

**EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**



**PSALMS 42 - 57**  
**(The Exodus Psalms)**

**BY**

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**[BOOK 49-8]**

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## **WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?**

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases. He was teaching law at a university in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would apply his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined would be Jesus Christ. Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, Simon Greenleaf personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all jurists in the United States saying in part "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being, he is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than he is God. Having concluded that he is God I have accepted him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

## **HOW CAN I BE SAVED?**

**Salvation is available for all members of the human race.**

Salvation is the most important undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consistent with the divine holiness of His character. This is called grace. It relies on God so man cannot work for salvation, neither can he deserve it. We need to realise that the creation of this vast unmeasured universe was far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

However the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise, nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the colour of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

### **How do I become a Christian?**

There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all I have to recognise that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4; John 5:24).

Secondly, realising that if I want a relationship with Almighty God who is perfect, and recognising that I am not perfect, I need to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour (1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16).

Thirdly, by the exercise of my own free will I personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, believing that He died personally for me and that He is what He claims to be in an individual, personal and living way (John 1:12; 3:36; Acts 16:31; 4:12).

### **The results of Salvation**

The results of this are unbelievably wonderful:  
My sins are taken away (John 1:29),  
I possess eternal life now (1 John 5:11,12),  
I become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17),  
The Holy Spirit takes up His residence in my life (1 Corinthians 6:19),  
And I will never perish (John 10:28-30).

This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all people; this is the ultimate of our existence. We invite and exhort any reader who has not become a Christian by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

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**PSALMS SECTION TWO****THE EXODUS PSALMS – PSALMS 42 - 72****INTRODUCTION**

The Psalms are arranged in five specific books. Book 1 covers Psalms 1 – 41, and is tied to the book of Genesis, book 2 covers Psalms 42-72 and is tied to the book of Exodus, book 3 covers Psalms 73-89, and is tied to the book of Leviticus, book 4 covers Psalms 90 – 106, and is tied to the book of Numbers, and book 5 covers Psalms 107-150, and is tied to the book of Deuteronomy. The book of the Psalms gets into its final form in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah when books four and five of the Psalms appear to be added to the earlier collection. The longest Psalm, 119, dates from the time of the Exile to Babylon in the early sixth century, but there are others that may date from the times after the Exiles return in 535 BC, and even some from the days of Ezra and Nehemiah in the fifth century BC.

Psalm 42 begins the second book of the Psalms. Psalms is divided into five books, each named after a book of the Mosaic Pentateuch, this section being the set of Psalms tied to the book of Exodus. The dominant name for God used in this section is “El”, translated “God” it means the Almighty One, and reminds us that it was by the almighty power of God that the Israelite people were delivered from Egyptian bondage and brought into the Wilderness of Arabia. The name for God “EL” is used 207 times in this second book of the Psalms, well ahead of the other four books.

The other names for God are also significant to note here. The name “Adonai” is used 19 times, also ahead of the other books, but the Tetragrammaton, the name JHVH, translated Jehovah or Yahweh, “the covenant making God”, is only used 31 times, whereas in book one of the Psalms it is used 277 times, in book 3 it is used 43 times, in book 4 it is used 101 times, and book 5 it is used 226 times. This use of the names of God in the Psalms is a glimpse at the very different themes of the five Hebrew divisions of the book. Refer to the BTB study on NAMES OF GOD below.

The Psalms in this section begin with the “Psalms for Sons of Korah”, who were the Temple singers, and they certainly sing praises to the Lord. There are also Psalms of Asaph the Scribe, and David himself. The Psalms in this section are from the full period covered by the early history of Israel, from David’s day around 1000BC, through until the days of Hezekiah around 701 BC, and Josiah around 620 BC, when the second and third books of the Psalms are gathered into their final form. There are Psalms in this section that cover the full spectrum of topics covered by Psalms. There are straight doctrine teaching Psalms like Psalm 50, Penitential Psalms like Psalm 51, Messianic Psalms like Psalm 68, 69, Nature Psalms like Psalm 65, and a number of imprecatory (Cursing of enemies) Psalms like Psalms 52, 58, 69.

Psalm Forty Two is a Psalm of worship and praise. It expresses the hunger of the doctrine led believer for deep fellowship with the Lord their God and Saviour. It is described as a song for the sons of Korah. We need to recall the incident that makes these Temple singers incredible indeed, for there should have been no sons of Korah, Dathan or Abiram, for their fathers were rebels against Moses leadership and divine instruction. Numbers 16:1ff. All sons who stood with their father Korah died with him in God’s judgement upon these evil men and women, so it must have been that at least one son of Korah stood against his father’s evil and separated himself from his family and stood with Moses before Divine Judgement fell upon them. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on Numbers 16.

These singers lost all their ancestors in the rebellion yet would sing of the grace of God and their love for God, singing both songs they wrote, and songs written for them. They

were testimonies of FAITH and GRACE, and they sang of the perfect JUSTICE of God in their own lives and the lives of their ancestors. Ezekiel 18:1-9. Refer to this passage and then the BTB studies on the topics below.

## PSALMS 42:1-11

**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? 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. 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. 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 day time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. 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? 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.**

## REFLECTION

**1 As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after thee, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?**

The soul of the psalmist “pants” for deep fellowship with the Lord, just as a fallow deer pants after a deep spring of pure water after a run across the desert places. This is a beautiful picture of an animal that is graceful, energetic and focused. These three qualities are meant to be true of us also. We are meant to be beautiful in our works; with the fruit of the Holy Spirit active in our daily life and making us pleasant to the taste of all we meet.

Believers ought not to be ugly of spirit and soul, for the Holy Spirit will make us attractive to others, for that is the purpose of fruit; it draws in the eaters to spread the seed that is hidden within the fruit. Do we pant for the fellowship of God? Many believers don’t “pant” after anything because they are too lazy to ever feel really thirsty or hungry. 2 Corinthians 5:9, Colossians 1:29, 1 Timothy 4:10.

Do we work to the point of exhaustion? Paul did, and so did the other apostles. This is the standard for us all and yet we fall so short of it. If you really work hard and perspire in a job role all food and fluid is sweet to the taste. The exhaustion that flows from hard and long work produces a real appetite, and makes the plainest food taste wonderful. Many are never going to feel this, but the Psalmist draws the picture as a test for us and we need to test ourselves against this. I have had to prepare the funeral of my old mother over these last days in 2009.

I met with the minister yesterday (2009) and we spoke of the details for the service of celebration for my mother’s long Christian life. I commented to the minister that in light of the end of our life I cannot understand mediocre believers who do not throw themselves into their faith and work. Life is just too short to waste time in a half hearted, lukewarm faith that doesn’t produce real fruit in the life. The psalmist is absolutely sure of his desire, and it centres in fellowship with the true God over all, for anything other than this is pointless

and empty. It is only fellowship with the real God that offers any hope for the individual, for fake faiths are more frustrating than no faith at all.

The psalmist longs to come and stand before the Lord in worship; he is counting the days until he can stand in the temple again. His desire is to stand before the Lord's house and worship the one who has loved him and given him a path to follow through this life. Psalms 36:7-9, 63:1-12, 143:5-7. It is reality that people seek on their journey through this life, and reality is only found within a living and powerful relationship with the real God, not any tin-pot gods. Jeremiah 2:13, 10:10, John 5:24-27, 10:10.

**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.**

Most people upon this earth mock passionate faith as "religious emotional enthusiasm". Let us just relax and come to terms with that fact, for it was true in David's day, just as today. More mock the truth than serve the truth, and most are a little bit threatened by people who are passionate for the truth. We are warned that as we advance towards the end times that more and more will be open "mockers" of our passionate love for the Lord and be filled with hatred towards the truths of God's Word. Luke 18:32, John 15:18-21, 1 Timothy 4:1-5, Hebrews 11:36, 2 Peter 2:8-19, Jude 4ff.

Notice the psalmist's reaction to the mockery; he wept for those people. Psalms 102:7-11. His tears are not the self-centred tears of a person who is ashamed and humiliated by the mocking; they are the tears of a genuine believer who feels great sadness at the state of the souls of those who mock him. These people cannot see eternal realities and mock them, but the psalmist feels the pain of their coming judgement. These people mock the believer's passionate commitment to God when there is trouble in his life, and there is no evidence of God helping him. They ask him where his God is when trouble comes, and they mock his patience. Job 2:9-10. These people insult the believer's faith, and the believer pours his tears out to the Lord and leaves his vindication in God's hands. 1 Peter 5:5-9.

The path of life of the believer who is determined to be a strong and passionate servant of the Lord is going to find that the company around them soon dissipates when they realise how passionate he is. It is a lonely walk to walk with passion for God, because most people prefer the calm, settled, and respectable walk of "ordered religion". God wants our whole heart and mind and body, but religion is more popular and always has been, because it makes few demands and then you go home and carry on as you always have done. The psalmist weeps as he thinks about the great crowd that went up to worship and praise, and how few have stayed in a spiritual place and rejoice in their close fellowship with the Lord. All the people kept the holy days, but most have polite fake faith, not passionate real faith!

**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.**

The impact of the abuse of others is depressing and it is easy to get overwhelmed at times by it. The psalmist is upset and cast down in spirit, and it is not wrong to feel depressed when there is something to be depressed about! I love the work of Dr Viktor Frankl who said, "There are certain things, that when they happen to us, and we do not lose our minds, it is only because we didn't have a mind to lose". Depression is not a sign of sin, but failing to deal with the issues that may have created it, can be a sign of sin. The psalmist is "cast down" emotionally and rightly so, for he contemplates the death and eternal judgement of his neighbours, relatives and friends. They are people he grew up

with, and now they mock the truth in a way that indicates they do not love or even know God. Refer to the BTB study below DEPRESSION.

The psalmist casts himself before the Lord and opens his heart to God for healing. He gives himself an order, and that order is to express hope/confidence in the Lord. The prophet Isaiah understood the importance of this order. His words in Isaiah 61:3 have been put to song, and it expresses this thought. We are to “put on the garments of praise to replace the spirit of heaviness”. Paul builds on this thought in the New Testament. Colossians 3:8-17. There are things to put off and things to put on to transform the thinking and with that cognitive shift to change the emotions.

As we think so we will become over time! Proverbs 23:7. By taking the negative emotions and transforming them by positive worship we transform the emotions over time. By actively starting to praise God we build power to cope with situations, and we strengthen our faith on the way. Depression is eliminated by active strategies that mobilise our deep inner reservoir of energies. The best “mobiliser” we have of our spirit, our bodily energy, and our Immune System itself, is Holy Spirit filled worship.

When we see the countenance of God in the Scriptures we are empowered by the glimpse of God we get. It is Holy Spirit taught doctrine which fires up the body, soul and spirit. The “help of his countenance” is what we get every time we open the scriptures, and so let us open them and teach them in power every time/opportunity we can take to teach. Sometimes there are places that I refer to as “magic places”. This doesn’t mean they are witchcraft places, but very special “magical” places that recharge our batteries more than others.

There is scenery that lifts up our spirit and there are places that depress us. When we are down it is good to travel to places that lift us up and have a walk or picnic there. This doesn’t mean we spend thousands of dollars to visit exotic places, but identify the places that are locally powerful ones for lifting our spirit, and then go there. I will encourage cancer patients to identify such places and go there with their loved ones and picnic and rejoice in the lifting of their spirits there. For this psalmist it is the view of the Jordan River Valley that lifts his spirit most and he has a favourite hill there to worship from.

**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 day time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.**

The great thing about the place the psalmist has chosen to sit is that he can hear the roaring of the waters beneath him in the valley. As he looks at the raging waters and the bubbling of the torrent he thinks of the power of God, and also the power of the turmoil he feels within him. He feels the surging power of the waves of pressure that have swept over him in recent times and he looks at the raging power of the waters of the river and takes comfort, for he is in the hands of the one who made the waters.

Many years later the prophet Jonah would experience this drowning feeling as he was cast into the sea by the pagan mariners. Jonah 2:1-7. Jonah has the same response to this experience of depression also and lifts up his heart to worship from the depths and imagines the temple of the Lord and focuses his imagination upon it and lifts his heart towards that in worship of the Lord. No matter where we are we can imagine a powerful place for worship and lift our heart and worship. Jonah was in the most uncomfortable place imaginable, and he was able to worship.

At times the billows of pain, despair, and distress go over our heads. We can be overwhelmed totally by the distressing things of this world that we must face at times. It is not being overwhelmed that is important spiritually, it is how we come up the other side of the experience that matters. The psalmist sees his pain, sits with his pain, and heals his pain by worship. He contemplates the majestic power and integrity of God and so is lifted

up from his place of distress. He experiences the loving kindness of the Lord towards him through his worship.

Often in worship this will be my experience; as I sing and pray the Lord gives me a glimpse of His love towards me in the midst of my distress. This is our hope and our encouragement; the Lord remains faithful to us. Refer to the study below, GOD CARES FOR US! If we have scripture in our memory we can sing the song of the Lord in the night, and pray through each day that we face troubles. Ephesians 5:15-21, Colossians 4:2-6, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22. Refer to the BTB study PRAYER.

**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?”**

The Lord is meant to be our rock! Refer to the BTB study CHRIST – THE ROCK. A rock is a place of security and stability. To build upon the rock is to build upon a place of stability. Matthew 7:24-25. Foolish people build on the “shifting sands” of man’s opinions, but the intelligent people build upon the rock of God’s character. Refer to the BTB study GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD. All else shifts and is unstable, except the Holy Character of God, and the believer who is stabilised upon God’s holy and immovable character is stable in their thinking and emotions. This is God’s purpose for us all.

It is easy, if you are not stabilised upon the rock, to start to doubt the Lord, and even think you are forgotten by God. When the waves of extreme pressure sweep over us we can be overwhelmed by things and feel it is all too much. We need to claim the promise of God from 1 Corinthians 10:13, but often we do not; we just moan and groan like the Israelites did during the Exodus! Hebrews 3:17 – 4:6. Remember this section of the Psalms are the Exodus Psalms and the Exodus was a time of testing of the people by God and moaning by the people towards God. We are to learn from them not repeat their errors.

We will mourn at times because of the pressures we face. Once again, reflect upon this reality. There are things that it is absolutely right to mourn over, because they are sad, upsetting, and possibly also frustrating. Mourning is normal but persistent moaning is sinful. The most frustratingly sad thing is the oppression and persecution of the enemies of the truth against us. We stand for the truth and we want the lost to find peace in Jesus, but we are persecuted for the truth. It hurts to care about people who hate you and are trying to hurt you. If those who hate you are old friends their attacks are like the wounds of a sword in the bones; the pain is deep and at the highest level.

The insult of the pagan is direct and terrible, for they insult God and only an act of God will answer their abuse, and we cannot demand that sort of action. The Lord told a parable about the family of a well known Rich man and Lazarus the Beggar, Luke 16:19-31. These rich men lived well and ignored spiritual realities until it was too late, and the words of Abraham to the oldest brother in Hades was clear; let your brothers take God seriously, read Moses and learn about God from his words. Miracles are not provided to fools who have ignored the Word of God. Luke 23:8-11, 39-43.

**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.**

The chorus of the song ends the Psalm here. This may have been sung several times as the entire Psalm was sung by the sons of Korah. The psalmist now sings about his hope and confidence that remains secure despite the great power of the waves of persecution and pressure that have swept over him. He is secure because his hope is in the Lord who made the heavens and the earth. He hopes in the creator of space and time and so he is secure in his confidence. No matter how bad he feels at times he will transform his emotions by worshipping the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is worship that



transforms things and will produce the healthy countenance for the believer. We can look good and be good because the Lord is our God and the PLAN OF GOD is absolutely secure for us. Psalms 43:5.

## **PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS**

1. It doesn't matter what our ancestors have done, and how evil they were, for each generation stands alone before the Lord, and each person is judged in accordance with their own sins and their own good works. Ezekiel 18:1-9. No-one is to be judged by their parentage, but by their second birth into the Royal Family of God through faith in Jesus. Refer to the BTB study SALVATION – REGENERATION-BORN AGAIN.

2. How passionate is your faith believer? Are you panting for the fellowship of the Lord as a tired and thirsty deer pants for water? Are you doing enough to even get that thirsty? We have no end of polite form of faith today, but God calls us to passionate faith. We have many who will turn up for a worship service and then head home unchanged by it. God wants us changed by our relationship with Him.

