). It was a terribly trying and taxing time. Charles Spurgeon: “God does not permit His children to sin successfully.” His bones were “roaring” (groaning): Cf. Ps 51:8.

סֵלָה **Selah: “Stop. Look. Listen.”**

It is commonly assumed that this refers to musical instructions; however: *selah* is to connect subject matter, not music. It connects the end of one strophe with the beginning of the next; it is the connecting of the two subjects together—sometimes synthetic; sometimes antithetic. It is *concerned with truth, not tunes*. The term is used three times in this psalm alone.

The Way of Deliverance (Ps 32:5-7)

- 5] I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

The Lord sent the prophet Nathan to confront David (... “Thou art the man ...” (2 Sam 12:1-7) and declare God’s forgiveness (1 Jn 1:9). God puts the righteousness of Christ on our account (Rom 4:3ff; 5:13; 2 Cor 5:19-22; Gal 3:6).

- 6] For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.
- 7] Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

David’s Family Troubles

- Bathsheba’s first son died. [Bathsheba’s first surviving son was Solomon (the basis for Matthew’s genealogy); Bathsheba’s second surviving son was Nathan (not the prophet) and the basis for Luke’s (Mary’s) genealogy.
- David’s son Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar and was slain by Absalom (2 Sam 13).
- Absalom tried to seize the throne and was killed by Joab (2 Sam 14-18).
- While David was dying, Adonijah tried to take the sceptre from Solomon and Adonijah was slain (1 Kgs 1).

The Joy of Obedience (Ps 32:8-11)

- 8] I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.
- 9] Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

God gave David assurance that the joy of salvation would be restored to him (Ps 51:12) if he remained obedient, following God’s instruction. He was not to descend to that of an animal (impetuous as a horse; stubborn as a mule).

- 10] Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.
- 11] Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

David opened this psalm with the joyful announcement of having been forgiven; he now closes with the exhortation to join him in celebrating the mercy of the Lord.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 33

The verbs in this psalm are in the plural, which suggests the involvement of a community in the sanctuary. It appears as a helpful primer on praise.

- 1] Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.
- 2] Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

This is the first time specific instruments are mentioned. “Psaltery” = zither-like. [Why “ten” strings?]

- 3] Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.
- 4] For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

Not all songs are doctrinally correct; any worship that is contrary to God’s Word will not be pleasing to the Lord.

- 5] He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

We also need to know the God of the Word (as well as the Word of God)!

- 6] By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

It is interesting that the information sciences are the very foundation of all other discoveries at the very frontiers of science. (Gen 1:1-2:1; Heb 1:3; 11:3; 2 Pet 3:5-7; et al.)

- 7] He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.
- 8] Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

His creation holds all without excuse (cf. Rom 1).

- 9] For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.
- 10] The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

The more men oppose the truth, the more it prevails. This should have been the verse labeling the United Nations.

- 11] The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

- 12] Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

This is the verse for Washington D.C. to take note of.

- 13] The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.
- 14] From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

“...look” = to gaze intently. He knows the “thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb 4:12).

- 15] He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.
- 16] There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

At the Arbela, the Persians—million men—were utterly put to rout by Alexander’s 50,000. Napoleon’s Grand Armee of 453,000 were reduced to 10,000 by Field Marshal Kutuzov (1812).

- 17] An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.

The Pharaoh’s horses and chariots found it disastrous to pursue the Lord’s anointed.

- 18] Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;
- 19] To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.
- 20] Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.
- 21] For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.
- 22] Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

This psalm begins and ends with the theme of joy. A suggestion: *saturate* yourself with the Psalms and see what happens...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 34

Psalm 34 is another acrostic psalm (as are Ps 25, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145). This acrostic psalm has the Hebrew letter *waw* omitted and an extra *pe* added at the beginning of v.22 (see graphic on next page).

Four Instructions to Avoid Tight Situations

- Bless the Lord v.v. 1-3
- Seek the Lord v.v. 4-8
- Fear the Lord v.v. 9-16
- Trust the Lord v.v. 17-22

Psalm 34

341 מלאספ תתו לךוד בשנותו את־טעמו לפני אבימלך ויגדשוהו בגלד:

- א 2 אֲבָרְכָה אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־עַתְּ תָמִיד תְּהִלָּתוֹ בְּפִי:
- ב 3 בִּיהִנֵּה תִתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי וְשָׁמְעוּ עֲנוּנִים וְיִשְׁמְחוּ:
- ג 4 גִּדְּלוּ לַיהוָה אֶתִּי וְגִדְּמוּמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו:
- ד 5 דַּרְשָׁתִי אֶת־יְהוָה וְעֲנֵנִי וּמִכָּל־מְנוּרוֹתַי הַצִּילֵנִי:
- ה 6 הַבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו וְנִהְרֹו וּפְנֵיהֶם אֲלֵי־יַחְפְּרוּ:
- ו 7 זֶה עָנִי קָרָא וַיהוָה שָׁמַע וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתָיו הוֹשִׁיעֵנו:
- ז 8 חֲנֵה מִלְּאֲדֵי־יְהוָה סֶבִיב לִירְאָיו וַיַּחֲלֹצֵם:
- ח 9 טַעְמוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי־טוֹב יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־יִגְבֵּר וַיַּחֲסֶה־בוֹ:
- ט 10 יִרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה קִדְשׁוֹ כִּי־אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו:
- י 11 כַּפְּרִים רָשָׁו וְרַעְבּוֹ וְדַרְשֵׁי יְהוָה לֹא־יַחְסְרוּ כָל־טוֹב:
- יא 12 לְכוּ־בָנִים שְׁמַעוּ־לִי יִרְאַת יְהוָה אֲלֹמֹדֶכֶם:
- יב 13 מִי־הָאִישׁ הַחֹפֵץ חַיִּים אֲהַב יָמִים לְרֵאוֹת טוֹב:
- יג 14 נִצַּר לְשׁוֹנֵךְ מִרָע וּשְׁפָתָיִךְ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה:
- יד 15 סוֹר מִרָע וְעִשְׂה־טוֹב בַּקֶּשׁ שְׁלוֹם וְרַדְּפֵהוּ:
- טו 16 עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֲלֵ־צַדִּיקִים וְאֹזְנוֹ אֲל־שׁוֹעֲתָם:
- טז 17 פָּנֵי יְהוָה בַּעֲשֵׂי רָע לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ זָכָרָם:
- יז 18 צַעֲקוּ וַיהוָה שָׁמַע וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתֵם הַצִּילֵם:
- יח 19 קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְנִשְׁבָּרֵי־לֵב וְאֶת־דַּכְּאֵי־רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ:
- יט 20 רַבּוֹת רַעוֹת צַדִּיק וּמִכָּלֵם יַצִּילֵנוּ יְהוָה:
- כ 21 שֹׁמֵר כָּל־עֲצוּמוֹתָיו אַחַת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבָּרָה:
- כא 22 תְּמוֹתַת רִשָׁע רָעָה וּשְׁנְאֵי צַדִּיק יִאֲשָׁמוּ:
- כב 23 פּוֹדֵה יְהוָה נַפְשׁ עַבְדָּו וְלֹא יִאֲשָׁמוּ כָל־הַחַסִּים בּוֹ:

[A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.]

The title connects this with David’s dangerous experience with the Philistines at Gath (1 Sam 21:10-22:1), after which he fled to the cave of Adullam. (The Philistine king is called Achish in 1 Samuel, but the dynastic title of Philistines kings was Abimelech, as in this psalm.)

- 1] I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- 2] My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

- 3] O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

Delighted to be out of enemy territory (where he probably shouldn’t have gone in the first place). Note the verbs: bless, boast, magnify, exalt. The name ‘Lord’ is used 16 times in the psalm.

- 4] I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.
- 5] They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.
- 6] This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.
- 7] The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

Threefold witness: He saves (vv.4-8); He keeps (v.7); He satisfies (v.8). The Angel of the Lord appears only three times in the Psalms (here and in Ps 35:5,6). [Preincarnate Christ? In Heb 13:5 the Lord Jesus says, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” In Mt 28:20 the Lord says, “...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”] Today Angels are ministering spirits to the saints, in ways that we will never know until we get to heaven (Heb 1:14).

- 8] O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.
- Quoted in 1 Pet 2:3; Cf. Jn 7:17, 37. “Good” is used four times (vv 8, 10, 12, 14).
- 9] O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.
- Those who fear the Lord need fear nothing else. OT equivalent of Mt 6:33; Rom 8:28.
- 10] The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.
- 11] Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
- 12] What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?
- 13] Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.
- 14] Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

Quoted in 1 Pet 3:10-12: Desire what is good; speak what is true; pursue what is right; and, expect what is best.

- 15] The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.
- 16] The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

- 17] The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.
- 18] The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Nowhere does David suggest that the life of faith is exempt from troubles; rather, if we trust Him and call upon Him, the Lord will see us through our troubles and make them a blessing to us and others.

- 19] Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.
- 20] He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

John quotes and applies to Christ (John 19:36; Cf. Ex 12:46; Num 9:12).

- 21] Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.
- 22] The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

“Desolate” = condemned.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 35

An imprecatory psalm. 1 Samuel 24 provides the background for this Psalm: Saul’s persecution of David.

Imprecatory Psalms (Ps 6, 12, 35, 37, 58,59, 69, 79,83, 109, 139, 140)

- Enemies were rebels against the Lord.
- The Covenant People were protected under conditions of obedience (Lev 26, Deut 27-29; Cf. Gen 12:2,3).
- A battle between good and evil has been going on since Gen 3—and we can’t remain neutral in this battle!
- Don’t take vengeance into your own hands (Rom 12:19). Jesus refers to a widow who went to a judge saying, “Avenge me of mine adversary” (Lk 18:3).

Compare:

- Jeremiah (Jer 11:18f; 15:15; 17:18; 18:19f; 20:11f);
- John the Baptist (Mt 3);
- Jesus (Mt 23);
- Martyrs in heaven (Rev 6:9-11).

If we are troubled by this, perhaps we don’t hate sin enough to get upset at the wickedness and godlessness around us. We have gotten to used to the darkness...

Psalm 35

- Protect Me vv. 1-10
- Reward Me vv. 11-18
- Vindicate Me vv. 19-28

David is once again being hounded by Saul and slandered by Saul’s men, many of whom had been David’s friends (Cf. 1 Sam 19:5; 20:1; 23:25; 24:9-15; 25:29; 26:18,19).

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.
- 2] Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.
- 3] Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.

A mixture of idioms: courtroom and battlefield. “...buckler” = a small, round shield either worn on the forearm or held by a short handle at arm’s length, to parry blows, etc. “...draw” = unsheath. David asks the Lord to “stop the way” as He had done at the Exodus (Ex 14:19ff).

- 4] Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.
- 5] Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.
- 6] Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

Chaff: weightless, worthless, defenseless, and harmless...Criticizing David for vv.4-8 shouldn’t overlook that David first prayed for their help and healing. (Angel of the Lord appears only three times in the Psalms: Ps 34:7, 35:5,6).

- 7] For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.
- 8] Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.
- 9] And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

Let them fall into their own traps (pits with nets and leaves over them). Goliath was slain by his own sword. Maxentius built a false bridge to drown Constantine, but was drowned himself. Henry III of France was stabbed in the very chamber where he schemed the cruel massacre of the Protestants, while his brother. Charles IX, who delighted in the blood of the saints was given blood to drink.

- 10] All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?
 11] False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.
 12] They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.

Each of David's three requests is followed with a song of praise to the Lord (vv. 9-10, 17-18, 27-28). "Who is like thee?" reminds us of Exodus (Ex 15:11). David states that the evidence proved he was innocent. On two occasions David could have killed Saul (1 Sam 24,26). Saul even admitted David was the better man (1 Sam 24:17).

- 13] But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.
 14] I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.
 15] But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not:
 16] With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.
 17] Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.

There are many forms of betrayal and breach of loyalty... Even just gossip is the most painful of sins...

- 18] I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.
 19] Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.
 20] For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.

Unlike Elijah, who felt he was fighting all alone (1 Kings 19:10-18), David knew that many people in Israel supported him, those who were living quietly in the land (v.20).

- 21] Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.
 22] This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.
 23] Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.
 24] Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

David's cause was the Lord's cause; the Lord's reputation was at stake.

- 25] Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.
 26] Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.
 27] Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.
 28] And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.

Unlike Elijah, who felt he was fighting all alone (1 Kgs 19:10-18), David knew that many people in Israel supported him, those who were living quietly in the land (v.20).

"Prosperity" = Shalom; not just "peace," but well being in every aspect of life. David's experience reminds us of Christ: hated without cause (Jn 15:25), falsely accused; but the Father "spared not His own son" (Rom 8:32) but willingly gave Him to die for the sins of the world...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 36

| | |
|--|-----------|
| The problem of evil in God's world | vv. 1-4 |
| Praise of God's character | vv. 5-9 |
| A petition for protection against evil and judgment for the wicked | vv. 10-12 |

Psalm 36

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD.]

- 1] The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.

"...fear of God": פֶּחַד *pachad* = dread, terror of judgment.

"Listen to your heart" the world advises! Yet, it is deceitful and incurably wicked (Jer 17:9). In Matthew 15:19 the Lord Jesus Christ says, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." There is no fear of God before their eyes" is quoted by Paul in Romans 3:18.

- 2] For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.
 3] The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.
 4] He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil. .

They can't sleep until they hatch a new plot (Cf. Micah 2:1). David then does a wise thing: instead of focusing on evil, he focuses on God's character...

Sinners are Self-destroyed

They are self-destroyers by being self-flatterers; Satan could not deceive them, if they did not deceive themselves. But will the cheat last always? No, the day is coming when the sinner will be undeceived, when his iniquity shall be found hateful.

Matthew Henry

One of the things the lost will have to live with throughout eternity is the old nature that they are going to learn to hate.

The next five verses are a concise theology: David was a worshipper, not a philosopher. Mercy and faithfulness, righteousness and justice, are often joined (Cf. Rom 11:33). "...wings" may allude to the cherubim over the Mercy Seat. (Cf. "Thy house" v.8.)

Jesus said, "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!" (Mt 23:37)

- 5] Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.
- 6] Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.
- 7] How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.
- 8] They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.
- 9] For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

The Lord's satisfying "river": Ps 46:4; Isa 8:5-8; Jer 2:13-19; Ezek 47: Jn 4:1-15; 7:37-39; Rev 22:1. "Pleasures" comes from the same Hebrew root as "Eden" in Gen 3 (means "delight"; Cf. rivers in Eden: Gen 2:8-14.)

- 10] O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.
- 11] Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.
- 12] There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

He took personal responsibility to obey God and to serve Him.

Next Session

Read (& meditate on) Psalms 37 - 41.

The Book of Psalms Session 8 Psalms 37 – 41

Christ's birth, betrayal, agony, death, resurrection, ascension, coming again in glory, and His worldwide reign—all pictured in inspired vividness in the Psalms (even more than Isaiah).

Messianic Profiles in Psalms

- To speak in parables Ps 78:2
- Will calm the storm Ps 89:10
- To be despised Ps 2:6; 69:19-22
- To be rejected Ps 118:22
- To be mocked Ps 22:7-8; 89:51-52
- To be whipped Ps 129:3
- To be derided Ps 69:8, 20
- Impaled on a cross Ps 22:ff
 - Thirsty Ps 22:16
 - Given wine mixed with gall Ps 69:20-22
 - Lots cast for his garments Ps 22:18-19
 - Not a bone to be broken Ps 34:21
- To rise from the dead Ps 16:10
- To Ascend to heaven Ps 68:19
- At the right hand of God Ps 110:1; 80:17
- Is the High Priest Ps 110:4
- Will judge the nations Ps 89:3-5
- Reign to be eternal Ps 89:35-37
- Is the Son of God Ps 2:7
- Is the Son of David Ps 110:1 (Mt 22:42-45)
- People to sing Hosanna to him Ps 118:25-26
- Blessed forever Ps 45:1-4, 8, 18
- Will come in glory in last days Ps 102:16-23

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 37

Acrostic psalms are Psalms 25, 34, **37**, 111, 112, 119, 145. David had written about the wicked in Psalm 36, and will pick up that theme again in Psalm 39. He wrote Psalm 37 in his mature years and discusses the

age-old problem of why the righteous suffer while the wicked appear to prosper. Perhaps this was part of David preparing Solomon for the throne (1 Kgs 2:3; Prov 23:17-18, 24; 24:19-20).

Covenant Relationship

If Israel disobeyed, God would chasten them *in the land* (invasion, drought, famine); then, if disobedient, He would take them *out of the land* (captivity); Deut 11, 33:28; Lev 2:3-20. However, it seemed that the wicked were prospering and God wasn't doing anything about it. David takes the long view and evaluates the immediate and transient in terms of the ultimate and eternal. He give four assurances:

Four Assurances: Psalm 37

- God can be trusted vv. 1-11
- God understands your situation vv. 12-20
- God blesses His people vv. 21-31
- God judges the wicked vv. 32-40

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.
- 2] For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.
- 3] Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

David gives one negative instruction—don't fret—and four positive instructions: trust in the Lord (v.3), delight in the Lord (v.4), commit yourself to the Lord (vv.5,6), and rest in the Lord (v.7). "...fret" = "to burn, get heated up." David says, "stay cool." The wicked are temporary and will eventually be gone. A fretful heart is not a trusting heart. This is the key theme of this psalm.

- 4] Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.
- 5] Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.
- 6] And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

"Delight": from a root which means "to be brought up in luxury, to be pampered." To enjoy the blessings and ignore the Blesser is to practice idolatry. Do you seek more "things" or more of God in your life?

"Commit" = "to roll off your burden": Cast your care upon Him (1 Pet 5:7). He will bring to pass the vindication of His servants who have been slandered by God's enemies.

- 7] Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

"rest" = "be silent," "be still." Creative silence is a rare commodity today. People cannot tolerate silence.

- 8] Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.
- 9] For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.
- 10] For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.
- 11] But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.
- 12] The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

"...meekness" does not mean weakness: force under control of faith. Moses was the meekest on the earth (Num 12:3), but of great power. For us to get upset because of evil schemes is to doubt the justice of God.

- 13] The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.
- 14] The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.
- 15] Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

Since God can be trusted, we should not fret. Since God understands our situation, we should not fear. "...slay" = "to butcher an animal."

- 16] A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.
- 17] For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.
- 18] The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.
- 19] They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

The Lord knows how "to make a little go a long way." (Loaves and fishes, et al.)

- 20] But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.
- 21] The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.
- 22] For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

- 23] The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.
 24] Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.
 25] I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

“Ordered” = “secured, established.” (Ps 119:133). The Lord can keep us from stumbling (Jude 24). David’s blessed summary follows...

- 26] He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.
 27] Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.
 28] For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.
 29] The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.
 30] The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.
 31] The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.
 32] The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.
 33] The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.
 34] Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.
 35] I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.
 36] Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

Not only did the tree die, there was no evidence that it was ever there.

- 37] Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.
 38] But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.
 39] But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.
 40] And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

The final destiny is the ultimate measure; not intermediate temporal appearances.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 38

Penitential Psalms: 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143

Suffering under God’s discipline: Our choices (Heb 12) are to: despise it; resist it; collapse under it; or...accept it, submit and pray that the lessons not be wasted...and that it is “undeserved” (Mt 5:11,12 ; 1 Pet 3:13-17).

Galileo, imprisoned by the Inquisition at Rome for asserting the Copernican System, was enjoined, as a penance, to repeat the Seven Penitential Psalms every week for three years.

Three Responses: Psalm 38

When God’s people suffer the consequences of sin and feel the chastening hand of God, we must choose one of three responses:

- We can focus on Ourselves
 – and experience Sins Painfulness vv. 1-8
- We can focus on Others
 – and experience Sin’s Loneliness vv. 9-14
- We can focus on the Lord
 – and experience Sin’s Forgiveness vv. 15-22

[A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.]

- 1] O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.
- “Remembrance” = for a memorial. A petition to God to remember him and grant forgiveness. YHWH (v.9: Adonai: Master. He will use both names in v.15 & 21,22): Like a loving father, the Lord first rebuked him and then chastened him—both evidences of His love.
- 2] For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.
 3] There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.
 4] For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.
- God’s arrows (cf. Job 6:4; 7:20; 16:12.) “...rest” = Heb. Shalom, peace, or, health. The cause of the illness is sin (this is not “Messianic”).
- 5] My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.
 6] I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.
 7] For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh.
 8] I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

There was no health in his body; his pain was so severe that he howled like a wild beast. All this because he had been foolish and sinned against the Lord (v.5). We are free to disobey, but we are not free to change the consequences.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:1,2

But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

2 Corinthians 2:5-11

- 9] Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.
10] My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.
11] My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.

Here, Lord = Adonai: Master. (v.1: YHWH) He will use both names in v. 15 & 21,22. Prayer is God's way of enlisting us in what He is doing. Prayer isn't a theological concept to analyze and explain: it's a privilege to cherish, a blessing to claim. "...sore" = Heb. stroke; or plague, like leprosy; cf. "...my kinsmen" keeping their distance.

- 12] They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.
13] But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth.
14] Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

Those who should have encouraged kept their distance; his enemies wanted him to die. (Cf. Job's three friends...) David kept quiet and turned the matter over to the Lord: he followed the instructions he had given in Psalm 37.

- 15] For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.
16] For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me.
17] For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me.

It wasn't just for David: his enemies plot against him (v.12), gloat over his fall (v.16), hate, slander, etc (v.19-20): we shouldn't give God's enemies occasion to blaspheme! (2 Sam 12:14).

"...to halt" = Heb. for halting; give up.

- 18] David doesn't question the legitimacy of his suffering, for he admitted his sin.
18] For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.
19] But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.
20] They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is.
21] Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me.
22] Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Be with me | Deut 4:31; 31:6,8; Heb 13:5 |
| Be near me | Ps 16:8; 34:18; James 4:8 |
| Be for me and help me | Ps 28:7; Isa 41:10; Rom 8:33-39 |

Like the Prophet Habakkuk, David wanted God to remember to be merciful (Hab 3:2).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 39

Psalm 38 and 39 record David attempting to remain silent during a time of trial, lest he say something that would offend believers or give ammunition to unbelievers (Ps 38:13-14; 39:1-3,9). (This is also a psalm often used at funerals: "...the most beautiful of all elegies in the Psalter." But his pent up feelings burst forth to God, and not to man...)

Four Stages in Overcoming: Psalm 39

- He was Silent
– A Burning Heart vv. 1-3
- He was Despondent
– A Burdened Heart vv. 4-6
- He was Confident
– A Believing Heart vv. 7-8
- He was Repentant
– A Broken Heart vv. 9-12

[To the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.]

Jeduthun: one of the three musicians (with Heman and Asaph) David put in charge of the worship at the sanctuary (1 Chr 16:37-43; 2 Chr 5:12). Jeduthun is also mentioned in Psalm 62 and 77.

- 1] I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

“...my mouth” = Heb. a bridle, or, muzzle for my mouth. He wanted to speak out but deemed it best to remain silent (Eccl 3:7); he “put a zipper on his mouth.” But that just intensified his “heartburn.” He didn’t argue with God (v.9).

- 2] I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.
- 3] My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue,
- 4] LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.
- 5] Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.
- 6] Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

David measured his days: Ps 90:12; 119:84 (as a “handbreadth”—four fingers: Ps 90:1-11). “...vanity” = “a breath, emptiness.” Also, v.11. Cf. Eccl 6:12, et al. The brevity of life should tell us something! Your journey is an eternal one. What is life all about? A vain show on life’s stage: “signifying nothing” [Hamlet... Image vs. reality...]

*Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!
Life’s but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.*

—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* Act III

- 7] And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.
- 8] Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

The central verse in this psalm, and a turning point in David’s experience. He admitted his guilt before God (1 John 1:9; Cf. 1 Sam 3:18; Lam 1:21).

- 9] I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.
- 10] Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.
- 11] When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.

“...blow” = Heb. Conflict. “...his beauty...” = Heb. that which is to be desired in him to melt away.

God whispers to us in our pleasures; speaks in our conscience; but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to arouse a deaf world.

—C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

—Jim Elliot

- 12] Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.
- 13] O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

“...no more” = on his earthly pilgrimage. He will “dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Ps 23:6).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 40

Psalm 40 and 41 complete Book I of the Psalms (the “Genesis” collection.) They are both quoted in the New Testament, which make them “Messianic” psalms. Hebrews 10:5-9 quotes Ps 40:6-8 and applies it to Christ (hence, a Messianic Psalm). Yet it also applies to David’s own life experiences.

David’s Life: Psalm 40

- Dangerous exile years
 - Praises God for all He has done vv. 1-5
- Dedication as new king
 - Gives God all that He asks vv. 6-10
- Prayer for personal forgiveness and victory following coronation
 - Trusts God for all that remains vv. 11-17

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
- 2] He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
- 3] And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

“I waited...” = Heb. In waiting I waited. “...pit...clay”: A rhetorical allusion to the years of exile and persecution...

- 4] Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5] Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

“Lies” = idols. Verse 5 is David’s version of Romans 8:28.

6] Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

“Mine ears hast thou opened” [literally, digged, or pierced through] Cf. Ezek 21:6. Apparent editorial change by the Holy Spirit in the quote: Contrast the bondsman’s awl with the body that was nailed to the cross on our behalf...

Personal: Hearts (commitment) must precede offerings (Isa 1:11-17; Jer 7:22-23; Hos 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Mk 12:32,33).

“A body hast thou prepared me” (Heb 10:5).

- Sacrifice: any animal whose blood was offered at the altar, followed by a communal meal.
- Offering: a meal offering that could accompany sacrifices.
- Sin Offering: given to cover specific offenses and bring reconciliation between the offender and God.
- All these were fulfilled in Christ (Lev 1-7; Heb 10:1-17).

7] Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

8] I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

“...Lo, I come”: speaks of pre-existence (Jn 5:39; Cf. Emmaus Road, Lk 24:27). “...within my heart” = Heb: “in the midst of my bowels.”

9] I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

10] I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

11] Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12] For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

Those hairs are numbered: (Matt 10:30; Luke 12:7) God knows all of your problems...

13] Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

14] Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

15] Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

16] Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

17] But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

A royal prayer for God’s blessing on the nation. “I am...Thou art...” The great I AM is adequate for every need! Verses 13-17 are repeated in modified form in Psalm 70.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 41

Again we see factors that suggest the distress and danger David felt when his enemies plot against him and wait for him to die. This, again, suggests the time of Absalom’s rebellion. David’s illness prevented him from leading the nation as he wanted to (2 Sam 15:1-6), and Absalom took advantage of this to promote himself as king. When we find ourselves in difficulty, we may use this psalm to take an inventory of our spiritual condition by asking four questions:

Four Questions: Psalm 41

- Integrity:
 - How do we treat others? vv. 1-4
- Treachery:
 - How do others treat us? vv. 5-9
- Mercy:
 - How does God treat us? vv. 10-12
- Glory:
 - How do we treat God? vv. 13

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

1] Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

2] The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

Covenant stipulations (Lev 26:1-13; Deut 7:13-16; 28:1-14). David had obeyed the Lord’s rules and had shown mercy to King Saul, to Saul’s grandson, Mehpibosheth, and to the needy in the land.

3] The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

4] I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

“...heal him and raise him up.”

5] Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

6] And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.

7] All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.

Absalom had no son: it would have ended the dynasty. God had promised that David’s descendants would sit on the throne forever (2 Sam 7:11-16); a promise fulfilled in Christ (Lk 1:31-33). David was gifted at reading people (2 Sam 14:17-20) and knew the truth.

8] An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

9] Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

If the “familiar friend” was Ahithophel, David’s counselor, then this was, indeed, during Absalom’s rebellion. Jesus quoted v.9 in the upper room, referring to Judas (John 13:18). (He didn’t quote the phrase “whom I trusted” for He knew Judas had no saving faith (John 6:70,71).

Ahithophel

Ahithophel was the father of Eliam (1 Chr 3:5). Eliam was the father of Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:3; 23:34,39). Ahithophel apparently never forgave David for what he did to his granddaughter & grandson-in-law. Ahithophel also ultimately committed suicide by hanging himself (2 Sam 17:23). Peter also refers to this (Acts 1:16).

10] But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

“Raise me up, that I may recompense them”: Resurrection! (1 Cor 15:1-4).

11] By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

12] And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.

13] Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

This psalm opens and ends with “blessed.” This “Genesis Section” opens and closes with “blessed.” (Each of the first four books ends with

a similar doxology (Ps 72:18-20; 89:52; 106:48). Book V ends with a praise psalm, Psalm 150. The double “amen” puts the finishing touches on God’s salvation for us: “It is finished,” indeed!

Next Session

Begin Book II: the “Exodus” Section, Psalms 42-72. Meditate on Psalms 42-48. Which of these are “Kingdom Psalms”? Why?

The Book of Psalms Session 9 Book II: The Exodus Section Psalms 42 - 48

A “Pentateuch” of Psalms

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Genesis | About Man | Ps 1 - 41 |
| Exodus | Deliverance | Ps 42 - 72 |
| Leviticus | Sanctuary | Ps 73 - 89 |
| Numbers | Unrest; Wandering | Ps 90 - 106 |
| Deuteronomy | Word of the Lord | Ps 107 - 150 |

The Messianic Psalms

The Book of Psalms is quoted in the NT more than any other book in OT and it constitutes irrefutable testimony to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures (cf. Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 87, 89, 102, 110, 118, et al.).

The Shepherd Psalms: Review

- **The Suffering Savior** **Psalm 22**
– The Good Shepherd John 10:1-18
- **The Living Shepherd** **Psalm 23**
– The Great Shepherd Hebrews 13:20,21
- **The Exalted Sovereign** **Psalm 24**
– The Chief Shepherd 1 Peter 5:4

Dispensationally Considered

This is a view neglected (or missed) by most commentators. It is, however, recognized by J. Vernon McGee, Peter Ruckman, and others. You need to come to your own conclusions...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 42

Psalm

| | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|
| 42 |] The Great Tribulation | | |
| 43 | | | |
| 44 | | | |
| 45 | Marriage Supper of the Lamb | | |
| 46 |] His Kingdom |] Its Arrival | |
| 47 | | | Its Range |
| 48 | | | Its Center |

Book II begins. When Israel was in the land of Egypt (Ex 12), God first redeemed them by blood. The blood of the Passover lamb was sprinkled on the doorposts of the houses by those who believed God. That night the death angel “passed over” the homes, and if blood was there no one died. This was redemption *by blood*. The next phase of redemption was at the Red Sea, and there it was redemption *by power*.

[To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah.]

“Maschil” = a psalm of teaching, a psalm of understanding.

“Korah”: He led a rebellion during the period of Israel’s wandering in the wilderness. God executed him because of his rebellion against the authority of Moses and Aaron, but his sons were spared. God made it very clear (Num 26:9–11) that his sons did not die in God’s judgment, but they continued their service before God. They are the ones who wrote these first few psalms of the so-called “Exodus section.”

- 1] As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.
- 2] My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Historical Context?

- Did David write this psalm?
- When did he enter the Holy of Holies (v. 2) ; with a multitude on a holy day (v. 4)?

- 3] My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?
- 4] When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

This will be the taunt during the Great Tribulation period: “Where is your God? When is Messiah coming?” By his own as well as his enemies (v.9). But now the joy and praise has ceased. There was much weeping in the brickyards of Egypt and will be again in the future.

- 5] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.
- 6] O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.

“...for the help of his countenance” or, His presence is salvation. He rebukes himself for his despondency and encourages himself to trust in God. Some suggest this is David in exile from Absalom; however, Mizar is a low peak in the northern part of Palestine E or the Jordan, as is the region of the Hermon, 40 mi N of Galilee; David was 20 miles south of Galilee.

- 7] Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.
- 8] Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

This is the language Jonah used in his prayer. “For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me” (Jon 2:3). Jonah went down into the jaws of death. During the Great Tribulation Israel will think that destruction is upon them, but God will deliver them.

- 9] I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
- 10] As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?

Oppression of the enemy? The Antichrist? Christ is (my) Rock (1 Cor 10:4).

- 11] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

This theme appears to continue in the next Psalm.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 43

Psalm 43 is closely connected with Psalm 42. The godly remnant calls on God to act in their behalf. (In these Psalms, I was quite taken with J. Vernon McGee's and Peter Ruckman's focus on the *dispensational* aspects implied by them...)

- 1] Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.
- 2] For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

This is the remnant of Israel speaking: The Antichrist is a liar. He will make a covenant with these people and then will break it in the midst of the "week." When this happens, their cry will be, "Deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man." [Have you ever prayed that our country will not be taken over by deceitful and unjust men?]

- 3] O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

Jesus said, "... I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn 8:12). He also said, "... I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn 14:6).

"Holy hill" = Psalm 2:6 "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." "Tabernacle(s)" = plural. ("Mansions" of John 14:1?)

- 4] Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.
- 5] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Their prayers will be answered, and their long expected Messiah will return. At that time Ezekiel's prophecy will be fulfilled (Ezek 36:26-28).

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Ezekiel 36:26-28

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 44

[To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.]

- 1] We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.
- 2] How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

Again, instruction from the sons of Korah. Their history echoes: "And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites" (Judg 6:13).

In that day of trouble, just when God is on the verge of delivering them again, Israel will refer to God's help in the past. God has intruded in history before, and He will do it again.

- 3] For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.
- 4] Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

Jacob became the nation of Israel. When he cries, "Thou art my King, O God," he is talking about Israel's King. Our Lord Jesus is Israel's King, and He will return to deliver His suffering people.

- 5] Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.
- 6] For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.
- 7] But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.
- 8] In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.

Israel is in deep trouble. The enemy is raging against them; that "little horn" that Daniel mentioned "... shall wear out the saints of the Most High ..." (Dan 7:25). These are Jewish saints, and Antichrist makes war against them to overcome them. They are warned not to fight back. They refuse the mark of the beast, and they are killed in large numbers. In their distress they cry out to God.

- 9] But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.
- 10] Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us spoil for themselves.
- 11] Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen.

“like...”: Heb. “as sheep of meat.”

- 12] Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase thy wealth by their price.
- 13] Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.
- 14] Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.

Jews are being sold as slaves, and eaten alive (v.22).

- 15] My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,
- 16] For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger.
- 17] All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.

Historical Context?

- The Jews had no armies from 70 A.D. to 1945 (v.9);
- In the Tribulation, they lose the battles with the Antichrist (v.10);
- They are scattered during the Church age and sold for slaves during the Tribulation (v.12);
- “The enemy and avenger” (v.16) is identified in Rev 12:9 & 13:6 (Cf. 11:8, 17:3)

Verses 9-16 would seem to describe the Church age and at the end of the Tribulation.

- 18] Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way;
- 19] Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

“Dragons”: תנין *tan-noon* or *tan-neem* (Ezek 29:3); dragon, serpent, sea monster, venomous snake (Ps 74:13; Isa 27:1; not “jackals” as in NIV, RSV, et al.). “Shadow of death”: Isa 9:2; Job 10:21,22.

In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Isaiah 21:1

For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

Psalms 74:12-14

- 20] If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god;
- 21] Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.
- 22] Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.
- 23] Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.

Cf. Rom 8:36. Here, it is the remnant crying for deliverance; Psalm 121:4: “Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

- 24] Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?
- 25] For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.
- 26] Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies’ sake.

From the darkest moment in the history of this world comes a cry from the remnant for God to redeem them for His mercies’ sake.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 45

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman: “One of the greatest doctrinal views of ‘Daniel’s Seventieth Week’ found anywhere in the Bible. Psalm 44 shows the condition of Israel on the earth while the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is taking place in heaven (Psalm 45).”

This is a messianic psalm and is so quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It speaks of the second coming of Christ. This changes the tenor of the Psalms from the cry of a people in the anguish of tribulation to the glorious triumph of their coming King, as it is described in Revelation 19. Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke of it also (Mt 24:29-30), and it *is* the hope of the world.

[To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves.]

This is another *maschil* psalm; that is, for instruction, written by the sons of Korah, and is inscribed “To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim,” which means “lilies.” It is a picture of Christ as the Messiah—He is the Lily of the Valley as well as the Rose of Sharon. [“A song of loves” may also tie this to the Song of Songs...] This is a lovely psalm which is occupied with the person of Christ: not as a Savior, but as a King and Bridegroom...

- 1] My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

“...is inditing”: Heb. boileth, or bursting forth. [“I” is God the Father!]

This is a lovely psalm which is occupied with the person of Christ: not as a Savior, but as a King and Bridegroom...

["Ready writer" (LXX) = This technical term must have been common enough among Greek-speaking Jews in the 3rd century B.C. for its use in the Septuagint to have any purpose.]

Shorthand Skills

One of the obligatory qualifications among the professionals in the Graeco-Roman world was that of a *tachygráphos*, or shorthand writer. Matthew, a former customs official, would have had a working knowledge of *tachygraphy*, and thus may have been able to transcribe the Sermon on the Mount verbatim, just as Tertius and others were able to transcribe Paul's more verbose utterances. [E. R. Richards, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul*, Tübingen, 1991, pp.26-47,169-72 (q.v. Thiede and d'Ancona, p.240); E. J. Goodspeed, *Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist*, Philadelphia, 1959, pp.16-17; and R. H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel*, Leiden, 1967, pp.182-4; B. Orchard and H. Riley, *The Order of the Synoptics*, Macon GA 1987, pp.269-73; (q.v. Thiede and d'Ancona, p.240).]

Professional Stenographers

- By hand: "manu-scripts."
- Specifically named:
 - Romans 16:22 Tertius
 - 1 Corinthians 1:1 Sosthenes
 - 2 Corinthians 1:1 Timothy
 - Philippians 1:1 Timothy
 - Colossians 1:1 Timothy
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Silvanus
 - Philemon 1:1 Timothy
 - 1 Peter 5:12 Silvanus

- 2] Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.
- 3] Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.
- 4] And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.
- 5] Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.

"...sword": as the Avenger of Blood; "...ride prosperously..": Heb. prosper thou; truth, meekness, and righteousness. (That would be refreshing.)
"Terrible" = awe-inspiring. "...arrows": Ps 21:12; 77:17; 18:14; 144:6

- 6] Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.
- 7] Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

This is a Messianic Psalm, as it is quoted in Heb 1:8-9. "Thy throne": Coronation day! (Mt 25:31). The anointing of the Bridegroom...
"..anointed One = Messiah, a title (Christ in Greek).

But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Hebrews 1:8,9

The entire first chapter of Hebrews presents our Lord Jesus in His exaltation, being the express image of God, far superior to angels, and seated at God's right hand.

- 8] All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.
- 9] Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.
- 10] Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

Who is the "queen" in verse 9? The church is not mentioned by name in the Old Testament, but we see it in type or in figures of speech: most of the brides in the Old Testament are pictures of Christ and His bride, the church. Examples of this are Eve, Rebekah, and Ruth. Although she is not specifically identified as a picture of the church, some see this as Christ will lift her to the throne. We are to leave the world. We are not to love the world. We have been saved out of it.

- 11] So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.

The preparation of the Bride. The church is to be made beautiful. All sin will be removed. The future tense of Salvation: Glorification.

- 12] And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.
- 13] The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.
- 14] She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

The Bride is brought to the King.

- 15] With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.
- 16] Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.
- 17] I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

This verse speaks of the millennial kingdom. This is a glorious psalm, and when it is put in proper perspective, it has great meaning for us today.

The Kingdom Psalms: Psalms 46-48

The next three psalms form a little cluster of prophetic pictures of the kingdom that is coming on this earth. Psalm 45 presented the coming of the King to establish His kingdom here upon this earth, the millennial kingdom. The following three psalms set before us this kingdom.

The Coming Kingdom

- **The Arrival of the Kingdom** **Psalm 46**
– through Tribulation
- **The Range of the Kingdom** **Psalm 47**
– “all the earth”
- **The Center of the Kingdom** **Psalm 48**
– “Zion”

Some suggest that King Hezekiah wrote Psalms 46, 47, & 48 out of the context of God's deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians (2 Kgs 18, 19; 2 Chr 32; Isa 36, 37). The scope of them seems to go much further... It is important to see this psalm in its proper setting. It belongs after Psalm 45 and with Psalms 47 and 48...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 46

- The Sufficiency of God vv. 1-3
- The Security of God vv. 4-7
- The Supremacy of God vv. 8-11

A hallelujah chorus, in which we see the Sufficiency of God, the Security of God, and the Supremacy of God.

[To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth.]

“...Alamoth”: Evidently the word alamoth means “with virgins” (Isa 7:14) and in this instance speaks of maidens' voices. Reminiscent of

another great song of deliverance and victory that was sung when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, apparently led by Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron (Ex 15:21).

- 1] God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Psalm 46 was Martin Luther's favorite psalm. (When he wrote that great Reformation hymn, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” he may very well have had this psalm in mind.) Verse 1 is on his tomb at Wittenberg.

- 2] Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
- 3] Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

Christians fail to trust God in times of trouble because they know nothing about His sufficiency. They have not learned that God is sufficient in any circumstance.

- 4] There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.
- 5] God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.
- 6] The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.
- 7] The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

In Psalm 1 we were told that the blessed man was planted by the rivers of water, which is the Word of God. Also, a river that flows out from the house of God (Ezek 47). And John saw “...a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God...” (Rev 22:1).

“...and that right early”: Heb. when the morning appeareth. Verse 6 is looking back on the convulsions of the Great Tribulation period. In the next verse, the remnant sings His praises: our “refuge”: Heb. a high place for us.

Jacob was protected from:

- Being killed by his brother Gen 27:41-46
- Being ignored at he dispensing of the blessing Gen 25:33,34
- Being cheated by Laban his employer Gen 31:7
- Getting involved in a war over Dinah Gen 34:30
- An early death (lived 130 years) Gen 47:9

- 8] Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.
- 9] He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

Only a war will cause wars to cease (Isa 1:28-2:4). This picture sets before us the last days on earth, when the One who is “the stone cut out of the mountain without hands” (whom Nebuchadnezzar saw in his vision in Dan 2:45) will deal an annihilating blow upon this earth. We are told that after the Battle of Armageddon is over, the wreckage of warfare and the dead will be strewn everywhere (Cf. Hag 2:6,9; Joel 3:11,12; Ps 9:19;18:43; 47:8; 102:15 et al.).

- 10] Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.
- 11] The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

This is God’s purpose for the earth: “Be still and know that I am God.” There are even convulsions in nature today. He tells us to be calm in the time of storm. (Christ was in a storm with His disciples, and He went to sleep. When they roused Him from His sleep, He had more trouble calming the disciples than He had calming the storm.) This psalm will be a great blessing in the future, and it also is a comfort for all of God’s people today.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 47

This is the second of the little cluster of prophetic pictures of the millennial kingdom, which is established by the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming. In Psalm 46 we saw the celebration of His coming in judgment, and now in Psalm 47 His kingdom is established and He is reigning on the earth.

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.]

- 1] O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
- 2] For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.

This is a continuation of praise and worship of Christ who is now King over all the earth. “...terrible” = awesome. However, before Christ can reign on this earth, He will have to put down all rebellion, self-conceit, arrogance, and the lawlessness of the god of this world (2 Cor 4:4).

- 3] He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.
- 4] He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

This, now, is the appropriate time to sing, “Joy to the World!” (This is not really a hymn that speaks of the birth of Christ; rather, it speaks of His Second Coming.)

Joy to the World

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav’n and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;
Let men—their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy.

Joy to the World
No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love.

— Isaac Watts

- 5] God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
- 6] Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.
- 7] For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

Shout & trumpet (1 Thess 4:16?)... Note the threesome: “sing praises...”

- 8] God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.
- 9] The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.

“...princes...”: the people are gathered unto the people of the God of Abraham; this is Millennial. The Lord came to earth 1900 years ago, was born in Bethlehem, finished His work of salvation on earth, and then ascended to heaven—Psalm 24 refers to that. But in this psalm another ascension is spoken about. When Christ comes to earth the second time, He will establish His kingdom and be going back and forth to the New Jerusalem:

God is gone up amidst shouting, Jehovah amid the sound of a trumpet. Sing Psalms unto God! Sing Psalms unto our King, sing Psalms! For God is the King of all the earth—sing Psalms for instruction. God reigneth over the nations; God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness. The willing hearted of the people have gathered together with the people of the God of Abraham; for unto God belong the shields of the earth; He is greatly exalted.

— A.C. Gaebelein, *The Book of Psalms*

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 48

This is the last of the group of three Millennial psalms, which celebrates the final and complete victory of the Messiah.

[A Song and Psalm for the sons of Korah.]

- 1] Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.
- 2] Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.
- 3] God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

When it talks about the city of God in the holy mountain, it refers to Jerusalem. "...the sides of the north": a way of ascent and descent to this earth? A remarkable prophecy in Isaiah mentions Satan in connection with "the sides of the north" (Isa 14:13-14).

NIV: Zaphon (Heb: *tsaphon*); a city on the East of the Jordan in the territory of Gad (Josh 13:27), where Baal was said to dwell. [It is named again in Judg 12:1 as the place where the elders of Gilead gathered to meet with Jephthah. Heb: *tsaphonah* could be translated "to Zaphon," not "northward."]

Satan's ambition: "to be like the most high":

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Isaiah 14:13,14

- 4] For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.
- 5] They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away.
- 6] Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail.

This describes the time after the thousand years of peace when the devil is released for a season:

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Revelation 20:7-9

- 7] Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.
- 8] As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.
- 9] We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.
- 10] According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.
- 11] Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.
- 12] Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.
- 13] Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

"Mark...": Heb. Set your heart to; consider: or, raise up.

- 14] For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

Dispensationally Considered

Psalm

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

The Great Tribulation

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

His Kingdom

Its Arrival

Its Range

Its Center

A Devotional Paradigm

- Past: David's predicament, motives.
- Present: How this impacts Israel today.

- Personal: How does this impact *you* today?
- Prophetic: Messianic *and* Dispensationally Considered

A Caveat for our Souls

- Chewing the cud: the key to (the “clean”) sacrifices.
- Analysis Paralysis: This can blindfold our souls to the message.
- Prayerful absorption vs. Intellectual dissection: a gateway to His presence.

Next Session

Meditate on Psalms 49 – 51. Also, read 2 Samuel 11 & 12.

The Book of Psalms Session 10

Psalms 49 - 51

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 49

Theme: The end of those who boast themselves in riches—not only the vanity of riches themselves, but the end of those who boast in riches.

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.]

- 1] Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world:
- 2] Both low and high, rich and poor, together.
- 3] My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

As He will also do in the next psalm, God is calling all to “hear” (“give ear” is an unusual Hebrew word for the total human scene), as He did when He put His people in the land (Deut 32:1), and 800 years later when He was about to put them out of the land (Isa 1:2).

- 4] I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.
- 5] Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

“...dark saying” = riddle. Who is asking the question? The poor? The rich? You? And me... No one can buy Salvation (Rom 4:5): “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

- 6] They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

- 7] None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

A king's ransom would be of no avail, a Monte Rosa of rubies, an America of silver, a world of gold, a sun of diamonds, could all be utterly contemned. O ye boasters, think not to terrify us with your worthless wealth, go ye and intimidate death before ye threaten men in whom is immortality and life.

Charles H. Spurgeon

- 8] (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)
- 9] That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.
- 10] For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

This psalm can be viewed as the basis for the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31). (You “can’t take it with you,” but you can send it on ahead. [“How much did he leave?” the anxious heir asked the lawyer. “All of it,” was the reply.]

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

Jim Elliot
The Journals of Jim Elliot,
 Elisabeth Elliot, ed., Revell, 1975, p.174

- 11] Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.
- 12] Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.

Names are forgotten, despite our attempts to perpetuate them... “Dust to dust” has few exceptions...

- 13] This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.
- 14] Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.
- 15] But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.
- 16] Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

“Grave” = Sheol. The abode of the dead—not the physical grave, which *can* be owned. “Death shall feed upon them” = (Heb) “Death shall be their shepherd.” The important issue is what YOU inherit after death...

The rich today can get away with murder. A fair trial is coming, with our King.

- 17] For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.
- 18] Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.
- 19] He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.
- 20] Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

Evolution in reverse: man, not as he was created, goes the way of animals...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 50

This is the first psalm of Asaph, a musician and one of the three great song leaders in the temple. Heman, Asaph, and Ethan. It reveals God coming in righteousness to judge His people and to judge the wicked.

[A Psalm of Asaph.]

- 1] The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.
- 2] Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.
- 3] Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.
- 4] He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

God wants plenty of witnesses.

- 5] Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

These are the covenant people: the Jews, the children of Israel.

- 6] And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.

The Lord Jesus Christ is going to be the judge. John 5:22: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

- 7] Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.
- 8] I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.
- 9] I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.

For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and

I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

Jeremiah 7:22-23

Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Micah 6:6-8

- 10] For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.
- 11] I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.
- 12] If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.
- 13] Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?
- 14] Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:
- 15] And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.
- 16] But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?
- 17] Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.
- 18] When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.
- 19] Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.
- 20] Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.
- 21] These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.
- 22] Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.
- 23] Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

God is not speaking only to Israel, He is speaking to us in our day also. He unmasks hypocrisy. Because God is silent does not mean that He approves.

2 Samuel 11: David & Bathsheba

- 1] And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.
- 2] And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and

- walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.
- 3] And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?
 - 4] And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.
 - 5] And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child.
 - 6] And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.
 - 7] And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.
 - 8] And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king.
 - 9] But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.
 - 10] And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house?
 - 11] And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.
 - 12] And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.
 - 13] And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.
 - 14] And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.
 - 15] And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.
 - 16] And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.
 - 17] And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.
 - 18] Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;
 - 19] And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king,
 - 20] And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?
 - 21] Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.
 - 22] So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.

- 23] And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.
- 24] And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.
- 25] Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him.
- 26] And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.
- 27] And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.

Bathsheba's Talents

- Obtaining the object of her ambitions;
- Her promptitude disclosing her pregnancy;
- Her activity in defeating Adonijah's expectation of succeeding to the crown;
- Her son's succession to the throne;
- Her dignity as the king's mother.

[Cf Matthew 1:6: "of her that had been the wife of Uriah..." It was David's sin as far as the sacred record goes; Bathsheba's name is not directly associated with the sin in the listing in Matthew or I Chronicles.]

2 Samuel 12: David Rebuked

- 1] And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.
- 2] The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:
- 3] But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.
- 4] And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.
- 5] And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:
- 6] And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

From David's own lips...

- 7] And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

Nathan was one of the bravest men in Scripture!

- 8] And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.
- 9] Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.
- 10] Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.
- 11] Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.
- 12] For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.
- 13] And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.
- 14] Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.
- 15] And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.
- 16] David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.
- 17] And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.
- 18] And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?
- 19] But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.
- 20] Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.
- 21] Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.
- 22] And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?
- 23] But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

Romans 7:8,9

- 24] And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.
- 25] And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

David's Wives and Sons

Wives:

Michal (Saul's daughter)
Ahinoam
Abigail (Nabal's widow)
Maacah (daughter of King Geshur)
Haggith
Abital
Eglah
Bathsheba (wife of Uriah)

Sons:

Ammon
Kileab
Absalom
Adonijah
Shephatiah
Ithream
Solomon
Nathan

Also: Shammua, Shebab, Ibhar, Elishua, Elpalet, Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Beeliada, & Eliphalet.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 51 "David's Repentance"

David broke two of God's commandments: the 7th commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (with Bathsheba); he broke the 6th commandment: "Thou shalt not kill" (arranging death for Uriah, one of his mighty men and one of David's most faithful followers).

Psalm 51

- Cry of Conscience & Conviction of Sin vv. 1-3
- Cry of Confession of Sin & Clemency vv. 4-8
- Cry for Cleansing and Communion vv. 9-19

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.]

The superscription is also part of the inspired Word of God. In this case, the historical identity is clearly known and essential to our understanding. We *all* have need of repentance and cleansing...

- 1] Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.
- 2] Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3] For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

“...transgressions”: To transgress is to step over the boundaries of God. Iniquity means that which is altogether wrong. And David admitted it! In verses 2 & 3 “sin” is חַטָּאת *chattath*, meaning “sin offering.” [In v.4 it is חַטָּא *chata*, translated in the LXX by the Greek word ἡμαρτων *hamartia*: “to miss the mark.” [The verb is indicative aorist active 1st person singular.]

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23).

Cry of Confession of Sin & Clemency (vv. 4-8)

- 4] Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Sin Against Whom?

- Against Bathsheba
- Against Uriah, her husband
- Against Joab by involving him
- Against his family
- Against the community & Jerusalem
- Against the nation of which He was king
- Against God Himself!

The others are now gone. It continues to give the enemies of God cause to blaspheme “railing accusations” (cf. 2 Sam 12:14). Also, as Joseph (cf. Gen 39:9!) God says, in effect, “David, You’ve hurt me!”

- 5] Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

The Sin Nature

Every man knows that of himself which he dares not tell his dearest friend.
Samuel Johnson

We must say of ourselves that we are evil, have been evil, and unhappily, I must add—shall be also in the future. Nobody can deliver himself; someone must stretch out a hand to lift him up.

Seneca

- 6] Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.
7] Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

- 8] Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Exodus 34:6,7

“...that will by no means clear the guilty...”: The ultimate paradox...How then?

It may be that God can forgive sin, but I don’t see how.

Socrates

Hyssop

Hyssop was a little plant that grew on rocks in damp places and is traditionally described as Marjoram (origanum). [An interesting sidelight is a statement from a scientific journal that penicillin was found growing on hyssop. However, hyssop had to do with something penicillin can’t cure: sin.] Hyssop was used to apply the blood to the doorposts during the Passover (Ex 12:22) and in cleansing a leper: two birds, one dipped in the blood of another and released (Lev 14:4-55). It was also used to apply the ashes of the red heifer (Num 19:6) and to sprinkle the blood of the vessels, etc. (Heb 9:19).

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Hebrews 9:19-24

Cry for Cleansing and Communion (vv. 9-19)

- 9] Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

David needed a spot remover. So do we: 1 John 1:9!

10] Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

“Create” = Bara, as in Gen 1:1. Our heart is incurable! (Jer 17:9).
“...right”: or constant. All things are become new (2 Cor 5:17).

11] Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

The New Testament Christian cannot properly pray this prayer: we are sealed.

12] Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

He lost the joy, not the salvation.

13] Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14] Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15] O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16] For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

- What is the measure of *your* love? – *It is your estimate of your own sins.*
- Is it possible that you do not confess your sins?
- When was the last time you wept over your sins?
- When was the last time you cried out in the night because of your failures? – *There is forgiveness with Him; but there must be confession on our part.*

17] The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18] Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19] Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

David's Zenith

- Victorious Warrior, Clever General; Subdues:
 - Philistines to the West (Saul's nemesis);
 - Syrians and Hadadezer in the North;
 - Ammonites and Moabites on the East;
 - Edomites and Amalekites in the South.
- Constructive Administrator:
 - “*Judgment and justice to all the people*”;
 - Organizes Priesthood into 24 Courses.
- Major Poet, Song Writer, Psalms.

David's Turning Point

- His Great Sin (Note the honesty of the Scriptures!): Adultery; then murder.
- Culmination of a *Process*—prosperous ease; self-indulgence—accumulating wives forbidden (Deut 17:17). Bathsheba: the granddaughter of Ahithophel (who later counsels Absalom against David...)
- Remorse and Repentance (Psalm 51): “*A man after God's own heart*” (1 Sam 13:14; Acts 13:22).

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, “Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.” Selah.

Psalm 89:3,4

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Galatians 6:1

Next Session

Four Prophetic Psalms *about the Antichrist!* (Psalms 52 - 55).

The Book of Psalms Session 11 Psalms 52 - 55

Perhaps it is the personal, devotional, aspect of the psalms that will cause them to become so dear to one immersed in them. However, their prophetic aspect can also be a key epistemological treasure.

The Messianic Psalms

The Messianic psalms are on solid ground as they are quoted as such in the New Testament. The Book of Psalms is quoted in the NT more than any other book in OT (even more than Isaiah) and it constitutes irrefutable testimony to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures (Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 87, 89, 102, 110, 118, et al.)

In contrast, the Dispensational Psalms are not free of controversy, as they are not directly quoted, as such, in the New Testament. They are also difficult since they depend on a sound foundation in eschatology.

This is a view neglected (or missed) by most commentators. It is, however, recognized by J. Vernon McGee, Peter Ruckman, and others. You need to come to your own conclusions...