3. Worship is a powerful anti-depressant, for by releasing the power of praise we change the very chemistry of our bodies. 2 Timothy 1:7. Let us praise the Lord with all our strength, for even if it is small at the time we start, by the time we have praised the Lord our God for who He is, we will be empowered by the end. Let us use worship as our main anti-depressant. Also ask the important question. Are we putting time aside regularly to rest and recharge our inner batteries? Are we recharging with worship as we ought? Are we taking time out with our families and having picnics in awesome places to deepen our fellowship with each other? Let us worship the Lord in fellowship with others, alone in our room, and in the cathedral of the trees and the open spaces of this world.

4. Much discussion is wasted today about "making the gospel message relevant", for we see the Lord's direct answer here and in Luke 16. God holds all people responsible for being interested enough in their creator to seek the Lord and His Truth. Those who ignore eternal realities, and take no thought for their eternal destiny are culpable! We are always to be ready to give the truth, filled with the Holy Spirit, and knowing the truth to give, Romans 1:13-23, but our alert, prepared readiness is the Lord's call upon us, not for us to waste time trying to find new ways for badgering reluctant people into facing truths they prefer/desire to ignore. Jesus didn't chase after the Rich Young Ruler, and neither are we to. We are to feed the hungry, and heal with truth, those who know they are fatally wounded!

## **DOCTRINES**

### **GOD – NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD**

1. Father, Son and Holy Spirit - Matthew 28:19,20. These titles emphasise the function of each member of the Trinity.

- a) Father - the sovereign authority, who decreed the plan of salvation
- b) Son - the obedient Son, who offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin according to the Father's will
- c) Holy Spirit - the one who reveals the Son to mankind, thereby bringing honour and glory to Him

2. At the Lord's Baptism - Matthew 3 where the Spirit descends, the Father speaking from heaven and the Son being baptised.

3. We have the Father sending the Son in John 3:16, in John 14-17 we have the Son sending the Spirit.

4. We have the three fold titles of God Romans 5, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 1, Romans 15

5. The Holy Spirit is called God in Acts 5, 1 Corinthians 3 and called the Lord in 2 Corinthians 3:17.

6. The works of the Lord are ascribed to the Father John 17, the Holy Spirit responsible for the procreation of the Son Luke 1:35, 2:11; the Son doing the will of the Father John 8, 10, the Holy Spirit sustaining the Son. Matthew 18:28, John 3:34

7. The Trinity are involved in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ in the first advent. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ is the co operative work of the Trinity, the Father gives the son Romans 8:32, the Lord lays down his life John 10:18, the Holy Spirit empowers Him to offer Himself on the Cross Hebrews 9. On the Cross He addresses the other two members of the Trinity when He cried out "My God, My God why hast thou forgotten me?"

8. All three were involved in the resurrection:

[a] The Father - Colossians 2:12

[b] The Son as the person who was raised - John 2:19, 10:18, 1 Peter 3:18

[c] The Holy Spirit was involved in His resurrection - Romans 8:11 The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit will be involved in our resurrection.

9. The indwelling of the believer - John 14:23, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit - 1 Corinthians 6:19, we have the power in us - Ephesians 4:6, the Lord in us - Colossians 1:27

## **GOD – NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

God reveals Himself and His character by His names.

1. EL - The strong one (singular) - 2 Samuel 22:33
2. EL ELYON - The most high God - Genesis 14:18-22
3. EL OLAM - The everlasting God - Genesis 21:33
4. EL SHADDAI -The almighty one - Genesis 17:1
5. ELOHIM - The all powerful one (plural) - Genesis 1:1
6. JEHOVAH - The self-existent one - I AM Exodus 3:14
7. JEHOVAH-ELOHIM - Lord God, Creator - Genesis 2:4
8. JEHOVAH-JIREH - Jehovah will provide - Genesis 22:13, 14
9. JEHOVAH -NISSI - Jehovah is my banner - Exodus 17:15
10. JEHOVAH-RAAH - Jehovah is my Shepherd - Psalm 23:1
11. JEHOVAH-RAPHA - Jehovah that Heals - Exodus 15:25, 26
12. JEHOVAH-SABOATH - Lord of hosts - Psalm 46:7, 11
13. JEHOVAH-SHALOM - Jehovah is peace - Judges 6:24
14. JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH - Jehovah is there - Ezekiel 48:35
15. JEHOVAH TSID KENU- Jehovah our righteousness - Jeremiah 33:16

## **GOD – TRINITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

1. The plurality of God is given by the plurality of the word Elohim which is not only a word of magnitude but also of number - Genesis 1, 3, 11

2. The tetragrammaton JHWH also refers to three personalities in the Trinity - Numbers 6:24-27
3. The Father speaks of
  - [a] The Son - Psalm 2:6,7,
  - [b] The Holy Spirit - Isaiah 11:2
4. The worship of God we have repeated three times "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty - Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4
5. The Lord Jesus Christ is revealed in the Old Testament - Exodus 3:14 cf. John 8:58; Psalm 10:16 cf. Revelation 11:15; Zechariah 14 cf. Revelation 19
6. The Lord Jesus Christ is noted as the angel of Jehovah - Genesis 16, 22, 33, Exodus 13, 14; Judges 6, 13. The angel of the Lord is the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. The Lord Jesus Christ is the visible and audible person of the Godhead. - Genesis 3:8 cf. John 1:18 - Adam; Genesis 18 - Abraham, Genesis 32 - Jacob; Exodus 3 - Moses; Exodus 25, Leviticus 16 - Shekinah glory

## GRACE

1. Grace is all that God is free to do for man on the basis of the cross. Therefore Grace is unmerited favour from God.
2. Grace depends on the character of God therefore Grace depends on who and what God is. Grace is what God can do for man and still be true to his own character.
3. The believer must recognise the difference between legalism and grace. Legalism is man's work intruding upon the plan of God.
4. The greatest thing God can do for the saved person is to make him exactly like His Son Jesus Christ. This is accomplished in three stages of sanctification.
5. Positional Sanctification: At Salvation every believer enters into union with Christ. (Hebrews 1:2) Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father and is therefore superior to all angels in his humanity. At the point of salvation we are entered into union with Christ thus we are positionally higher than angels. We are positionally seated with Christ at God's right hand.
6. Experiential Sanctification: During the Christian's life on the earth the time spent under the power of the Holy Spirit. During this time we produce the character of God in our lives - gold, silver, precious stones. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)
7. Ultimate Sanctification: When the believer receives a resurrection body he loses the sin nature and all human good. At this point the believer is physically superior to all angels. He remains in this perfect state eternally.
8. All believers have tasted of Grace at least once (1 Peter 2:3). This refers to the point of Salvation at which the believer receives at least 34 things which he did not earn or deserve. (Ephesians 2:8, 9) Disorientation to grace is the believer's greatest occupational hazard in his Christian life. (Galatians 5:4, Hebrews 12:15)
9. The divine attitude to grace is expressed in (Isaiah 30:18, 19) God is constantly waiting to pour out his blessing on all believers in the Christian life.

10. Grace in salvation is expressed in many ways. It is always the same - believing in Jesus Christ (Psalm 103:8-12, Romans 3:23-4, Romans 4:4, 5:20, Ephesians 2:8, 9)

11. There are many ways in which the Christian life expresses GRACE:

- a) Prayer (Hebrews 4:16)
- b) Suffering (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10)
- c) Growth (2 Peter 3:18)
- d) Stability (1 Peter 5:12)
- e) Lifestyle (Hebrews 12:28, 2 Corinthians 1:12)
- f) Production of Divine Good (1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 6:1)

12. Grace is the correct attitude in relation to giving. (2 Corinthians 8 & 9)

13. Grace is the only means of coping with suffering in the Christian life. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) Through Grace God is able to bless the believer in the midst of the pressures and adversities of life. (1 Peter 1:6,7)

14. Implications of grace:

- a) God is perfect, his plan is perfect.
- b) A perfect plan can only originate from a perfect God.
- c) If man could do anything in the plan of God the plan would no longer be perfect.
- d) A plan is no stronger than its weakest link. Grace therefore excludes all human merit, all human ability.
- e) Legalism, human works is the enemy of Grace.
- f) The works of human righteousness have therefore no place in the plan of God. (Isaiah 64:6)

## JUSTICE

1. God's character involves perfect justice as an attribute. All He does is just and righteous. Refer Character of God, Righteousness.

2. We must adjust our lives and attitudes to God's perfect Justice.

- a) We do this at salvation by recognising our need of a perfect Saviour.
- b) We do this when we confess our sins, recognising that we need the perfect sacrifice for sin.
- c) We do this through Christian growth to spiritual maturity, as we grow more Christ like, so that our lives are characterised by more justice in our dealings. Refer Sin, Salvation, Maturity.

3. Through the Cross God's grace provides what His Righteousness and Justice demands of sinful man. Romans 5:12, 6:23, 1 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24, 1 John 1:9, 2:2.

4. God's perfect Justice is met by the Cross and He waits for us to appropriate the blessings of salvation through faith in Christ. He waits to bless us without any compromise to His perfect character. Proverbs 1:3, Ecclesiastes 9:13-10:13, Isaiah 30:18.

## DEPRESSION – PRINCIPLES FOR DEALING WITH IT

Proven Biblical techniques which you can use to successfully deal with depression in your life, REGARDLESS OF THE CAUSE:

### 1. CONFESSION OF PERSONAL SIN

Make it a spiritual habit to confess sins the moment that you become aware of them. This step toward recovery from depression is absolutely critical!! 1 John 1:9

### 2. THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit fills you and controls your life when you have no unconfessed sin in your life. You can trust the Holy Spirit to reveal sin to you when you commit it, or even before. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is given in Galatians 5:22-23 it is: Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control. These 9 virtues replace depression

### 3. LIVING IN THE WORD OF GOD:

Make it a daily practice to read and study the Bible each and every day. By living in the Word of God you are constantly reminded of GOD'S viewpoint, of His Plan, of His provision, of His awareness of our spirit of heaviness; and we are reminded of what He wants to accomplish in us with the tests or trials that we are going through.

A Christian's response to the Word of God should be:

- [a] READ IT - Deuteronomy. 31:11; Isaiah. 34:16; Luke. 4:16; Ephesians. 3:4; Colossians. 3:16; 4:1; 1 Thessalonians. 5:27; 2 Timothy . 4:13; Revelation 1:3.
- [b] HEED IT - Psalm 119:9; 1 Timothy. 4:16.
- [c] SEED IT - Matthew. 28:19, 20.
- [d] DESIRE IT - 1 Peter. 2:2.
- [e] PREACH IT - 2 Timothy 4:2
- [f] RIGHTLY DIVIDE IT - 2 Timothy. 2:15.
- [g] LIVE BY IT - Matthew. 4:4
- [h] USE IT - Ephesians. 6:17.
- [i] SUFFER FOR IT, AND IF NEED BE, DIE FOR IT - Revelation 1:9; 6:9; 20:4.

THE CHILD OF GOD IS TO:-

KNOW IT in his HEAD  
STOW IT in his HEART  
SHOW IT in his LIFE  
SOW IT in the WORLD:

Deuteronomy 4:1-10; 12:32; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 33:6; Proverbs 30:5, 6; Mark 4:24; Luke 8:12; John 12:48-50; Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 2:1-4; Revelation 1:1-3; 20:12; 22:18; 19.

### 4. APPLY THE PRINCIPLES OF GRACE:

Depression is often caused by PEOPLE, and most of the time by people we cannot escape, or people we love, or people we cannot confront, or people we trust.

By applying the principles of grace we will develop the ability to look at people and see them as GOD sees them.

This includes the ability to let them live their lives as unto the Lord, and trusting God to make His way clear to them. This technique lets people make mistakes without your judging them. Matthew 7:1-5

### 5. FOCUS ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

When we focus on Jesus Christ it helps to cure depression because it gets our eyes off our spouse, our children, our neighbours, our friends, ourselves and our problems. Hebrews 12:2

Instead, as we move through the day, we are thinking about the Lord Jesus Christ, His plan for our life, the Father's provision for each incident in our life, and His provision of wisdom for each decision we must make.

### 6. TRUSTING AND APPLYING THE PROMISES OF GOD

When we trust and use the promises of God we then enter into the "REST" phase of Christian living.

We need to have a good grasp of just who God is so that we will not hesitate to believe that He can do what He has promised to do. Hebrews 4:1-11 [see topic PROMISES]

We need to know Him as He reveals Himself in the Bible. We need to believe Him when He tells us what He will do for us. Cast your burden on the Lord because He really does care for you!! 1 Peter 5:7

## **7. RELAX – TAKE IT EASY – BACK OFF AND LET GOD DO HIS WORK.**

A relaxed attitude is based on knowing God personally and intimately as His special child that you are. A relaxed attitude is one of the results of living in the Word of God, walking in fellowship with Him, trusting in and using His promises to you, and being focused on Jesus Christ.

If you are a Christian, YOU are His personal gift to His Son, who categorically stated that no one can ever snatch you out of His Father's hand, nor out of His John 10:27-29

You are personally being trained and groomed by God Himself to rule this entire universe with Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. God already sees you seated in heavenly places perfectly sanctified and glorified. See topic on ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD

To have the glory, you must also have some suffering for a little while on this earth. This is part of your training. See topic on CHRISTIAN LIFE - SUFFERING

## **8. STRIVE FOR INNER HAPPINESS IN YOUR LIFE:**

Inner happiness is not possible for the Christian who is occupied solely with himself and his own needs. It is also not possible for the person who occupies himself solely with his own problems, his own circumstances and his own efforts.

Inner happiness is a state of happiness and joy based on knowing that God is everything He claims to be and that He can do ALL that He has promised. See topic on BEATITUDES

Inner happiness is the joy of living where every provision for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being is being made by God in the life of a Christian who is walking in daily fellowship with Him.

## **GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU**

1. God knows ...
  - a) Our sorrows. (Exodus 3:7)
  - b) Our devotions. (2 Chronicles 16:9)
  - c) Our thoughts. (Psalm 44:21)
  - d) Our foolishness. (Psalm 69:5)
  - e) Our frailties. (Psalm 103:14)
  - f) Our deeds. (Psalm 139:2)
  - g) Our words. (Psalm 139:4)
  - h) The composition of the universe. (Psalm 147:4)
  - i) All things. (Proverbs 15:3)
  - j) Our needs. (Matthew 6:32)
  - k) About animal creation. (Matthew 10:29)
  - l) Mankind. (Matthew 10:30)
  - m) What might or could have been. (Matthew 11:23)
  - n) His own. (John 10:14)
  - o) Past, present and future. (Acts 15:18)

2. God is able to ...
  - a) Save forever those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ - Hebrews 7:25
  - b) Supply every need - 2 Corinthians 9:8
  - c) Deliver all who are tempted - Hebrews 2:18
  - d) Sustain the weak believer and make him stand - Romans 14:4
  - e) Keep us from falling and make us blameless - Jude 24,25
  - f) Surpass all that we could ask or think - Ephesians 3:20
  - g) Raise us up in resurrection in the likeness of His Son - Hebrews 11:19
3. With God, all things are possible - Matthew 19:26
4. God is in control. Nothing will ever happen to you that you are not able to deal with. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
5. God's character is stable.
  - a) If God is for you who can be against you. (Romans 8:31-34)
  - b) No matter what happens God's love is stable. (Romans 8:35-39)
6. God's promises are secure for He is always with us. (Matthew 28:19-20, Jeremiah 1:19)
7. God's power is always the same:-
  - a) He will always keep us. (John 10:29, 2 Timothy 1:12,)
  - b) God does not forget us or lose His power to keep. (Jude 24)
  - c) Even if we fall away from fellowship we still are saved. (2 Timothy 2:13)
8. God knew before time what we would need in time and has provided for the supply of all our needs. (Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 4:16, Ephesians 3:12,)
9. God has the power to bless us. (2 Corinthians 9:8)
10. God is able to make all grace abound towards us. (Ephesians 3:20)

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – PRAYER

1. We may know the provision of God but we must communicate with Him in order to obtain this provision.
  - a) Prayer is the believer's means of communicating with God.
  - b) The Bible is God's way of communicating with man.
2. Promises Involving Prayer
  - a) Matthew 21:22 We should ask believing.
  - b) Matthew 18:19 The power of corporate prayer.
  - c) Psalm 116:1, 2 God is always available to hear our prayer.
  - d) Isaiah 65:24 God will answer while we are yet praying.
  - e) Matthew 7:7 We are commanded to pray.
  - f) John 14:13-14 We can ask for anything in His name.
  - g) Philippians 4:6 The prayer should be with thanksgiving.
  - h) 1 Thessalonians 5:17 We should pray without ceasing.
  - i) Hebrews 4:16 We can come boldly to the throne of Grace.
3. Prayer Divided into 4 Segments
  - a) Confession of sins (1 John 1:9)
  - b) Thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
  - c) Intercession for others (Ephesians 6:18)
  - d) Petitions for one's own needs (Hebrews 4:16)
4. Power of Prayer

- a) Individual - Elijah and the burnt offering (1 Kings 18:36-39)
- b) Corporate - the release of Peter from prison (Acts 12:1-18)

**5. One Prayer that could not be Answered**

The prayer of our Lord on the Cross (Psalm 22:1-18)

**6. To Whom are Prayers Addressed?**

- a) Directed to the Father - (Matthew 6:5-9)
  - b) In the name of the Son - (Hebrews 7:25)
  - c) In the power of the Spirit - (Romans 8:26-27)
- The Son (Jesus) and Spirit are interceding for us.