Dispensationally Considered

Psalm

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 42 |] The Great Tribulation | |
| 43 | | |
| 44 | | |
| 45 | Marriage Supper of the Lamb | |
| 46 |] His Kingdom | Its Arrival |
| 47 | | Its Range |
| 48 | | Its Center |

The Antichrist (Psalms 52-55)

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| “Mr. Big Mouth” | Psalm 52 |
| The Denial of God | Psalm 53 |
| The Believing Remnant | Psalm 54 |
| The Darkest Days | Psalm 55 |

These four psalms are *maschil*, or instruction, psalms. While only a few commentators see these in a dispensational light, I think it may be profitable to review them within this rather unique perspective.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 52 “Mr. Big Mouth”

Here begins a series of four psalms that give a prophetic picture we get nowhere else of the coming of Antichrist, the Man of Sin, who will be a world dictator and dominate Israel during the Great Tribulation. Our Lord referred to him in the Olivet discourse; the prophet Daniel and the apostle Paul both speak of him.

[To the chief Musician, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.]

The superscription of the psalm is part of the psalm itself. In other words, here is a man who betrayed David. David was betrayed by many men who professed to be his friends.

- 1] Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually.

Here is a man who is boasting of his sin. When David sinned, he kept quiet because he was under deep conviction. When the man of the world sins, he loves it and boasts about it. The Antichrist will be the epitome of that type of man.

- 2] Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.
- 3] Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.

Some people that they would rather tell a lie even when it would have been easier to tell the truth. That will be true of the Antichrist.

- 4] Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.

This psalm has given us two names for the Man of Sin: In v.1 he is called “mighty man.” Here he is called a “deceitful tongue.” You will not be able to believe a word he says. He is “Mr. Big Mouth;” with Devouring words...

- 5] God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

The word destroy means “to beat down.” God will tolerate the Man of Sin for a short period of time: For 7 years the Antichrist’s tongue will devise mischief. [ref: beat down?]

- 6] The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:
- 7] Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.

Abe Lincoln could not win the presidency today! It takes lots of cash...

- 8] But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.
- 9] I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints.

This brief psalm gives us a prophetic picture of the Antichrist and of the believing remnant who will suffer under his persecution and then will worship and praise God when he is dethroned.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 53 “The Denial of God”

[To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, A Psalm of David.]

Mahalath has to do with sickness and sorrow, and it corresponds to the mournful condition of the last days when Antichrist is the ruler. He, of course, will be an atheist.

Theme: The fool, foreshadowing Antichrist, denies the existence of God.

- 1] The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good.

This psalm is the same as Psalm 14 as far as the translation is concerned; however, Psalm 14 uses YHWH 4 times, Elohim, 3 times; Psalm 53 uses Elohim 7 times. Elohim focuses on God’s role as Creator.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

2 Thessalonians 2:3-6

- 2] God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God.
- 3] Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- 4] Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.
- 5] There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.
- 6] Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

How can anyone say that God is through with the nation of Israel after reading this verse? (Many churches have embraced “Replacement Theology.” To deny that God has a future purpose for Israel is to deny the inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture.) God means what He says.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 54 “The Believing Remnant”

Theme: A cry of faith in the time of the Antichrist.

[To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?]

The neginoth was a stringed musical instrument. Maschil; another psalm of instruction. The Ziphims (also called Ziphites) twice betrayed David (1 Sam 23:13-24; 1 Sam 26:1).

- 1] Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.
- 2] Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

In the Great Tribulation period, brother will betray brother. A godless crowd betrayed David. In the Great Tribulation, a godless Antichrist will be in power.

- 3] For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.
- 4] Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.
- 5] He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth.
- 6] I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for it is good.
- 7] For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

We know from the historical record that God did deliver David from the treacherous Ziphites; the faithful remnant can rest in the confidence that God will deliver them also. God always keeps His promises.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 55

Theme: The darkest days under Antichrist. The Antichrist, the Man of Sin, is fully portrayed here in a remarkable way, a way that many who are even students of prophecy have never considered.

Probable Historical Context

Absalom, David’s own son, led a rebellion against him. David was forced to leave Jerusalem. He found that many people were following his son, and he knew there would be trouble. In order that Jerusalem, his beloved city, would not be destroyed, he left it. He went back to the caves of the earth to hide.

As David left his city, weeping, word was brought to him that Ahithophel, a member of his cabinet and ostensibly a close friend, had gone over to Absalom’s side and had betrayed David.

And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people

that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

2 Samuel 15:30, 31

And that is exactly what God did. Keep this background in mind as we review this psalm.

[To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.
- 2] Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

The squeaking wheel gets the grease...

- 3] Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.
- 4] My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.
- 5] Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

David did not know but what he might be slain at that time, especially when those who had been so close to him had deserted him.

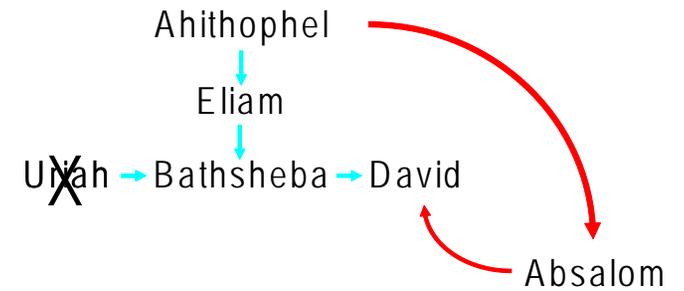
- 6] And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.
- 7] Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.
- 8] I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.
- 9] Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

If you have ever experienced serious betrayal, you can imagine how this felt. Ahithophel reminds us of Judas (In fact, Jesus quoted Ps 49 in this regard); and it may also be a foreshadowing of the nation Israel by the Antichrist.

- 10] Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.
- 11] Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.
- 12] For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:
- 13] But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.
- 14] We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

Ahithophel. It may also be a picture of the Antichrist who will betray the nation of Israel. He will pretend to be their friend, will make a covenant with them and then will betray them.

Relationships



David prays, and Ahithophel's counsel is put to confusion (2 Sam 15, 16).

- 15] Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.

Verse 15 is literally, "Let them go alive down to Sheol!"

- 16] As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.
- 17] Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.
- 18] He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.
- 19] God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.
- 20] He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant.

Antichrist is a liar! Remember that the Lord Jesus said the devil was a liar from the beginning (John 8:44), and Antichrist is right out of the pit of hell.

- 21] The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

Ahithophel, pretending to be a friend to David, was plotting against him. He was a little adumbration of Antichrist.

- 22] Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

Turn your enemies over to God. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom 12:19).

23] But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

What about you and me today? How are we going to live in the world today? Are we going to hate people and criticize them for what they do to us? Are we going to cry when we are betrayed and wronged? Absolutely not! Let's start trusting in the Lord. That's our way out.

Next Session

Meditate on the *Michtam* Psalms (Psalms 56-60). *Michtam* speaks of that which is substantial, or enduring, or fixed. It literally means "engraved" or "permanent"; it pictures that which is unmovable, steadfast, stable and enduring.

The Book of Psalms Session 12 Psalms 56 - 60

A "Pentateuch" of Psalms

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Genesis | About Man | Psalms 1 - 41 |
| Exodus | Deliverance | Psalms 42 - 72 |
| Leviticus | Sanctuary | Psalms 73 - 89 |
| Numbers | Unrest; Wandering | Psalms 90 - 106 |
| Deuteronomy | Word of the Lord | Psalms 107 - 150 |

Another delightful cluster of psalms (Ps 56–60) are known as the *michtam* psalms: substantial, or enduring, or fixed. *Michtam* literally means "engraved" or "permanent." In Psalm 57:7 when David says, "My heart is fixed," that is a *michtam*. All of these psalms have a prophetic undertone. Between the historical (David's experiences) and the prophetic (Israel's experience in the future), is a message for us today.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 56

"The cheerful courage of a fugitive" (Delitzsch). In an hour of deep despair, David fled to the Philistine city of Gath. He didn't get a good reception; he had to pretend to be insane to escape (1 Sam 21:10-22:1). Psalm 34 also came out of this experience

In Psalm 55, David wished that he had the wings of a dove so that he could fly away into the wilderness (Ps 55:6–7). In this psalm his desire is realized.

David's experience can also be seen as a picture of the Great Tribulation period.

[To the chief Musician upon Jonathelem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath.]

- 1] Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.
- 2] Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou most High.
- 3] What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.
- 4] In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.
- 5] Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil.
- 6] They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

David admitted he was afraid, but he trusted the Lord to take care of him. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 Jn 4:18).

- 7] Shall they escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God.
- 8] Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?
- 9] When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.

"The Lord counts my wanderings." The Lord knows about every trip you take and about every trip I take... Matthew Henry: "The tears of God's persecuted people are bottled up, and sealed among God's treasures."

- 10] In God will I praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word.
- 11] In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

He repeats verse 4, but uses the YHWH, the Covenant Name. If God be for us, who can be against us? (Rom 8:31).

- 12] Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.
- 13] For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

"... Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal 5:16) Present tense of salvation: power over the presence of sin: "it ain't gonna reign no more." (Rom 6. Walking one step at a time...)

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 57

After David's deliverance from Gath, he fled to the cave of Adullam (1 Sam 22:1ff). Later, he would move to a cave in En Gedi (1 Sam 24; Cf. Ps 142).

[To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave.]

Michtam # 2: Al-taschith, meaning "destroy not." David spent time in the caves along the Dead Sea by Engedi: below sea level—hot during the summer, but in the winter it's delightful. The cave of Adullam is in that area also; many expositors believe this psalm has reference to that cave where David meditated on many of the psalms that he composed.

Some see his sufferings foreshadowing the sufferings of Christ and those of the godly remnant during the time of Jacob's trouble.

- 1] Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.
- 2] I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.

My prayer is the same as David's, "O God, be merciful to me."
"...take refuge." The nation did not: (Matt 23:37) They have yet come under his wings.

- 3] He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

This will be literally fulfilled for the faithful remnant when Christ returns in power and great glory; and they will say, "... Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isa 25:9).

- 4] My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

Satan goes up and down this world like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet 5:8), (and he has a lot of little lions helping him!) Remember: these michtam psalms have to do with that which is permanent and enduring, that which is substantial and lasting.

- 5] Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.
- 6] They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah.

- 7] My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

Fixed: or, prepared (vv. 7-11 are same as Psalm 108:1-5).

- 8] Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.
- 9] I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.
- 10] For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.
- 11] Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.

"I will wake the morning dawn": Dr. Gaebelein's translation. The night of sin and suffering is over. Satan's rule is finished, and the morning has come. The Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in His wings. (I'm tempted to add a "Selah": Think of that! What assurance we find in this psalm!)

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 58

An imprecatory psalm (along with the next psalm).

Background

Enemies were rebels against the Lord. The Covenant People were protected under conditions of obedience (Lev 26, Deut 27-29; Cf. Gen 12:2,3). A battle between good and evil has been going on since Gen 3 (and we can't remain neutral in this battle).

Leadership Crisis

During David's exile years, Saul led the nation down a path of political and spiritual ruin as he disobeyed God's law and opposed God's anointed King. Saul was surrounded by a group of fawning flatterers who fed his ego and catered to his foolish whims (1 Sam 22:6ff) while David himself was treated illegally; many of his men lost everything for following him (1 Sam 22:1,2).

Psalm 58 was probably written late during David's exile, or early in his reign at Hebron. It may have grown out of his pondering the mess he had inherited from his father-in-law. [Lawlessness in leaders: Isa 1:23-28; 5:22-25; 10:1-4; Amos 5:7-13; Mic 3:1-4. Nations, corporations, and even churches need to take leadership crises seriously.]

This is another al-taschith as well as another michtam psalm. It means that there is something substantial and enduring here, and it means "destroy not."

[To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David.]

- 1] Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?
- 2] Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

David addresses the lawless leaders: decisions legal? Judgments equitable? Silences honest? (This is another imprecatory prayer. David's enemies are all around him.)

- 3] The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.
- 4] Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;
- 5] Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

The unjust judges were liars. Because of the sin nature God established laws and government; for without laws, society would be in chaos.

- 6] Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

David prays for six destructions to come upon his enemies in this psalm: (1st of 6) "Break out the great teeth of the young lions." We have already found that the enemy is like snakes and lions. Satan is like a roaring lion... David is speaking of his enemies, and he is under law; so he is asking for justice.

- 7] Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

(2nd of 6) Wickedness was like a flood! He asks that this flood of wickedness might just melt away. (3rd of 6) The enemy is like a marksman who is shooting at him.

- 8] As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.

(4th of 6) There is a certain snail in that country called a "slimeworm" which actually melts away in the heat of the sun. David is saying, "The enemy leaves a slimy trail, but evaporate him! Get rid of that slimy trail through the world." (5th of 6) That is, may the things they plan in the evil womb of their mind not come to fruition. May they come to nought.

- 9] Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.

- 10] The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.
- 11] So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

(Last of 6) The twigs of the bramble bush are gathered together and put under the pot to heat it, then a wind comes along and blows them away. David says, "Oh, God, remove them before they can do their dirty work, before they can burn and sear." He asks the Lord to bring vengeance: Deut 32:35; Heb 10:30; Rom 12:19.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 59

Psalm 59 is closely linked with the two preceding psalms. It is also an al-taschith ("destroy not") and a michtam of David. The inspired title of this psalm places it at the time Saul sent messengers to watch the house to kill David (1 Sam 19:1-10.)

Again in this psalm we see David surrounded by his enemies, and prophetically it describes the suffering remnant during the Tribulation, surrounded by enemies.

Enemy of the King

Saul's fear and hatred of David that he gave orders to kill his son-in-law: twice Saul tried to it himself (1 Sam 19:1-10); then he plotted to have him murdered at home (1 Sam 19:11-19), but his wife helped him escape through a window. A dummy in the bed gave David time to get to Samuel at Ramah.

[To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.]

- 1] Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.
- 2] Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

defend...: Hebrew "set me on high."

- 3] For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD.
- 4] They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold.
- 5] Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

He asks the Lord to bring vengeance: Deut 32:35; Heb 10:30; Rom 12:19.

- 6] They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.
- 7] Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear?
- 8] But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.
- 9] Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.
- 10] The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.
- 11] Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.

Let their own sins find them out before the people.

- 12] For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak.
- 13] Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.
- 14] And at evening let them return; and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.
- 15] Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.

“...for meat”: Hebrew, to eat “...and grudge...”: or, if they be not satisfied, then they will stay all night.

- 16] But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.
- 17] Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.

As is typical with David’s psalms, it concludes with an expression of faith and trust in God’s deliverance. In the case of David, God did deliver him. God will not forsake those who are His own. The believing remnant of Israel will be delivered by the coming of Christ Himself, and He will judge the nations of the world.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 60

Psalm 60 is the last of these michtam psalms and describes the time David was victorious over his enemies, the Edomites. The Edomites were soundly defeated and never rallied after that.

Prophetically it can be viewed as a picture of the deliverance God will give to His people, the remnant of Israel, after the suffering of the Great Tribulation.

Historical Background

David was winning battles and making a name for himself (2 Sam 8:1-14; 10:6-8; 1 Chr 18:1-13; 19:6-19). While fighting the Arameans (Syrians) up north, the Edomites attacked Israel from the south, doing great damage. David dispatched Joab with part of the army who defeated Edom in the Valley of Salt, south of the Dead Sea.

[To the chief Musician upon Shushaneduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aramnaharaim and with Aramzobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.]

The musical direction means “Lily of the testimony (covenant)” (Cf. Ps 45, 69 & 80).

- 1] O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.

The plural pronouns indicate that David was speaking on behalf of the Israelites, who felt abandoned by God.

- 2] Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.
- 3] Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.
- 4] Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.

Initially, they were stunned by the defeats in the south...

- 5] That thy beloved may be delivered; save with thy right hand, and hear me.
- 6] God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

Shechem was the chief city in Ephraim; and with Succoth, was located W of the Jordan River. The patriarch Jacob was connected to both (Gen 33:17,18).

- 7] Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;

Gilead was E of Jordan; Ephraim was a strong tribe, called “helmet.” Judah was the royal tribe (Gen 49:10).

- 8] Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.

“...triumph...”: or, triumph thou over me (by an irony). Moab and Edom were known for their arrogance (Isa 16:6-14; Obad; Cf Ex 15:14,15; Num 20:14-21). David was related to the Moabites (Ruth 4:13-22).

- 9] Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?
- 10] Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies?
- 11] Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.
- 12] Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

“And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly” (Num 24:18).

Next Session

Read and meditate on Psalms 61-68. Which is the “only” psalm? Also, read Judges 5, The Song of Deborah.

The Book of Psalms Session 13 Psalms 61 - 68

A cluster of eight psalms: The cry and confidence of the godly.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 61

David was in danger; perhaps during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam 15-18). The security of his throne was in danger (v.7).

[To the chief Musician upon Neginah, A Psalm of David.]

Neginah: a stringed instrument. A prayer from the heart.

- 1] Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.
- 2] From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
- 3] For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

Jesus is the Rock (1 Cor 10:4). “Shelter...and tower”: Is He for you, too? He has been for me!

- 4] I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

“...trust”: or, make my refuge. “Wings”: Ps 91; Mt 23:37-39! (May also refer to the Cherubim on the Mercy Seat...)

- 5] For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.
- 6] Thou wilt prolong the king’s life: and his years as many generations.

Heritage for those that fear (and obey)...

“Thou...”: Heb. Thou shalt add days to the days of the king. David made vows...

- 7] He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.
- 8] So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

“...abide” = enthroned. Covenant: a dynasty forever (2 Sam 7; Cf. Ps 89:36). The closer we get to God, the more we recognize our need for mercy (Cf. Isa 6:1-5).

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 6:1-5

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 62 - The “Only” Psalm

The “Only” Psalm. Hebrew adverb: “Truly” = “Only,” “Alone” (vv. 1,2,4,5,6,9). During Absalom’s rebellion, or in the early years at Hebron. The throne was under attack...

[To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.]

Psalm 39 was also written to Jeduthun, one of the chief musicians. Apparently he led the orchestra and the choir when this psalm was used.

- 1] Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.
- 2] He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.
- 3] How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.
- 4] They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.
- 5] My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

- 6] He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.
- 7] In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.
- 8] Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.
- 9] Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.
- 10] Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

Trust not in oppression... a message for today...

- 11] God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.
- 12] Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

1 Corinthians 3:8

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 63

[A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.]

- 1] O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;
- 2] To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

Spiritual, rather than physical, needs... "My" God changes everything...

- 3] Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.
- 4] Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.
- 5] My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:
- 6] When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.
- 7] Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.
- 8] My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.
- 9] But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.
- 10] They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.

"They shall fall...": Heb. "They shall make him run out like water by the hands of."

- 11] But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

David asked God to deal with his enemies. And He did (2 Sam 18:6-8).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 64 - The Battle of Life

The first quality for a commander-in-chief is a cool head to receive a correct impression of things. He should not allow himself to be confused by either good or bad news.

— Napoleon

David was probably serving in Saul's court when he wrote this psalm (1 Sam 18-20). He knew that the king was his enemy and most of Saul's officers were conspiring against him. Although David was the anointed king, he had no authority to oppose Saul and eventually had to flee to the wilderness as a fugitive.

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.
- 2] Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:
- 3] Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:
- 4] That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.
- 5] They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?
- 6] They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

Satan's Stratagems

- As a lion, he comes to devour (1 Pet 5:8).
- As a serpent, he comes to deceive (2 Cor 11:1-4).
- Accusation is a chief weapon (Rev 12:10; Zech 3).
- David compared the enemy's tongues = swords; words = poisoned arrows.

Saul's traps were frustrated by the Lord: 1 Sam 18-19...

- 7] But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

"...shall they...": Heb. their wound shall be (Eph 6:10-18).

- 8] So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.
- 9] And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

- 10] The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 65

The first of four psalms that focus on praising the Lord for His manifold blessings in nature and His gracious dealing with His people.

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm and Song of David.]

- 1] Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.
- 2] O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.
- 3] Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.
- 4] Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

Who are “kings” and “priests”? (Cf. Rev 5...)

- 5] By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea:
- 6] Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power:
- 7] Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.
- 8] They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.
- 9] Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.
- 10] Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.
- 11] Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

The “crown” of the year suggests Rosh HaShannah.

- 12] They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.
- 13] The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 66

[To the chief Musician, A Song or Psalm.]

- 1] Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:
- 2] Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

“...all...”: Hebrew, “all the earth”; to praise God for what He has done for Israel; Cf. vs. Replacement Theology...]

- 3] Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.
- 4] All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.
- 5] Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.
- 6] He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.
- 7] He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.
- 8] O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:
- 9] Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.
- 10] For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.
- 11] Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.
- 12] Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

“...wealthy”: Some believe this victory was over Assyria (Isa 36-37), and v. 13-20 refers to King Hezekiah, whose prayer was answered.

- 13] I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,
- 14] Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.
- 15] I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.
- 16] Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.
- 17] I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.
- 18] If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:
- 19] But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.
- 20] Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 67

This brief psalm mentions “all nations” and fits in with Psalm 65 & 66.

[To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song.]

- 1] God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.
- 2] That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.
- 3] Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.
- 4] O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

- 5] Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.
- 6] Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.
- 7] God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

Read the “Song of Deborah” (Judges 5) as preparation for Psalm 68.

Judges Chapter 5: The Song of Deborah

- 1] Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,
- 2] Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.
- 3] Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.
- 4] LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.
- 5] The mountains melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.
- 6] In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways.
- 7] The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.
- 8] They chose new gods; then was war in the gates: was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?
- 9] My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD.
- 10] Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.
- 11] They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.
- 12] Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.
- 13] Then he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.
- 14] Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek; after thee, Benjamin, among thy people; out of Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer.
- 15] And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley. For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart.
- 16] Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.
- 17] Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches.
- 18] Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardard their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.

- 19] The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.
- 20] They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.
- 21] The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.
- 22] Then were the horsehoofs broken by the means of the pransings, the pransings of their mighty ones.
- 23] Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.
- 24] Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent.
- 25] He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.
- 26] She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen’s hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.
- 27] At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.
- 28] The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?
- 29] Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself,
- 30] Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two; to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?
- 31] So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 68

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm or Song of David.]

- 1] Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.

“...before...”: Hebrew, “from his face.” A quote from Num 10:33-35, Israel’s “marching cry” whenever they set out on a journey.
- 2] As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.
- 3] But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.
- 4] Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

“JAH”: The emphatic concentration of the name YHWH.

- 5] A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.
- 6] God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.
- 7] O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:
- 8] The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
- 9] Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.
- 10] Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.
- 11] The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.
- 12] Kings of armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.
- 13] Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.
- 14] When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.

Salmon means shady, dark. Salmon was a hill near Shechem where Abimelech cut down the boughs with which they set on fire the tower of Shechem. The brightness of prosperity after the gloom of the conflict was like the glittering white snow which covers dark Salmon's forests.

- 15] The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; an high hill as the hill of Bashan.
- 16] Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.
- 17] The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.
- 18] Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.

Paul quotes this verse in Ephesians 4:18, referring to the Ascension.

- 19] Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.
- 20] He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death.
- 21] But God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.
- 22] The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea:
- 23] That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.
- 24] They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.
- 25] The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing with timbrels.

- 26] Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel.
- 27] There is little Benjamin with their ruler, the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.
- 28] Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.
- 29] Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.
- 30] Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people that delight in war.
- 31] Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.
- 32] Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:
- 33] To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.
- 34] Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds.
- 35] O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.

Next Session

- Read and Meditate on Psalms 69 - 79.

The Book of Psalms Session 14 Psalms 69 - 72

The "Pentateuch" of Psalms

There are five divisions, each ending with a benediction: 1-41, 42-72, 73-89, 90-106, and 107-150.

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| I. Genesis | About Man | 1 - 41 |
| II. Exodus | Deliverance | 42 - 72 |
| III. Leviticus | Sanctuary | 73 - 89 |
| IV. Numbers | Unrest; Wandering | 90 - 106 |
| V. Deuteronomy | Word of the Lord | 107 - 150 |

Some psalms appear routine. Others, like Psalm 69, have astonishing and distinctive features. (In searching the Word of God, the diligent are never disappointed!)

The Messianic Psalms

The Book of Psalms is quoted in the NT more than any other book in OT. Jesus said that the psalms spoke about Him (Luke 24:44) and they

constitute irrefutable testimony to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. Messianic psalms include Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 87, 89, 102, 110, 118, et al.

Most Quoted

Next to Psalm 22, it is the most quoted psalm in the New Testament: Psalm 22 deals with the death of Christ; Psalm 69 deals with the life of Christ. Psalm 69 is quoted in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and in Acts and Romans. (There are also many references to it beyond those actual quotations.)

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 69 “The Silent Years in the Life of Christ”

This is a great Messianic psalm. It is another psalm of David, but unique since it appears to deal with the silent years in the life of the Lord Jesus.

The Early Years

This psalm tells us about the silent years of Christ’s childhood and young manhood, of which the Gospels tell us practically nothing. Dr. Luke tells us about an incident in the life of our Lord when He was twelve years old, but we learn nothing else about Him until He is about thirty years old. This psalm fills in some of the details of those early years. We see some of Christ’s dark days in Nazareth and His dark hours on the cross.

It is classified as an imprecatory psalm because of an imprecatory prayer: vv.22–28 And it is from *this* section of the psalm that the New Testament writers often quoted. His imprecatory prayer is actually a cry for justice. This is a psalm of His early humiliation and rejection.

We begin way up north at Nazareth: We hear the heart sob of a small boy, a teenager, a young man...

[To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, A Psalm of David.]

A shoshannim, or lily, psalm: He is the Lily of the Valley, the Rose of Sharon, and altogether lovely.

- 1] Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul.
- 2] I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

- 3] I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

We have no idea of how he suffered in his younger years! Those early 30 years were not free of pain...What is the most painful sin?

- 4] They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

John 15:25

The enemies of the Lord hated Him without a cause; that is, there was no justification for their hatred.

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Romans 3:24

Being justified freely is the same as being justified without a cause. The Lord did not find any merit in me. He justified me without a cause within me. This psalm tells us that they hated Jesus without a cause—they hated Him without a cause that we might be justified without a cause.

- 5] O God, thou knowest my foolishness; And my sins are not hid from thee.

How can this verse apply to the Lord? He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. But the last few hours on the cross He *became sin* for us (2 Cor 5:21). He prayed, “Let this cup pass.” (Mt 26:39,42) What cup? The cup of sin, which was *my* cup and *your* cup of iniquity. That was the thing He was resisting in the Garden of Gethsemane.

- 6] Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.
- 7] Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

There are two reasons He is bearing this:

- 1) They hated Him because of who He was.
- 2) He came to take a lowly, humble place on earth.

- 8] I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children.

Mary had other children, which confirms the record in the Gospels (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3). He became an alien unto His mother’s children—not

His father's children because Joseph was not His father. They were half-brothers and half-sisters. It may have been a very unhappy home. (This verse also teaches the virgin birth of Christ.)

This verse tells a lot we would not know otherwise. Possibly her boys, James, Judas and Joses, said to her, "Mother, we heard somebody said that Jesus is not really our brother. They said that nobody knows who His father is." It must have been interesting when they later discover who He really is!

Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

Matthew 13:15

Four (half) brothers. James and Jude later become believers and wrote two books of the New Testament. Peter adds two details...

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?

Mark 6:3

Apparently a family of at least seven children. Jesus, also, was apparently viewed as having taken up Joseph's trade as a "carpenter." This word [Heb: *charash*; Grk: *tehton*], which is a general word for graver or craftsman, is translated "carpenter" in 2 Kgs 22:6; 2 Chr 24:12; Ezr 3:7; Isa 41:7. The same word is rendered "craftsman" in the American Standard Revised Version of Jer 24:1 and 29:2 and "smith" in the American Standard Revised Version of Zech 1:20.

In 2 Sam 5:11; 2 Kgs 12:11; 1 Chr 14:1; and Isa 44:13, Heb: *charash* occurs with Heb: *ets* (wood), and is more exactly translated "carpenter" or "worker in wood." Grk: *tehton*, the corresponding Greek word for artificer, is translated "carpenter" in Mt 13:55 and Mk 6:3.

- 9] For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

This is a verse which our Lord also quoted—in reference to the temple.

And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

John 2:14-17

They were well aware of Psalm 69! The Greek word for zeal signifies "to stretch out the neck," a metaphor from the racers who strain every limb to reach forward to lay hold upon the prize.

- 10] When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

When He would fast or weep, His brothers would ridicule Him for it. They would probably assume that He was just putting on an act.