**7. Prayers can be Divided into Petition and Desire**

- a) Petition - What you ask God for (e.g. a new car).
- b) Desire - The desire behind the petition (e.g. happiness because you have a new car).

**8. Four Possible Combinations**

- a) Petition answered - Desire not answered. Psalm 106:15 - The quails of the Exodus generation. 1 Samuel 8:5 - A king to reign over Israel.
- b) Petition not answered - Desire answered. Genesis 18:23 - The preservation of Sodom. 2 Corinthians 12:7 - Removal of the thorn in Paul's side.
- c) Petition answered - Desire answered. 1 Kings 18:36-37 - Elijah requests fire for the offering. Luke 23:42 - The penitent thief's prayer. Type c) represents the perfect prayer.
- d) Petition not answered - Desire not answered. Type d) unanswered prayer has 8 main reasons which are shown in paragraph 9.

**9. Reasons for Unanswered Prayer**

- a) Lack of belief (Matthew 21:22)
- b) Selfishness (James 4:3)
- c) Unconfessed sin (Psalm 66:18)
- d) Lack of compassion (Proverbs 21:13)
- e) Pride and self righteousness (Job 35:12-13)
- f) Lack of filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18)
- g) Lack of obedience (1 John 3:22)
- h) Not in the Divine will (1 John 5:14)

Most of the reasons for unanswered prayer, is some form of sin in the life, which can be solved by confession of known sins as per paragraph 3 a) under the concept of 1John 1:9.

**10. Intercessory Prayer**

- a) This is one of the four factors in a prayer, which are:-
  - i) Confession of sins
  - ii) Thanksgiving
  - iii) Intercession
  - iv) Own needs.
- b) The power of intercessory prayer is taught in (1 Kings 18:42-46) the principle being found in (James 5:16-18)
- c) The power of prevailing prayer is shown in (Acts 12)
- d) The prayer for the unbeliever (Romans 10:1)
- e) Prayer for an unknown believer (Colossians 1:3-11)
- f) Prayer for the known believer (Ephesians 1:15-23)

**CHRIST – ROCK - CHRIST AS THE ROCK**

- 1. Christ is the rock of salvation. (Exodus 17:1-7, 1 Corinthians 10:4)
- 2. Christ is the rock of judgement. (Isaiah 8:14, 1 Peter 2:8)
- 3. Christ is the rock of provision. (Isaiah 26:3, 4) Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever for in the Lord is the rock of ages.



4. Christ is the foundation rock. (Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22)
5. Christ is the foundation rock of the Church. (Matthew 16:16, 18, 1 Corinthians 3:11, Ephesians 2:20-22)
6. Christ is the destroying rock of the Second Advent. (Daniel 2:35)

## **GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD**

1. Whilst God is three persons all three persons have exactly the same essence or character:

### **a) SOVEREIGNTY**

The Father (Ephesians 1:11, cf. Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 6:10, Hebrews 10:7, 9)  
 The Son (John 5:21, Revelation 19:16)  
 The Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11, cf. Hebrews 2:4)

### **b) RIGHTEOUSNESS**

The Father (John 17:25)  
 The Son (Luke 1:35, Hebrews 7:26, 2 Corinthians 5:21)  
 The Spirit - The Holy Spirit

### **c) JUSTICE**

The Father (Job 37:23, cf. 8:3)  
 The Son (Acts 3:14, John 5:22, Revelation 19:11)  
 The Spirit (Nehemiah 9:20)

### **d) LOVE**

The Father (John 3:16)  
 The Son (Ephesians 5:25, 1 John 3:16)  
 The Spirit (John 16:7-11, 1 Corinthians 2:10)

### **e) ETERNAL LIFE**

The Father (John 5:26)  
 The Son (Micah 5:2, cf. John 1:1-2, 1 John 5:11)  
 The Spirit (Isaiah 48:16)

### **f) ALL-KNOWING**

The Father (Hebrews 4:13, cf. Matthew 11:27, 1 Peter 1:2)  
 The Son (John 18:4, cf. Matthew 9:4, John 2:25, 1 Corinthians 4:5)  
 The Spirit (Isaiah 11:2, cf. 1 Corinthians 2:11)

### **g) EVERYWHERE**

The Father (2 Chronicles 2:6)  
 The Son (Matthew 28:20, cf. Ephesians 1:23)  
 The Spirit (Psalm 139:7)

### **h) ALL-POWERFUL**

The Father (Mark 14:36, cf. 1 Peter 1:5)  
 The Son (Hebrews 1:3, cf. Matthew 24:30, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:21)  
 The Spirit (Romans 15:19)

### **i) UNCHANGEABLE**

The Father (Hebrews 6:17, Psalm 33:11)  
 The Son (Hebrews 13:8)  
 The Spirit (John 14:16)

### **j) TRUTH**

The Father (John 7:28, John 17:3)  
 The Son (1 John 5:20, cf. John 1:14, 14:6, Revelation 19:11)

The Spirit (1 John 5:6, cf. John 14:17, 15:26, 16:13)

## **GOD – THE PLAN OF GOD**

1. In eternity past, God designed a plan for every believer, which takes into account every event and decision in human history.
2. The plan centres on the person of Jesus Christ. (1 John 3:23, Ephesians 1:4-6)
3. Entrance into the plan is based on the principle of grace (Ephesians 2:8, 9) where the sovereignty of God and the free will of Man meet at the cross. God brings salvation which is complete, Man brings his faith.
4. God's plan was so designed so as to include all events and actions. (1 Peter 1:2)
5. Under His plan God has decreed to do some things directly and some through agencies, Israel, the Church.
6. Without interfering with human free will in any way God has designed a plan so perfect that it includes cause and effect, as well as provision, preservation and function.
7. There are many functions in the Plan of God. They all constitute one whole comprehensive plan which is perfect, eternal and unchangeable.
8. The plan of God is consistent with human freedom and does not limit or coerce human free will. Distinction should be made between what God causes and what God permits. God causes the Cross but permits sin. God is neither the author of sin nor sponsors sin.
9. His plan portrays that man has free will. God never condones sin in the human race. Man started in perfect environment and innocence. Man sinned of his own free will. Man will sin in the perfect environment of the Millennium.
10. Distinction should be made between the divine plans which are related to the plan of God and divine laws which regulate human conduct on the earth. Divine laws occur in time, divine plans occur in eternity.
11. God's plans derive from His foreknowledge. He recognised in eternity past those things which are certain. The foreknowledge of God makes no things certain, but only perceives in eternity past those things that are certain.
12. There is a difference between foreknowledge and fore ordination. Fore ordination establishes certainty but does not provide for the certainty which is established. It is the plan that provides. (Romans 8:29, Acts 2:23, 1 Peter 1:2)
13. Therefore the elect are foreknown and the foreknown are elect. God knew in eternity past what way each free will would go for each particular problem in life. God does not coerce human free will but He does know what way each freewill will choose at any given time. As free will decides so God provides.
14. Since God cannot contradict His own character He plans the best for the believer. God is perfect, His plan and provisions are therefore perfect.
15. The cross was planned in eternity past but the human free will of Christ decided for the cross at Gethsemane. (Matthew 26:39-42) God has provided salvation through the cross and it is a free will decision as to whether one accepts it or not.

16. No plan in itself opposes human freedom but once a choice is made from the free will then the plan limits your human freedom. At the same time it gives you the freedom to love and appreciate God. God lays down the means of living the Christian life.

## **SALVATION – REGENERATION-BORN AGAIN**

1. General Scripture - (John 3:5-8) 'Ye must be born again [born from above] (v7). You are born of the Spirit. (v8) We then become new creatures in Christ.
2. Natural man cannot understand spiritual phenomenon (1 Corinthians 2:14). He lacks the ability to enter the Kingdom of God. (John 3:5). They are unable to please God. (Romans 8:7, 8)
3. New birth is a creation of the Holy Spirit. (John 1:12, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:10, 4:24). Through the Holy Spirit we become aware that we are joint heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:16, 17)
4. The requirement for the new birth is belief on Christ, that He is crucified and risen. (John 1:12, 3:16-18,36). New birth occurs at the instant of belief.
5. Through new birth (Regeneration) the believer lives in Christ, and Christ in the believer. (Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 2:10, 4:24, 1 Peter 1:23-25, 1 John 5:10-12).
6. Once you are born you cannot be unborn.

## **CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE**

1. The Hebrew word used in worship is "Shoko" - to bow down.
2. The Greek words are as follows:-
  - a) proskueo - prostrate yourself. (1 Corinthians 14:5)
  - b) sebomai - lack of arrogance. (Matthew 15:9)
  - c) sebazomai - stand in awe. (Romans 1:25)
  - d) eusebeo - act with devotion. (Acts 17:23)
3. Worship is the attitude of the believer when he approaches God in awe, fear and respect. (1 Chronicles 29:20, Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:17)
4. We should never be casual or flippant with God. (John 13:13, Hebrew 10:19-21)
5. Worship is an expression of bible doctrine that a believer has in him and is applying. All expression of doctrine is worship. (Nehemiah 8:6-10, 9:3)
6. We must worship the Lord in spirit, controlled by the Spirit, and in truth, reflecting doctrine accurately. (John 4:23-24)
7. It is therefore of critical importance that we worship in accordance with biblical doctrines. This is especially important in singing as because of pleasant music it is easy to forget or ignore the meaning of the words being sung.
8. People worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 2:11, 9:38)
9. People who do not worship God will worship demons. (Deuteronomy 8:19-20, 11:16, 30:17-20, Romans 1:25)

10. All will eventually bow before Jesus Christ and acknowledge Him as Lord, either for blessing or before they are judged eternally. (Isaiah 45:23, Romans 14:11, Philippians 2:10)

11. In eternity there will be perfect worship as there will be perfect knowledge of doctrine. (Revelation 4:8-11)

12. Worship begins at salvation. (Mark 5:1-10, 18-20)

13. Worship expresses a believer's concentration on his Lord. (Psalms 29, 66, 96, John 12:1-11)

14. The song of worship. (1 Chronicles 16:7-36)

15. We worship through:-

- a) Reading God's Word. (Colossians 4:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:27, 1 Timothy 4:13)
- b) Studying God's Word. (2 Timothy 2:15, 3:15)
- c) Teaching God's Word. (Acts 2:42, 6:7, 12:24, 18:28, 1 Timothy 4:6, 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:2)
- d) Preaching God's Word. (2 Timothy 4:2)
- e) The sacrifice of our praise. (Hebrews 13:15)
- f) The sacrifice of our good works. (Hebrews 13:16)
- g) The sacrifice of our bodies. (Romans 12:1)
- h) The sacrifice of our substance. (Philippians 4:18)
- i) The receiving of His Son. (John 1:11-12)
- j) The keeping of the Ordinances. (1 Corinthians 11:2)
- k) Through the singing of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs. (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, James 5:13)
- l) Prayers, Intercessions, Supplications and Thanksgiving. (Acts 2:42, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, 8)

16. Praise

- a) Praise and thanksgiving are linked in worship. (1 Chronicles 23:30)
- b) When they praised the Lord at the dedication of Solomon's Temple the glory of the Lord filled the house of God. (2 Chronicles 5:13,14)
- c) Praise always glorifies God. (Psalm 50:23)
- d) When Paul and Silas praised God by singing hymns in prison God acted for them. (Acts 16:25)
- e) The Jews were delivered when they sang praises to the Lord. (2 Chronicles 20:21,22)
- f) Praise is important in missionary work. (Psalm 96)
- g) Praise is a feature of the Godly home. (Psalm 118:15)
- h) Jesus Christ praises God in the midst of the Church (Hebrews 2:12)

## **PSALMS 43**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm needs to be read in combination with Psalm 42, and some consider it a chorus, or ending to the former song. It is also addressed to the sons of Korah, for them to sing at assigned times as part of the Temple service. Like the earlier one it probably dates from the days of Solomon, but may be a Psalm of David.

### **PSALMS 43:1-5**

**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? 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. 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.**

## **REFLECTION**

**1 Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.**

This reads very much like David, but it may also be Solomon, and may date from the rebellion of Jeroboam and his flight to Egypt. At that time Solomon knew for certain that his Egyptian wife was very likely a fifth columnist in his harem and a traitor to him and his kingdom. Jeroboam fled to Egypt and found refuge there and the Egyptian Pharaoh plotted to use him to seize the throne after Solomon's death. 1 Kings 11:26-40. The plot would be successful, due to Rehoboam's stupidity after his father Solomon's death. 1 Kings 12:1-20.

From all these things happening in the latter years of Solomon's reign it may be that this Psalm is written by Solomon, but we cannot be sure, as most commentators accept these songs for the sons of Korah as David's Psalms, and date them to other earlier incidents in the life of Israel's united monarchy. I see the description of the enemy of the writer as one that fits Jeroboam perfectly, and of all the enemies of David and Solomon it fits Jeroboam alone.

The author is clearly writing about a serious attack upon his leadership that involves a foreign power with its own powerful king. This cannot be any of the minor kings around the United Kingdom, as both David and Solomon's armies controlled these places. Only Egypt was beyond their sphere of influence and unable to be controlled or conquered. Egypt alone had to be left in the Lord's hands, for all other nations had been given into Israel's hands.

The words of the prophet Ahijah were absolutely clear to Jeroboam about the judgement of Solomon and his house. 1 Kings 11:29-39. Solomon had sinned greatly and by this later time in his life was suffering from the heart disease that appears to have killed him around 60 years of age. If he is the author of this Psalm it is a heart felt cry for God to deliver him and his kingdom, and the Lord's answer is given by Ahijah; the kingdom is protected only until Solomon's death, and then the failure of Rehoboam to follow godliness sets the seal of God upon his destruction and the total loss of the kingdom of Judah's power and wealth to the Egyptians within five years of Solomon's death. 1 Kings 14:21-30.

**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?**

Solomon is battling carnality through the middle years of his reign and there is a question as to whether he finally loses the battle and dies under divine discipline, or in his writing of Ecclesiastes does he record his return to the Lord, but too late, and too little changes to save the kingdom. At this point, if it is indeed his Psalm, he wins the battle and through worship casts his cares upon the Lord. 1 Peter 5:5-9. Refer to the BTB study below on CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS, and SPIRITUALITY. The writer feels deep mourning at what has happened, but the next verse will reveal that he knows there is a lesson in the midst of this for him.

He does the right thing, which is come before the Lord and seek the Lord's guidance, light upon the path ahead and answer to the problems he now faces. There is only strength in the Lord when we face attack by powerful and deceitfully evil people. Zechariah 10:12, Ephesians 6:10, Philippians 4:13. A believer has no other source of winning power than the power of God, but if we draw on that power through prayer and worship we can rise up in strength that baffles the pagans around us. Isaiah 40:28-31.

**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.**

These verses indicate to me that the writer knows he is in error in some way and seeks the Lord's light upon the path, but also upon his sin, that he might address it. God's Word brings light to our path, and clarity to our minds and hearts. Psalms 40:11, 57:3, 97:10-11, 119:105-107.

If the author here is Solomon this verse is a poignant one, for the words of the prophet Ahijah tell us that he never got around to the life change that the Lord demanded of him, and so he died under discipline rather than under DYING GRACE. He wanted the Lord's light, but he had compromised too long with the "deeds of darkness" and so he never got around to dealing with the idols that had filled Jerusalem through his own sinful actions, and his religious compromise destroyed his kingdom and the right of his line to rule. 1 Kings 11:1-10. The Lord Jesus will not be descended from Solomon, but from Nathan. Luke 3:31.