- 11] I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.

Do you know what that proverb was? The word that circulated around was that He was illegitimate. You know what people would call Him today. (John 8 is a tense confrontation about "Fatherhood"! "We be not born of fornication..." Jn 8:41.)

- 12] They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.

The drunkards at the local bar made up dirty little ditties about Him and His mother. Those who are "sitting in the gate" are the high officials of the town, the judges. The best people in Nazareth also spoke against Him. (You know how forgiving small towns are!) His life in Nazareth was not nice.

Messianic Genealogy

Why did He endure all of this? He was raised in a town where He was called illegitimate in order that I might be a legitimate son of God. The Son of God bore that for me on the cross; He paid the penalty for my sins. We have no idea what He endured for 30 years in order that we might have a clear title as a legitimate son of God

In reality, He had the most distinguished Family Tree in history:

- Encrypted in Torah (Gen 38);
- Prophesied in Judges (Ruth 4);
- Evaded the blood curse on Jeconiah (Jer 22:30);
- Virgin Birth (Gen 3:15; Isa 7:14; Ps 69, 110);

- 13] But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

Paul quotes this in his 2nd Corinthian letter (2 Cor 6:2). The Gospel records tell us that our Lord prayed, but this psalm tells us *what* He prayed:

- 14] Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

- 15] Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matthew 12:39-40

And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.

Jonah 2:2-6

- 16] Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.
17] And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily.
18] Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies.
19] Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee.

The next two verses (20 & 21) tell of the dark hours on the cross...

- 20] Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.
21] They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Now, His imprecatory prayer. What C.S. Lewis says here "we get the refinement of malice." Paul quotes this in Romans:

And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

Romans 11:9,10

- 22] Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.
23] Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.
24] Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

The imprecatory prayers have been greatly misunderstood. There are some who consider the imprecatory prayers unchristian. But since it is quoted in the New Testament in reference to those who have rejected Christ, I see nothing unchristian about it. When we put them back into the position where they belong, we see they are judgment being pronounced upon the lost.

- 25] Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents.

This is quoted by Peter in Acts 1:20 in reference to Judas Iscariot.

For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. 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. 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. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

Acts 1:17-20

- 26] For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.
27] Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness.
28] Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

Books

- Books (plural) Dan 7:10; Rev 20:12
- Book of Living Ps 139:16, 69:28
- Book of Life (Salvation) Rev 13:8; 17:8; 21:27
- Book of Life (Rewards) Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5

- 29] But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.
30] I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.
31] This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.
32] The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

There are just two kinds of people in the world today. There are lost people and saved people—redeemed sinners and unredeemed sinners. You can distinguish quite easily which group you are in.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18

- 33] For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.
- 34] Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein.

God is going to bring justice to this earth some day, but justice will not be realized until He returns. What a Hallelujah chorus this will be when everything that moves praises Him!

- 35] For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.
- 36] The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

Review: Psalm 2 - The Coming Cosmic War on pages 15-19.

Psalm 69 (Summary)

We have no idea what He endured for 30 years. He was raised in a town where He was called illegitimate in order that I might have clear title to be a legitimate son of God. The Son of God bore that for me on the cross; He paid the penalty for my sins.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 70 “To Bring to Remembrance”

With minor changes, this is a duplicate of Psalm 40:13-16. Spurgeon said David made this excerpt (from Psalm 40) as “a fit pendant to Psalm 69, and a suitable preface to Psalm 71.”

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.]

- 1] Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.
- 2] Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.
- 3] Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.
- 4] Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.
- 5] But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 71

A psalm for old age. This one means more to me now than it did 30 years ago...

- 1] In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.
- 2] Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.
- 3] Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.
- 4] Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.
- 5] For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth.

Hindsight over my *own* early years...

- 6] By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.
- 7] I am as a wonder unto many; but thou art my strong refuge.

Psalmist apparently a high profile person, in his final years...

- 8] Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.
- 9] Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.
- 10] For mine enemies speak against me; and they that lay wait for my soul take counsel together,

This means more to me now than it used do...

- 11] Saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him.
- 12] O God, be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help.
- 13] Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered with reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.
- 14] But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.
- 15] My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.
- 16] I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.
- 17] O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.
- 18] Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.

The Lord put me on this earth to accomplish certain things. Right now I am so far behind, I know I'll live forever...

- 19] Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!
- 20] Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

Resurrection is anticipated...

- 21] Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.
- 22] I will also praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.
- 23] My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.
- 24] My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 72

This psalm concludes Book II, the “Exodus section” of the Psalms. The Book of Exodus concludes with the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle; this is a prophetic psalm in which the Messiah Himself comes and establishes His glorious kingdom on earth.

[A Psalm for Solomon.]

- 1] Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king’s son.

This is a psalm of David written for his son, Solomon.

- 2] He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.
- 3] The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.
- 4] He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

The Lord Jesus will reign in righteousness some day. This psalm describes His glorious kingdom. “Break in pieces” with a rod of iron...

- 5] They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.
- 6] He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.
- 7] In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.
- 8] He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

God promised Abraham the He would give his descendants all the land from the River of Egypt to the River Euphrates (Gen 15:18) and reaffirmed this promise through Moses (Ex 23;31).

Land Grant

God promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit all the land from the River of Egypt to the River Euphrates (Gen 15:18) and

reaffirmed this promise through Moses (Ex 23;31). Both David and Solomon ruled over great areas (1 Kgs 4:21,24; 1 Chr 9:26) but not to the “ends of the earth” (Ps 72:8). This final privilege is Jesus’ (Ps 2:8; Zech 9:9,10; Mic 4:1-5; Lk 1:33). The Millennial Reign will fulfill the grant cited.

- 9] They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.
- 10] The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
- 11] Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.
- 12] For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.
- 13] He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.
- 14] He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.
- 15] And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.
- 16] There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.
- 17] His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

The following verses are not part of Psalm 72: it is the closing benediction to Book II of the Psalms.

- 18] Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.
- 19] And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.
- 20] The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

The “Pentateuch” of Psalms

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| I. Genesis | About Man | Psalms 1 - 41 |
| II. Exodus | Deliverance | Psalms 42 - 72 |
| III. Leviticus | Sanctuary | Psalms 73 - 89 |
| IV. Numbers | Unrest; Wandering | Psalms 90 - 106 |
| V. Deuteronomy | Word of the Lord | Psalms 107 - 150 |

Next Session

Review Book III, Psalms 73 – 89. Meditate on Psalms 73 - 79 for next time.

The Book of Psalms Session 15

Book III: Psalms 73 - 80

Book III

Book III is viewed as corresponding to the Book of Leviticus because in this section—even in Psalm 73—the sanctuary is prominent. Leviticus is the book of worship for the tabernacle and later for the temple. It is one of the greatest books in the Bible. In this section we find the emphasis upon the sanctuary and, in particular, on two aspects of the house of God.

The Book of Leviticus emphasizes two things: that God is holy and that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins—the key words are holiness and sacrifice. These two words will also figure largely in this Leviticus section of the Book of Psalms.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 73

Theme: Perplexity about prosperity.

[A Psalm of Asaph.]

This first series of 11 psalms (73-83) was written by Asaph.

- 1] Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.
- 2] But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.
- 3] For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Asaph said, “I looked around me at my nation, and I noticed that the wicked among my people were the ones prospering, and the godly were not.” He was perplexed; and so are we...

- 4] For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.
 - Doubt: from a struggling mind.
 - Unbelief: from a stubborn will that refuses to surrender to God.
- 5] They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.
- 6] Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.
- 7] Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.
- 8] They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.
- 9] They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

The news media all spread their prideful arrogance and ungodliness.

- 10] Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.
- 11] And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?
- 12] Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

They have no serious interest in God. They cling to foolishness...but still prosper: “They that have, get.”

- 13] Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence.

He says, “I have attempted to live for God, and it looks like it doesn’t pay.”

- 14] For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.
- 15] If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.
- 16] When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;
- 17] Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.

Now we come to the answer: in the sanctuary—the afterlife; cf. Lk 16:19-31.

- 18] Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.
- 19] How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.
- 20] As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.
- 21] Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.
- 22] So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.
- 23] Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.
- 24] Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.
- 25] Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.
- 26] My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.
- 27] For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.
- 28] But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

Where are you? Are you close, or at a distance?

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 74 - The Temple Defiled

Theme: A cry for deliverance when the temple is defiled by the enemy. Echoes the Babylonian destruction in 587-586 B.C.

This is a maschil psalm, not of David but of Asaph, who is a Levite and a musician in the tabernacle. (Possibly a namesake of the original Asaph of David's day.)

[Maschil of Asaph.]

- 1] O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?
- 2] Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

“...rod”: or, tribe. The psalmist is talking about the land of Palestine and the nation Israel.

- 3] Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

Notice that it is the “sanctuary” that the enemy had profaned. [Is that true today in our sanctuaries?]

- 4] Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs.

(Ensigns of the Roman Legions in A.D. 70?)

- 5] A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

Babylonians chopping into the Holy Place (1 Kgs 6:18-22).

Asaph's Prophecy

This is prophetic of that terrible invasion by the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes. He was a Syrian, in the family of one of the four generals who divided up the empire of Alexander the Great after his death. In 167 B.C., he plundered Jerusalem, profaned the temple and placed an image of Jupiter in the holy place. This was called the Abomination of Desolation (Dan 8, 9).

In A.D. 70 the destruction by Titus the Roman leveled the temple to the ground (Lk 21). [Titus may have been a descendant of Antiochus IV.]

During the Great Tribulation the final Abomination of Desolation will profane the holy place (Mt 24:15).

- 6] But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.
- 7] They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

- 8] They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.

[“meeting places”: Synagogues were established after the return of the Israelites from Babylon.]

- 9] We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.

The Diaspora lasted 1900 years...

- 10] O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?
- 11] Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom.
- 12] For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

Turning point in the psalm: Asaph lifted his eyes in faith to the throne of God...

- 13] Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.
- 14] Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.
- 15] Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers.
- 16] The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.
- 17] Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.
- 18] Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.
- 19] O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.
- 20] Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.
- 21] O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

He has delivered His people out of much worse situations than we have been in, and He will do even greater things for them in the future.

- 22] Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.
- 23] Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually.

“...increaseth”: Heb. “ascendeth.” This is a call to God to move in victory; it is a prayer that recognizes God's ability to do it. This psalm is a prayer of Asaph. It is a maschil psalm, instructing you and me that we can trust God in all our troubles.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 75 “Thanks for Deliverance”

Psalm 74 was a prayer of Asaph; Psalm 75 is a song of deliverance, a song of the triumph that will come; therefore, it is a psalm of faith. Some associate these psalms (75, 76, 77, & 78) with Hezekiah and the Assyrian attempts at Jerusalem (Isa 36, 37).

[To the chief Musician, Altaschith, A Psalm or Song of Asaph.]

“...Altaschith”: or, “destroy not.” Ultimately, God is going to protect His name on earth.

- 1] Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.
- 2] When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.

“...receive...”: or, take a set time. This verse should read, “For I will take hold of the set time; I will judge in uprightness.” This means that when the Lord comes it will be at a set time.

- 3] The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.

Cf. Col 1:17 “...by him all things are held together.”

- 4] I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn:
- 5] Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.

The “horn,” being the instrument of the oxen’s strength, is the symbol of power (Ex 21:9; 1 Sam 2:1, 10; 2 Sam 22:3; 1 Kgs 22:11; et al).
“Lift up”: 5X: vv.4, 5, 6, 7,10.

- 6] For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.

“...south”: Heb. “desert.” [Then it will come “from the sides of the north”? Associated with Zion (Ps 48:2); Satan’s ambition (Isa 14:13); path of Jerusalem’s enemies, Assyria, Babylon (Jer 1:13-16; 4:6; 6:22-36)... Antonia Fortress, etc.]

- 7] But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.
- 8] For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.
- 9] But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

- 10] All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

A Sequence

You will miss a great deal of the message if you ignore the arrangement because they often tell a story. There are messages that develop in several series of psalms. (Although this can be carried to extremes by some!)

- Psalm 74 was a cry for help—“Arise, O God.”
- Psalm 75 was a song of thanks for God’s deliverance out of the clutches of the northern power. They couldn’t get help from the east or west or south, and the north was where their trouble was coming from. Russia will come from the north to invade the land of Israel (Ez 38, 39).
- Psalm 76 shows the Lord Jesus reigning in His kingdom as King-Priest, the true Melchizedek.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 76

Again, the background of this psalm may well be God’s judgment of the Assyrian army (Isa 37-38, 2 Kgs 18,19).

[To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song of Asaph.]

- 1] In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel.
- 2] In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.
- 3] There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

Salem is the ancient name for Jerusalem: “the habitation of peace.”

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa 2:4) Until the Lord Jesus Christ reigns, you had better not apply this to the United Nations because it doesn’t fit. Isaiah is speaking about the peace that will come to this earth when Christ comes back. Until the sin of the human heart is either dealt with in redemption or judgment, there can never be peace on earth.

- 4] Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey.

The “mountains of prey” refer to Jerusalem: besieged 27 times.

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

The whole world lies asleep in the arms of the wicked one (1 Jn 5:19).

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

Isaiah 60:1: “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” We sometimes sing these words at Christmas; but it will be fulfilled when the Lord comes again to this earth. It will be a great day, but it is still in the future.

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

In Revelation 6:17 John says, “For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

No one can now the true grace of God who has not first known the fear of God.

A.W. Tozer

- 8] Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,
9] When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.
10] Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.
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.
12] He shall cut off the spirit of princes: he is terrible to the kings of the earth.

Today man is being restrained. The Restrainer is the Holy Spirit. Who else can restrain evil in the world today? During the Great Tribulation the Lord will remove all restraint and let man go to the limit. God is going to make the wrath of man to praise Him. The Gentile nations are in submission to Him. “All kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him” (Ps 72:10-11).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 77

Asaph in Jeremiah’s “circle” is left behind to minister to the suffering remnant? (cf. Jer 30 - 40).

[To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of Asaph.]

- 1] I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

God is real, and He is listening. Prove it to yourself: try it.

- 2] In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my soul refused to be comforted.
3] I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.
4] Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
5] I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.
6] I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.
7] Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?

Questions we all have asked in our valleys of doubt.

- 8] Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?

“...for evermore”: Heb. “to generation and generation.” We all often act as if God does not exist, as if He does not hear our prayers. We live as though God is no longer favorable and has stopped expressing His grace. Yet, God is good! He wants to be gracious to you and to me. Regardless of what you have done, God wants to be good to you.

- 9] Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

Asaph’s Six Questions

- Has He rejected us? No! He is faithful to His Word (Lam 3:31-33).
- Will He ever again show favor to Israel? Yes! (Ps 30:5; Isa 60:10).
- Has His unfailing love vanished forever? No! (Jer 31:3).
- Have His promises failed? No! (1 Kgs 8:56).
- Has He forgotten to be gracious? No! (Isa 49:14-18).
- Is He so angry, He has shut up His compassions? No! Lam 3:22-24).

- 10] And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.
11] I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.
12] I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.
13] Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?

Remember, Book III of Psalms is anchored in the sanctuary.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Hebrews 10:25

- 14] Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.
- 15] Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.
- 16] The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.
- 17] The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.
- 18] The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.
- 19] Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.
- 20] Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

God is able to deliver His people today from the flood tide of atheism and lawlessness and immorality. What a great, loving Shepherd He is!

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 78 **“The History of Israel From Moses to David”**

Theme: The history of Israel from Moses to David...the failure of the people and the faithfulness of God. History psalms include Psalm 78, 105, 106, 114, 135, and 136.

History teaches us that man learns nothing from history.

—Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Those who cannot remember history are condemned to repeat it.

—George Santayana

[Maschil of Asaph.]

“Maschil...”: or, a Psalm for Asaph to give instruction.

- 1] Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2] I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

Dark sayings = riddles, or enigmas.

- 3] Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.
- 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.

- 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:
- 6] That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:
- 7] That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:
- 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 stedfast with God.

Apostasies

- The Northern Kingdom that forsook the Lord and established new kingdom and a false religion (vv. 9-11).
 - The Exodus generation that died in the wilderness (vv. 12-39).
 - The forgotten lessons of Egypt (vv. 40-53); Plagues (Ex 7-12; Num 14:32-35; Red Sea opened: Ex 12-15).
 - The 3rd generation in Canaan that turned to idols (vv. 54-64).
- 9] The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

“...carrying”: Heb. “throwing forth.” This is a direct reference to when Ephraim did not go to battle, and God took note of it. In a larger sense, Ephraim is typical of the conduct of all Israel and of all of God’s people. It was Israel then; it is the church today.
 - 10] They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;
 - 11] And forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

Ephraim

- Adopted and elevated to “firstborn” by Jacob (Gen 48:8-20; Deut 33:13-17).
- Joshua, Moses’ successor (Num 13:8).
- Jeroboam, founder of Northern Kingdom (1 Kgs 11:26; 12:16ff).
- Tabernacle at Shiloh (in Ephraim)
 - Later at Nob (Benjamin) (1 Sam 21:22; 2 Sam 6:1,2).
 - Gibeon (Benjamin) (1 Kgs 3:4).

Asaph will mention Egyptian experience again in vv. 40-53. Example: quail—sometimes God’s greatest judgment is to give us what we want!

Lessons in the Wilderness

- Futility of Egyptian gods (Ex 12:12; Num 33:4).
- Water miracles (Ex 17:1-7; Num 20:1-13).

- Manna (Ex 16).
- Quail (Num 11).

- 12] Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.
- 13] He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.
- 14] In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.
- 15] He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.
- 16] He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.
- 17] And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness.
- 18] And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.
- 19] Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?
- 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?
- 21] Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;
- 22] Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

This represents the type of unbelief that is seen among believers today. It is practical atheism on the part of God's people.

- 23] Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,
- 24] And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.
- 25] Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

“Angels' food” is better translated food of the mighty—“Man did eat the food of the mighty; He sent them food to the full.” He gave them all that they needed, yet they were doubting God and criticizing God.

- 26] He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.
- 27] He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:
- 28] And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.
- 29] So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;
- 30] They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths,
- 31] The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.
- 32] For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.
- 33] Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

- 34] When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God.
- 35] And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.
- 36] Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.
- 37] For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.
- 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.
- 39] For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.
- 40] How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!
- 41] Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.
- 42] They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.
- 43] How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan:

Spurgeon: “We are too prone to engrave our trials in marble, and write our blessings in the sand...”

- 44] And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.
- 45] He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.
- 46] He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust.
- 47] He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycomore trees with frost.
- 48] He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts.
- 49] He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.
- 50] He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence;
- 51] And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham:
- 52] But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.
- 53] And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.
- 54] And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased.
- 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.
- 56] Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:
- 57] But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.
- 58] For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.
- 59] When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:
- 60] So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men;
- 61] And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.
- 62] He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

The Book of Judges records how seven different nations invaded Israel, and God raised up “judges” when the people repented and turned to Him for help.

- 63] The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage.
- 64] Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.
- 65] Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.
- 66] And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach.
- 67] Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:
- 68] But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.
- 69] And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever.
- 70] He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds:
- 71] From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.
- 72] So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 79 “Israel in the Great Tribulation”

This psalm is a prayer for God’s people, the nation Israel, in the Great Tribulation, which is the terrible day of trouble that is coming to them.

This is another psalm of Asaph, a great musician, who was probably the writer and arranger of them. He was contemporary with David and probably served as his assistant.

Prophetic Applications

- The siege of Nebuchadnezzar and the subsequent Babylonian captivity.
- The Maccabean period also brought such a calamity.
- This prophecy’s ultimate fulfillment will be during the Great Tribulation.

The Perils of Jerusalem

The false prophets were saying that God would never allow their destruction and captivity. However, the city that the false prophets had said could never be taken *was* taken, and the inhabitants were carried

away into captivity. The temple they said could never be destroyed *was* destroyed. The temple, the sanctuary, was the very center of things. (This section of the Psalms corresponds to the Book of Leviticus: its theme is the worship centering about the tabernacle and later the temple.)

[A Psalm of Asaph.]

- 1] O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.
- 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.

Their Painful Dilemma

This horrible carnage was difficult for the people of Israel to understand: Why was God permitting this to happen to them? The false prophets had been continually telling them that it could not happen to God’s people.

The prophet Jeremiah had been faithfully giving God’s warning of judgment to come; yet, he had been discredited and labeled as a traitor to his nation. The Israelites could not understand why God had not protected them. *This is still a question in our day.* A great many Jews have become atheists because of the terrible persecution and suffering of their people in Germany during Hitler’s dictatorship.

Of course it is difficult for them to understand it. Maybe they have the same questions the psalmist has:

- Have they been faithful to God?
- Are they back in proper relationship with Him?
- Have they accepted their Messiah?
- Are they turning to Him?

The answer, of course, is no. Judgment has come upon the nations of the world, nations like our own. God has judged His people in the past and is judging them in our day. Great judgment has come upon the church and will increase in the future.

- 3] Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them.
- 4] We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

Not just Babylon: Ammon, Moab, and Edom were delighted...

- 5] How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

- 6] Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.
- 7] For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place.
- 8] O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.

But how will He be able to rub them out and forget them? Only through the death of Christ. When Christ is rejected, there is judgment. You have to meet Him in judgment or redemption; there are only two ways. Now listen to the plaintive cry of these suffering people:

- 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.
- 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 children of Israel had been making the boast that God was among them and would deliver them. God had not delivered them, and they were being subjected to ridicule. The heathen were making fun of them: the enemies of God blaspheme...

- 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;
- 12] And render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.
- 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.

In that coming kingdom their sorrows and their tears will be gone forever, and so there will be praise from generation to generation.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 80 "Prayer to the Shepherd of Israel"

In this series of psalms there is a continuation of thought, a prophetic development. [The LXX has the inscription: "the Assyrian," so some expositors place this psalm in a later time. However, it is definitely a psalm of Asaph, a contemporary of David, so it was written during the time of the Davidic kingdom.]

[To the chief Musician upon Shoshannimeduth, A Psalm of Asaph.]

The inscription is "To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim-Eduth," which means "lilies." We have seen before that a beautiful lily's psalm mentions the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of Israel.

- 1] Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.
- 2] Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us.

Why These Three Tribes?

Why would Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh be mentioned? These three tribes were immediately behind the Ark in the order of the march (Num 2:17-24). It was the ark that led the children of Israel through the wilderness, and as God had led them once before, the cry comes to lead them again.

- 3] Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.
- 4] O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?
- 5] Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.
- 6] Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.

A brief elegy: a lament, a sad part of the psalm. The psalmist feels God is angry because He does not answer the prayer of His people.

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Luke 19:41-44

But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

Luke 23:28-30

- 7] Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Cf. Num 6:24-27, the OT benediction; The Messiah's face...

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

Vine: Isa 5:1-7; Jer 2:2; 6:9; Ezek 15:1,2; 17:6-8; 19:10-14; Hos 10:1; 14:7; Mt 20:1-6; Mk 12:1-9; Lk 20:9-16.

- 9] Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.
- 10] The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.

A Disturbing Pattern

The responsibility of Israel was greater than that of the heathen nations, because God had granted to them a privilege that no other nation had, which was the visible presence of God.

God brought the nation of Israel out of bondage in Egypt. God cast the heathen nations out of the land of Palestine and planted Israel, His vine, there. Israel built a temple in which to worship God. Then they were told that their temple would be destroyed and they would be put out of the land. Why? For the same reason that God put the heathen nations out of the land—they turned their backs upon God.

- 11] She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.
- 12] Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?
- 13] The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

For years, after God planted His vine, He put a hedge about the land. The people lived in the land for 600 years. God didn't permit any of the great nations of that day to destroy them. Egypt came against Israel and had victories but did not destroy them. The same was true of Syria and the Hittite nation. But the day came when God removed the hedge and let the enemies of Israel come in. Why? Because Israel had rejected the Shepherd of Israel.

- 14] Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;
- 15] And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.
- 16] It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.
- 17] Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.

Who is at God's right hand? It is Israel's Messiah. David wrote, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine

enemies thy footstool" (Ps 110:1). The Lord Jesus applied this to Himself when His enemies challenged His messianic claim (Mt 22:44).

Genesis 35

When Rachel gave birth to her second son along the road-side that leads into Bethlehem: Benjamin was the baby, but she didn't call him that: she called him Ben-oni, "son of my suffering." But when Jacob looked upon him, he said, "No, we won't call him Ben-oni, we'll call him Benjamin, because he is the *"son of my right hand."*

Benjamin is a picture, a type, of our Lord Jesus who came to earth the first time as the Son of suffering. But today He is at God's right hand. Of Him the Father said, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps 110:1) and someday He will be returning from that position to this earth (Hos 5:15).

- 18] So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.
- 19] Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

The chorus, the third time: restore us...

Next Session

Meditate on the remainder of Book III: Psalms 81 - 89.

The Book of Psalms Session 16 Book III Psalms 81 - 89

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 81

This psalm is also linked to the one that preceded it. The prayer in the preceding psalm was not a prayer for Christians: It is a song of deliverance for the time of Jacob's trouble.

[To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of Asaph.]

- 1] Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.
- 2] Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.
- 3] Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

Feast of Trumpets? Trumpets here are *shofar*, not the silver trumpets (Num 10).

New Moon (Num 28:11-15; 10:10)

- Work was suspended (Amos 8:5).
- The temple was opened for worship (Isa 66:23); but there was no “holy convocation” as on the Sabbath.
- The godly received for religious instruction (2 Kgs 4:23).
- The trumpets were blown at the sacrifices (Num 10:10; Ps 81:3).
- The 7th new moon of the religious year was the Feast of Trumpets and also began the civil year

- 4] For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.
- 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.
- 6] I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.
- 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.
- 8] Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;
- 9] There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.
- 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.

For us, Egypt is the world, which He has brought us out of...

- 11] But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.

They still have not turned to God. There is not much difference between the Israel side and the Arab side as far as their relationship to God goes, and there is not much difference between that land and the United States. And as a people, as individuals, we need to turn to God.

- 12] So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.
- 13] Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!
- 14] I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.
- 15] The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.
- 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.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 82 - “God Judges the Judges”

Theme: God judges the judges of His people. This is a psalm that has been misunderstood. A critic who denies the deity of Christ will turn to this psalm and ridicule it. This is another prophetic psalm that looks to the future for God’s earthly people, Israel.

[A Psalm of Asaph.]

- 1] God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

This hasn’t happened yet, but He will stand there during the Millennium. Whom is He calling gods? God is calling the judges “gods” because they stand in His place and “walk in His shoes.”

- 2] How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.
- 3] Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

“Defend”: Heb. “Judge.” The current discussion of giving the poor an equal opportunity is not new; it is as old as the Book of Psalms. When the Lord Jesus, as Messiah, reigns on this earth, He will defend the poor and the fatherless, the afflicted and the needy. Today judges are standing in God’s place, and they are to do the same thing.

- 4] Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.
- 5] They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

Certainly our world today is being shaken and is in great turmoil, and one of the great problems has been the judges of the earth.

The Rule of Law

The big problem in our contemporary society is not so much with the criminal as it is with the judges and the breakdown of law and order. It is strange that the breakdown of law and order has begun with the legal profession and not really with the criminal element.

- 6] I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

What does He mean, “Ye are gods?” Jesus quoted this verse to the Pharisees when they questioned His deity: they accused Him of blasphemy because He made Himself God...

The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture

cannot be broken; 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? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

John 10:33-37

Jesus was telling these Jews that they were sitting in judgment and, when one sits in the place of judgment, he is taking the place of God. Many saints are guilty of that type of thing.

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

1 Corinthians 4:3-5

Paul is saying that he is going to stand before God someday; and, thus, he doesn't even judge himself. When you start judging someone, you are acting for God, and you are "a god" when you have taken that position of judging. I am fearful for our nation with so many godless people seeking office. They know nothing of the background of this country which was founded upon the Word of God; they are not in spiritual tune with the founding of this nation.

A Lesson for Parents

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.

Proverbs 1:8

What is worse than going to Hell? Hearing your son's voice and asking him... "What are you doing here?" "Following you, Dad..."

- 7] But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.
- 8] Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

This will be a prayer of the nation Israel. I think that we all can join in that prayer: "O God, judge this earth. You are going to inherit all the nations. This earth is Yours. You judge it."

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 83 - "A Cry for Judgment"

This is the last psalm of the Asaph series (50, 71-83) and a rather puzzling one. You can't seem to fit it into the history of the nation of Israel: yet, there have been some wild guesses.

[A Song or Psalm of Asaph.]

- 1] Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.
- 2] For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.
- 3] They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

Whoever the enemy is here, he hates God. But isn't that always the case with the enemy?

- 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.
- 5] For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee:

This refers to those who have plotted the destruction of the nation Israel. There are those who have tried to fit this psalm into the time of Jehoshaphat, and others who have attempted to fit it into other historical periods.

- 6] The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;
- 7] Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;
- 8] Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah.

There is no place in history where they clearly fit in; and that makes this a very remarkable section, because it appears that these verses look to the future. Apparently these nations, which were in existence at one time, will appear again in the future...

The Enemies

- "Assur" is Assyria.
 - "The children of Lot" would be Moab and Ammon.
 - At the present time Israel is surrounded by "Arab nations" (who are apparently joined together not so much as Arabs but as Muslims)
- 9] Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison:

In the Book of Judges we read how God judged those nations. There are those who say that God will not judge that way in the future. He won't? He has judged that way in the past. God has not changed. What He has done in the past, He will do in the future. For that reason this is impressive.

- 10] Which perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth.

- 11] Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna:
- 12] Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.
- 13] O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind.
- 14] As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire;

“Be like a forest fire!”

- 15] So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.
- 16] Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

- 17] Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:
- 18] That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.

In contrast to Al-Ilah, the Moon God... Apparently, the only way this world is going to know that God is God is for Him to move in judgment.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 84 - “Desire for God’s House”

Theme: A deep desire for God’s house .This is a psalm in which the Levitical emphasis is prominent. It is a psalm for the sons of Korah who served in the tabernacle and later in the temple.

The Sons of Korah

- The divisions of the porters: of the Korhites of the sons of Asaph” (1 Chr 26:1ff).
- Korah had led the rebellion against Moses, and he was judged for it. By the grace of God, these descendants of his yet served in the tabernacle and in the temple of God.
- These strong, robust Levites guarded the tabernacle, and later they watched over every entrance to the temple (1 Chr 26:12-13).

[To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.]

- 1] How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!
- 2] My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Is this your heartcry today? Do you love to meet with God’s people? (I have found the warmest and most fruitful fellowship today is in small groups—which is one of the most encouraging trends in today’s society...)

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

Not one sparrow falls but what the Father sees it (Mt 10:29). Actually, the language is stronger than that: He says that the sparrow falls into the lap of your Father; He knows all about it.

- 5] Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.
- 6] Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

“...Baca...”: Balsam tree, whose sap oozes like tears; thus, any difficult place in life, etc.

- 7] They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.
- 8] O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.
- 9] Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.
- 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.

This is a reference to the Messiah, revealed the face of God on earth. What a glorious psalm this is, and what a rebuke it is to many of us.

- 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.

Wow! Is that really true? ...in your life...?

- 12] O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 85 - “Future Restoration of Israel”

Certain critics have attempted to identify this psalm with the return of the people to the land under Ezra and Nehemiah. Actually it has no reference to that at all. The reason critics do this is because they do not recognize the fact that the Psalms are *prophetic*. We are in a section where we have several writers of the Psalms and the amazing thing is that these psalms have been put together to tell a story and it certainly looks as if God had the oversight of it.

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.]

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

- 2] Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

Many critics assume that this verse refers to the return of the Jews to their land from the Babylonian captivity, but in reality only a small remnant returned to the land at that time (less than 60,000). The bulk of the people did not return. Rather, it looks forward to the kingdom age when God brings all of His people back into the land. (Isa 11:11). Cf. the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

- 3] Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger.

This looks forward to the time when the judgments are over for Israel. The worst time for this nation and for the world is still in the future.

- 4] Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.
5] Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?
6] Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Today we need revival in our churches for several reasons. One reason is there is a lack of joy in the lives of believers. It should be there, but it is not.

- 7] Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.
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.

When God's final judgment of sin takes place, His people will no longer turn to folly. They will not return to their sins because sin will be removed from the universe.

- 9] Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

There is no glory in Israel today.

- 10] Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

“Mercy and truth” haven't met each other in our day. “Righteousness and peace” aren't even on speaking terms today. We cannot have peace in this world is because we do not have righteousness in the world. Until things are right, there will be no peace on earth.

- 11] Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

- 12] Yea, the LORD shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase.
13] Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps.

The Lord Jesus Christ will reign in righteousness.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 86 - “David Prays for the Future Kingdom”

This is the only Davidic psalm in Book III of Psalms. There are at least 14 specific requests (specificity in prayer!).

Names of God

- We have seen in previous psalms:
 - *Elohim*, which speaks of God as Creator,
 - *Jehovah (YHWH)*, which speaks of God as Savior.
- In this psalm another name for God appears seven times: *Adonai*, which the English translation is “Lord.” *Adonai* is the name of God which the pious Jew uses instead of YHWH—the sacred tetragram. An orthodox Jew doesn't pronounce YHWH.
- Because *Adonai* occurs seven times in this psalm, it is considered a messianic psalm by some scholars. However, in the strict sense of the word, it isn't a messianic psalm denotatively because of the nature of the prayer.

[A Prayer of David.]

- 1] Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy.
2] Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.
3] Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.
4] Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
5] For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.
6] Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.
7] In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.
8] Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.
9] All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.
10] For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.
11] Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

There is no way that you can apply this verse to the Lord Jesus. He would never need to pray a prayer like this, because He came to do the Father's will. *But this verse can apply to you and me.* We need to be taught God's way and His truth; our hearts do need to be united to fear His name.

- 12] I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.
- 13] For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul

How few can say with the Apostle [Paul], "This one thing I do." We are on the road—not, at least intentionally, off it—but we stop to chase butterflies among the flowers, and make no serious progress... yielding ourselves with scarce a thought to endless trifles, lighter than a thistle down for which the child spends all his strength, and we laugh at him.

—F. W. Grant

If we examined our lives carefully in such an interest as this, how we would realize the multitude of needless anxieties, or self-imagined duties, of permitted relaxations, of 'innocent trifles,' which incessantly divert us from that in which alone is profit. How few perhaps would care to face such an examination day by day of the unwritten history of their lives.

—F. W. Grant

- 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.
- 15] But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.
- 16] O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.
- 17] Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

The first thing that the apostle Paul said after he was converted was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

Teach me thy way, O Lord.

Psalm 86:11

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Psalm 32:8

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 87 - "Zion, The City of God"

This same view was expressed before in Psalm 48, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Ps 48:1-2).

[A Psalm or Song for the sons of Korah.]

- 1] His foundation is in the holy mountains.
- 2] The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
- 3] Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

Isaiah 2:1,2

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

Isaiah 2:10,11

- 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.
- 5] And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.
- 6] The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah.

Rahab and Babylon

- "Rahab" is not the harlot of Jericho, but Egypt, the southern world power; *Rahab* means "arrogant" (Isa 51:9; Ps 89:10).
- "Babylon" represents the northern world power; *Babylon* means "confusion."
- Notice: "Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia." (The first convert was the Ethiopian eunuch; he was born again there in the desert; Acts 8.)

The arrogance and confusion of these nations will end when Christ is reigning in Zion. There will be many who will turn to the Lord in that day, recognizing that they were deceived by the Antichrist.

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

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 88

This is a lamentation. It is the darkest wail of woe in the Book of Psalms. In Hebrew, the final word is *hoshek*, darkness.

[A Song or Psalm for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leanoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.]

“...Maschil...”: or, a Psalm of Heman the Ezrahite, giving instruction. This psalm has been speculatively applied to Job and to Uzziah who had leprosy and to Jeremiah in the dungeon and to Hezekiah when he was sick...

- 1] O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee:
- 2] Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;
- 3] For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.
- 4] I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength:
- 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.
- 6] Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.
- 7] Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.
- 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.
- 9] Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.
- 10] Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah.
- 11] Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?
- 12] Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?
- 13] But unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.
- 14] LORD, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?
- 15] I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.
- 16] Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.
- 17] They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together.
- 18] Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

He is in a tough place. Wrath, death, the grave, and darkness are summed up together by the sufferer. The darkness is thickest at the end just as it is in the morning, before the rising of the sun.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 89 “The Davidic Covenant”

The *New Scofield Reference Bible* refers to this psalm as the Davidic Covenant. It is quite a contrast to the previous psalm which was all gloom and no glory. This one is all glory and no gloom.

[Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.]

Ethan of Solomon’s reign (1 Kgs 4:31); vv. 39-45 describe the invasion of Shishak, which occurred in Rehoboam’s reign (1 Chr 12).

- 1] I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.
- 2] For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

“Faithfulness” is used 10X in this psalm; “Covenant,” 4X; “I have sworn,” 3X; “I will not lie,” 4X. It’s His faithfulness that is view here. [If I lost my soul, He would lose more than that—His reputation, His Word.]

- 3] I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,
- 4] Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

Cf. 2 Sam 7; Ps 2, 72, 89, Isa 11...

- 5] And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.
- 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?
- 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.
- 8] O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?
- 9] Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.
- 10] Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.
- 11] The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.
- 12] The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.
- 13] Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.
- 14] Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.
- 15] Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.
- 16] In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.
- 17] For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.
- 18] For the LORD is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.

- 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.
 20] I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:
 21] With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.
 22] The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.
 23] And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.
 24] But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

The pronoun has changed to “my” because it is God speaking. All the references in this psalm, regardless of the pronoun used, refer to the faithfulness of God.

- 25] I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.
 26] He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.
 27] Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

He was the Firstborn in Bethlehem; firstborn in the Resurrection, first begotten of the dead... King of Kings...!

- 28] My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.
 29] His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.
 30] If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;
 31] If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;
 32] Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.
 33] Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.
 34] My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.
 35] Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.
 36] His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.

At this very moment there is One sitting at the right hand of God who is coming to earth to sit on that throne of David. He is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David.

- 37] It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

David will have a Son who will sit on the throne of this universe. That fact is as established as the moon is established in the heavens, and it looks like the moon is going to be there for a long time.

- 38] But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.

Verses 39-45 describe the invasion of Shishak, which occurred in Rehoboam’s reign (1 Chr 12). Young Jehoiachin had been taken captive

to Babylon; his uncle Zedekiah replaced him (2 Kgs 24) and Jeremiah had announced a blood curse on Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah, or Coniah). Whence the Dynasty?...

- 39] Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.
 40] Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.
 41] All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.
 42] Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.
 43] Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.
 44] Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.
 45] The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.
 46] How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?
 47] Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?
 48] What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.
 49] Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?
 50] Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people;
 51] Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.

To these people who had gotten away from God at this time, it looked as if God had forgotten His covenant. But He hadn’t forgotten His covenant. God is faithful. God has the Man to sit on David’s throne.

- 52] Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Verse 52 is not part of the psalm: it forms the conclusion of Book III (Cf. Ps 41:13, 72:18-19).

Next Session

Review Book IV: Psalms 90 - 106. Meditate on Psalms 90 - 97.

The Book of Psalms Session 17 Psalms 90 - 100

Book IV: “Numbers” Section (Psalms 90-106)

The theme of Book IV is *Peril and Protection*. The Book of Numbers records the great tragedy of a generation dying in the wilder-

ness, never reaching their goal: the Promised Land. How appropriate it is to begin this section with Psalm 90, the prayer of Moses. It is the only psalm of Moses that we have.

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Theocratic Psalms | 93, 95-100 |
| Penitential Psalms | 90, 91, 94, 102 |
| Thanksgiving Psalms | 92, 93, 95-100 |
| National Psalms | 94, 97, 99, 102, 105, 106 |
| Historical Psalms | 105, 106 |

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 90

This is the oldest Psalm and was written by Moses, possibly after the failure of faith at Kadesh Barnea (Num 13-14). For 38 years they wandered in a funeral march in the desert—until that generation died. Moses saw a lot of people die—over two million of them—and his psalm is the psalm of death.

Just as Moses acts in teaching the law, so does he in this Psalm. For he preaches death, sin and condemnation, in order that he may alarm the proud who are secure in their sins, and that he may set before their eyes their sin and evil.

—Martin Luther

[A Prayer of Moses the man of God.]

- 1] Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.
- 2] Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Is the Lord your “dwelling place”? [There were six generations from Abraham to Moses.]

“...everlasting”: This is figurative in the Hebrew: “from the vanishing point to the vanishing point.”

- 3] Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.
- 4] For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.
- 5] Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.
- 6] In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

Life is so brief compared to eternity. This is a picture of man. In the wilderness Moses saw over one million people die. He probably attended more funerals than anyone else.

- 7] For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.
- 8] Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

Secret sin on earth is open scandal in heaven. The angels are watching you; they see what you do down here.

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

In the Hebrew this verse is figurative: “We spend our years as a moan.” A tale “full of sound and fury, yet signifying nothing” according to Hamlet. How about yours?

- 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.
- 11] Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.
- 12] So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

“The days...”: Heb. “As for the days of our years, in them are seventy years.” [I don’t know how you can be “over the hill” if you haven’t ever reached the top!] Moses lived to 120; Joshua, 110; David, 70. The ultimate stewardship: our only non-elastic resource...

- 13] Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.
- 14] O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
- 15] Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.
- 16] Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

Life is a difficult school; we should pray that the lessons not be wasted.

- 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.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 91

Psalm 90 was a psalm of the difficulties of life; Psalm 91 is a psalm of the dangers of life. It reveals a wonderful place of protection and security for us. (It saw me through the challenges and trials of my Academy days...and beyond. My wife and I keep a copy on our key chains...)

- 1] He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

- 2] I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.
- 3] Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.
- 4] He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
- 5] Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
- 6] Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

Feathers? Those of the cherubim of the Holy of Holies! (Ps 36:7,8; 57:1; 61:4; 63:2,6,7). “...buckler” = “to go around”; some translate = bulwark or rampart.

- 7] A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.
- 8] Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.
- 9] Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

It’s all a matter of trusting Him...Israel saw the death of the Egyptian firstborn with their own eyes, and on the shore of the Red Sea (Ex 12:29-30; 14:26-31)

- 10] There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.
- 11] For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.
- 12] They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.
- 13] Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

This is the passage that the Devil misquoted; Satan knew this psalm applied to the Lord Jesus. (He omitted “in all thy ways.”) “...adder”: or, asp—the lion and serpent are images of Satan.

- 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.

Two important “because.” (Not the usual word for love: this one means “to cling to, to cleave, to be passionate”; also found in Deut 7:7 & 10:15 for the Love of YHWH for His people Israel.)

- 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.
- 16] With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

“...long...”: Heb. “length of days.” “Salvation” = help, deliverance, long life.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 92

[A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day.]

Theme: Song of praise for the sabbath day. It tells of praise and worship and adoration—that’s what the sabbath was given for. YHWH, covenant name, used seven times.

- 1] It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:

Do you want to do a good thing today? Give thanks to the Lord right now wherever you are and sing praises to His name.

- 2] To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,
- 3] Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.
- 4] For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.
- 5] O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.
- 6] A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

Brutish = beastly, lacking values and discernment, savage, living only to satisfy the appetite. Some translate it as stupid, senseless, rude, and uncultivated.

- 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:
- 8] But thou, LORD, art most high for evermore.

Central verse: The sovereign rule of God. Most people live as though God does not exist. They just eat, and sleep, and rest, and play, and work. That’s it—that’s life for them...

- 9] For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.
- 10] But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.
- 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.
- 12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

The palm tree = an emblem of victory; the cedar tree denotes strength and seriousness. This is a picture of the righteous who are walking in fellowship with God even today.

- 13] Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.
- 14] They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;
- 15] To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 93

Theme: Millennial psalm of sheer praise. This brief psalm of only five verses, tucked between psalms 92 and 94, is a song of sheer praise because the King is *reigning*. It is a millennial kingdom psalm and speaks of the Lord who has come to reign gloriously over the earth.

- 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.
- 2] Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

This psalm will really have its meaning when He comes to reign on this earth: all rebellious opposition will be broken down, and all those who have opposed God will be dethroned on the earth.

- 3] The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The flood tide of sin is over. Satan's head has been crushed.

- 4] The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.
- 5] Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 94

Theme: A call upon God to intervene against the wicked. Psalms 94 to 100 form a series of psalms that tell a consecutive story. These seven glorious psalms are kingdom songs, celebrating the sovereign reign of the Messiah. They are a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ and His reign on earth following the time of the Great Tribulation and all the trouble that comes upon man during that period.

- 1] O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.
- 2] Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.
- 3] LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

A familiar theme, found in Psalms 10, 14, 73, 92. See also Job, Habakkuk, etc.

- 4] How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?
- 5] They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.
- 6] They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.
- 7] Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.
- 8] Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?

Brutish = beastly, lacking values and discernment, savage, living only to satisfy the appetite. Some trans.: stupid, senseless, rude, uncultivated. Once again God is speaking to the stupid and foolish man.

- 9] He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?
- 10] He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?
- 11] The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.
- 12] Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;
- 13] That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.
- 14] For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.
- 15] But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.
- 16] Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

Edmund Burke: "It is only necessary for the good men to do nothing for evil to triumph."

- 17] Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.
- 18] When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.
- 19] In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.
- 20] Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?
- 21] They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.
- 22] But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.
- 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.

The psalm concludes with the confidence that God has heard and will judge the wicked.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 95

Theme of Psalms 95 -99: Songs of joy and praise.

- 1] O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
- 2] Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.
- 3] For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

First, praise and thanksgiving. Then He is worshiped as the Creator: praise is looking up; worship is bowing down.

- 4] In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.
- 5] The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.
- 6] O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.
- 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,
- 8] Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
- 9] When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

Hebrews 3:7 - 4:13 applies the following passage to the church.

- 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:
- 11] Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end: While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Hebrews 3:7-19

Hebrews 4:1-13 then continues this admonition...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 96

This psalm is found in another version in 1 Chronicles 16:23-33. The psalm in Chronicles combines quotations from Psalms 96, 105 (vv. 1-15) and 106 (vv. 1, 47-48). Some believe Psalm 96 was used to dedicate the Second Temple upon their return from Babylon. Yet the psalm looks ahead to the Millennium and the worship includes Gentile nations...

- 1] O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.
- 2] Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.
- 3] Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.
- 4] For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

We have already seen that this “new song” is the song of redemption. The Book of Revelation says we will sing it.

- 5] For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.
- 6] Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
- 7] Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

Idolatry is referred to here because the Millennium will end all idolatry. There are men today who think themselves wondrously wise by turning to all kinds of religions. The day will come when atheism, deism, polytheism, and all of the cults will be done away with.

- 8] Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.
- 9] O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.
- 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.
- 11] Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.
- 12] Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice.
- 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.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 97

This psalm combines Psalm 95 (God’s people) and Psalm 96 (the Gentile nations) to focus on YHWH Most High, with all things under His control.

- 1] The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

- 2] Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.
- 3] A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

This is not a hymn of Christ's First coming to earth but of His Second Coming.

- 4] His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.
- 5] The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
- 6] The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

Not a "tribal God": the Lord of the whole earth...

- 7] Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.

"Gods" should be translated "angels"—compare Hebrews 1:6—"And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."

- 8] Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD.
- 9] For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.
- 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.
- 11] Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.
- 12] Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 98

This psalm inspired Isaac Watts to compose "Joy to the World," which is a Kingdom hymn, not a Christmas carol; and of the Second Advent, not the First; and of the Messianic kingdom, not a manger.

[A Psalm.]

Psalm 98 is the second stanza of the new song of worship.

- 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.
- 2] The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.
- 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.
- 4] Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come!"

- 5] Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.
- 6] With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.
- 7] Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
- 8] Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together
- 9] Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 99

This is another great psalm of praise to God, the Mighty One. If you haven't formed the habit of praising God, you should. This is the sixth of the "royal psalms" which magnify the rule of YHWH the King. Psalm 99 is a song to the King whose throne is a throne of grace and mercy.

- 1] The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.
- 2] The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people.

"...all the people": The Lord is great in all nations, not just Israel.

- 3] Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.
- 4] The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.
- 5] Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.
- 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.

Often Moses, Aaron and Samuel had to intercede for the people, and God heard them and answered...

- 7] He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them.
- 8] Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.
- 9] Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

Psalms 94 - 100

Psalm 94: "O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth..."

Psalm 95: "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation."

- Psalm 96: “O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth.”
- Psalm 97: “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice”
- Psalm 98: “O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things....”
- Psalm 99: “The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble....”

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 100

Psalm 100 is the grand finale of that wonderful little cluster of psalms that began with Psalm 94 and closes with psalm 100. In this section we have seen the Lord Jesus Christ as King. YHWH is King. For centuries Christian congregations have sung William Kethe’s paraphrase of this psalm to the tune “Old Hundreth,” published in 1561. It is the glorious finale of this very precious cluster of psalms.

[A Psalm of praise.]

- 1] Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.
- 2] Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
- 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.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

John 10:14-16

- 4] Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
- 5] For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

This is the way God wants you to come into His presence. “...to all...”: Heb. “to generation and generation.”

... Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Revelation 1:5-6

Next Session

Meditate on the remainder of Book IV: Psalms 101 - 106. Compare Psalm 104 with Genesis 1.

The Book of Psalms Session 18 Psalms 101- 106

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 101 - “Song to the King Who Rules in Righteousness and Judgment”

This is a Davidic psalm. It begins a little nest of 6 psalms (101–106) that speak of praise to the King. [Leadership 101?] Yet, this is a psalm that really cannot fit into David’s: it must also be a *prophetic* psalm.

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.
- 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.

I don’t remember David walking like that. The One we really see here is the Redeemer, the only-begotten of the Father.

- 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.
- 4] A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.
- 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.
- 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.
- 7] He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.
- 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.

David’s Failures

- His sin with Bathsheba set a bad example for his family (2 Sam 11,12).
- He failed to discipline Amnon and Absalom for their sins (2 Sam 13-15).
- He had problems with his generals, Joab and Abishai.
- His trusted counselor Ahithophel betrayed him.

David was far from perfect; but his commitments were still formidable...

His Achievements

- He reigned for 40 years and expanded the borders of the kingdom.
- He defeated Israel’s enemies.

- He gathered the wealth for the Temple and wrote the psalms.
- He established the dynasty that eventually brought the Messiah into the world: Jerusalem = “City of David”; Jesus = “Son of David.”

The Messianic Example

- Before His incarnation Christ said, “Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God” (Heb 10:7).
- While our Lord was on earth, He stated that His meat and drink were to do the will of the Father who sent Him, and He did *perfectly* His Father’s will. He waited patiently for that hour called “My hour” when He wrought out your salvation and mine.
- Today He is at God’s right hand and is still doing the will of His Father. He is waiting for that hour when the Father will send Him into the world again, because the Father has said, “... Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Ps 110:1).
- We are told that “... when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor 15:28). This verse has caused a great deal of discussion. What does it really mean? It means that after He reigns on this earth, subject to the Father, He will complete the integration that completes the Father’s plan...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 102

Theme: Prayer of trouble and sorrow. This is a Messianic psalm that pictures the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane. As we will soon find out, the Holy Spirit has marked out this psalm as Messianic in the New Testament.

[A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.]

- 1] Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.
- 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.

Here is a case where Jehovah prays to Jehovah! [In Genesis we find a remarkable statement: “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven” (Gen 19:24).]

- 3] For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.
- 4] My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.
- 5] By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.

- 6] I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.
- 7] I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.
- 8] Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.
- 9] For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.
- 10] Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

The words indignation and wrath are the strongest terms you can use in the Hebrew language. The Lord endured this. Why? He did it “... for the joy that was set before him ...” (Heb 12:2).

- 11] My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.
- 12] But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.
- 13] Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.
- 14] For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.
- 15] So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.
- 16] When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

Our Lord knew that through His sacrificial death Zion would ultimately be redeemed.

- 17] He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.
- 18] This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.
- 19] For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;
- 20] To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;
- 21] To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;
- 22] When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.
- 23] He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.
- 24] I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.
- 25] Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.
- 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:
- 27] But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

The Holy Spirit quotes this passage in Hebrews 1:10-12, and we would not have known that Psalm 102 was a Messianic psalm if it hadn’t pleased the author of the Bible, the Spirit of God, to reveal the meaning of this section in the first chapter of Hebrews.

And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 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.

Hebrews 1:10-12

- 28] The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

Psalms 102 applies to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His prayer of trouble and sorrow. This is the King in Gethsemane—His humiliation before His exaltation...

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Hebrews 5:7

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 103

No requests; only praise.

- 1) Admonition for the Present
- 2) Declaration concerning YHWH
- 3) Declaration concerning Man
- 4) Proclamation for the Future

McGee, J. Vernon, *Thru the Bible Commentary*
electronic ed. Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1997, c1981, S. 2:825

[A Psalm of David.]

Admonition for the Present

- 1] Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
- 2] Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

...and all that is within me! That says it all (“all” is used nine times in this psalm). You can use this as a table grace if you already started...(!)
Jews give thanks before *and after* each meal.

Declaration Concerning YHWH

- 3] Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;
- 4] Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

There can be no healing until the sins are forgiven. Disease is the result of sin, and before healing can take place, the sin question must be settled. In 1 Peter 2:24 (quote from Isaiah 53:5) we read, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” ...from sin.

Many of God’s choicest servants have been ill and afflicted and have never been healed in this life. The apostle Paul was one of these. He had a thorn in his flesh. It may have been eye trouble. If anyone should have claimed healing, it seems to me he should have. John Milton was blind...

- 5] Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.
- 6] The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.
- 7] He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.
- 8] The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Declaration Concerning Man

- 9] He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.
- 10] He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

If God would deal with us according to our sins and according to our iniquities, none of us would be saved.

- 11] For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.
- 12] As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

The psalmist does not say, “As far as the north is from the south.” That is a finite distance; but when you start moving from the east to the west, there is no end...

- 13] Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.
- 14] For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

God remembers that we are dust. We forget it, and when dust gets stuck on itself, it is mud.

- 15] As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.
- 16] For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

Proclamation for the Future

- 17] But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;
- 18] To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.
- 19] The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.
- 20] Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.
- 21] Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.
- 22] Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 104 - "Praise to the God of Creation"

- 1] Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.
- 2] Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

On the first day of creation God said, "Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen 1:3). The second day of creation is pictured in these words: "Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain..."

- 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:

On the second day of creation God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters" (Gen 1:6).

More Than a Metaphor?

- Who alone stretches out the heavens (Job 9:8).
- Stretching out heaven like a tent curtain (Ps 104:2).
- Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in (Isa 40:22).
- He has stretched out the heavens (Jer 10:12).
- The Lord who stretches out the heavens (Zech 12:1).

"Stretching the Heavens"

- 2 Sam 22:10 • Job 9:8 • Job 26:7 • Job 37:18 • Psalm 18:9 • Psalm 104:2 • Psalm 144:5 • Isaiah 40:22 • Isaiah

- 42:5 • Isaiah 44:24 • Isaiah 45:12 • Isaiah 48:13 • Isaiah 51:13 • Jeremiah 10:12 • Jeremiah 51:15 • Ezekiel 1:22 • Zechariah 12:1

Space Is *Not* an Empty Vacuum

- “torn” (Isa 64:1).
- “worn out” like a garment (Ps 102:25)
- “shaken” (Heb 12:26; Hag 2:6; Isa 13:13).
- “burnt up” (2 Pet 3:12).
- “split apart” like a scroll (Rev 6:14).
- “rolled up” like a mantle (Heb 1:12) or a scroll (Isa 34:4).

“Rolled Up?”

- There is some dimension in which space must be “thin.”
- Space can be “bent”; therefore, there is a direction it can be bent *toward*.
- Thus, there are *additional spatial* dimensions.

- 4] Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:
- 5] Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.
- 6] Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

On the third day of creation “God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so” (Gen 1:9). He had put waters above them—the clouds that go over carry quite a bit of water—now He divides the land and the waters.

- 7] At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.
- 8] They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.
- 9] Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.
- 10] He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.
- 11] They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.
- 12] By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.
- 13] He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.
- 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;
- 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.

“...oil to make his face to shine...”: Heb. “to make his face shine with oil,” or, “more than oil.”

- 16] The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;
17] Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house.
18] The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies.
19] He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

The sun and the moon move according to schedule. Don't tell me that we are living in a meaningless universe. [Cf. The Anthropic Principle...]

The Appointed Times

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

Genesis 1:14

“...seasons”: המועדים “the appointed times.”