We must do more than pray for LIGHT, we must walk in the light. Refer to the two BTB studies on LIGHT, and WALKING. The writer here seeks the light of God to bring him to the "tabernacles of God". This is a prayer for more than just temple worship, for the plural indicates he wants to dwell in the places the Lord has for him in this life and do the things the Lord wants him to do there. The kings of the United Kingdom built great palaces for themselves and their harems, and they had misery as a result. God's challenge to us is to build our worship and service not architect designed bricks and stones. Buildings can be shaken and destroyed, but the legacy of spiritual service is forever.

The writer seeks the tabernacles of God's provision, not the palaces of his own plan and schemes. While he says this in his distress, he will not follow through with godly actions after he feels the grace of deliverance. All too many of us do this. We seek the Lord in difficult places and then we ignore the Lord's holy demands upon our lives at later times. It is finishing the race that wins eternal rewards, not starting it and then getting distracted and sidetracked! 2 Timothy 4:6-8. Refer to the BTB study REWARDS AND CROWNS. Let us focus upon finishing our race and winning the prize – there are no prizes for people who don't keep their focus on the race and winning the prize.

**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.**

Once he is clear as to his path ahead, then he will worship in the temple at the altar of the Lord. He will then worship with pure joy for he will see the Lord's will clearly and be able to rejoice in what God is going to do. He will take up a musical instrument himself and praise the Lord his God. Refer to the BTB studies MUSIC, and MOTIVATION. He is highly motivated to praise the Lord and give thanks for the deliverance he believes will come, and the answer to prayer that he believes he will receive.

"FAITH is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen". Hebrews 11:1. To express faith is to act as if your prayer is already answered before the answer is physically seen. Faith means we see a thing as solved and resolved by God as we pass it over to Him for solution. Faith calls "amen" as an affirmation of the Lord's readiness to act, and the certainty that He has already acted to answer our prayer. Faith is not therefore passive, but an active moving forward on the basis of what God is doing and going to do, rather than what we see here and now.

**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.**

This is a great verse for those of us who work in psychology and counselling, for it reminds us that even after we express confidence and have hope we can still experience waves of

anxiety, doubt and despair at times. I find myself constantly encouraging believers with this fact. Many feel that their faith is weak because they still experience waves of doubts. All that tells them is that they have an Old Sin Nature and the “dark side” of us doesn’t want us to walk in the light. Feel the fear and do the job before you anyway! Feel the doubts that the Old Sin Nature will throw up but keep moving forward.

Fear and doubt just prove we are normal, and we need to affirm this and then worship afresh and recharge our faith batteries and keep our focus forward upon the Lord’s coming answer to our prayer. We need to tell our self to remain confident and assured “in the Lord”. There is assurance no-where else! The Lord is the one who lightens our countenance, and He is the one who recharges our batteries, and He is the one who answers all our prayers, just as the Lord Jesus said He would.

### **PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS**

1. We need to teach believers the vital importance of casting their cares upon the Lord in prayerful confession that they might obtain forgiveness. 1 Peter 5:7.
2. Do not just ask for light from God, but actually walk in it! James 2:14-26. Hearing the truth and seeing the light and then rejecting its guidance in daily life is called hypocrisy and apostasy! Such actions place the person under the judgement of God.
3. Let us pray with focused purpose and strong faith. Let us express faith in the Lord our God, and let us apply the principles of faith and call prayer answered when we say “amen”. Let us see the answers to prayer as the Lord sees them, and always step out in obedience to the Lord’s will, expecting the answers to come in God’s time. Until we have all the things we need for certainty let us step out into the certainty of direction and service we have.

### **DOCTRINES**

#### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

1. Forgiveness is by the death of Christ (Matthew 26:28, Revelation 1:5)
2. Divine forgiveness is to all who believe in Christ (Acts 10:43, Acts 16:31)
3. The penalty of sin was paid by Christ on the cross. (Hebrews 9:22, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
4. When a believer sins his fellowship with God is disrupted. God forgives these sins upon confession and cleanses from the unknown sins in the believer's life as well as known sins. (1 John 1:9).
5. Jesus Christ is our propitiation. (1 John 2:1,2 )
6. In human forgiveness we are told to forgive others even as God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32). This can only be accomplished by the filling of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22,23)
7. Steps towards restoration of fellowship
  - [a] Examine yourself for genuineness of motivation. (2 Corinthians 14:5)
  - [b] Act on what you see (Romans 4:7-8)
  - [c] Deal with any sin by confession. (1 John 1:9, Psalm 66:18)
  - [d] Forget the sin you have confessed. Do not proceed into a pattern of guilt. (Philippians 3:13-14, Psalm 103:10-12)
  - [e] Resume your active spiritual walk. Avoid areas where you might be tempted by the sin which so easily besets us. (Hebrews 12:12-13)
  - [f] Be reconciled to others once you have been reconciled to God. (James 5:16)

[g] Get moving and grow up. (2 Peter 2:17-18)

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – SPIRITUALITY-CARNALITY

1. All Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. When we allow Him to control our lives, we are said to be "filled with the Spirit" or "walking in the Spirit".

2. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be lost by

- a) Grieving the Spirit - by sin
- b) Quenching the Spirit - by not submitting to His leading
- c) This is called being carnal, or controlled by the flesh, the old sin nature.

3. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be regained by

- a) Confessing sin (1 John 1:9)
- b) Surrendering your life to God (Romans 12:1-2)
- c) This is called being spiritual, or controlled by the Holy Spirit.

4. Only the Holy Spirit in us can produce good works acceptable to God - anything in our own strength is unacceptable (Romans 8:8-9, 1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

5. The spiritual believer

- a) Imitates God (Ephesians 5:1, 1 John 3:9)
- b) To glorify Christ (John 7:39, John 16:14)
- c) Fulfills the Law (Romans 8:2-4, Romans 13:8).

6. In the Bible the human race is divided in three Categories:-

[a] Natural Man - A person born physically alive, but not regenerated. He may be highly sophisticated, civilised, gentle and kind, but is completely ignorant of any spiritual phenomena. (1 Corinthians 2:14) Equivalent to the cold person in the church in Laodicea.

[b] Carnal Man - A person regenerated or born again but living his life under the power of his old sin nature. Prolonged activity in this area produces a Christian who is still a baby. (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). Equivalent to the lukewarm person in the church of Laodicea.

[c] Spiritual Man - A person regenerated and living generally in the power of the Holy Spirit. He discerns the difference between the things of God and man. (1 Corinthians 2:11-13) He has fellowship with God in his daily life. (Ephesians 5:18-20) Equivalent to the hot person in the church of Laodicea.

7. Carnality

[a] The believer possesses an Old Sin Nature after salvation (1 John 1:8, Romans 7:14,15).

[b]. The Old Sin Nature is desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9).

[c]. The believer under the control of the Old Sin Nature is called carnal (1 Corinthians 3:1-3, Romans 7:14).

[d]. The Old Sin Nature frustrates bona fide production in the life of the believer (Romans 7:15).

[e]. The Old Sin Nature is acquired at the point of physical birth (Psalm 51:5).

[f]. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth (Romans 5:12).

[g]. The Old Sin Nature has several facets: areas of weakness produces sins, areas of strength produces human good. It has trends towards asceticism or lasciviousness. In many cases asceticism is considered to be spirituality.

[h] The Old Sin Nature is not found in the resurrection body.

## DYING GRACE

1. We are all here upon the earth as in a "strange country"; we are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth, and are not meant to be too comfortable here. Philippians 3:12-17, Hebrews 11:13, 1 Peter 2:11.



2. Death is the strangest thing we confront on this earth; the weirdness of being here one minute, alive, alert and warm, then a second later, dead, cooling and inert. Death is meant to appear strange to us, for it is the evidence before us that we are not permanent inhabitants here, but simply playing out a part as we pass through. This is not a place we are meant to get attached to. Refer Death.

3. The death of believers is a precious thing to the God who has given his life to save us from the judgement of sin and death. 1 Samuel 26:21, 2 Kings 1:13-14, Psalms 49:8, 72:14, 116:15, 1 Peter 1:7, 2:4. Refer Grace.

4. We all must die, but that is not the end. 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Hebrews 11:13. The mature believers facing death see through it, to the other side where they meet with the Lord face to face. 1 Corinthians 13:12, 2 Corinthians 5:6-10.

5. Dying grace is provided to all believers who are looking to their Lord as they die, for his perfect provision for each of us from eternity past has everything we need provided in advance of our life, let alone our death itself. There are no surprises to God, and all things we face have provision for them there to be claimed by faith. 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, 2 Peter 2:9, Jude 24-25.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING

1. Physical walking is analogous to the faith rest life: step by step. Romans 14:5,6, Ephesians 5:16-18, James 4:13-15.

2. Being regularly filled with the Spirit and feeding on the Word are similar to walking.

3. Attacks on believers occur when they are caught off balance. Romans 13:13.

4. Walking depicts the pattern and function of the believers life in time. Philippians 3:18, Ephesians 4:17.

5. It can also represent a backsliding believer who are said to be walking backwards. Ephesians 4:17.

6. We are all told to:

- a) Walk in the Spirit. Galatians 5:16, 25
- b) Walk in the faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7, Colossians 2:6, 4:5
- c) Walk in doctrine. 3 John 3.
- d) Walk in the truth. 2 John 4

7. Walking is an analogy for spirituality

- a) Walk not after the flesh. (Romans 8:4)
- b) Walking in Love. (Ephesians 5:2)
- c) Walking in newness of Life. (Romans 6:4)
- d) Walking worthy of our vocation. (Ephesians 4:1)
- e) Walking worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
- f) Walking honestly as in the day. (Romans 13:13)
- g) Walking in good works. (Ephesians 2:10)
- h) Walking in light. (Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7)
- i) Walking in Christ Jesus. (Colossians 2:6)
- j) Walking circumspectly. (Ephesians 5:15,16)
- k) Walking as ye ought. (1 Thessalonians 4:1)

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING AND LIVING IN THE LIGHT

1. Light is a metaphor of God's manifestation in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and his work - John 1:4, 8:12, 9:5, 12:46.
2. The Lord's coming was prophesied in Isaiah 49:6 cf. Acts 13:47.
3. Light was seen in the darkness of the world - Matthew 4:16, Luke 2:32.
4. The Lord brought life and light to the gospel - 2 Timothy 1:10.
5. We as believers are light bearers - Matthew 5:14-16, or sons of the light - John 12:36.  
The Lord is to be seen in us.
6. We are children of the light - 1 Thessalonians 5:5, 1 Peter 2:9, Ephesians 5:8, John 11:9,10.
7. Doctrine is the light of the soul - 1 Peter 1:19.
8. Satan is an angel of light and the distorter of the truth - 2 Corinthians 11:14.
9. Satan's strategy is to outshine the true light with his own false gospel - 2 Corinthians 4:3-6.
10. The Lord's resurrection body was composed of light - Matthew 17:2.

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS**

1. Rewards and Salvation are carefully separated in the scriptures. Salvation is a free gift from God, rewards are for meritorious service in the power of the Spirit.
2. Salvation - a free gift to the lost (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 6:23, John 4:10) - an everlasting possession (John 3:36, John 5:24, John 6:47).
3. Rewards - to the saved who faithfully work for the Lord (1 Corinthians 9:24, 25, Revelation 22:12) - distributed at the Judgement Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:10), which takes place after the Rapture of the Church (Revelation 19:7,8).
4. Rewards are often pictured in the form of crowns:-
  - a) The incorruptible crown - for faithfulness in exercising self control. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
  - b) The crown of glory - for faithfulness in suffering. (1 Peter 5:4)
  - c) The crown of life - for faithfulness under trial. (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10)
  - d) The crown of righteousness - for faithful testimony. (2 Timothy 4:8)
  - e) The crown of rejoicing - for faithful service. (1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, Philippians 4:1)
5. Rewards come after you have entered into the Plan of God through regeneration.
6. Rewards are based on the use of divine operating assets including the filling of the Holy Spirit.
7. You can lose rewards but never salvation. (1 Corinthians 3:14-15, 2 Timothy 2:12,13)

## **MUSIC**

1. Music has been with creation since the start (Job 38:7).
2. The Jews sang their thanks to God for their delivery from Egypt (Exodus 15:1).
3. Sacred music provides:-
  - a) Refreshment and drives away evil spirits (1 Samuel 16:23).
  - b) Assists with the ministry of the Word (2 Kings 3:15,16).
  - c) Helps to bring man to God (Psalm 40:1-3).
  - d) Helps defeat the enemy (2 Chronicles 20:21-22).
  - e) Fills the House of God with glory (2 Chronicles 5:13,14).

4. The Jews lost their song in captivity (Psalm 137:1-6) but recovered it when they returned (Ezra 3:2,11).
5. We have the lyrics of many songs in the Bible such as the Psalms, Miriam's song but no musical notes. The lyrics which accompany the music are important as music by its effect on the emotional pattern can cause the believer to sing words which are inaccurate or heretical, yet feel good.
6. There is a song for the redeemed (Colossians 3:16) which is one of the results of the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18,19).
7. There will be a new song in heaven (Revelation 5:9).

## **MOTIVATION**

1. True motivation is the result of the Holy Spirit's ministry together with the application of bible doctrines and principles. (Philippians 2:13)
2. Sometimes a good motive is maligned. (Exodus 17:3)
3. Sometimes a wrong motive is turned into good. (Genesis 50:20)
4. The Word of God is the critic of motivation. (Hebrews 4:12)
5. The issue in giving is not how much you give, but the motivation to give. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
6. False motivation hinders production, in the Christian life. (Philippians 2:14)

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE – FAITH**

1. The Christian life can be divided into three sections or stages.
  - a) Stage 1 - Salvation.
  - b) Stage 2 - The Christian Walk
  - c) Stage 3 - The Christian in Heaven.
2. Man has three means of obtaining knowledge:
  - a) Faith - to believe or trust that something is true
  - b) Reasoning - using human logic to deduce that something is true
  - c) Experimentation - to test and prove something to satisfy yourself that it is true
3. The only acceptable method of gaining grace is by faith, since this means depending upon God without our human merit.
  - a) Stage 1 - Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved - salvation (Acts 16:31).
  - b) Stage 2 - Trusting in the promises and principles of the Word of God - the Christian walk.
  - c) Stage 3 - Trusting in God's provision - Heaven.
4. To illustrate belief and unbelief we follow the Jews from the plagues in Egypt to crossing the Jordan:

<b>Incident</b>	<b>God's Promise</b>	<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Result</b>
Last plague	Passover Lamb	Exodus 12:21-30	Trust	Jews spared last plague.
Egyptian Army	Red Sea Crossing	Exodus 14:1-31	Trust	Moses leads Jews over Red Sea.
No Water	Water	Exodus 17:1-7	Trust	By striking rock (Christ) water obtained.

Gold Calf	God's Doctrine	Exodus 32:15-28	Distrust	Sons of Levi (Priests) slaughtered for leading
Quails	Manna	Num 11:10-33	Distrust	Many deaths due to quails
Giants	Enter Canaan	Num 13:1-14:38	Distrust	Death of fearful spies. Wandering in desert
No water	Water	Num 20:2-13	Distrust	Moses strikes rock in disobedience. Will not enter Promised Land.
Wanderings	Cross Jordan	Joshua 3:1-17	Trust	Israel crosses Jordan on dry ground

5. Salvation faith is the complete trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for your sins and rose from the dead to give you eternal life. (Acts 16:31, Romans 4:20-25)
6. Anything added to becomes works, and therefore nullifies faith (Romans 4:4)
7. Faith is shown outwardly by confession with the mouth. (Romans 10:9-10)
8. Since faith does not depend on our own abilities, anybody can believe. Even little children (Matthew 18:2-4)
9. Assurance is by faith (Hebrews 10:22)
10. Faith is trust which does not ask to know all about God but believe all that God has said.
11. Salvation faith receives Christ as Saviour and Lord. (John 1:12, 3:16, 3:36)
12. Faith of salvation is the complete trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as having been delivered from our transgressions and raised again for our justification. (Romans 4:20-25)
13. By Faith God gives the soul assurance of the reality of things never yet seen by the natural man. (Hebrews 11:1-3)
14. The triumphs of faith in daily life are illustrated for the believer in Hebrews 11:1-39. Abel, Noah, Moses etc.
15. Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)
16. Faith is the only non meritorious means of understanding things the other being rationalism and empiricism.
17. To become like a little child is an analogy to faith as a young child only has faith. (Matthew 18:2-4)

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – PRAYER** See page 16

**PSALM 44****INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm is a song of distress after reverses in battle, and it acts as a recall to the worship of the Lord as the only antidote to defeat. It reminds the people that in this life there will be troubles, but they will be resolved if the believer comes to the Lord. John 16:33, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, 2 Peter 2:9. Jesus Christ is the OVERCOMER, and we are meant to be OVERCOMING BY FAITH in all areas of conflict and distress.

There will always be difficulties, but these will be overcome if we walk closely with the Lord and cast our cares upon him. 1 Peter 5:5-9. The Exodus Generation faced impossible odds, but they walked the path of the Lord, even though it was with a rebellious heart, and they were brought through because of the faith and obedience of Moses. Exodus 12:21ff, 15:1ff, Psalms 78:1ff, Hebrews 3:5 – 4:10.

**PSALMS 44:1-26**

**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. **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.

**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. **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. **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. **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. **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. **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. **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.

**REFLECTION**

**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 planted them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.  
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 you had a favour unto them.**

We build our faith by learning of the work of God with our ancestors and taking courage from those actions of the Lord and claiming the same work upon our path. God remains the same throughout the ages, and His power remains available to us on the same basis as it was available to our ancestors; that we are obedient to the commands of the Lord. The purpose of the pastor is to “feed the sheep” with the truths of God’s Word and do so on a regular basis. We are called to be “HERALDS of the King” and that means being ready to state openly the King’s policy whenever we are able to be heard. Isaiah 50:4, Colossians 4:6, 1 Timothy 4:7-16, 2 Timothy 4:1-8. We are to be SALT in the earth. Refer to the BTB studies below.

What God has done in the past is the clue to us as to what He is able to do today if we will listen to his words and obey them. Let us hear the words of the Lord’s story with his people and rejoice in his on-going power to deliver and to restore us to joy. Numbers 21:14-30. God’s planting of the Israelites in the land involves his supplanting the people who had originally been given the land.

The evil people lost their land because of their paganism and evil practises, and Israel needed to remember that they also held the land on condition that they obeyed the Lord. God judged these people and finally, when they didn’t repent of their evil, He drove them out, and the message is clear; the Lord will drive the Israelites out if they persist in their rebellion against the Lord. Psalms 78:55-66, 80:7-19.

It was not the military strength of Israel that delivered them, for they were few in number and inferior in weaponry to their enemies. It was the Lord’s power that gave them security, and it was the Lord’s strength that gave them deliverance. They were solemnly warned by Moses not to forget that it was the power of God that delivered their enemies into their hands, not their military prowess. Deuteronomy 8:17-20, Joshua 1:5-9, 24:13-20.

It is God’s special favour that granted them the land, and the Lord’s special blessing was upon them to keep them in the land. Deuteronomy 7:6-11. We are blessed because of our relationship with the Saviour, not through any power, ability or character we have. It is GRACE all the way for us, just as it was with Israel.

**4 Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.  
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.**

The Lord is our king! Think for a minute about what that means. It means we owe the Lord our total and complete obedience in all things; He is our king and we are His people. Refer to the BTB studies, PROPHET, PRIEST, KING, and OBEDIENCE, SUBMISSION. We are used to democracies that have no authority or respect structures and so we find the total obedience of the ancient world difficult to comprehend, but comprehend it we must, for this is the standard we are called to with Jesus. Psalms 74:12, 89:18, 149:1-2, Isaiah 33:22.

The King over all other kings has ultimate authority to command deliverance for any people-group, for His will must be obeyed. The psalmist asks for deliverance for the

nation Israel. The nation is referred to as “Jacob”, not Israel, as the sinful and fallen nature of the people is in view here.

To gain victory over the enemies of Israel the people need to walk closely with the Lord alone. If God’s people walk with God, on God’s path for them, in God’s power, and in obedience to God’s Word and will, then they are unstoppable. There is no power upon the earth that can deliver a believer into disaster if they are walking powerfully in the will of the Lord for them. 1 John 4:4. “Greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world”. Those who rise up to oppose God’s people and God’s work are up against the mighty power of God that will be expressed directly against them, and through God’s people. Psalms 18:25-34, 118:10-18, Isaiah 41:9-16.

It is not the power of our weaponry that will save us but walking in the way of God that will give us deliverance. The bow was the distance weapon and the sword the close quarter weapon of the ancient world. Both were useful, but without the will of God being followed, both are useless as a defence. The smart soldier has his weapons, knows how to use his weapons, but does not trust his weapons to save him; he trusts in the quality of his king who gives the battle orders. Battles rarely are won on the raw courage of one soldier, but they are always won by the superior strategy of the king who rules over the army. We place our trust in the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords, for He has all the facts, and He has the plan that will work out. We are on the winning side.

Verse seven reminds us that we will be hated by the enemies of God. John 15:18ff. As long as we are hated by the right people we are on the right path through this life. God has saved the people of Israel, and He will save them again. Right until the end of history the Lord will ensure His plan is followed and there is absolute certainty about the way things will work out. Refer to the BTB study THE PLAN OF GOD, and SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS.

Security for the future is found by frail man only in the plan of God that encompasses all things, because God is the author of Space and Time as the creator. We are here upon the earth to be winners in the Holy Spirit’s power, not losers. Satan is the loser in the great drama of space and time, but the believer who follows the Lord Jesus Christ is a winner. Let us live and be the winners we are.

Verse eight reminds us that we will be hated by the enemies of the truth, and that good men and women are as well known by their enemies as by their friends. John 15:18-27. There will be oppressors at times, and they are to be dealt with by prayer, for the Lord will directly deal with all who oppose His people. Matthew 5:10 -12, 43-48, 1 Peter 3:13-17, 4:12-19. Go to the EBCWA studies on these passages and read them slowly and prayerfully, for as the days grow darker, we as believers need to be ready for the persecution that is coming to many in the LAST DAYS. 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 4:1-5.

These passages of the Psalms and from the New Testament need to be memorised by believers so that without their written Bibles they can encourage themselves with the recalled memories of the truths of the Word of God. Refer to the BTB study PERSECUTION and the two studies on the LAST DAYS.

**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.  
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.**

When a nation before God goes off the path of God's will they certainly must receive DIVINE DISCIPLINE. God was very clear to Israel about this, and gave them clearly identifiable signs that they were under discipline, and one of the signs was defeat in warfare. Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 27-28. When an Israelite Army was defeated it was to be seen as the Lord's warning to them and judgement of them. They were not to put down a military defeat to "bad luck", for such a concept is foreign to God's people; if they lost, it was because they had sinned in some way.

Once they saw an otherwise unfathomable defeat, they were to stop in their tracks and offer the sacrifices of confession and repentance and pray for the Lord's light upon them to show them their sin that they might forsake it and walk in godly paths. Only when they did this would they be delivered. While they harboured iniquity in their hearts, and desired sin more than godliness then the Lord would not hear them, and their pagan enemies would be used by God to discipline them. 1 Samuel 7:2-9, Psalms 66:18, Jeremiah 5:7-9, 23-31, 34:12-20.

When an army panicked and fled from their enemy in the ancient world they were decimated. To flee and turn your back on an enemy was great disgrace and also great danger, for their archers would find their mark in your back as you ran away. The well known verse, "Be sure your sin will find you out" referred specifically to cowardice in the face of the enemy. Numbers 32:23. The results of defeat in battle were awful for the civilian population, with rape, enslavement, and the theft of all their earthly goods. Jeremiah 12:1-4, 14:7-12, 17:5-10, 32:27-35.

There is judgement, but there is also hope for those who accept the Lord's offer of salvation, but it is conditional upon their repentance for their sins and evil life styles, and repentance needs to be accompanied by genuine life change. The judgement described by the Psalmist occurred upon the people in the Assyrian crisis of 725 – 700 BC, and again in the Babylonian invasion 605 – 586 BC. The people suffered defeat and finally total deportation due to their refusal to honour God and make the life changes required. God is not mocked; if His people play act (are hypocrites) before Him, then they will experience judgement. Only genuine repentance and life change removes judgement from us. Galatians 6:7-8, Hebrews 10:30-31, 12:29.

The pagans around about God's people will always rejoice and mock them when they are being disciplined by God, for all they see is the Lord letting His people get hammered and they don't see why. The enemy of God loves to mock God's people at any opportunity, and a believer's sinful life and resultant judgement gives them that opportunity to mock.

This is why a believer's carnality is such a disgraceful thing; for by committing stupid sins the believer gives the enemy ammunition to use against the church. It is bad enough that believers are mocked, but to open the door to have the truth mocked because of our stupidity is a terrible thing. Once a believer realises what they have done they need to cast themselves upon the Lord's mercy through confession and repentance. Only this will lift the burden of judgement. Psalms 123:1-4, Ezekiel 36:16-27.

**14 You make us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.**

**15 My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,**

**16 For the voice of him that reproaches and blasphemes; 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.**

When God judges, He judges severely, and even the pagans will be astonished at the extent of the judgement upon Israel and Judah because of their idolatry and associated pagan evil life style. Jeremiah 18:11-17. This psalm is a prophetic one regarding the coming judgements under Assyrian and Babylonian power. The early psalmist



prophetically sees the judgement coming and warns the people and their kings of the certainty of God's actions against them if they persist in their evil choices.

The writer hears the blasphemies of the enemy against God and his people, and he calls the Lord to hear also. God does of course hear the blasphemy of men against Him and He acts to redeem his people and judge his enemies in accordance with his plan and its timetable, not theirs. Psalms 74:18-23, 79:10-13, Isaiah 37:1-7, 15-29.

The psalmist still pleads his innocence before the Lord, for he has indeed not forgotten the Lord, but the fact of judgement means he or his people must have disobeyed the Lord. This is the distinction we need to make ourselves and ensure that we walk closely with God and deal with the foolish sins that separate us from living fellowship with our God. We know God, we have not forgotten God, but we have walked away from the truth in thought and deed, and so we face discipline. Others we lead may also have sinned and so the pastor must be ready to call the church to godliness and set the personal example well before he calls on others to obey the Lord.

**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.  
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.**

The psalmist maintains his faith through the time of testing and discipline. The psalmist casts himself upon the Lord's righteousness and justice here. They have been severely disciplined but they are keeping their eyes fixed upon the path that the Lord has called them to walk. They have been broken in spirit in the wild and desolate places of the heart. The abode of dragons is a way of saying the worst of desert places in the land, but it is far more than this physical thing.

The greatest wild place is within the mind itself; it is the dry harsh torment of spirit when you feel bereft of hope and meaning and purpose. These people have been brought low by the Lord's judgement of them, and they are at a loss to fully appreciate, at this point, why they have suffered so badly. They haven't served other gods, and they lay their heart open before the Lord on this matter.

Part of confession of sin is the readiness to open the heart and mind to the Lord's examination and revelation. "Examine yourselves" is the order of scripture. Psalms 4:4, 26:1ff, Proverbs 17:3, 2 Corinthians 13:5. The Holy Spirit will convict the open soul of anything that needs dealing with. John 16:8-11. God will search the heart for things that need resolution, and our job is then to resolve them by CONFESSION. Hebrews 4:12-13, Revelation 2:20-23.

**22 Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.  
23 Awake, why sleep thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.  
24 Wherefore hide thou thy face, and forget 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.**

There will be times for some believers of every generation when persecution comes with horrific violence. There will a time in the last days when persecution comes universally to the Church. At these times of pressure the believers caught up in the midst of them need to rest upon the character and stability of the person and work of Jesus. The Lord does not sleep when believers suffer! (Verse 23) Such an accusation is a disgraceful thing, but many believers under pressure have felt this and the psalmist is to be congratulated for his honesty in expressing it.

We can all feel like this at times, but the truth is far from our fears. The Lord our God is not Baal that He sleeps. 1 Kings 18:27ff. The people have indeed been “cast off”, but not from the family; only from their place of blessing. God does not discipline those who are not His own; they are being punished for their good, not their evil. **Hebrews 12:1-13**. Read this passage in the EBCWA Commentary, for it details the path to peace of mind and health of body that this psalmist only briefly hints at in the Psalm before us. 2 Timothy 1:7.

If we face great pressure and discipline for stupid sins we have foolishly entered into, then we need to repent, confess, and humble ourselves before the Lord. If we have not sinned, but the suffering upon us is for other purposes, then like Job we need to humbly call all to godliness, and then await the Lord’s answer for us. God does not hide His face from us, nor fail to hear our genuine prayers. We are loved and heard, but we must wait for the Lord’s timing for the answers to our prayers. God is not to be ordered to do things by us but obeyed by us. Prayer is not to be used for abusing our creator and saviour but humbling our self before Him.

The psalmist gets to the right place in the last two verses of this Psalm. He is humbled and has his head firmly in the dust before the Lord. This is the right posture in prayer for the repentant and confused believer. The only right we have to ask for anything before the Lord is the right He gives us in His grace, love and mercy towards us, as expressed through the Cross of Christ. It is the Cross that has opened the door to our redemption and deliverance from troubles into heaven. Psalms 66:10-20, 119:25-32, 130:5-8.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. It is not by the might of man, nor the power of man, but by the spirit of the living God that we achieve the goals He has set for us. Zechariah 4:6. Let us be obedient to the Word of God and walk by means of the Holy Spirit and so fulfil our destiny as the children of God. Romans 15:13-19, Ephesians 6:10, 1 Peter 1:5. What is done in our own strength has no value eternally, but all that is done in the power of God has value and significance for all eternity.

2. We have strength in and through Jesus alone. It is in His power and direction alone that we have any hope, joy and purpose. There is a plan and we are a part of that plan. The challenge for all believers is to know the plan and be obedient to every part of it to which we are called. Let us walk in obedience and serve in submission to the Lord’s will, for there alone is safety now, and eternal rewards.

3. How battle ready is your church membership pastor? How ready are the individual members to withstand the persecutions that are coming? How many believers in your church can recite psalms from their memory and recall the passages of the New Testament that are needed to encourage them in dark days. Let us be very wary of the emotional religion that is masquerading as Christianity today, where people are going forward for emotional encounters with the Lord but are not being stabilised in the truths of scripture. If God’s people are not strong in their faith they will fall into distress, despair and mental disorder under the pressures that the Bible makes clear are coming to the church in the last days. Let us train our people as we should, so that they can stand!

4. When divine discipline comes upon them, the believer is to bow before the Lord in humility and seek the Lord’s light upon their life that they might repent of any evil that is there. We are to be ready to open the secret places of the heart to the Lord and really do business with God. God wants our obedience and holiness in the secret places of the heart. Let us deal with the sins that trip us up and be holy before our God.

## DOCTRINES

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – OVERCOMER

1. Definition of an overcomer - "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4,5). It is seen that an overcomer is a believer and we become overcomers at the point of salvation.
2. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" - believers will live with God in heaven forever. (Revelation 2:7)
3. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" - believers will not be subject to the lake of fire. (Revelation 2:11)
4. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" - believers are accepted by God on the basis of His provision. (Revelation 2:17)
5. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 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. And I will give him the morning star" - believers will rule over the nations and will be honoured. (Revelation 2:26-28)
6. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" - believers are justified and sanctified by the death of our Lord and their names are permanently in the book of the living. (Revelation 3:5)
7. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" - believers will have access to the Holy Places of God and will eternally be identified with Jesus Christ. (Revelation 3:12)
8. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" - believers will reign with the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 3:21)

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – OVERCOMING BY FAITH**

1. By faith learn to accept conditions as God's will for life and be thankful - Romans 8:28, 1 Thessalonians 3:3; 5:18
2. By faith maintain fellowship with God, walking in the light - 1 John 1:7
3. By faith consistently day by day examine your conduct, confessing all known sins - 1 Corinthians 11:28, 31 1 John 1:9
4. By faith receive the Word of God daily as being more necessary than daily food. - Matthew 4:4; 5:6, 2 Peter 3:18
5. By faith approach the throne of grace boldly in every case of need, requesting aid, casting every care on Him. - Hebrews 4:15,16; 1 Peter 5:7
6. By faith resist the attempts of Satan and he will flee from you. - Ephesians 6:10-13, 1 Peter 5:8
7. By faith maintain the habit of thinking and meditating on spiritual values and priorities - Philippians 4:6-9
8. Walk by faith and not by sight - 2 Corinthians 5:7

### **CHRIST – MINISTRY AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD**

As Christians we never have to face the enemy alone as the Lord Jesus Christ is at the right hand of the Father in the place of commendation. As such:

1. Jesus Christ as our Advocate defends us -1 John 2:1, Romans 8:1, 32-34
2. Jesus Christ as our Intercessor prays for us - Romans 8:34, John 17, Ephesians 1:3, 20
3. Jesus Christ as our Great Shepherd supplies us. - Psalm 23:1, Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 13:20-21
4. Jesus Christ as our Forerunner opens the path to God for us - Hebrews 6:20, 10:20, Romans 5:2
5. Jesus Christ as our High Priest sets us apart for service to God - Hebrews 5:5-10, 7:17-27, 10:5-18
6. We have a defender who has promised He will never leave us nor forsake us - Hebrews 13:5
7. He who keeps us never sleeps - Psalm 121
8. God's great power is shown towards us. He is at every moment watching over us for protection and provision.
9. Because of the ascension the Lord has received the promise of the Holy Spirit and poured it forth upon His obedient and believing disciples.
10. He has gone to prepare a place for us - John 14:1-3
11. The power of the glorified Christ is available through the power of the Holy Spirit.
12. Jesus Christ has been exalted above the angels and received a name which is above every name, everything is subject to Him and has become His footstool.