המועדים The Appointed Times (Leviticus 23)

- 52 sabbaths
+ 7 days of Passover (including its related feast days)
+ 1 *Shavout*, Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)
+ 1 *Yom Teruah*, Feast of Trumpets
+ 1 *Yom Kippur*, Day of Atonement
+ 7 days of *Sukkot*, Feast of Tabernacles
+ 1 *Shimini Atzeret*, 8th Day of Assembly
70

- Statistical expectation: 5 times in the 78,064 letters of Genesis;
- As an *equidistant letter sequence*, it appears **only once** in Genesis;
- At an interval of **70**;
- It is centered on **Genesis 1:14**.
- Odds against this by unaided chance have been estimated at greater than *70,000,000 to one!*

The Jew's catechism is his calendar.

Samson Raphael Hirsch

The Feasts of Israel

The Spring Feasts (1st Month: Nisan)

- Passover
- Feast of Unleavened Bread
- Feast of First Fruits

– Feast of Weeks (3rd Month : Sivan)

The Fall Feasts (7th Month: Tishri)

- Feast of Trumpets
- Yom Kippur
- Feast of Tabernacles

- 20] Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.

“...beasts...”: Heb. “beasts thereof do trample on the forest.”

- 21] The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.
22] The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.
23] Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.
24] O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.
25] So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.
26] There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.
27] These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.
28] That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.
29] Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.
30] Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

Man now is going to be put on the earth—his home is ready for him.

- 31] The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.

When His creation was finished, God looked upon it and saw that it was good.

- 32] He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.
33] I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

- 34] My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.
 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.

Man is on the earth, created to praise God. He has been put on earth, and he has an address: he lives at No. 1, Garden of Eden. Man has sinned. So what will God do? He is going to remove him from the earth. Unless you are willing to turn to Christ, this earth will not be your permanent dwelling place. God will remove you to another place, and He has another address for you.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 105

Psalm 105 and 106 are Historic Psalms. Psalms 105 is a hymn to God in history from Abraham to Moses. I believe that it was written by David, because the first part of this psalm is the same as 1 Chronicles 16:8-22, which tells about the time David brought the tabernacle into Jerusalem.

- 1] O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.
 2] Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.
 3] Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.
 4] Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.
 5] Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;
 6] O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.

He goes back in history and begins with the descendants of Abraham, and the covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then He follows them through Joseph, down into the land of Egypt.

- 7] He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth.
 8] He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.
 9] Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;
 10] And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant:
 11] Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:
 12] When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.
 13] When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people;
 14] He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes;
 15] Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.
 16] Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.
 17] He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant:
 18] Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron:

- 19] Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.
 20] The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free.
 21] He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance:
 22] To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.
 23] Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourn'd in the land of Ham.
 24] And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.
 25] He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.
 26] He sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he had chosen.
 27] They shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.
 28] He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.
 29] He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.
 30] Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.
 31] He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts.
 32] He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land.
 33] He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.
 34] He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillers, and that without number,
 35] And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.
 36] He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength.
 37] He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.
 38] Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.

“Egypt was glad when Israel departed”—they certainly were. They were glad to get Israel out of their hair after those plagues. Then God brought His people into the land. The psalmist recites Israel’s history as something to sing praise about.

- 39] He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.
 40] The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.
 41] He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.

That rock has been found near Jabal.

- 42] For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.
 43] And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness:
 44] And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;
 45] That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 106 - “The Wilderness Wanderings”

Psalm 106 is another historic psalm, and a long one; it ends the Numbers section. It follows the children of Israel through the wilderness. This psalm shows us Israel’s failure and God’s faithfulness.

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 2] Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? who can shew forth all his praise?
- 3] Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.
- 4] Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;
- 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.
- 6] We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.
- 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.
- 8] Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.
- 9] He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.
- 10] And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.
- 11] And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.
- 12] Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.
- 13] They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel:
- 14] But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.
- 15] And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

George Morrison: "The Lord took Israel Israel out of Egypt in one night, but it took Him forty years to take Egypt out of Israel."

- 16] They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD.
- 17] The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.
- 18] And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.
- 19] They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.

Korah and 250 co-conspirators...

- 20] Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.
- 21] They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;
- 22] Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea.
- 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.
- 24] Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word:
- 25] But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.
- 26] Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:
- 27] To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.

"...to overthrow": Heb. to make them fall.

- 28] They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

- 29] Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.
- 30] Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and so the plague was stayed.
- 31] And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.
- 32] They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:
- 33] Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.
- 34] They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them:
- 35] But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.
- 36] And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.
- 37] Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,
- 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.
- 39] Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.
- 40] Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.
- 41] And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.
- 42] Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.
- 43] Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.
- 44] Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:

Six nations for over 100 years, punished in their own land...

- 45] And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.
- 46] He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.
- 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.
- 48] Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen.
Praise ye the LORD.

A final doxology, written by an ancient editor, closes the 4th Book of Psalms. "...Praise...": Heb. "Hallelujah."

Next Session

We now are entering the final Book of Psalms, the "Deuteronomy" section, Psalms 107 – 150. Meditate on Psalms 107 – 118.

The Book of Psalms Session 19

Book V (Psalm 107 - 150)

Psalms 107-118

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 107

Psalm 107 begins the Deuteronomy section of the Book of Psalms. This fifth book begins with a great retrospect in the plains of Moab, which reviews God's gracious dealings with His people. They were then soon to enter the land of promise.

In the opening psalm of this Deuteronomy section the remnant of Israel is seen prophetically regathered and about ready to enter the land. Psalm 105 emphasized Israel's exodus from Egypt; Psalm 106, on God's long-suffering care of his people. Psalm 107 focuses on the Lord's redemption of the nation from the captivity of Babylon (vv. 2-3).

- 1] O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 2] Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;
- 3] And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.

Let the redeemed of the Lord *say* so. Don't go around complaining and criticizing. If you are a Christian, tell others how good God is. He *is* good, but He doesn't have a good reputation in the world today.

- 4] They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.
- 5] Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.
- 6] Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.
- 7] And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

Cf. Deuteronomy 28:64-65...

- 8] Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
- 9] For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.
- 10] Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;
- 11] Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:
- 12] Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help.

- 13] Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.
- 14] He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.
- 15] Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
- 16] For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.
- 17] Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.
- 18] Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.
- 19] Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.
- 20] He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.
- 21] Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
- 22] And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

"...rejoicing": Heb. "singing," Cf. Heb 13:10-15.

- 23] They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;
- 24] These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.
- 25] For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.
- 26] They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.
- 27] They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.
- 28] Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.
- 29] He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
- 30] Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.
- 31] Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
- 32] Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.
- 33] He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;
- 34] A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.
- 35] He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.
- 36] And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;
- 37] And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.
- 38] He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.
- 39] Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

- 40] He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.
- 41] Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.
- 42] The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.
- 43] Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 108

(The first half is the same as Psalm 57, and the last is like Psalm 60: first 5 verses from 57:7-11, and last 8 from 60:5-12, respectively).

[A Song or Psalm of David.]

- 1] O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.
- 2] Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.
- 3] I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.
- 4] For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.

“...clouds”: or, “skies.”

- 5] Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth;
- 6] That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me.
- 7] God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

The words of the delivered remnant of Israel. They see themselves receiving their inheritance and dividing the land among the tribes.

- 8] Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;
- 9] Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.
- 10] Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?
- 11] Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?
- 12] Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.
- 13] Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 109

A Messianic psalm: It pictures the humiliation of Christ and is the last of the “imprecatory psalms.” (It has been likened to “the heat of an open furnace door” by C.S. Lewis.) It has also been called a Judas Iscariot

psalm, because Simon Peter quoted from this psalm in reference to Judas: “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” (Acts 1:20).

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;
- 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.
- 3] They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.
- 4] For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.
- 5] And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.
- 6] Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.
- 7] When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.
- 8] Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

Quoted by Peter in Acts 1:20.

- 9] Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.
- 10] Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

Judas was apparently married and had children. [Only Andrew Lloyd Weber (Jesus Christ Superstar) defends Judas...]

- 11] Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.
- 12] Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.
- 13] Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.
- 14] Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.
- 15] Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.
- 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.
- 17] As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.
- 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.

“...into his bowels”: Heb. “within him.”

- 19] Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.
- 20] Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

- 21] But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.
- 22] For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.
- 23] I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.
- 24] My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.
- 25] I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.
- 26] Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:
- 27] That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it.
- 28] Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.
- 29] Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.
- 30] I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.
- 31] For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 110

This psalm, like Psalm 109, is a Messianic psalm. It speaks of the exaltation of Christ and begins with the ascension of Christ. This psalm is remarkable because it sets forth the deity of Christ. You could not in any way consider this psalm and still deny His deity. This psalm is referred to many times in the New Testament (Acts 2:34, 35; Heb 1:13; Heb 5:6; 6:20; 7:21; 10:12–13).

- Verse 1: quoted 25 times in the NT (Acts 2:34, 35; Heb 1:13; Heb 5:6; Heb 6:20; Heb 7:21; Heb 10:12-13).
- Verse 4: quoted 4 times in the NT.
- Hebrews: 10 quotes/allusions alone.

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Attacks of the Enemies

- **The Herodians:** a political party, tried to trap Him by forcing Him to make a political statement that would mark Him as a traitor to Rome. That failed.
- **The Sadducees:** a liberal religious party, tried to trap Him with a ridiculous question regarding the Mosaic Law. That failed.
- **The Pharisees:** a religio-political party, then tried to trap Him.

Jesus' answer puzzled the Pharisees; so while they huddled again to plan a further strategy, Jesus asked them a question:

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

Matthew 22:41-45

- Son of David: 2 Sam 7:12,13; Ps 78:68–72; Mic 5:2.

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

Proverbs 30:4

And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

Matthew 22:46

This psalm is telling us that the Lord Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah, was virgin born. Hebrews 1:13 says, "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?"



“YHWH said *unto* Adonai...” The grammar of the possessive hangs on a single yot! Cf. Matthew 5:18: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

A call to taking the text *very* seriously.

- 2] The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.
- 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.

This verse speaks of the coming of Christ to the earth to rule in Zion. Concerning this time Isaiah said, “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” (Isa 2:3). Jerusalem will be the center of the government on earth. God does have a purpose for Israel in the future.

- 4] The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Cf. Hebrews 5:6-10.

- 5] The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.
- 6] He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.
- 7] He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 111

This begins a series of three hallelujah psalms (Ps 111–113). This is a hallelujah psalm for the works of God. And in the Hebrew it is a perfect acrostic.

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

“Praise ye...”: Heb. “Hallelujah.”

- 2] The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
- 3] His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

The idea today of attributing the origin of this universe to natural causes takes away the glory from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is robbing Him of His glory. It is as bad as denying the Lord’s redemption or denying Him as Savior.

- 4] He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.

- 5] He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.
- 6] He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.
- 7] The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.
- 8] They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.
- 9] He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.

Here we find the word reverend. The holy God is the reverend God. That title should never be applied to a man. No preacher should be called “Reverend.” This is a title for God alone.

- 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.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 112

This is another of the wonderful hallelujah psalms, and it also is written as an acrostic in the Hebrew—which, of course, we miss in our English translations. All twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet are included in this psalm.

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

[Do you delight in His commandments?]

- 2] His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.
- 3] Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.
- 4] Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.
- 5] A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

“...discretion”: Heb. “judgment.”

- 6] Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.
- 7] He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.
- 8] His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.
- 9] He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.
- 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 Hallel Psalms (113-118)

This psalm to the majesty of God opens the six Hallel psalms (Psalms 113-118), which were sung at the Passover feast, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles (and probably at all feasts of Israel).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 113

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

“Praise ye...”: Heb. “Hallelujah.”

- 2] Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.
- 3] From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD’S name is to be praised.
- 4] The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.
- 5] Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,
- 6] Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!
- 7] He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;
- 8] That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.
- 9] He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 114

This is another of the Hallel psalms (which begin or conclude with a Hallelujah). Psalms 113-118 were called the “Egyptian Hallel” psalms, and apparently they were sung during the time the Passover was being celebrated. Some Bible scholars think three of them were sung at the beginning and three at the end. Others think they were sung intermittently during the Passover feast.

- 1] When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;

When Abraham first went into the Land of Promise, he was a stranger. God told him that his people would go down to the land of Egypt where they would become a nation. Israel began as a nation in Egypt, and anti-Semitism was born in Egypt.

- 2] Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.
- 3] The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back.
- 4] The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.

God is speaking now of the whole nation being a tabernacle. God’s original intention was that Israel would be a nation of priests—not just one tribe—which means they were to be priests for the world. The children of Israel not only crossed the Red Sea, they also crossed the Jordan River (Josh 3:13–17).

- 5] What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?
- 6] Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?
- 7] Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;
- 8] Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 115

Some believe that this great psalm was sung in the Upper Room at the time our Lord commemorated the Passover with His disciples and instituted the Lord’s Supper. It is provocative to reflect that the Lord Jesus Himself sang this and the other Hallel psalms.

- 1] Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth’s sake.
- 2] Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?

In other words, “You say He is your God: Why doesn’t He deliver you?”

- 3] But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.
- 4] Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands.

Israel’s God is in heaven. Man did not make Him. The gods of the heathen, on the other hand, were made out of silver and gold; they were the work of men’s hands. So are the current speculations regarding the creation itself.

- 5] They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:
- 6] They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:
- 7] They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he

warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god.

Isaiah 44:14-17

Does your God carry you, or do you carry your god? To many people their religion is a burden, something that they have to carry on their shoulders. If you have to carry your god, that is a modern form of idolatry.

- 8] They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.
- 9] O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.
- 10] O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield
- 11] Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

“What is the answer to atheism? ... to materialism? ...to the immorality around us? The answer is so simple that many people have passed right by it: Trust the Lord!

- 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.
- 13] He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great.

God has not forgotten me, and He has not forgotten you. Do you believe it? What a change that makes...

- 14] The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.
- 15] Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.
- 16] The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

Apparently God did not intend for man to live on the moon. He has given the earth to man. (When man journeys to the moon, he is more or less using God's property.)

- 17] The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.
- 18] But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 116

This is one of the great psalms in Scripture; some expositors place it next to Psalm 23 in greatness. It is a love song. It is a Hallel psalm. It is a psalm that speaks of the past, the future, and it also speaks of the present and has a message for modern man in this hour in which we live. The Lord Jesus sang this psalm the night before He was crucified.

- 1] I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.

Remember that this is a love song. Have you ever told Him that you love Him? Are we to pray audibly? This verse implies audible prayer.

- 2] Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.
- 3] The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

The sentence of death was upon us, but it became His sentence. He did not have to die. He laid down His life for you and me. No one took His life from Him.

- Do you love the Lord Jesus?
- Do you love His person?
- Do you have a personal relationship with Him?
- Is there any communication with Him?
- Have you talked to Him today?
- Is He vital and real to you? The world is tired of that which is phony; and aren't you tired of it too?

“We love him, because He first loved us” (1 Jn 4:19).

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Pet 1:8).

The Lord asked, “... Lovest thou me?” (Jn 21:15-17).

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Rev 1:5).

“I will make them to come and worship before thy feet. and to know that I have loved thee” (Rev 3:9).

- 4] Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.
- 5] Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.
- 6] The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.
- 7] Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

After a difficult, frustrating, pressure-filled day, we each need to seek out a quiet place where we can confess our sins, read the Word, and talk with God. That is the sanctuary of the soul. This will enable us to walk out and face the world for God.

- 8] For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

- 9] I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.
- 10] I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:
- 11] I said in my haste, All men are liars.
- 12] What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?
- 13] I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

Out in Gethsemane He prayed that the cup would pass from Him. His holy nature rebelled against being made sin. Yet "... for the joy that was set before him [he] endured the cross..." (Heb 12:2), and He took that cup joyfully the next day on the cross.

- 14] I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.
- 15] Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.
- 16] O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.
- 17] I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

The only thing that you can give God is your thanksgiving. That is all He wants from you. God wants His children to be thankful. Have you ever thanked Him for your salvation? Have you thanked Him for this day?

- 18] I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,
- 19] In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Hebrews 13:15

- 20] I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,
- 21] In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 117

This is another Hallel psalm, and it is the shortest in the series. The Hallel psalms (113–118) were sung at the three great feasts of the nation Israel: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. This is not only the shortest psalm, it is the shortest chapter in the Bible.

- 1] O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.
- "Praise the Lord, all ye nations" is obviously prophetic (Zech 2:11; 14:16).
- 2] For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

When will all of this find fulfillment? The "Us" is Israel! (Mic 7:20; Isa 54:7,8; Acts 15:14-17; q.v. Amos 9:11ff).

And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

Acts 15:13-17

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 118

The last of the Hallel psalms; many believe it was the psalm which our Lord sang with His disciples the night before His death.

- 1] O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.
- 2] Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.
- 3] Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

Let the house of Missler now say, "that His mercy endureth forever!"

- 4] Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever.
- 5] I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.
- 6] The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?
- 7] The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.
- 8] It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.
- 9] It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.
- 10] All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.
- 11] They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

"All nations compassed me about"—Rome was a polyglot nation, and Rome nailed our Lord to a cross. The day He died on a Roman cross, that nation was doomed. Its days were then numbered.

- 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.
- 13] Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.
- 14] The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.
- 15] The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

- 16] The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.
 17] I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

This is a reference to our Lord's resurrection. Also there is something else here: Israel is going to survive as a nation.

- 18] The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

That is, Christ came back from the dead. And Ezekiel 37 makes it clear that God will open the graves and bring out the nations of the world.

- 19] Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:
 20] This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

What is the gate of the Lord? Christ made it very clear when He said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (Jn 10:9; cf. Jn 14:6).

- 21] I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.
 22] The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

1 Peter 2:6-8

- 23] This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.
 24] This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

This "day" celebrates the Triumphal Entry, the fulfillment of Zech 9:9. Jesus held them accountable (Lk 19:44).

- 25] Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

"Save now" = "Hosanna."

- 26] Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me hence-forth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Mt 23:38-39).

- 27] God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.

This is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, a sacrifice for you and for me.

- 28] Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.
 29] O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Next Session

Read Psalm 119.

The Book of Psalms Session 20 Psalm 119

Psalm 119

Psalm 119 is an acrostic psalm; others are Psalms 9, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, and 145. In Psalm 119 there are 22 sections (for each Hebrew letter). In each section there are 16 lines in 8 couplets; each couplet begins with same letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The name YHWH also occurs 22 times...

Authorship

Most assume David wrote it, including Charles Spurgeon, *Treasury of David* and Herbert Lockyer, *Psalms*. Other speculations include Moses; a Second Temple Priest during the Babylon Captivity; and, Jeremiah.

It seems to be written by a high profile person. There is no mention of a sanctuary, to sacrifices, or to a priestly ministry. Prominent characters include: The Lord God; a godly remnant within the nation; the Psalmist; and, ungodly people who, although born into the covenant, disdained the Law, and persecuted and falsely accused the Psalmist.

Why Jeremiah?

- To encourage disciples after the destruction of the Temple (v.9).
- A priest as well as a prophet.
- Spoke with kings (5!).
- Bore reproach for his faithfulness: he was surrounded by lawless critics and imprisoned for his outspoken declarations.
- Wept over the national decline.

Theme(s)

- The practical use of the Word of God in the life of the believer.
- Rejoicing in the Old Testament: *Torah*, and the other equivalent terms, referred to the entire revelation of God as found in the Old Testament Scriptures. It was the *only* Word of God possessed by the early church (until the NT books were distributed during the 1st century).

Old Testament References

- Peter: Ps 69:25 & 109:8 to receive guidance on a new disciple (Acts 1:15-26); Joel 2:28-32 to explain Pentecost; Ps 110:1 to explain the resurrection (Acts 2:14-39).
- Stephen: Gen 21:1 (Exodus, Deuteronomy, Amos) and Isa 66:1,2 in his defense before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7).
- Philip: Isa 53 to lead the Ethiopian Treasurer to Christ (Act 8:26-40).
- Paul: Isa 49:6 for his Gentile mandate (Act 13:47); Hab 2:4 for his trilogy (Rom 1:17, Gal 3:11, Heb 10:37-38); numerous OT verses to encourage support of leadership.
- James: Amos 9:11-15 concluding the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:13-21).

OT “Law” vs. NT “Grace”?

- Law – sets God’s standard.
- Grace – enables us to meet it (Rom 8:1-3).
- The Psalmist *delighted* in God’s Law.
- Paul: Paul did not annul God’s law and set it aside. He said the Law was “holy, just and good” and spiritual (Rom 7:12-14).

Characteristic Terms

- **Law:** *Torah*, from a verb which means to direct, guide, to aim, to shoot forwards, and implies a rule of conduct.
- **Way:** Jesus said of Himself, “I am the Way.” By this designation we are to understand the rule both of Divine providence and of our own obedience. [Saul, before he became Paul, set out to imprison those who were “of this Way,” or “that were of the Way,” namely Christ. (Only occurs twice in Psalm 119.)]

- **Testimonies:** Derived from a word signifying “to bear witness, to testify”; the Ark, Two Tables of Stone, The Tabernacle, are called by this term because they were witnesses of God’s habitation among the people. These testimonies are God’s revealed law, solemnly declared to the world and attested beyond contradiction. They are the confirmation of His promises or affirmation of His will, and the earnest of our future salvation.
- **Commandments:** This word signifies, “lodged with us in trust.” At the root, it means to command or ordain, a word given with authority...such as God gave to Adam about the tree, and to Noah about the Ark, and the Ten Commandments given to Moses.
- **Precept:** This designation means something entrusted to man, almost as a synonym for “command.” This is not found outside the Psalter, means something prescribed to us, and not left indifferent. As appointments of God, they have to do with conscience, man, as an intelligent being, must meet.
- **Word:** The Greek form of the Hebrew word is “Logos,” a title of Jesus Christ. Words are the clothing of the thoughts of our mind. Jesus came as the revelation of the mind or thought of God. The term is rendered “saying,” and often has the sense of “promise.” God’s Word is the declaration of His mind, the revelation of His will, the announcement of His purpose.
- **Judgments:** Judicial pronouncements of the Law; a word signifying to govern, to judge, to determine, judicial ordinances; legal sanctions are implied. God’s judgments are framed in infinite wisdom, and by them man must judge and be judged.
- **Righteousness:** All Divine judgments are righteous, and the Divine Word is all holy, just, and good, and provides the only authentic rule and Standard of righteousness for man.
- **Statutes:** Literally this term meant “what is engraved”; then, “a law carved on stone or on metal.” In this Psalm, the moral law of God engraved on the fleshly tables of the heart: the inmost and spiritual apprehension of His will: fixed, determined, and of perpetual obligation.
- **Faithfulness:** As a noun, this designation is the equivalent of *Truth*, which is another way of describing the Word. Jesus declared Himself to be *The Truth*, the manifestation of God’s unchanging faithfulness.

The Law

- To unsaved sinners, the law is an *enemy* because it announces their condemnation, and it cannot save them.
- To legalistic believers, the law is a *master* that robs them of their freedom.
- To spiritually minded believers, the law is a *servant* that helps them see the character of God and the work of Christ.

The Attributes of God

- Gracious Ps 119:29, 58; 86:15
- True & the truth Ps 119:30, 43; 160; Ex 34:6
- Righteous Ps 119:106, 123, 137-8, 143,151
- Good Ps 119:39, 68
- Trustworthy Ps 119:9, 73, 86, 90, 138
- Eternal Ps 119:89, 152,160; Deut 33:27
- Light Ps 119:107; 27:1

Practical Helps in Ps 119

The Word of God performs many wonderful ministries...

- Keeps us clean v. 9
- Gives us joy vv. 14, 111, 162
- Guides us vv. 24, 33-35, 105
- Establishes our values vv. 11, 37, 72,103, 127, 148, 162
- Helps us pray effectively v. 58
- Gives us hope v. 49
- Gives us peace v. 165
- Gives us freedom vv. 45, 133
- Bring us best friends vv. 63, 74, 79
- Find and fulfill purposes vv. 73
- Strengthen our witness vv. 41-43
- Resuscitates us vv. 25, 37, 40 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 119

It has in it 176 verses, and every verse (with the possible exception of two verses) is praise to the Word of God. It is not our intention to dwell on each verse: Spurgeon, in his unmatched *Treasury of David* devotes 400 pages to them!

⌘ Aleph: “The Undeiled and The Blessedness”

All eight verses begin with an Aleph: the first letter, representing the ox and the blessings of service...

- 1] Blessed are the undeiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.
- 2] Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

“Blessed,” (vv. 1 & 2), appears nowhere else in this psalm...Seeking God is more than simply reading and studying the Bible: it means not halfheartedly...

- 3] They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.
- 4] Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently.
- 5] O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!
- 6] Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.
- 7] I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.
- 8] I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

⌚ Beth: The Sanctifying Influence of the Word

Beth: The second letter means a house: Beth-Lehem; Beth-El; etc. Making the heart a home for the Word of God.

- 9] Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Key Question! Our young people are taught everything in school except the Bible; it is now against the law to teach the Bible in school! The decline of the U.S. can be measured against 1963, et al...

- 10] With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.
- 11] Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Scripture memorization can be over-emphasized; but it is clearly of value. (It is astonishing to discover how common memorizing the Scriptures was to earlier leadership! That is also an argument for the KJV, as it will be around for decades...)

- 12] Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.

The Best Profession: Thy Word...
The Best Plan: Have I hid...

The Best Place: In my heart...
The Best Purpose: That I might not sin against thee.
— Herbert Lockyer, Sr.

- 13] With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.
14] I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.
15] I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.
16] I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

It's not our promises to the Lord but His promises to us that will give us victory over sin.

1] **Gimmel: “The Longings of the Holy Soul”**

- 17] Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.
18] Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

We are not only servants, we are also students!

- 19] I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

Only pilgrims, indeed... Our citizenship is elsewhere... [The driving laws in Great Britain are different than the U.S.; it's important not to confuse the two!]

- 20] My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.
21] Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments.
22] Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.
23] Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.
24] Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.

7] **Daleth: A Cry for Quickening**

Spurgeon: “Depression, Devotion, Determination, Dependence.”

- 25] My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.

Everything pulls us down: TV, etc. Entropy laws at work (and worst!).

- 26] I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes.

Not deliverance, but “what can we learn from this experience?”

- 27] Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

- 28] My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

“Strengthen”: Gesenius: “Keep me alive.” An entreaty that the waste of life through tears might be restored by the life-giving Word.

- 29] Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.
30] I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.
31] I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.
32] I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

[Look up the eight times “lying” is mentioned in this psalm.] If we think up clever schemes to defend ourselves and slander others, the Lord will not be able to defend us (Rom 12:17-21).

7] **He: “Faithfulness—The Result of Divine Inworking”**

The most prayer-laden segment of the Psalm.

- 33] Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.

Literally, “point out,” “indicate to me,” “show me.” Ending well...!!

- 34] Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.
35] Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

“Path” here a different word than v.33: never of a public road, but a footpath, seldom used.

- 36] Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

“Covetousness is the loss of the soul” (Ambrose); “the citadel of vices,” (Clemens Alexandrinus) Double-minded people are vulnerable people (James 1:5-8).

Tragedies at the Finish Line

- Lot • Samson • King Saul • Ahithophel • Solomon
- Demas... ...all had good beginnings but did not end well.

What are the essentials for a consistent life that ends well?

Make me to see. Make me to understand. Make me to go. And make me to love to go the narrow path. It's not our promises to Him, but His promises to us that really count!

- 33] Point out to me
- 34] Explain to me
- 35] Lead me
- 36] Incline or bend me or my heart
- 40] Quicken me in thy righteousness

— Martin Luther

- 37] Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

Eyes have an appetite (vv. 82, 123, cf. 1 Jn 2:16) and we must be careful where we focus them. Eyes that feast on the vanities of this world will never see the wonders of God’s Word...

- 38] Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.
- 39] Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.
- 40] Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

1 Vav: “Mercies and Their Effect”

Vau, Vav: [Vav is a conjunction; few words actually begin with Vav.]

- 41] Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word.
- 42] So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

“So...”: or, “So shall I answer him that reproveth me in a thing.” While God is speaking, the enemy also will be speaking...

- 43] And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.
- 44] So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.
- 45] And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.
- 46] I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.
- 47] And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

Oh, for a love of the Word! (At a very early age, I discovered a love for the Word that has never waned...)

- 48] My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

1 Zain: “Hope in Affliction”

The octrain’s key word: “remember.” (3X: 49, 52, 55; followed by consequences) [Cf. Deuteronomy: “remember”: 15X; “Forget”: 14X]

- 49] Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.
- 50] This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.
- 51] The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law.
- 52] I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.
- 53] Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.
- 54] Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.
- 55] I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

YHWH, “I AM”: Ex 6:1-3. Existence, Sovereignty, Power, and the dynamic of working out His will in this world. In the Book of Psalms, there are more than 100 references to the name of the Lord. Study the names of God in the OT, and “I AM” statements of Jesus in the Gospel of John...

- 56] This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

1 Cheth: “God Our Portion”

Our Sufficiency. (This 8th octrain is an expansion of the last clause of the previous one.)

- 57] Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.

Spurgeon: “The poet is lost in wonder while he sees that the great and glorious God is all his own! ...There is no possession like Jehovah himself.”

- 58] I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.
- 59] I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

GPS to heaven: “First turn to the right, then keep straight on.”

- 60] I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

Duty discovered should instantly be discharged.

- 61] The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.
- 62] At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

It was at midnight in a prison cell that Paul and Silas sang praises to God (Acts 16:25).

- 63] I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.
- 64] The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.

‡ Teth: “A Review of Divine Dealings”

In the 9th Octrain, all eight verses begin with the Hebrew Teth; Spurgeon observes that in our version they do, too (except for v. 67 & 70), which can be made to do so by adding “Till” or “Tis.”

- 65] Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.
66] Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.
67] Till [Before] I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.
68] Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.
69] The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart.
70] Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law.

Critics of the Bible need to go on a diet, or they may die of heart trouble. The Word of God is marvelous for heart trouble! Fatness is gross of heart; an emblem of pride and insensibility (Ps 17:10, 73:7; Isa 6:10)

- 71] ‘Tis good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.
72] The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

The largest Bible in the world is in Hebrew and in the Vatican. It weighs 320 lbs! Pope Julius II refused an offer of Russian Jews who offered its weight in gold. (Over \$3 million?)

Psalm 119

Part 1: verse 1 א Aleph (1st Letter) to verse 72 ט Teth (9th Letter)

Part 2: verse 73 י Yod (10th Letter) to verse 176 טו Tau (22nd Letter).

Next Session

Re-read Psalm 119: 1-72. Study Psalm 119:73-176.

The Book of Psalms: Session 21 Psalm 119, Part 2

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 119 (Part 2: vv. 73 - 176)

Psalm 119 has 176 verses, and every verse (with the possible exception of two verses) is praise to the Word of God. It is not our intention to dwell on each verse: Spurgeon, in his unmatched *Treasury of David*, devotes 400 pages to them! In this final half, we will explore—superficially at best—verses 73 to 176.

י Yod: “The Creature’s Appeal to the Creator”

“Not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law...” (Mt 5:18) No trifles here.

- 73] Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

God made us: He knows exactly what we need. One of our basic needs is His Word, and that is what the psalmist is talking about here. Our factory warranty requires all scheduled maintenance. Read the instructions in the Owner’s Manual!

- 74] They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

When God makes our life a platform upon which to display His grace and power, others rejoice over such a manifestation.

- 75] I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.
76] Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

Vices to be Shunned

Victor Hugo ingeniously noted that the different verbs in verse 1 reflect the different vices to be shunned by those who delight in His Word: The Bible is a mirror in which we see ourselves—and can do something about what we see (James 1:22-27).

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ingratitude: | “Thou hast made me: |
| Pride: | “And Fashioned me” |
| Confidence in personal judgment: | “Given me understanding” |
| Prying Inquisitiveness: | “That I may learn thy statutes” |

—Victor Hugo

- 77] Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.
78] Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.
79] Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.
80] Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

LXX: “Let my heart be without spot and blemish.” Powerless ministries are hindered by a blunt or damaged sword.

☞ Caph: “Hope in Depression”

The 11th letter signifies the hollowed or curved hand, to receive or retain something to be placed in it by another. This octave is the midnight of the Psalmist’s depression...

- 81] My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.
- 82] Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?
- 83] For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes.

“A bottle in the smoke” refers to a wine skin “bottle” hung up in the fire, which would become blackened, parched, and cracked. A picture of one who endures long and severe persecution!

- 84] How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

This verse (& 121, 122,132) contains none of the 10 words referring to God’s Law.

- 85] The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.
- 86] All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.
- 87] They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.
- 88] Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

☞ Lamed: “The Inimitable Word of God”

Lamed: the Nadir

- First Eleven Octaves: “Hitherto hath the Lord brought me; Shall it be that I now perish?”
- Last Eleven Octaves: “The Lord’s Word changeth not; in spite of all forebodings, the Lord will, concerning me, perfect the work He hath already begun”

— Joseph F Thrupp, 18th century expositor

At the lowest nadir of his pilgrimage, after tossing about on a sea of trouble, the Psalmist leaps to the shore and stands on the rock of YHWH’s immovable Word. What God begins, He finishes.

- 89] For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Heaven is where the original copy is. I believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of that copy, and we hold a good copy of it right in our hands.

It is settled in the heavens: heaven and earth may pass away, but where He is, it will never pass away.

- 90] Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

If the earth displayed erratic movements, life would be impossible: anthropic principle, including maintenance...

- 91] They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.
- 92] Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

- 93] I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

The thesis of this octave is that the Word is certain, immutable, everlasting and dependable.

- 94] I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.
- 95] The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I will consider thy testimonies.
- 96] I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad.

☞ Mem: “The Benefits of Pious Musing”

The “11-inch problem”: Getting from the head to the heart!

- 97] O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.
- 98] Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.
- 99] I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.
- 100] I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

Outstripping Three Classes

- 1) Enemies, whose malice sharpens their wits, excelling in policy;
- 2) Teachers, who are furnished with learning and who excel in doctrine;
- 3) Ancients, who grow wise by experience and safe in counsel. Yet the Psalmist was made wiser than all these: by the Word!

In contrast to “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” is the contemporary world’s flight from wisdom and truth...

Enforced Ignorance

- Denial of the existence of Truth.
- Attribution of design to randomness (RAND's "Million Random Digits," Cf. SETI, et al.).
- Denial of the Creator; specific judgment, homosexuality (Rom 1:20 ff).

101] I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

Hebrew verb strongly denotes "I have fettered my feet"

102] I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

YHWH taught Him; not human teachers... Acts 17:11.

103] How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

104] Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

י Nun: "Light for a Dark Landing"

105] Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

We don't see the entire path but a step at a time. Each of us should rely on the Word of God personally, practically, and habitually as we make our way through this darkening world.

106] I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107] I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

108] Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments.

109] My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

110] The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.

111] Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

112] I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end.

ו Samech: "Human Thoughts Vs. God's Law"

This 15th letter signifies a prop or pillar, which is in harmony with this octave in which God is twice implored to uphold His servant (vv. 116-117).

113] I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.

How much time do you spend reading the newspaper, or reading trash, in comparison to the time that you spend reading the Bible? Your diet of the Word?

114] Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

115] Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

116] Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

117] Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

118] Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood.

119] Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

120] My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

וּ Ain: "The Plea of the Oppressed"

This 16th letter has no direct correspondent in English; it can be expressed by what are called "breathings" in the Greek. This expresses the outbreathings for a soundness of heart and mind amid the impiety and unbelief of a godless world.

121] I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.

122] Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

"Surety" is better than NIV "ensure": Cf. Judah as surety for Benjamin (Gen 43:1; 44:18-34), etc.

123] Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

124] Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.

125] I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

126] It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law.

"To work" is the Hebrew verb used absolutely for "to execute judgment" or "to administer justice by punishing the wicked." Cf. Jer 28:23; Ezek 31:33.

127] Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

128] Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.

פ Pe: "Thirst for the Living God"

Spurgeon suggests these verses are Precious, Practical, Profitable, Power—Peculiarly so!

129] Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

130] The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

Spurgeon has said, “Jesus the eternal Word is called Wonderful, and all the uttered words of God are wonderful in their degree. Those who know them best wonder at them most.”

- 131] I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.
132] Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.
133] Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.
134] Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.
135] Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.
136] Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

Floods of tears... If we fail to grieve for the wicked, their sin may become ours (Ezek 9:8; 1 Cor 5:2).

Descriptions in this Octrain

Thy Testimonies demand Obedience
Thy Words prove guidance and wisdom
Thy Commandments satisfy longing
Thy Word offers direction and purity
Thy Precepts result in deliverance of man
Thy Statutes bring a benediction
Thy Law begets compassion for the lost

‡ Tzaddi: “God’s Righteousness”

This 18th letter signifies justice or righteousness.

- 137] Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments.
138] Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.
139] My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.
140] Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

We can rest in the truth of His righteousness when we cannot see the reasons for our trials and troubles. (See following on Emperor Maurice, as quoted in Herbert Lockyer’s commentary on the *Psalms*.)

Emperor Maurice

Emperor Maurice, by this psalm, was encouraged to bow to the will of God. His virtuous rule for 20 years marked him to succeed Tiberius II, but the army turned against him, and in 602 he fled with his wife and children to Chalcedon to escape the deformed and disfigured Phoeas.

By Phoeas’ order, he and his five sons were seized and executed. He was the last to die. As, one by one, the boys were murdered before his eyes, the noble father cried aloud, with each stroke of the sword, “Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true is Thy judgment” (Ps 119:137).

—Edward Gibbon

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

Revelation 16:5-7

- 141] I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts.
142] Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

“To live without understanding, is not to live the life of a man, but to be dead while we live.”

- 143] Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are my delights.
144] The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

‡ Kopf: “The Paragraph of the Heart-Cry”

This octave and the one following are similar in that they constitute a primer on earnest prayer for the grace of faithfulness in distress and tribulation.

- | | |
|------|---------------------------|
| 145] | How the Psalmist prayed |
| 146] | What he prayed |
| 147] | When he prayed |
| 148] | How long he prayed |
| 149] | What he pleaded |
| 156] | What happened |
| 151] | How he was rescued |
| 152] | How he witnessed to truth |

—Charles H. Spurgeon

- 145] I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.
146] I cried unto thee; save me, and I shall keep thy testimonies.
147] I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.
148] Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

“...prevent” = anticipate, forestall, come to meet (not “hinder”). Sacrificial meditation is often connected with fervent prayer.

149] Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness: O LORD, quicken me according to thy judgment.

150] They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

151] Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth.

152] Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever.

7 Resh: “An Appeal for Consideration”

The heart-cry just considered is accentuated in this octave.

153] Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

154] Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.

“Deliver”: in v. 153 it’s the Heb. *chalats*, withdraw with a gentle hand; in v. 154 it’s the Heb. *gaal*, save by avenging!

Dwight L. Moody said that the next great revival will be a revival of the Word of God. We are seeing exploding interest in the Bible and small groups, etc.

155] Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

156] Great are thy tender mercies, O LORD: quicken me according to thy judgments.

157] Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; yet do I not decline from thy testimonies.

158] I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

Hebrew more descriptive: “I beheld the transgressors, and I loathed them, abhorred them, contended with; but not so much because they were mine enemies, as because they were Thine; They kept not thy word.”

159] Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.

160] Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

God never had to regret or to retract, amend, or reverse any word of His, and every word bearing His imprint will outlive the stars.

W Schin: “A Believer’s Eulogy on God’s Word”

In this 21st octave we have a prayer for deliverance from causeless persecution on the part of the powerful forces of the world, and a testimony to the peace and joy of those maligned for the love of God’s Word.

161] Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

The psalmist had more respect and awe for the Word of God than he did for the rulers of this world.

162] I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163] I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.

164] Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

165] Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

166] LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

167] My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

168] I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.

A commitment to a balanced life...

7 Tau: “A Closing Appeal”

The Psalmist concludes by praying for his prayers. (No more mention of his enemies...)

169] Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word.

170] Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

171] My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172] My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.

173] Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.

174] I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.

175] Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.

176] I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

This Psalm opened with a benediction (v.1) and closes with a warning. The Shepherd is out looking for you. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (Jn 8:36). What liberty the Word of God will give to your heart and life! What does God put *above* all else?

[A Psalm of David.] I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee. 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.

Psalm 138:1-2

What does God put *above* all else? **His Word!** We know how jealous God is of His Name: yet He magnifies His Word even above His Name! The longest chapter in the entire Bible is all about *His Word!*

A Caveat for our Souls

- Chewing the cud: the key to (the “clean”) sacrifices—*ruminare* on His Word. Jer 15:16, “Thy words were found and I did eat them...” Rev 10:9, 10: The little book: John took it and ate it up...
- Analysis Paralysis can blindfold our souls to the message.
- “Prayerful absorption” vs. “Intellectual dissection.” It should be a *Gateway to His presence!*

Next Session

Read and meditate on the Songs of Degrees (or Ascents): Psalms 120 - 134. These were sung on the pilgrimages to Jerusalem...and they contain some surprises...

The Book of Psalms Session 22 Psalm 120 – 134 Songs of “Degrees”

Book V: Deuteronomy — Psalms 107 - 150

- Psalm 107 – 118
- Psalm 119
- **Psalm 120 – 134 Songs of Ascent**
- Psalm 135 - 145
- Psalm 145-150

Songs of the Pilgrim Caravans

- Captives returning from Babylon (Ezra 7:9);
- Compulsory feasts: three/year (Deut 16:16); Feast of Unleavened Bread; Feast of Weeks; and, Feast of Tabernacles
- Caravan rallying point (Ps 122:3,4; Cf. Lk 2:41-50).

“The Songs of [the] Degrees” Psalms 120-134

- Traditions: “Ascents?” “Steps?” “Degree” = “going up”[Possibly a separate grouping of psalms for travel?]
- Hezekiah: Godliest of Judah’s kings (2 Kgs 18:5, 6) wrote many psalms and proverbs; restored Temple worship (2 Chr 29). The addition of 15 years to his life as confirmed by Ahaz’s sundial (2

Kgs 20:8-11). (But there were only 10 degrees; there are 15 “songs of degrees).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 120 - “From Whence the Pilgrim?”

An astonishing psalm, conspicuously appropriate to *today!*

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.
- 2] Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.
- 3] What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?
- 4] Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

Where does he live? From whence does he come? It sounds like he comes from a tough neighborhood...with deceitful tongues: “What shall the deceitful tongue give unto thee? or, what shall it profit thee?” YHWH’s response (v. 4): It is as the sharp arrows of the mighty man, with coals of juniper... Juniper (roots for charcoal) make the hottest and most-enduring fire...

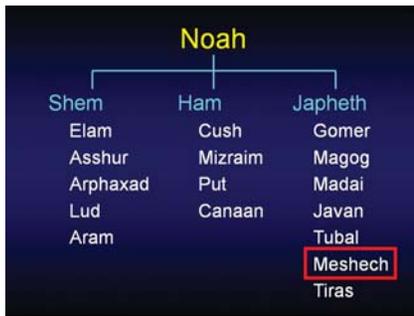
This is an “imprecatory psalm”: one crying out for vengeance. Where does he live? Where is he coming from?

- 5] Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!

Unless you know your Bible, you may miss the import of this disclosure! First of all, who was *Mesech*? He was a grandson of Noah Mesech: Son of Japheth = Gentile land. Who was *Kedar*? He was a son of Abraham, but *not Jewish*. This will require a closer look at his background (and a glimpse through the fog that clouds the perspectives of the news media).

Abraham was a descendant of Shem; Kedar was a descendant of Ishmael, the son of Hagar, the Egyptian (see charts on the next page).

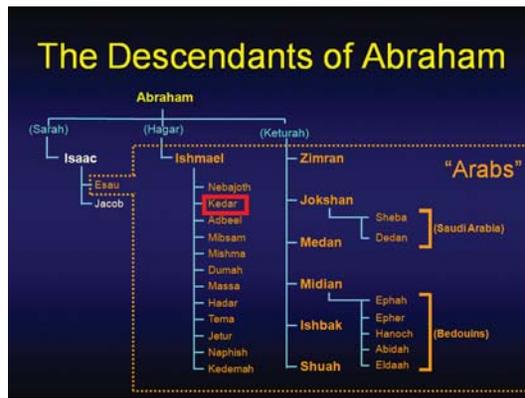
Arabian tribes were descended from the concubine Keturah. However, it is also important to realize that Esau, Jacob’s brother, in a deliberate effort to offend his parents, took Ishmaelite wives, including Nebajoth’s sister. His descendants, Ishmael’s, and Keturah’s all intermarried; no tribal distinctions were required to be maintained. So the term “Arab,” as is commonly used in the news media, is somewhat indistinct and very broadly employed.



(What links these diverse groups referred to as Arabs in the media is not their genealogy, but their religion: they are united by a legacy of hatred. They are Muslim. The two houses of Islam, Sunni and Shi'ite, hate each other almost as much as they hate Israel.)

So with this background, we gain a more revealing insight into the plight of the pilgrim. This paradox is further amplified in the pilgrim's plea for peace:

- 5] Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!
- 6] My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.
- 7] I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.



Doesn't that characterize the current tensions in the Middle East? The enemies of Israel are resolute in their denial of Israel's right to even exist. Nine times it was the "Palestinians" that walked away from the negotiating table, insisting on an "all or nothing" resolution to the proposals on the table. We know from Zechariah 12:2 that the entire world is destined to go to war over the issue of Jerusalem. Clearly, there will be no peace until the Prince of Peace comes to enforce it.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 121 - "The View of the Hills"

As the pilgrim travels toward Jerusalem to worship, in this psalm he can see the hills of Jerusalem in the distance.

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

No matter what direction you approach from, hills surround Jerusalem...

- 2] My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.
- 3] He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.
- 4] Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

This is the reason I don't worry about Israel. (I've already read the final chapters!) I *do* worry about America, however...

- 5] The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.

You, too, are "kept" by the power of God (1 Pet 1:5).

- 6] The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

Sun refers to days; Moon, months. (Also, the term "lunatic" comes from Latin term for the moon: *luna*; *epileptic* (from Greek: "moon-struck").

- 7] The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.
- 8] The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Cf. Rom 8:28. Ex: Joseph: 13 yrs imprisoned, falsely accused, etc; yet, he could say, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good," (Gen 50:20).

My Help Cometh from the Lord

- "For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken" (Prov 3:26).
- "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Ps 37:24).
- Hannah said, "He will keep the feet of his saints..." (1 Sam 2:9).
- "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling [stumbling], and to present you faultless..." (Jude 1:24).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 122 - "The Sight of Jerusalem"

[A Song of degrees of David.]

(If David's, the "house of the Lord" refers to the Tabernacle (1 Sam; 2 Sam 6). Some attempt to deny David's authorship, but Jeroboam's concerns highlight the practice of the pilgrimages to Jerusalem.)

- 1] I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.
- 2] Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.
- 3] Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:
- 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.
- 5] For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.
- 6] Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

“Jerusalem” = “foundation for peace”; but there can be no peace until the Prince of Peace comes (Isa 9:6,7; Lk 1:26-33). But let us not forget the “Jewishness” of our heritage, our untold debt, etc.

Millennial Prophecy

For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.

Hosea 3:4,5

- 7] Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.
- 8] For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.
- 9] Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 123 - “The Temple”

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

The psalmist is making it very clear that God is not confined to the temple. The critic is wrong when he says that Israel considered Jehovah God a local deity who lived in their little temple in Jerusalem.

- 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.

[Masters used hand signals to direct servants.] Do you watch the clock and watch the boss? How many of us live as though God is looking at us all the time? Well, He is. “He loves us so much, He can’t take His eyes off us!”

- 3] Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.
- 4] Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

The contempt continues to this day. [Cf. Ps 31:11,18; 44:13; 119:22, 141; Neh 2:19; 4:1-4, 7ff; Lam 3:15,30.]

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 124 - “Divine Deliverance”

This psalm was sung each Dec 12th in Geneva, celebrating their victory over the Romish Duke of Savoy in the *Escalade* of 1602. Aug 22, 1900: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions received a cablegram from Che-Foo, China, where missionaries were being massacred. “Psalm 124,” with the list of those who had escaped, was better than a code. At the feast of Purim, it celebrates deliverance from Haman.

[A Song of degrees of David.]

- 1] If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say;
- 2] If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

“if...”: Cf. Rudyard Kipling’s poem...there is much virtue in *ifs*...Shakespeare: “your *if* is the only peace-maker, much virtue is *if*” (*As You Like It*). “Talk’st thou to me of *ifs*? Thou art a traitor; Off with his head.” (*King Richard III*).

- 3] Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:
- 4] Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:
- 5] Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

Three times: “Then...” binds what “might have been” without YHWH’s help. These could be the waters of the Red Sea, and the waters of the Jordan River, and the waters of circumstances in which they found themselves many times...

- 6] Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.
- 7] Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.
- 8] Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Hebrew has 12 words for lions: they took wild beasts seriously. Emphatic in the Hebrew: “and we—we are escaped.” Note also the Creator reference.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 125 - “A Song of Security”

[A Song of degrees.]

As the pilgrim sees Mount Zion, his heart is encouraged for the future. This has been called a “Song of Security” and is a prediction of Israel’s national restoration.

- 1] They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.
- 2] As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

Jerusalem *is* surrounded by mountains... And Jesus is our solid rock (1 Cor 3:11; 1 Pet 2:4-8)

- 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.
- 4] Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts.
- 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.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 126 - “The Joy of Return”

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

The “too good to be true” feeling...

- 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.
- 3] The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.
- 4] Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

Returns: under Cyrus (Ezra 1-3; Darius (Ezra 6) and Artaxerxes (Ezra 7,8). [This may apply to a subsequent “captivity”!?!]

- 5] They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

“He that believes what he doth see--this is the seed; Shall one day see what he hath believed—this is the harvest.” —Proverb

- 6] He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 127 - “The Vanity of Building Without God”

This psalm has been used on several important occasions: It was used at the inauguration of President Eisenhower. Two Bibles were used. One of them was George Washington’s Bible, and it was opened at Psalm 127.

[A Song of degrees for Solomon.]

[“for Solomon” not in the LXX.]

- 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.
- 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.

The word *vain* is used three times in these verses. *Everything* is vain unless God is in it. Ben Franklin: “If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without God’s notice, is it possible that an empire can rise without his aid?” 1787, a prayer caused an impasse to yield...

- 3] Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

Children: when the pilgrim went to Jerusalem, he took his family to worship with him. “We rejoice in children because we are a historical people.” Are *we*?

- 4] As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.
- 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.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 128 - “Home Sweet Home”

Luther called this a “Marriage Song.” It describes a happy family life and then gives the invocation of the Lord’s blessing. It is God’s picture of a happy family, and notice its foundation....

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.
- 2] For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.
- 3] Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.
- 4] Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.
- 5] The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.
- 6] Yea, thou shalt see thy children’s children, and peace upon Israel.

Unless there is that reverential fear of God and obedience to Him, there will not be a happy home. You can go to all of the conferences you want to, but you will never have a happy home until your relationship with God is right.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 129 - “Burned But Not Consumed”

Also, a picture of Israel: burned but not consumed.

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:
- 2] Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against
- 3] The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.
- 4] The LORD is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.
- 5] Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.
- 6] Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up:
- 7] Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.
- 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.

“The blessing of the Lord be upon you” should be incorporated not only into the home but also into business today. A man’s religion and his right relationship to God should be an integral part of both his home life and his business life. Boaz was a businessman. When he spoke to his workers, he said to them, “... The Lord be with you.” And they answered him, “The Lord bless thee” (Ruth 2:4).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 130 - “A Pauline Psalm”

Psalm 130 is closely linked to the preceding psalm. It is the 6th of 7 Penitential Psalms (Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143). Suffering under God’s discipline involves choices on our part: We can despise it, resist it, collapse under it, or accept it and submit—and pray that the lessons not be wasted!

The Pauline Psalms

It has also been called a Pauline psalm because it speaks of that which has to do with the mercy of God. Martin Luther called these “Psalmi Paulini”: Psalms 32; 51; 130; and 143. He explained that these psalms teach us that the forgiveness of sins is vouchsafed to all who believe without having any works of the law to offer.

God has delivered man out of the depths of sin and death, and He has done it not on the basis of man’s works.

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.
- 2] Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.
- 3] If thou, LORD, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

“Mark” = to observe and keep a record. Thank God that He is not going to judge us according to our iniquities. If God judged us that way, we would all be lost. It is because of His mercy that He saves us.

- 4] But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

There is forgiveness because Christ has paid our penalty. Salvation is a serious and costly transaction. **“Grace = God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense”** (Hal Lindsey)

- 5] I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.
- 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.
- 7] Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

“Redemption” = setting someone free by paying a price.

- 8] And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes.

Romans 11:26-28

The day is coming when Israel’s cry out of the depths will be answered. Christ will return unto Zion and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. (Cf. Isa 11:11-16, et al.)

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 131 - “Humility”

One of the shortest psalms to read, but one of the longest to learn. David began as humble shepherd, the 8th son of a common citizen, and became Israel’s greatest king. A courageous soldier, gifted tactician, and sincere man of God, he expanded her boundaries, amassed the wealth that Solomon used to build the Temple. Here he tells us the essentials of a life that glorifies God and accomplishes His work on earth.

Note: Ascribed to David. Remember Michal, David's wife and Saul's daughter? She despised David and mocked him because of the way he took the ark into the tabernacle (2 Sam 6:12-23). David said that he would probably be even more contemptible in her eyes, because he was going to humble himself even more and get down in the dust before his God. Remember, he was king. *When was the last time you got down on all fours before God?*

- 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.
- 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.
- 3] Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever.

True Humility

- “Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off” (Ps 138:6).
- “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isa 57:15).
- “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (1 Pet 5:5).
- “But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (1 Pet 3:4).
- “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:10).
- And the Lord Jesus Himself said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [literally, I will rest you]” (Mt 11:28).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 132 - “The Royal Presence”

David is mentioned four times, but many serious scholars question that David wrote it. Some believe that it was composed by King Solomon when the Ark of the covenant was removed out of the tent of habitation that David had prepared for it in Jerusalem, and was then being moved into the temple that Solomon had built. This the only mention we have of the Ark in the Psalms.

We need to note that the ultimate “son of David” is not Solomon, but the greater Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ. With this background, let us look at this psalm.

- 1] LORD, remember David, and all his afflictions:
- 2] How he swore unto the LORD, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob;
- 3] Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;
- 4] I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids,
- 5] Until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.
- 6] Lo, we heard of it at Ephrathah: we found it in the fields of the wood.
- 7] We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool.
- 8] Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the Ark of thy strength.

Now that the pilgrims are there in Jerusalem, they have come to the temple where the Mercy Seat is above the Ark, the place where they can approach God's presence. This evidently was the song that they sang when the ark was moved into the temple that Solomon had built, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple as it had the tabernacle of old.

The Ark of the Covenant

- Mercy Seat represented God's throne “between the cherubim.”
- Went before them through the wilderness (Num 1 - 36).
- After crossing the Jordan: temporarily at Bethel (Judg 20:27); at Mizpah (Judg 21:5); then Shiloh (1 Sam 1-3).
- Philistines captured it (1 Sam 4, 5).
- 20 years at house of Abinadab in Kirjath Jearim (1 Sam 6).
- David's 1st attempt failed (2 Sam 6:1-11): at the house of Obed-Edom for 3 months.
- David brought to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:12-19; 1 Chr 15,16): Tabernacle and Moses' furniture at Gibeon (1 Chr 21:29).
- Solomon puts it in Holy of Holies (1 Kgs 8:1-11).

Is the Mercy Seat presently at Axum, Ethiopia? To be given as a gift to the Messiah as He rules at Zion (Isa 18:7, Zep 3:10, et al)? To be His throne (Jer 3:16,17)?

Distinctives

The Ark of the Covenant was made of wood, covered with gold. The Mercy Seat was made of hammered gold. “He that dwelleth between the Cherubim” (12 times). The Holy of Holies described as the location of the *Mercy Seat* (Lev 16:2; 1 Chr 28:1). Review Exodus 25:17-22; Num 7:89; 2 Sam 6:2.

- 9] Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.
 10] For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.
 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.

This is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. (David's children did not measure up to the description of the One who one day would sit upon the throne of David.) In Kings and Chronicles, in the line of David, one sinner after another was sitting upon the throne. Very few were good kings, and only five of them saw revival come to the nation.

And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The Ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the Throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

Jeremiah 3:16-17

His Throne

And in mercy shall the Throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness.

Isaiah 16:5

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his glory:

Matthew 25:31

And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the Temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his Throne; and he shall be a priest upon his Throne:

Zechariah 6:12-13

The only object known in all history that is suitable for the Throne of Christ is the Mercy Seat. This suggests that the Mercy Seat will have a distinct place in Biblical prophecy as it relates to Christ's Second Coming, where He will rule and reign on earth in the Temple on Mount Zion.