## **HERALDS**

A herald is a person who preceded a King in ancient times to announce his arrival. The King that we study is the Lord Jesus Christ.

a) First Advent:

- i) Human herald - John the Baptist (Matthew 3)
- ii) Angelic heralds - Angels (Luke 2:1-15).

b) Second Advent:

- i) Human heralds - Moses, Elijah (Revelation 11)
- ii) Angelic herald - The mighty angel (Revelation 10).

## **SALT**

1. Salt is a preserver and speaks of eternal life.
2. Salt is a seasoner and speaks of the inner happiness designed by God for every believer. The Christian life is a full flavoured life.
3. Salt is the antithesis of leaven. Leaven corrupts, salt preserves.
4. The eating of salt depicts the appropriation of salvation. The believer receives eternal life at the point of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. (1 John 5:11, 12)
5. The believer on earth is the salt of the earth in Matthew 5:13 Since believers living in nations are often the reason for the preservation of the nations, salt is an unseen preserver. As long as the disciples were alive (with the exception of John), the nation Judah survived.
6. Loss of the preserver salt in Matthew 5:13 is the believer out of fellowship.
7. The salt of the covenant - when a contract was drawn up in the ancient world both parties ate salt to seal the contract.
8. Customs of the ancient world whereby salt was used for protection. Under the laws of hospitality, if, as an enemy of the host, you both ate salt at his table, you were preserved from harm while you were in the tent.

**GRACE** See page 11

## **CHRIST – PROPHET, PRIEST, KING**

### **JESUS THE PROPHET**

1. Moses predicted the coming of a perfect prophet, fulfilled in Jesus (Deuteronomy 18:15-19, Acts 3:20-23)
2. Jesus claimed he was a prophet. (John 7:16, 8:28, 12:49-50)
3. Fulfilled predictions
  - a) His death and resurrection (Matthew 16:21, John 2:19)
  - b) The destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:1-2, Luke 19:41-44)
  - c) The Gentile domination of Israel (Luke 21:20-24)
  - d) The Jewish dispersion (Matthew 24:34)
  - e) That the scriptures would survive (Matthew 24:35)

### **JESUS THE PRIEST**

1. A priest is a man who represents other men before God, so that sinful man can have relationship with a holy God (Hebrews 5:1). The priest made propitiation for the sins of the people. (Hebrews 2:17, Hebrews 10:12) and also made intercession for the people
2. As a high priest, Christ offered a perfect sacrifice to God to remove sin for all time - His own body (Hebrews 9:26).
3. He also offers intercessory prayer for us (Hebrews 7:23-25) at the right hand of the Father.
4. Characteristics:-
  - a) He was divinely appointed (Hebrews 5:4-10)
  - b) He is perfect (Hebrews 7:26-28)
  - c) He is merciful and faithful (Hebrews 2:17)
  - d) He is sympathetic (Hebrews 4:14-16)
  - e) He is everlasting (Hebrews 7:23-25)
  - f) He is our advocate (1 John 2:1)
5. Because of our union in the Body of Christ, every believer is a priest (1 Peter 2:9). We have direct access to God the Father (Matthew 27:51, Hebrews 4:16). Therefore, our lives are to be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1) of praise (Hebrews 13:15), giving (Hebrews 13:16) and obedience (Hebrews 13:17).

### **JESUS THE KING**

1. At the Second Advent Jesus Christ will come as King, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (1 Timothy 6:15)
  - a) His Kingdom - On earth (Jeremiah 23:5, Revelation 19:11-16). His kingdom is called the kingdom of heaven, because of its heavenly character, but it is clearly on earth.
  - b) His Capital - Jerusalem (Psalm 2:6)
  - c) Its Extent - The whole world. (Psalm 72:6-11, Isaiah 2:2-3, Daniel 7:13-14, Zechariah 8:20-23)
  - d) When - He will regather believing Israel after the Great Tribulation and will reign on earth for 1,000 years. (Revelation 19:11-16, Zechariah 14:1-4, 9. Revelation 20:4-6)
2. Characteristics of the Kingdom:
  - a) Universal Peace (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:2-3)
  - b) Universal Prosperity (Micah 4:4-7)

- c) Righteous and Just rule (Psalm 72:2-7, Isaiah 11:9)
- d) Worldwide in extent (Psalm 72:6-8)
- e) Glorious (Psalm 72:17-19)
- f) Everlasting (Daniel 7:13-14, Luke 1:32-33, Revelation 11:15)
- g) Uplifting of the under privileged (Psalm 72:2-4, 12-14)

3. Christ's rule on earth will terminate with the Great White Throne Judgement (Revelation 20:11-15). He delivers the kingdom to the Father, (1 Corinthians 15:24) thus commencing the eternal rule of Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:28)

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – OBEDIENCE

1. Obedience is better than offerings (1 Samuel 15:22; Proverbs 21:3; 28:9). If we are not in God's will, any "worship" we offer is unacceptable.
2. Obedience is something you have to learn. The basic training in obedience has to start in childhood. As it says in (Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16) "Honour your father and your mother." (Proverbs 4:3,4; 22:6; 29:15-17; Hebrews 5:8)
3. Teaching your child obedience is an act of love (Proverbs 3:12; 19:18; 23:13-14).
4. We have to obey those who are in authority over us (Exodus 20:12; 22:28; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 5:16; Romans 13:1-5; Ephesians 6:1-5; Colossians 3:18-22; Titus 3:1).
5. Those in authority have been put in that position by God (Romans 13:1).
6. Obedience to those in authority is obedience to God (Proverbs 24:21; Ephesians 6:7; Colossians 3:23-24; Romans 13:5).
7. Disobedience to those in authority is disobedience to God (Romans 1:30; 13:2).
8. But when we are ordered to do something that is against God's Will we have to disobey (Acts 4:19; 5:40-42).
9. The fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16) is the only commandment with a promise (Proverbs 10:17; Ephesians 6:1-3). Social life in a society is only possible when the people in it have learned to obey.
10. If this commandment is ignored, if the authority of the family is denied or not exercised, society will quickly slide into anarchy (Isaiah 3:12; Proverbs 29:21; 30:21-23; Romans 1:30).

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUBMISSION

1. This means to humble oneself in willing service to another, with the connotation that it is for your good. Genesis 16:9, 1 Peter 5:6, Hebrews 13:17.
2. We must fully surrender ourselves to God. James 4:7, Romans 12:1-2. As the Lord made himself obedient unto death so must we. Philippians 2:18.
3. We are, in Christ to submit ourselves each to the other within the church. This involves putting the spiritual needs of others ahead of any personal interests. Ephesians 5:21.
4. Within the church, believers are to submit to the teaching authority of the pastor as he preaches from the Word. Hebrews 13:17, 1 Corinthians 16:6, 1 Peter 5:5.

5. A wife is to submit herself to her own husband within their marriage. This involves respect for him as her spiritual leader and protector. Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18, Titus 2:4-5.

6. Children also are to submit in love to their parents' authority under God. Colossians 3:20.

7. All believers are to be in submission to the laws of their land, unless those laws violate the clear command of God. Romans 13:1, 2, Matthew 22:21, 1 Peter 2:13-17, exception example, Acts 4:15-20, 5:40-42.

8. Workers are to be under authority of their employers and their managers. Colossians 3:22-25, Ephesians 6:5-8, Titus 2:9, 10, 1 Peter 2:18-24.

9. Those in authority have a special responsibility to treat those under them with care and respect. Colossians 4:1.

## **GOD – THE PLAN OF GOD See page 19**

## **PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS**

1. Note: Some of the events in the Tribulation may occur in a slightly different sequence.

### **2. CHURCH AGE**

- a) Rapture of the Church (1 Corinthians 15:51-58, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
- b) Judgement Seat of Christ (believers only - purpose is rewards) (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

### **3. TRIBULATION (first 3 1/2 years)**

- a) Revival of Roman Empire, Ten Nation Confederacy (Daniel 7:7, 24, Revelation 13:1, 17:3, 12, 13).
- b) Rise of Middle East Dictator (Daniel 7:8, Revelation 13:1-8).
- c) Temple rebuilt in Jerusalem
- d) Seven seals judgements (Revelation 6:1ff) and seven trumpets judgements (Revelation 8:7ff).
- e) Two witnesses preach from Jerusalem until killed.
- f) Peace treaty with Israel (Daniel 9:27).
- g) World church established (Revelation 17:1-15).
- h) Russia attacks Israel about four years before the second coming of Christ (Ezekiel 38, 39).

### **4. GREAT TRIBULATION (second 3 1/2 years)**

- a) Peace treaty with Israel broken
- b) Antichrist sets up Abomination of Desolation and demands worship (Matthew 24:15,21).
- c) World government, world economic system, world religion begins (Daniel 7:23, Revelation 13:5-8, 17:16, 17).
- d) Seven bowl judgements (Revelation 16:2ff).
- e) Martyrdom of many Tribulation Saints and Jews (Revelation 7:9-17, 13:15).
- f) Catastrophic divine judgements poured out on the earth (Revelation 16:17).
- g) World war breaks out in Middle East; battle of Armageddon (Daniel 11:40-45, Revelation 9:13-21, 16:12-16).

### **5. SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST**

- a) Second coming of Christ (Matthew 24:27-31, Revelation 19:11).
- b) Tribulation surviving believers proceed into the Millennium (Matthew 3:12).
- c) Unbelievers cast off the earth (Ezekiel 20:33-38, Matthew 3,12, 25:31-46, Jude 14, 15, Revelation 19:15-21, 20:1-4).
- d) Satan bound (Revelation 20:1-3).

e) Resurrection of Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs (Revelation 20:4).

#### **6. MILLENNIUM**

- a) Millennial kingdom begins (Revelation 20:5, 6).
- b) Christ reigns on earth for 1,000 years in perfect environment and peace (Revelation 20:4-6).
- c) Satan released at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:7-9).
- d) Rebellion of Gog and Magog at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:7-10).
- e) Resurrection of all unbelievers (Revelation 20:5a).
- f) Great White Throne Judgement (unbelievers only - purpose is judgement) (Revelation 20:11-15).

#### **7. ETERNITY**

- a) New heaven, new earth, new Jerusalem (Revelation 21, 22).
- b) Believers blessed forever with Christ (Revelation 21 - 22:5).
- c) Unbelievers punished forever with Satan (Matthew 25:41).

### **PERSECUTION**

1. From the beginning of time the good have been persecuted by the evil, the believer by the unbeliever, the spiritual by the carnal. (Genesis 4:5-8, 37:23, Exodus 1:10ff, Matthew 5:12, Luke 11:47-51, Acts 7: 52)
2. Hatred of godly people comes from their silent conviction of sin in the lives of those who are disobedient. (John 3:16-36, 15:22-25, Hebrews 11:38, 1 John 3:12)
3. Jesus warned his followers that they would face persecution. (Matthew 5:11, 12, 44, 10:23, Luke 11:49, 21:12, Mark 4:17, John 15:20, 21)
4. The Lord was persecuted unto death.
5. The early church faced persecution very soon after the resurrection. (John 20:19, Acts 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12)
6. The apostles were persecuted. Of all the apostles, only John died a "natural" death - all of the others were martyred. (Acts 9:1-3, 12 1-5, 1 Corinthians 20:19, 2 Corinthians 11:23 ff.)
7. Persecution refines and strengthens faith. (James 1:2-4)
8. All who have suffered persecution for the Lord's sake will receive a crown of reward and eternal blessing. (John 16:33, Revelation 6:9-11, 8:9-17, 20:4, 5)

### **LAST DAYS – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST DAYS**

Just as world conditions just before the flood indicated judgement was overdue so conditions now show that we are at the end of the last days.

1. Preoccupation with physical appetites - Luke 17:27
2. Rapid advances in technology - Genesis 4:22
3. Grossly materialistic attitudes and interests - Luke 17:28
4. Uniformitarian attitudes and interests - Hebrews 11:7
5. Inordinate devotion to pleasure and comfort - Genesis 4:21
6. No concern for God in either belief or conduct - 2 Peter 2:5, Jude 15
7. Disregard for the sacredness of the marriage relation. - Matthew 24:38
8. Rejection of the inspired Word of God - 1 Peter 3:19
9. Population explosion - Genesis 6:1, 11



10. Widespread violence - Genesis 6:11, 13
11. Corruption throughout society - Genesis 6:12
12. Preoccupation with illicit sexual activity - Genesis 4:19; 6:2
13. Widespread words and thoughts of blasphemy - Jude 15
14. Organised satanic activity - Genesis 6:1-4
15. Promotion of systems and movements of abnormal depravity - Genesis 6:5, 12

### **LAST DAYS – DENIALS THAT CHARACTERISE THE END TIME CHURCH**

1. Denial of God. (Luke 17:26; 2 Timothy. 3:4-5)
2. Denial of Christ. (1 John. 2:18, 4:3; 2 Peter. 2:1)
3. Denial of Christ's return. (2 Peter 3:3-4)
4. Denial of the Faith. (1 Timothy. 4:1-2; Jude 3)
5. Denial of Sound Doctrine. (2 Timothy. 4:3-4)
6. Denial of Separated Life (Practical Sanctification. 2 Timothy 3:1-7)
7. Denial of Christian Liberty. (1 Timothy 4:3-4)
8. Denial of Spirituality. (2 Timothy 3:1-8; Jude 18)
9. Denial of Authority. (2 Timothy 3:4)

### **ISRAEL – FIVE CYCLES OF NATIONAL DIVINE DISCIPLINE**

1. Leviticus 26 states the five cycles of discipline

If the people in the nation do not want to do things in God's way God will hit them in five cycles of increasing discipline until He completely destroys the nation.

2. First cycle - v 14-17 - sickness, depression, economic problems, people losing their strength of character, lack of power in the nation.
3. Second cycle - v 18-20 - this is an intensified form of the first cycle with recession turning into depression, they become even less enthusiastic.
4. Third cycle - v 21-22 - the situation further intensifies, psychological problems in the nation multiply, people behave like animals, the wild animals are prowling on the streets both physically and symbolically. It was not safe to go out. Here you have a breakdown in a nation with psychiatric problems and criminal problems.
5. Fourth cycle - v 23 - 26 - this is the invasion of your land with defeat with all the things that go with it, with food rationing, with privation.
6. Fifth cycle - v 27-39 - this shows nation collapse and the removal of the nation from the land.
7. The parallel passage in Deuteronomy 28 indicates that God deals with the nation that rejects his Word in a systematic way.

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – DIVINE DISCIPLINE OF BELIEVERS**

1. Divine discipline is the result of a believer disobeying the will of God.
2. God disciplines all true children. Those who are not true children do not know discipline. (Hebrews 12:8; 1 Peter 5:9-10).
3. God's discipline of believers is shown in
  - a) Old Testament (Proverbs 3:11,12);
  - b) New Testament (Hebrews 12:3-13; Revelation 3:19).

4. Attitudes towards God's discipline (Hebrews 12:3-15).
  - a) Think lightly of it (v 5).
  - b) Faint or become disheartened (v 5).
  - c) Endure discipline (v 7).
  - d) Learn and benefit from discipline. (v 11).
5. The effect of God's discipline
  - a) Discipline blesses the believer (Psalm 94:12)
  - b) Lives are changed (Hebrews 12:11)
  - c) It is for a limited time (1 Peter 1:6,7)
  - d) It is for the believer's benefit (Hebrews 12:10)
6. The believer who refuses to repent may be disciplined to the extent of death (1 Corinthians 11:30-31, 1 John 5:16).
7. Divine discipline never implies a loss of salvation (Galatians 3:26, 2 Timothy 2:11-13).

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS See page 26**

### **NOTES**

## **PSALM 45**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This is a marriage song, or as called by the older commentators, a “nuptial ode”. It has a parallel in the Song of Solomon and that poem is the closest to this psalm. Some think it was written by Solomon on the occasion of his marriage to the Egyptian princess. 1 Kings 3:1. Whatever the origin of this psalm, it was a song for singing before a marriage ceremony and has been sung through the centuries in that context quite appropriately.

The sons of Korah are again the singers for whom it was written. It is a passionate song about the beauty of the bride and groom. It is a song that reminds us that every detail of our life is to be enjoyed in the Lord's plan for us. It is also a reminder that without real passion no marriage should go ahead. Polite and loveless marriages are an abomination before the Lord.

We are made to be loved and adored by our marriage partner, and to love and adore our partner, and no-one should enter into marriage if they do not fulfil this basic biblical requirement. If you do not passionately adore your marriage partner then there is something wrong – correct it before you cause sin to grow, for man and woman is made to love and be loved. It is a song that reminds us to dress and act to our best standard for our loved one, and be real in our love, and open in our shows of affection to the one we love. Refer to the BTB study MARRIAGE.

Having said these things, it is a song that has a dark side to it, for the beautiful appearance of this bride and groom is not matched over time by their steadfast love for each other.

This couple look great and start well but finish very badly indeed. It is a song that reminds us that it is the end of our lives that provides the real evidence for the reality of our promises to each other. Once again, the theme of the earlier Psalm comes through – it is finishing the race that matters, not starting well. It is obedience to God's Word and the principles/doctrines within it that prove the genuine heart and disobedience proves the fake. Solomon could not end his life with the words of Paul. Our challenge is to serve and love and maintain that loving service until the end. 2 Timothy 4:1-8.

## PSALMS 45:1-17

**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. 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. 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. 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; 11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. 12 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat 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. 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.**

## REFLECTION

**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.  
2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.**

As I write these words I am contemplating the funeral of my elderly mother which we will hold later today. Opening God's Word and studying it in these early hours of the morning is the best possible preparation for that funeral. My mother and father would perfectly fit the wonderful early verses of this psalm in their life. Together for nearly sixty five years they set an example to many of quiet loving fellowship throughout their life.

My elderly father, at ninety years of age is still just hanging on to life, but is relaxed about going to meet his Lord and be reunited with his beloved wife in heaven. (He will die this very evening after the funeral of his wife). The nurses in the Rest Home all speak of their love as a couple, and each had said to me in turn, "I wish I could have the lifelong love I see in this old couple". It is this standard of marital love that is the biblical standard.

Both came to the Lord later in life, although both went to church at many times earlier in their life. The Billy Graham Crusades here in New Zealand in the 1950s had the big impact upon them, leading to genuine salvation, and both served in their own ways in their local church through their life. They set me a good and godly example of living and loving in their own quiet way. They were truly God's provision for my young life.

Our psalmist begins this Psalm of married love by speaking of the king's appearance and character. He speaks of the king in noble and grand terms. He makes five points in these first verses:

1. The subject is a good subject in this Psalm. There is something morally, ethically and personally good in a godly and committed marriage. Stable marriage = stable community. The reverse is seen to be the same also; instability in marriage produces instability in communities. There is God's policy for mankind, which is GOOD, and there is Satan's policy to destroy mankind, which is EVIL. Our writer speaks of God's policy here; for loving, stable, and faithful marriage is God's plan for us all.

2. It is easy to praise the young king of this Psalm, and the writer readily pours words onto paper about him because of his character and physical beauty. This king is tall, dark, and handsome, strong and noble, and he is a godly and wise man. He is mature beyond his years and with his other characteristics is an appropriate husband for a princess to marry. He is what we refer to today as the "total package"; he has good looks, physical fitness, a great warrior, a wise man intellectually and emotionally, and he is godly. He is every mother's dream for her daughter to marry.

3. He is "fairer than the children of men". He is more handsome than all the ordinary people, and it is as if he is of another category of being; such is his physical beauty. There must be passion in a marriage; a genuine love for that person that makes them emotionally and sexually beloved. Without passion there is no marriage in the biblical sense. Each of us find attractive different looking people, and that is just as well! As the Lord has made us, each will be drawn to love different people, and for each of us there is our "right person". This king is attractive to his beloved, but not necessarily to others. Remember, true love is in the eye of the beholder! It is wonderful to hear the praise of a husband for his wife and a wife for her husband; for each the other is the best thing that has happened to them, and that is how it is meant to be.

4. This King has grace upon his lips. This is more than just wisdom, but it is spiritual maturity in the delivery of that wisdom. This person tells the truth, but he tells the truth in love. John 17:17-19, Ephesians 4:15, 1 Thessalonians 2:10-13.

5. This man is "blessed forever". This is not hyperbole and over exaggeration, but the simple truth that applies to all who are mature believers in the Lord God. We are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 1:3, Hebrews 3:1. Our relationship with God through the person and work of Jesus opens the door to eternal blessings. Refer to the BTB studies below on BLESSING. Sadly, this man will rob himself of many eternal blessings by his later decisions and life style. His BACKSLIDING will cost him blessing in time and eternity. He is still blessed eternally with eternal life, but he loses a great deal of peace of mind in time, and he does not inherit the rewards he could have eternally.

**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.**

This man is a man who can wear and wield a sword. He is ready to fight, physically fit to fight, trained to fight, and mentally able to go into battle. His sword is not decoration; it is a tool that he is able to use powerfully. I have said to my own daughters that they are not to bring any man home to meet me who isn't able to fight for them. If a man is not ready to protect his wife, his children, and his home, he is unfit to be a husband of that woman. Women must mentally, physically and spiritually respect their husbands, and if they do not, their marriage will unravel over time.

Mutual respect, admiration, and adoration are crucial for long term success in marriage. Accidents and old age may alter this ability to stand and fight, but the young husband must be ready to be a warrior and wield a sword for his wife; at very least this sword must be the sword of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12. Refer to the BTB study below on

CHRISTIAN SOLDIER IN EPHESIANS 6. Even if the husband is a man of peace, or physically disabled in some way, he must be a fully trained and equipped Christian soldier who wields the Word of the Spirit, the Word of God, with focused power.

The prosperity referred to here in verse four is the success of the king's missions upon the earth. The prayer of the psalmist is that he might finish his allotted course in life and be victorious in all he is called by God to accomplish. Psalms 110:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2:13, 2 Timothy 4:1-8. The king will be successful if he maintains his spiritual walk with God. This is referred to in the FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT that the psalmist lists in this verse; truth, meekness, righteousness, and ability to teach vital things.

This is a mature believer who speaks without arrogance and self centeredness (meekness), and who speaks the truth in righteousness. This last point is an important one that the early church strongly stated. All its ministers had to have their lives audited before their appointment to any pastoral role; as they had to be righteous in life and lips. Psalms 63:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4. The words they spoke had to be both godly and serious. The "terrible things" here is not a reference to awfulness, but to awesomeness! The minister of God's Word is to speak things that bring people to their knees before the Lord their God. 2 Peter 3:10-14.

**5 Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.**

**6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.**

When warfare and battles are needed the king needs to be ready to rise up and kill the enemy. The arrows were the light artillery of the ancient army and the king needed to understand the use of archery and be an expert himself in archery. He had to understand strategy, but also be an expert in actual combat so that his men respected him. There were to be no "ivory tower" academically only trained leaders. All leaders were to be people of character, of doctrine, and of military might. When people met a real leader they were to be in awe of the person. This remains the standard for pastoral leadership today; when people meet a pastor they should stand back and say, "That is a person of real strength and character". If we cannot say this of a pastor, then they ought not to be in the role.

The power of the leader is in their source of power. That source of power needs to be a stable and strong relationship with the living God. The throne of the king is established only by the grace of God and in accord with the plan of God. Solomon will lose his lasting place in that plan due to his persistent sinful life pattern. The Lord makes that clear to him directly, through two appearances to him, and through the prophetic ministry of the prophet Ahijah. 1 Kings 11:9-13, 29-39.

The sceptre of the king stands for earthly rulership stability, and certainty rests upon the relationship the king has with the Lord God over all the heavens and the earth. Deuteronomy 17:14-20. When the king/ruler loses their dynamic and spiritually alive relationship with God they lose their grip upon the authority they have been given. Remember, all authority to rule upon the earth is finally given by God (who holds each person's life in His Hands alone), and if the ruler does not follow the plan, then that right to rulership is lost. There is a sort of "divine right of kings" in the Bible, but it rests upon the king doing the will of the Lord in all things, and the king's right to rule is terminated by God when they persist in sinful or evil patterns of behaviour. 1 Kings 17:14-20.

**7 You love righteousness, and hate wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.**

**8 All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.**

At this early point in the king's reign he loves the truth and hates evil. He stands for righteousness and hates all manner of wickedness. Because this 'FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT' is alive within him at this point he is given authority to rule by the Lord. The double attitude is the indication of a spiritually active and growing believer. We need to love the truth and equally hate the opposite. A believer needs to understand the policy of God and the policy of the enemy of mankind. Their love needs to be focused upon the person, and policy of God, and their hatred needs to be focused upon the plan and works of the devil. Refer to the BTB study Satan's STRATEGY AND TACTICS.

The Lord's certification of His servants is in the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives, and this involves their attractiveness as doctrine filled believers. The "Oil of Gladness" refers to the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life that others can see; it is the fruit of spiritual joy that overflows and draws others into that person's circle of life so that they might discover a share of the blessing of God's grace also. Truly mature believers draw others into their lives and bring blessing to them.

The purpose of the fruit of the Holy Spirit is that it attracts unbelievers to the Gospel and strengthens weak believers in the truth. The picture of the "Ivory Palaces" is a picture of the palaces of the king, with their ivory inlaid walls. The perfumes are the perfumes of the kings that remind all who enter that they are visiting a wealthy, powerful and blessed monarch. Let us bring to others the "sweet smelling savour" of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our life. Exodus 29:18 - 41, 2 Corinthians 2:14 - 16, Philippians 4:18.

**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;**

This king is a man with many beautiful serving girls to attend to the palace duties but he is not to be distracted by them, and the new wife is to live in such a way that there is no possibility of the king being distracted from her. In all successful marriages there is a mutual commitment to keeping each other safe from sexual and other temptations. 1 Corinthians 7:1ff. Both people need to keep themselves fit, healthy, and be focused upon each other, meeting the other's emotional and sexual needs, so that neither sexual frustrations nor emotional upsets have any opportunity to destroy the spiritual-physical bonds that hold them firmly together as a couple.

Sadly, Solomon failed in his duty to his wife and the "Song of Solomon" is his admission of that great failure on his part. He writes of it with sadness, but he then still failed to stop his fornicating, and so he was judged by God, and he lost his right to have a son follow him in power and glory. 1 Kings 11:1-13. As a father he set a bad example and so Rehoboam didn't follow Proverbs he followed lust and arrogance and the kingdom split in two.

The new queen was a glory to behold; she is beautiful, perfectly dressed in the finest clothes, and she has been brought up to be a queen. There are tabloid "queens" in Hollywood today who behave in the most disgracefully immoral way and in public act like the "trashy" people they really are. They are people with no breeding, no education that fits them to be wealthy and powerful with humility, and no manners. This queen of our Psalm is altogether different.

This queen stands with regal confidence, having been born a princess and brought up to carry her role with dignity. She is ready to be a princess of Israel and that means putting aside all her past life as a princess of Egypt. 1 Kings 3:1. Once again however we must use that word, "sadly", for with sorrow I must record again Solomon's failure to follow the Lord's will, and convert his wife to the true faith. She remained a pagan and he made the great error of building a pagan temple for her, rather than requiring her to convert or return home to her father, even if it meant war. He was too polite and compromised where any retreat from truth was fatal to his nation.

**11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.**

**12 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.**

If the princess will continue to act with decorum, dignity and doctrinal wisdom then the king will love her all the days of his life, but this will be true only if he maintains similar biblical character. Happiness is determined by their mutual and separate moral and spiritual choices. This remains at the heart of marital happiness today. It is the daily separate, but mutual decisions to follow the truth from God's Word that keeps us safe from temptation.

All the people who see them will stand and honour those who are spiritually mature and noble in their lives and lips; the people of Tyre were the "modern-cultured" people of this day, and they will honour this princess as she walks with God and her husband maintains his spiritual eldership. That word "sadly" pops up here again, for both Solomon and the princess of Egypt fail God and each other, and there is great unhappiness in their marriage and family life. Their son Rehoboam lives to make a complete fool of himself as king, and he loses the kingdom. 1 Kings 14:21 – 31.

The husband is to be the Lord to his wife, and she is to worship him. Now ladies don't stop reading at this point, but hear me out! The husband is to be as God to the woman, and speak the words of God to her. He is to be worthy of worship and adoration, and if a woman turns up her nose at this concept, she proves herself publicly a fool who married a fool.

We are to be worthy of worship from our partner, and husbands, we are to be as the Lord to them and speak only words of God to them. Their spiritual and material blessing is to be our concern as husbands and we are to serve our wives as Christ served the church, ready to lay our lives down for our wives. If anyone is unworthy of worship, then let them do business with God and grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord, and so they will become as they are meant to be. Ephesians 5:21-29, Colossians 3:14 - 19.

**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.**

**15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.**

The appearance of this princess when she enters the wedding ceremony takes people's breath away. Her clothing glints with woven gold and she looks every inch a noble princess. We are warned against too flashy dressing in the New Testament, but to put our emphasis upon the moral and spiritual characteristics that are to be ours in Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:9-10. This woman and her companions look stunning and are the picture of beauty and grace, but the reality is "sadly" not as it appears.

Most commentators just sing their way through this passage, but I am sorry, I am an historian, and the truth must be pointed out to burst the false bubble of fluff and nonsense! This woman is not what she seems to be, and Solomon is not consistently what he appears to be at this point. Their marriage ceremony is a Hollywood show; it looks lovely, but there is no lasting spiritual depth, and so there was no lasting physical blessing in time.

They are overjoyed in the ceremony, and everyone has a great time, and it is "written up" in all the "newspapers", but it is a sham in the end. The loving couple come into their palace with rejoicing and enter their sexual relationship with joy, but so many other women are added into this harem that their marriage is ruined over the years and is in the end a disgrace. It is not how we start but how we advance and finish that matters. It is twenty four hours since I started to write the commentary on this chapter, and I have just returned from the Hospital where my old father has just died. We buried my mother yesterday and

he has now passed into heaven and in a few days we will bury him with my mother ready for Resurrection Day.

As I reflect upon their marriage of 63 years I see great contrast to the couple in this Psalm before us. My mother and father had a lovely but simple and humble wedding in the soldier's church, St Davids in Khyber Pass here in Auckland. They were well dressed in the immediately Post World War 2 styles, but not flashy, and they made promises that they fulfilled in 63 years of married life. They set an example of loving fidelity all their days and the staff at the hospital praised their love, and all said they wished to have the love they saw my parents share. What a contrast between the king and his princess and my two wonderful parents!

Solomon had all the wealth, wisdom, and power but had misery in his love life. He wasted himself in his harem of a thousand wives and lost his peace of mind in time and his eternal rewards, whereas my parents died as ordinary people, but they lived lives of extra-ordinary love in Christ Jesus and went to their eternal reward. They didn't care for show, and they were better prepared for their lives, enjoyed them more, and are better "dressed for eternity" than Solomon was in the end. The words of Jesus ring in my ears today. Matthew 6:28-34.

**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.**

Solomon was indeed remembered in all generations, and even today people speak of his great work in building Jerusalem and making his great temple upon the mount of God there, but the buildings that made him a "legend" in his own day are now all gone. He had many children and many sons, but all were failures as rulers and princes, for they grew up surrounded by immorality and false pagan religions. His children grew up in a pagan court with a father who had written scripture but went into immorality and religious compromise. Solomon is still remembered, but by biblical scholars he is remembered as the wisest man who by poor decision making became the very fool he warned others about. I praise Solomon for his honesty, because he identifies himself as that fool and warns us about following his foolishness.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Are we "fit to marry"? This is the question that the Bible indicates in many places ought to be asked of every prospective husband. Let us challenge our young people in the churches to be "fit to marry" before they come to us and ask us to conduct a service. Let us challenge our youth groups to grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Only strong and spiritually stable Christian Soldiers are fit to marry. Let us make sure our people can wield the Sword of the Spirit with power.

2. Let us make sure that all those who are appointed to pastoral offices are fit to serve according to the biblical standards of the Pastoral Epistles. Refer to the BTB study on PASTOR-ELDER below and check out your people on this basis, as only those who are qualified biblically are to be given authority in the Lord's Church and formally ordained into ministry.