Yom Kippur

Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the

blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the Mercy Seat:

Leviticus 16:15

This verse speaks of the priest sprinkling the blood of the sacrificed animal on the Mercy Seat in payment of the sins of the people. This was done once a year on the specific day known as Yom Kippur. Jesus Christ, known as the Lamb of God, the blood sacrifice for our sins. The Mercy Seat is certainly suitable for His throne.

And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my Throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.

Ezekiel 43:7

The Ark and Mercy Seat were two separate objects in the Scripture. The Ark is no longer the focus of worship in Jerusalem. It will be replaced by the Throne of the Lord as all nations shall be gathered to it.

- 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.
 13] For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.
 14] This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

These verses are a prophecy specific to the Second Coming of Christ, known as the Messianic Reign. We see in this verse that God speaks from the Temple, and from His Throne, and a place where He will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.

David's offspring did *not* keep God's covenant and testimony. That's why they were put out of their land and sent into captivity in Babylon. Even though the line of David sinned, God's covenant was not destroyed, and the time will come when the fruit of his body *will* sit upon his throne. That is why the NT opens with, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. 1:1). The Lord Jesus is this "Son of David" about whom the psalmist is writing.

- 15] I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.
 16] I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.
 17] There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.
 18] His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 133 - “A Psalm of Brotherhood”

Not only did our pilgrim come to Jerusalem with his wife and children, but he is now with friends and are having a wonderful time of fellowship together. These pilgrims came from all over the then-known world, and they had been suffering persecution among unbelievers.

[A Song of degrees of David.]

- 1] Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

David was king of Judah and Benjamin and ruled in Hebron for 7½ years. He inherited a divided nation and almost a civil war; but then the Lord gave him a united nation (2 Sam 5; 1 Chr 12:38-40). This could have been the occasion for this psalm. [We often sing *Hine Ma Tov* as a chorus...]

In the essentials, unity; in the non-essentials, liberty; in all things, *agape*...
— Augustine (a.d. 345-430)

- 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;
- 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.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 134 - “Final Song of Praise”

This is a great worship psalm and one that should be incorporated into our worship.

[A Song of degrees.]

- 1] Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.
- 2] Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.
- 3] The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Next Two Sessions

Study Psalms 135 – 150 and review the entire series. Try to explain Psalm 137:9...

The Book of Psalms Session 23 Psalm 135 - 144

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 135 - “Praise the Lord For Who He Is”

We leave the pilgrim psalms now and come to songs of praise. This psalm is in a parentheses of “Hallelujahs.” It begins with “Praise ye the Lord” (4X) and ends with “Bless the Lord” (4X). (“Hallelujah” is repeated 8X). In it, Israel praises God for the deliverance of the past.

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise him, O ye servants of the LORD.
- 2] Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God,
- 3] Praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant.
- 4] For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.

Why did God choose Israel? “Because the Lord is good” [v.3].

- 5] For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.
- 6] Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.
- 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 “gods” can do nothing (vv.15-18); YHWH can do anything He wants to. It is God who makes the weather. He runs the universe as it pleases Him. God does not have to answer our questions. He asks us to trust Him and live a life of faith.

- 8] Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.
- 9] Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.
- 10] Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;
- 11] Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan:
- 12] And gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.
- 13] Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations.
- 14] For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.

The psalmist then compares the living God with idols... “The great Ra whose shrines once covered acres, is now filler for crossword puzzles.”

One doesn't have to take a course in comparative religions to know the name of YHWH!

- 15] The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.
- 16] They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;
- 17] They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.
- 18] They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.

These are quoted from Ps 115:4-8. [v. 18: *You become like the gods you worship!*]

- 19] Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:
- 20] Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.
- 21] Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

Israel could praise the Lord because He was present with His people.
No other nation could claim that distinction! Immanuel, Indeed!

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 136 - "God's Mercy"

"The Great Hallel." Every verse has the same refrain: "for his mercy endureth for ever." This is an antiphonal psalm. *This psalm turned history into theology, and theology into worship.* It was sung at the dedication of Solomon's Temple (2 Chr 7:3,6) and by King Jehoshaphat's singers when Judah was attacked by Moab and Ammon (2 Chr 20:21).

- 1] O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 2] O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 3] O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Paul says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us" (Ephesians 2:4).

- 4] To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 5] To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 6] To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.

To those nations who fail to thankfully acknowledge Him as Creator, God has a specific judgment: *Homosexuality* (Rom 1:20ff).

- 7] To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 8] The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 9] The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 10] To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 11] And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever:

The Passover at the exodus marked Israel's birthday; and it also pictures our redemption in Jesus Christ...

- 12] With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 13] To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 14] And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 15] But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 16] To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Moses commanded them to remember those wilderness years and to obey the Word of God (Deut 8); and we are, too (Rom 15:4).

- 17] To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 18] And slew famous kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 19] Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 20] And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Three kings defeated: Pharaoh of Egypt, Sihon of the Amorites, and Og, King of Bashan (seven more will be dealt with in Canaan).

- 21] And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 22] Even an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Canaan is not a picture of heaven: there will be no wars in heaven. It pictures our present inheritance in Christ, that we claim as we walk in faith and defeat Satan's attempts to keep us in bondage...

- 23] Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:
- 24] And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 25] Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 26] O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

We, too, are to be continually thankful for His bounty toward us... The concluding declaration of this glorious psalm is to be as meaningful to you and me as it is to the people of Israel...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 137 - "A Cry for Vengeance"

Are you ready for a change of pace? Here's an imprecatory psalm with an astonishing concluding verse: "Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones"! [There are those who say, in a naive sort of way, "I believe the Bible from cover to cover"—yet they are ignorant of what *is* between the covers!]

One of the most plaintive and touching psalm. From the land of Goshen to the ghettos of Europe they have known what it is to be away from their homeland, to be in a strange land. The “rivers” were the irrigation canals dug with [Jewish] slave labor... [Note the “we” and “us” in their plight in Babylon...]

The Unrecorded Years

No detailed historical record within the 70 years of the Babylonian Captivity: Psalm 137 is one of the clearest records of the captivity.

Esther made possible the work of Nehemiah: Except for her, Jerusalem might never have been rebuilt, and there might have been a very history. If the Hebrew nation had been wiped out 500 years before it brought Christ into the world, it might have made a gigantic difference in the destiny of mankind! No Messiah for a lost world...

- 1] By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

Why were they *there*? Psalm 137 records the tragic experience of these people *during* the 70 years of captivity. You will find in this psalm bitter hatred and deep love. You will find a people that are overwhelmed and overpowered by their emotions.

- 2] We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
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.
4] How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?

They feel very deeply about what is recorded here. They know what it means to spend time in slave labor; and to the forced entertainment in the concentration camps...

[Also, realize that the Jews have always excelled in music: from David, the psalmist of Israel, to Meyerbeer, Offenbach, Fritz Kreisler, Felix Mendelssohn, George Gershwin, Paul Whiteman, Irving Berlin and to the present crop...Are we too required to “sing the Lord’s song in a strange land”?]

- 5] If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.

This is a pledge of allegiance. This is saying, “We’ll become obedient now to God, and we want back in the will of God. We want to go back to Jerusalem.”

- 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.

When the well is dry, we know the worth of water.

Ben Franklin

- 7] Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.
8] O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

Edom, their eternal enemy, was there at the time Jerusalem fell, and Edom was in the cheering section for Babylon. They shouted, “Tear it down! Destroy it! We want to get rid of that wicked city!” These people who had survived that experience remember it now—and what they are asking for is justice. [cf Obadiah 1:11-14, et al.]

- 9] Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

That’s what they did to their captives; it was another way that the Babylonians could limit the future generation of their enemies. [***We now do it in our own mother’s wombs!***]

Lex Talionis

- Lex talionis: “eye for eye, tooth for tooth” (Deut 19:16-21). Retaliation is not revenge: it means “to pay back in kind.”
- The day is coming when God will wreak His vengeance.
- “Better a millstone were hanged on his neck” than to offend one of these little ones (Mt 18:6; Mk 9:42; Lk 17:2; Rev 18:21,22).

The punishment should fit the crime. That’s still a principle in the courts today. It is a matter of history that Cyrus the Great, through his general, did exactly to the Babylonians what the Babylonians had done to the people of Jerusalem.

Let those who find fault with these cures, that were not causeless, who never seen their temple burned, their city ruined, their wives ravished, and their children slain; they might not, perhaps, be quite so velvet mouthed if they had suffered after this fashion. It is one thing to talk of the bitter feeling which moved captive Israelites in Babylon, and quite another thing to be captives ourselves under a savage and remorseless power, which knew not how to show mercy, but delighted in barbarities to the defenseless.

The song is such as might fitly be sung in the Jew’s wailing place. It is a fruit of the Captivity in Babylon, and often has it furnished expression for

sorrows which else had been unutterable. It is a gemlike Psalm within whose mild radiance there glows a fire which strikes the beholder with wonder.”

—Charles Haddon Spurgeon

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 138 - “Wholehearted Praise”

[A Psalm of David.]

This is the 1st of a grouping of eight psalms attributed to David. They form a special collection just before the five “Hallelujah Psalms” that climax the Book of Psalms.

1] I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

...whole heart! **Does that describe us?**... Anything between you and God is an idol.

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.

Knowing how jealous God is of His Name, that is a remarkable statement!
[We should re-read Psalm 119 again...]

3] In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

4] All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5] Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.

6] Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

2 Cor 8:9: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” (Cf. Phil 2:1-12.)

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.

Humility

- “Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off” (Ps 138:6).
- “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose

name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isa 57:15).

- “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (1 Pet 5:5).
- “But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (1 Pet 3:4).
- “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:10).

8] The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

OT way of saying: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:6). It is underscored at the cross: *Tetelestai*: “It is finished!”

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 139 - “The Attributes of God”

What we think about God determines what we think about *everything* else: others, the universe, God’s Word, God’s will, sin, our faith, and obedience. Wrong ideas about Him will lead to the wrong path, and the wrong destiny. This is a theological psalm in that it reveals something of the attributes of God in relation to His creation: It reveals His omniscience, His omnipresence, and His omnipotence.

The Attributes of God: Omniscient (God is all-knowing); Omnipresent (God is everywhere present); and, Omnipotent (God is all-powerful).

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

- 1] O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.
- 2] Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.
- 3] Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.
- 4] For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.
- 5] Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.
- 6] Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

He cannot “learn,” therefore He can never be disappointed in me... How can God do that? I don’t know, and the psalmist says *he* doesn’t know.

[The scientist Paul Davies suggests that the entire universe may be nothing more than “a thought in the mind of God.”]

- 7] Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
- 8] If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.
- 9] If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
- 10] Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

Let’s look at the *omnipresence* of God for a moment. No matter where you go, you cannot get away from God. Jonah tried; it didn’t work.

- 11] If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.
- 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.

A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, duty performed or duty violated, is still with us for our happiness or our misery. If we say, “Surely the darkness shall cover us,” in the darkness as in the light our obligations are yet with us. We cannot escape their power, nor fly from their presence.

—Daniel Webster

- 13] For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb.
- 14] I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.
- 15] My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Even the comprehensive DNA is insufficient: “conflict resolution logic” requires *external* input! God is involved in every cell division! Life is an exciting pilgrimage of continual discovery!

“...lowest parts of the earth”: i.e., privately, out of sight. (It probably is simply a variant for the “secretly” of the preceding clause; however, it also might be an allusion to a *hyperdimensionality* involved in God’s creative process... and elements which you won’t find in any periodic table...)

- 16] Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

I existed before I was “conceived” physically! Before the body was formed David says he was a person. He was a person while he was being formed in the womb. This has profound implications regarding abortion: *abortion is a form of murder!* (When did John the Baptist

begin his ministry? When he was 9 inches long and weighed 1 ½ lbs. He leaped in his mother’s womb for joy... cf. Lk 1:44.)

- 17] How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!
- 18] If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

God loves us! And the God who loves us is *omnipotent*—all-powerful!

- 19] Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.
- 20] For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.
- 21] Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?
- 22] I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

Both the wicked and the godly mentioned in this psalm. (These verses is why this psalm is categorized as an “imprecatory” psalm.)

Imprecatory Psalms

This psalm and the next are the last imprecatory psalms: 6, 12, 35, 37, 58,59, 69, 79,83, 109, 139, 140. Enemies were rebels against the Lord. The Covenant People were protected under conditions of obedience (Lev 26, Deut 27-29; Cf. Gen 12:2,3). This is a battle between good and evil that has been going on since Gen 3—and we can’t remain neutral in this battle...

- 23] Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:
- 24] And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

God says that He will judge the wicked, and He will hear the prayer of His people. Praise God that He is all-knowing, all-powerful, and present everywhere.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 140 - “Evil Leaders”

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.]

David is asking and praying for protection because evil men are about him. It also implies a prophecy of the last days when the godly remnant of Israel will face the Antichrist—that false messiah, the Man of Sin. This psalm has an application for you and me today: Many of us can pray this prayer.

- 1] Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man;
- 2] Which imagine mischiefs in their heart; continually are they gathered together for war.
- 3] They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips. Selah.

The tongue is deadly: it can ruin a man's reputation and blacken his life.

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Romans 3:10-18

- 4] Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from the violent man; who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

David's prayer is also a prayer that the remnant will pray during the Great Tribulation.

- 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.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:19-21

Four Lessons

- What sinners do to God's people (vv. 1-5)
 - What God's people should do to sinners (vv. 6-8)
 - What sin does to sinners (vv. 9-11)
 - What God does for His people (vv. 12-13)
- 6] I said unto the LORD, Thou art my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.
 - 7] O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.
 - 8] Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves. Selah.
 - 9] As for the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

- 10] Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.
- 11] Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.

David's enemies were slandering and setting traps for him "...Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num 32:23).

- 12] I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.
- 13] Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

David's life bears the tale: God defeated his enemies, kept His promise to establish his throne, established a dynasty that led to the Messiah Himself. He wrote half the psalms, extended his borders, and prepared the building of the Temple. He became great because he trusted the Lord.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 141- "Deliverance from Evil"

Psalms 140 and 141 are related: they use similar vocabulary (heart, tongue, hands, etc.). David's prayer arises from some unknown experience but probably comes from the time that he was fleeing from Saul (1 Sam 24). The application is to the remnant of Israel in the final struggle against evil, but it also has a message for us today.

[A Psalm of David.]

- 1] LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.
- 2] Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.
- 3] Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.
- 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.
- 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.

Avoid compromise. We may work *in* the world, but not be *of* the world. The boat should be in the ocean, but it is tragic when the ocean is in the boat.

- 6] When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.
- 7] Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.

- 8] But mine eyes are unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.
- 9] Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.
- 10] Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.

מִקְשָׁה *mowqesh*: a noose (for catching animals); a hook (for the nose); be ensnared.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 142 - “The Cave Song”

[Maschil of David; A Prayer when he was in the cave.]

This was written in a cave: one in En-gedi is mentioned in 1 Sam 24; also, there is the cave of Adullam where David went to hide the first time he left Israel to escape from King Saul. At this time “every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him ...” (1 Sam 22:2). About 400 men joined him here. In his prayers, David didn’t “dance around” the subject, or “mince his words.” He laid it all out bare...

- 1] I cried unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.
- 2] I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

Tell God

Here is a gem I found in J. Vernon McGee’s commentary...

Tell God all that is in your heart, as one unloads one’s heart, its pleasures and its pains, to a dear friend. Tell Him your troubles, that He may comfort you; Tell Him your joys, that He may sober them; Tell Him your longings, that He may purify them; Tell Him your dislikes, that He may help you to conquer them; Talk to Him of your temptations, that He may shield you from them;

Show Him the wounds of your heart, that He may heal them; Lay bare your indifference to good, your depraved tastes for evil, your instability. Tell Him how self-love makes you unjust to others, how vanity tempts you to be insincere, how pride disguises you to yourself as to others.

If you thus pour out all your weaknesses, needs, troubles, there will be no lack of what to say. You will never exhaust the subject. It is continually being renewed. People who have no secrets from each other never want subjects of conversation. They do not weigh their words, for there is nothing to be held back: neither do they seek for something to say.

They talk out of the abundance of the heart, without consideration, just what they think. Blessed are they who attain to such familiar, unreserved intercourse with God.

—Fénelon

- 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.
- 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.
- 5] I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

In the court of King Saul that mad king threw a javelin at young David, trying to pin him to the wall, but he missed, and David had to flee for his life. He complained that he was hunted like a partridge. It was open season on him all of the time, and he had to keep running.

- 6] Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.
- 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 was David’s situation when he first left the court of Saul, but afterward, 400 men joined him. He knew God was responsible for this support. The lessons of those fugitive years served him well in later life...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 143 - “An Urgent Appeal”

[A Psalm of David.]

The last of the “penitential” psalms; God’s “tools” to polish and nurture us, not to punish...

- 1] Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.
- 2] And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

Remember the Christian’s “Bar of Soap” (1 John 1:9): “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Praise His Name!

- 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.
- 4] Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.
- 5] I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

- 6] I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.
- 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.
- 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.
- 9] Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.
- 10] Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.
- 11] Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.
- 12] And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant.

This reveals David's trust in God as his only refuge and his only hope. "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God" should be the daily prayer of every child of God. *This is also the plea of the nation Israel.*

Israel Today

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Romans 10:3

In Romans Paul tells us what Israel's problem is today. This is also the trouble the Gentiles have: They are working at a religion. They are trying to do something to please God. He has already *done* something for them. He sent His Son to the cross to pay the penalty for sin. You please Him when you accept what He has done for you. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom 10:4).

- "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." (Micah 7:20)
- "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them." (Exodus 2:24,25).

This is their hope when they cry for help from God in their day of calamity. And God will not disappoint them. God is not through with Israel.

Why did God have respect unto Israel? Because He is faithful and righteous.

Penitential Psalms

- Against Wrath Psalm 8
- Against Pride Psalm 32
- Against Gluttony Psalm 38
- Against Impurity Psalm 51
- Against Covetousness Psalm 102
- Against Envy Psalm 130
- Against Carelessness Psalm 143

These were considered "Special Psalms," allocated by the early church for use on Ash Wednesday...

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 144 - "Our Ultimate Defense"

[A Psalm of David.]

Some of these contents are similar to those in Psalm 18, which began, "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Ps 18:1-2)

- 1] Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:

Jesus said, "When a strong man armed keepeth his [house] palace, his goods are in peace." (Lk 11:21) We have an obligation to protect our loved ones...

- 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.
- 3] LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!
- 4] Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.

This verse is used on sundials all over the world. Life is purposeless without God.

- 5] Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.
- 6] Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.
- 7] Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children;
- 8] Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

This is a call for God to intrude into human history. Cf. Isaiah 64:1-4...

- 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

Not until after the Tribulation will the children of Israel be able to sing this new song unto their God.

- 10] It is he that giveth salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.
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:
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:
13] That our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:
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.
15] Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD.

Next Session

Read Psalms 145 – 150. Review your notes on the entire series, including key psalms; glossaries; lessons, etc.

The Book of Psalms Session 24

Psalm 145 – 150

Completing Book V

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 145

[David's Psalm of praise.]

This is the last psalm that mentions David as the author. This psalm is an acrostic, but one letter is missing: the *Nun*. Some feel it was lost; others feel that it is deliberate: the fullness of praise is incomplete without other voices. (Cf. F. W. Grant, et al). Cf. Rev 19:1,3,6...

- 1] I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.
2] Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.
3] Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.
4] One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

- 5] I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.
6] And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.
7] They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.
8] The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.
9] The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.
10] All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.
11] They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;
12] To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.
13] Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.
14] The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.

He knows our every need and helps those who call upon Him. "You have not because you ask not" (James 4:2).

- 15] The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.
16] Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.
17] The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.
18] The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

One of the great doctrines that the Reformation brought back to us was the doctrine of the "priesthood of believers." If you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have *direct access* to God. There are many who are stiff-arming God. They go through a church ritual to escape a really personal confrontation with Him. If you are unsaved, God invites you to come to Him for salvation. God is available.

- 19] He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.
20] The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.
21] My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 146 - "A Hallelujah Psalm"

The five psalms that conclude this great hymn book are all Hallelujah Psalms. They begin with "Praise ye the Lord" and end with "Praise ye the Lord." No longer do they speak of persecution or suffering; no prayers for help or deliverance from the enemy; no imprecatory prayers. Weeping is past and joy has come in the morning of the Millennium. Hallelujah Psalms include: Psalms 106; Psalms 111, 112, 113; Psalm 135; and, Psalms 146, 147, 148, 149, and 150.

A Short Course on Worship

- Psalm 146: A vow of lifetime praise
Psalm 147: It is good and pleasant to praise
Psalm 148: Join all creation in our praise
Psalm 149: Worship joyfully
Psalm 150: Where, when, and how

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.
- 2] While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.
- 3] Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.
- 4] His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.
- 5] Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God:

(Last of 25 beatitudes in the Psalms, starting with Psalm 1:1.)

- 6] Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:
- 7] Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:
- 8] The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:
- 9] The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.
- 10] The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

In the closing verses of this psalm, “the Lord,” meaning *YHWH*, is mentioned eight times.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 147 - “A Hallelujah Psalm”

- 1] Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.
- 2] The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

This is yet future... (The language is reminiscent of Ezek 39:28 for the return of the captives to Judah, and Neh 1:9.)

- 3] He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.
- 4] He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.
- 5] Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.
- 6] The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

- 7] Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:
- 8] Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.
- 9] He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

The ancients believed that young ravens were abandoned by parent birds to find their own food (Lk 12:24: “Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?”)

- 10] He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.
- 11] The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.
- 12] Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.
- 13] For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.
- 14] He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.
- 15] He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

“His Word runneth swiftly”: From Gutenberg to the Internet...

- 16] He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.

“Hoarfrost” (from Latin, “rug of fire”): resembles the fine grey ash of wood burned in open air; likened unto “ashes” because it darkens the light, resembles the color of them, and has a kind of burning in it.

- 17] He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?
- 18] He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.
- 19] He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.
- 20] He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

The nation of Israel is unique: They are the *only* people given the title “Chosen People.” In His Word God says He has an eternal purpose for them. We are to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, for the time that God will fulfill His promise to them.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 148 - “A Hallelujah Psalm”

In this psalm praise begins with the heavenlies. What great hallelujah chorus this will be when all God’s created intelligences in heaven and in earth will praise Him! (“Praise”: 13X in 14 verses!)

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

- 2] Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.
- 3] Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.
- 4] Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.
- 5] Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.
- 6] He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.
- 7] Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:
- 8] Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word:
- 9] Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:
- 10] Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:
- 11] Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:
- 12] Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:
- 13] Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.
- 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.

“Horn” = symbol of power, authority. Can only be Christ (“David’s throne”): Lk 1:30-33). Jews are still dear to Him (Ex 19:6; Num 16:5; Deut 4:1-8).

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 149 - “A Primer on Worship”

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.
- 2] Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.
- 3] Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.
- 4] For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.
- 5] Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.
- 6] Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;
- 7] To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;
- 8] To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;
- 9] To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

Let’s keep in mind that when the Lord Jesus returns to this earth, He will not be welcomed by the nations of the world. He is coming to *judge* this earth. As it is said in Psalm 2 “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; judgment day thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (Ps. 2:9). You and I are living in a world that is moving toward a judgment day.

The Book of Psalms: Psalm 150 - “A Final Hallelujah”

Each of the previous four “Books” of Psalms ends with a benediction (41:13; 72:18,19; 89:52; 106:48); the final 5th Book ends with a whole psalm devoted to praise... (13 Hallelujahs in only 6 verses!)

- 1] Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.
- 2] Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.
- 3] Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.
- 4] Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.
- 5] Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
- 6] Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Instruments and dancing are to be used...***Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.***

Worship

- **What is worship?** “Praise ye the Lord.” (Ps 150:1). He is the Cre-ator and Redeemer. He is the object of worship. He alone is worthy. He has a monopoly in both fields. Not angels (Rev 22:9). Not Mary. And Scriptures say there is coming a day when everything that has breath will praise the Lord. He has created everything that it might praise Him.

- **Who is to worship?** “Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord” (Ps 150:6). “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy” (Job 38:7). “For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens” (Ps 96:5). What is the chief end of man? Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. There is no other reason for man’s existence.

- **Why worship?** “Praise ye the Lord.” Prostration. Adoration. Exaltation (Acts 9:6,9; Rev 1:7). Worship is an *active* verb. And it is actually a very *private* affair. (“public worship” is actually an oxymoron.) Prostration: on our faces...Adoration: a term of endearment; a love affair. Exaltation (of man!): Humanism is a deadening philosophy leading man back to the jungle; vs. “Arise; go...”(Acts 9:6,9); “Fear not,” (Rev 1:7). There is nothing that will give dignity to man, like worshiping God.

Character of the Composition

- Tephillah תפילה “a prayer”
- Tehillah תהלה “a praise”
- Miktam מִקְתָּם “a poem of gold”
- Shir שִׁיר “a song”
- Mizmor מִזְמוֹר “a psalm sung with musical accompaniment”

- Maskil מַשְׁכִּיל “an instruction”
- Shiggaion שִׁנְיֹן “an irregular ode”

Annotations

- Objects are declared, such as:
 - לְלַמֵּד “teaching”
 - לְתוֹרָה “thanksgiving”
 - לְהַזְכִּיר “to call to remembrance”
- Liturgical notices, such as:
 - שִׁיר לַיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת “a song for the sabbath day” (Ps 92).
 - שִׁיר הַמְּעֻלּוֹת “a song of the goings up” (Ps 120-134).

David’s Psalms

Different authorities disagree. We attempted to focus on their present and possible dispensational applications.

- **Psalms of David’s early life (14):** 7, 11, 12, 13, 17, 22, 23, 34, 35, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59.
- **Psalms of the earlier part of his reign (19):** 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26, 29, 36, 58, 60, 68, 101, 108, 110.
- **Psalms from the time of his greats into his flight from Jerusalem (10):** 5, 6, 32, 38, 39, 40, 41, 51, 55, 64.
- **Psalms of the exile (10):** 3, 4, 27, 28, 31, 61, 63, 69, 70, 143.
- **Psalms of the last period of his reign (3):** 37, 103, 139.

Some Group Labels

- “Shepherd Psalms” Psalms 22-24
- “Kingdom Psalms” Psalms 46-48
- “Hallelujah Psalms” Psalms 111-113; 146-150
- “Songs of Ascent” Psalms 120-134
- “Royal Psalms” Psalms 94-99
- “Pauline Psalms” Psalms 32, 51, 130, & 143

Which Psalm?

- | | Psalm: |
|--|----------------|
| • Appears as “1st person singular” from the Cross? | 22 |
| • Is a trilog among the Trinity? | 2 |
| • The shortest chapter in the Bible? | 117 |
| • Was written by Moses? | 90 |
| • Are the 3 most often quoted psalms in the New Testament? | 22, 69, 109 |

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Implies Judas was married and had children? | 109 |
| • Yields a glimpse of Christ’s early years as a boy? | 69 |
| • Is the most darkest, doleful of all? | 88 |
| • Is the “only” psalm? | 62 |
| • Was Martin Luther’s favorite? | 46 |
| • Is the longest chapter in the Bible? | 119 |
| • Refrains “His mercy endureth forever” | 136 |
| • Heralds the Attributes of God? | 139 |
| • Was David’s repentance of Bathsheba? | 51 |
| • Is suggestive of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb? | 45 |

For Next Time:

- Undertake a systematic commitment to the psalms for your life.
 - Memorize those that are the most dear...
- Choose the next book to explore *expositionally*, verse-by-verse.

* * *

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About The Cover Design

(on the tape cassette volumes)

The “Front” cover:

The Greek border: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).” The center design element symbolizes the Word of God Incarnate, illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

The “Back” cover: (the “front” to the Jewish reader)

The Hebrew border: “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (from the Sh’ma, Deut 6:4-5).”

The center design represents the Burning Bush, made up of Hebrew letters which proclaim “the Eternal One cannot lie.”

The Spine:

The spine includes a Menorah from the Old Testament, a Maranatha Dove suggesting the New Testament, and the Koinonia House logo at the base.



Koinonia House

P.O. Box D
Coeur d'Alene Idaho
83816-0347
(208) 773-6310
www.khouse.org

ISBN 978-1-57821-373-3