3. Let us be sure we do not over-emphasise appearance without having the full reality behind it. Appearance ought to be always appropriate, clean and tidy, but not a showy display of wealth and power. Let us dress as becomes the people of God; with the dignity and crisp cleanliness that speaks of a soul and body in the service of the King of all kings. We are to have dignity in all we do, and we are to be as far away from "Hollywood glamour" as we can be. We are not to resemble pagans in any way at all, for we serve the King of kings and we need to be clear in our witness to this fact. 1 Corinthians 11:13-15, 1 Timothy 2:8-10, 1 Peter 3:3-9.



## DOCTRINES

### GOD – DIVINE INSTITUTIONS

1. Divine institutions is the name given by the Reformists to the Biblical building blocks which are absolutely necessary for the efficient working and stability of the human race. They are available for both believer and unbeliever alike.
2. There are four divine institutions:-
  - a) Free Will. (Genesis 2:16-17, John 7:17)
  - b) Marriage. (Genesis 2:22-24, Matthew 19:5-6)
  - c) Family. (Genesis 2:24, 4:1, Psalm 68:6, Ephesians 6:1-4)
  - d) National Government. (Genesis 9:6, 11:9, Romans 13:1-7)
3. Within the four are principles ordained by God for the protection, orderly function, survival and blessing of the human race.
4. Satanic attack on the things that God holds sacred is evil. Anything that attacks, or violates the four "divine institutions" is evil: -
  - a) All violation of the free will of human beings is evil doing.
  - b) All violation of marriage is evil doing. Adultery and all forms of promiscuity, pornography, or other perversions (child abuse, etc), is evil doing.
  - c) All attacks on the sacredness of the family are evil doing. Child abuse comes into all three categories as one of the great evils.
  - d) All attacks upon the integrity of the nation state are evil, for God has established the nations as his way to limit evil and enhance opportunities to spread the gospel, reversing the curse of the tower of Babel.
5. Every divine institution is dependant for its function on the previous institutions: nations depend on families, families depend on marriage, marriage depends on freedom.
6. Believers are not to be known for attacking these four divine institutions; we are to be known as people who respect them and uphold them at all times.

### GOD – DIVINE INSTITUTIONS – MARRIAGE

1. Man and angels have personality but only men and animals have "nephesh" and experience physical death. Angels do not die because they are spirits.
2. Marriage requires both personality and life, therefore it is only applicable to man. There is no marriage in the angelic realm. (Matthew 22:30)
3. Definition:- the personal relationship between a male and female member of the human race which typifies the saving relationship between Christ and believers.
4. God's instruction - "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish and the fowl and every living thing". This shows that man should subdue and have dominion over the animal kingdom.
5. If God was a solitary personality there would be no divine example of relationships, however with the three personalities in the Godhead relationships are demonstrated. He is a personal God and we can therefore have a relationship with him.

6. Marriage typifies the relationship between Christ and the church.
  - a) In the form of grace and faith (Ephesians 5:22), the word submit meaning to fall into line to the law of God which the carnal mind cannot do. (Romans 8:7; 10:3)
  - b) You submit yourself by an act of freewill.
  - c) A family can strain marriage relationships if they are not submissive. (Romans 13:1,5)
7. Grace is typified by the male and faith by the female. If this pattern is not adhered to it results in misery and suffering.
8. Grace and the man.
  - a) The man is in the role of an initiator.
  - b) The man provides information to which the woman can respond but must not coerce her free will.
  - c) The man has to show his character to the woman.
  - d) The man has to be patient, a form of grace.
9. Faith and the woman.
  - a) The woman is in the role of a responder.
  - b) The woman makes the choice of her free will.
  - c) She is the one who uses faith.
  - d) The woman needs time to grow.
10. Glory revealed.
  - a) The glory of God is shown in the man in the form of a changed life through regeneration.
  - b) The glory of the man is shown in the woman by changes in the woman.
11. Compatibility.
  - a) The important area of compatibility is that in the spiritual realm as one can be psychologically compatible with many people.
  - b) Spiritual compatibility is indicated by the phrase "one flesh" and is a picture of the union of Christ and the church.
12. Satan will attempt to blur the differences between man and woman and cause role reversals. The degree to which this occurs reflects the level of decadence in a society.
13. Legitimate reasons for the termination of marriage:-
  - a) The death of one of the partners.
  - b) The desertion of a believer by an unbelieving spouse where one of the two partners has become a Christian after marriage. (1 Corinthians 7:10-16)
  - c) Inappropriate marriage partners such as close relations as specified in (Leviticus 18).
  - d) Adultery or fornication as this causes the destruction of the one flesh principle by forming another one flesh. (Matthew 5:32; 19:9)

## EVIL

1. DEFINITION: Evil is Satan's policy in opposition to God's doctrine. Evil is therefore a collection of beliefs and practises that back up Satan's viewpoint rather than God's.
2. Evil is not necessarily bad, it is simply a policy that will take you away from the path that God prepared for you.
3. False religion may be very moral and even ascetic (and therefore look "holy"), but if it is leading people away from God's revealed will it is evil.
4. Often evil can masquerade as "good". People who believe that their "good works" can satisfy God's holy demands are deceived by evil doctrine. Romans 7:19,20

5. Only God's Word, Bible Doctrine can help the believer distinguish between true good and evil, Hebrews 3:13,14.
6. Only a soul saturated in God's Word is truly protected from the subtlety of Satan's policy of evil. Proverbs 2:10-14, 3:7, 19:23.
7. Only applied knowledge of God's Word negates and neutralises evil. Psalms 54:5, Romans 12:21, Isaiah 45.
8. The issue for the believer is the daily choice to accept God's Word and therefore protect oneself against evil. God watches for our choices. Proverbs 11:18,19, 22:3, 24:1-4, Ephesians 5:16, 2 Thessalonians 3:2,3.
9. The company of evil people will distort the thinking of the believer and confuse his/her witness. Isaiah 5:20, 1 Corinthians 15:23.
10. There is no evil in God at all. Psalm 5:4, 1 John 1:5, 4:4.
11. God judges evil and will condemn it to the lake of fire for ever at the final judgement. Psalm 34:16, Isaiah 13:11, Revelation 20:11ff
12. In spite of evil still existing in the world due to Satan's on-going presence throughout the Church Age, the Lord is still on the throne, and his hand is on all things.
13. Satan only does things by "permission" and we are in the Lord's hands and so are, in Christ, safe. Job 1:6-12, Proverbs 16:3, 4, Isaiah 45:6, 7

## **GOOD WORKS**

1. Anything we can do in our own strength (human good) is unacceptable to God (Isaiah 64:6, Romans 8:8).
2. Only those things we do in the power of the Holy Spirit (divine good) are acceptable to God, since it is God Himself who produces the work in us (Ephesians 2:10).
3. When a believer produces human good he imitates an unbeliever (Galatians 5:19-21, 1 John 2:11, 3:4).
4. When a believer produces divine good he imitates Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:1-2).
5. Human good is:
  - a) Identified as dead works (Hebrews 6:1).
  - b) Cannot save mankind (Titus 3:5).
  - c) Is condemned by God (1 Corinthians 3:11-16; Ecclesiastes 12:14).
  - d) Is the basis of indictment at the Last Judgement (Revelation 20:11-15).
  - e) Has no place in the plan of God (2 Timothy 1:9).
  - f) Is destroyed at the Judgement Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).
6. Divine good is the basis of rewards (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).
7. God is satisfied with His own work in four general areas:
  - a) IN SALVATION  
 God approves of what God has done in the form of Jesus Christ. God the Father is propitiated by the work of God the Son on the cross. To be saved is to believe or trust on God the Son (Acts 16:31). Belief has no human merit, all the merit is in the work of Jesus Christ. God does not approve of human good. (Isaiah 64:6).

**b) IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

God approves of the works done under the filling of the Holy Spirit. Spirituality therefore is dependent on who and what the Holy Spirit is and whether or not the believer is filled with the Holy Spirit. The way to the filling of the Holy Spirit is confession of sins (1 John 1:9). Confession has no human merit. The Holy Spirit also provides at least one spiritual gift to each believer at salvation (1 Corinthians 12:8-11).

**c) IN THE WORD OF GOD**

The word of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21). It is the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). The Holy Spirit makes the Word of God effective in our lives.

**d) IN ETERNITY**

In eternity human works are removed (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). God provides us with a new body (1 Corinthians 15:51-3). God provides us with an incorruptible inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-5). God provides everything for our eternal future (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18). God approves of His provision.

8. Spiritual growth in the full knowledge and application of Bible doctrine produces divine good in the life. Divine good in our lives is the production of the Holy Spirit filled and led believer. Ephesians 2:8-10, Colossians 1:9-10, 2 Timothy 2:21, 3:17.

9. As we produce much spiritual fruit in our life we demonstrate before all the victory of the Holy Spirit over the enemy. 2 Thessalonians 2:17. In heaven we are rewarded for all divine good production in time. 2 Corinthians 5:10, 9:8.

10. Spiritual production of divine good, through the ministries of the Holy Spirit, is contrasted to the production of human works (good and evil), the fruit of the Old Sin Nature. Refer HOLY SPIRIT, OLD SIN NATURE.

11. Human good; even the best that man can do in his own strength, has no value before God at all and has no place or part to play in the plan of God for the believer. 2 Timothy 1:9, Titus 3:5.

12. Human good works apart from God's power and direction, is the basis of man's condemnation before the throne of God. 1 Corinthians 3:11-16, Revelation 20:12-15.

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST**

1. Believers are said to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

2. The same Greek word is used in (John 3:12) where the word 'things' is mentioned.

3. The heavenlies is the area of the believer's spiritual experience as identified with Christ in various ways:-

- a) Divine nature (2 Peter 1:4)
- b) Life (Colossians 3:4; 1 John 5:12)
- c) Relationships (John 20:17; Hebrews 2:11)
- d) Inheritance (Romans 6:16,17)
- e) Service (John 17:18; Matthew 28:20)
- f) Suffering (Philippians 1:29; 3:10; Colossians 1:24)
- g) Future glory (Romans 8:18-21; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10).

4. The believer is a heavenly man and a stranger or pilgrim on the earth. (Hebrews 3:1,1 Peter 2:11).

5. The believer is an ambassador from Heaven. (2 Corinthians 5:20).

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – BLESSING OF THE BELIEVER

1. Scripture views blessing as a sense of "peace and happiness". Peace (eirene) in the New Testament means both inner tranquillity of soul and great prosperity of Life. This is Paul's prayer for all believers that they might know the blessing of true God given prosperity. Romans 1:7, 1Corinthians 1:3, 2Corinthians 1:2, Galatians 1:3, Colossians 1:2, Ephesians 1:2, Philippians 1:2, 1Thessalonians 1:1, 2Thessalonians 1:2, 1Timothy 1:2, 2Timothy 1:2, Titus 1:4, Philemon 3
2. To be spiritually minded is peace, (Romans 8:6), i.e. to be thinking as God would have us think. Peace means contentment, tranquillity and spiritual prosperity in life. Paul uses this prayer as a greeting in many of his letters. It is similar to the Hebrew greeting, Shalom, which implies peace and prosperity.
3. Blessing comes by giving God and His righteousness first place. The details of life such as money, house, car, job, marriage partner are then able to be sorted out correctly. Matthew 6:31-34, 1Corinthians 10:13, cf. Philippians 4:11.
4. Believers should not have it as their aim in Life to be the richest person in the cemetery. Luke 12:16-21. Having eyes on money first is a foolish thing. Matthew 6:21 cf. James 5:1-6.
5. Godliness and contentment are God's will for your life, irrespective of wealth or possessions (1 Timothy 6:6-12)
6. Our intimate relationship with Jesus Christ is our treasure (2 Corinthians 4:6-7).
7. We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ - we share everything that He is (Ephesians 1:3)
8. God often uses material blessings to accompany spiritual blessing (3 John 2). However, we are to be content in all circumstances (Philippians 4:11-13)
9. Blessings from God include such things as:
  - a) Peace (Psalm 29:11)
  - b) Comfort (Matthew 5:4)
  - c) Riches (Proverbs 10:22)
  - d) Rain (Ezekiel 34:26)
10. The believers who enjoy God's blessings are:
  - a) Righteous (Psalm 5:12)
  - b) Just (Proverbs 3:33)
  - c) Faithful (Proverbs 28:20)
  - d) Pure in heart (Psalm 24:4,5)
11. God's blessings are secured by:
  - a) Delighting in His Word (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1 -3)
  - b) Obeying the Word (Deuteronomy 28:1,2; James 1:25)
  - c) Teaching from the Word (Psalm 94:12; Hebrews 12:5-11)
  - d) Kindness to Jews (Genesis 12:3; Psalm 122:6).
  - e) Generosity (Proverbs 11:26; Malachi 3:10)
  - f) Walking in God's way (Psalm 128:1-4)
  - g) Prayer (James 5:16).
12. There are blessings in the book of the Revelation for those who
  - a) those who heed the words of the book - 1:3, 22:7
  - b) those who die in the Lord - 14:13
  - c) those who are alert in the Tribulation regarding the Second Advent 16:15
  - d) those who attend the marriage supper of the Lamb - 19:9

- e) those who are part of the first resurrection - 20:6
- f) those who as believers will have eternal blessings in heaven. - 22:14

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – ETERNAL LIFE**

1. **DEFINITION:** Life belonging to the ages (Greek word *aionios*). This is the life of the believer who had a beginning in time but whose life will continue through the other side of death into the infinite future.
2. Mankind were created for eternity. God's purpose was to create a being to enjoy fellowship with forever. 2 Peter 3: 9.
3. The issue for entry into eternal life is faith in Christ. The choice for man is clearly stated in John 3:36, 5:24, Acts 13:46, Galatians 6:8, Matthew 25:6.
4. Those who are serious about life and concerned about death ask about it. Matthew 13:40-43, 19:16, Mark 10:17, Luke 10:25, 18:18.
5. The Lord's words provide the answer to the questions about eternal life. John 6:68, Romans 5:20, 21, Romans 6:22, 23. It is the Lord who gives eternal life, John 5:39, 40, 12:50.
6. The Lord gives eternal life to those who believe on him, John 10:28, 17:2. The door to fellowship and all that goes with it is opened by faith in him as Saviour. John 3:15,16, Acts 13:48, John 6:40, 47.
- “To Eat His Flesh and Drink His Blood” is graphic language to picture his work and our need to appropriate it for ourselves. John 6:54, 4:14.
7. While it may only be fully known in heaven the believer may grasp a glimpse of eternal life here and now by way of anticipation and relationship. Knowing God is a glimpse of eternal life now, John 17:3, and fellowship with him is the joy of every believer now and forever. 1 John 1:1-4, 5:10-12, 20, 1 Timothy 6:12, 19.
8. Eternal life is received in full at the resurrection/rapture when we all receive our new bodies from the Lord. Rewards are received then to enjoy with the Lord forever. We are all urged to live each day with the eternal life perspective in mind, thinking of our place with the Lord forever. Matthew 19:29, 30, Mark 10:29-31, John 12:25, John 4:36, Romans 2:6,7.
9. Eternal Life is the believers hope, associated with the Rapture and Resurrection, and should be on our mind through each day, as it sets us apart from the unbelievers who have no such hope. Philippians 3:20, 21, Titus 1:2, 2:13, 3:7, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 4:13, 1 Peter 1:3,
10. The assurance of eternal life is grounded in the promise of God given through Christ. 1 John 2:24,25, 1 John 5:13-15.

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – BACKSLIDING AND RECOVERY**

1. **Definition** - falling from the standard of living that the Lord calls us to and living at a lower level of belief, behaviour, and emotion. Living in a state of embarrassment at the gospel, thinking as an unbeliever would.
2. The Lord knows who are his, we don't. 2 Timothy 2:19. A backslider is out of fellowship, and may resemble an unbeliever in every way yet still be saved. They are like the prodigal son. Luke 15:3ff. These people are different (although they appear to be the same) to religious unbelievers. 2 Peter 2:1 -22, Jude 4 -13, 18, 19, 22.

3. The Lord desires these people to be restored. Matthew 18:12 -14, Luke 15:3 -32. In the Old Testament this message is also clear. Hosea 4:14-19, 11:7, 8, 14:1-4, Jeremiah 2:19, 3:6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 22, 5:6, 8:5, 14:7, Jeremiah 31:22, 49:4.

4. Believers who are "offended" at the Word have failed to grow spiritually John 6:61 -63, Matthew 11:6, 1 Corinthians 10: 13, Matthew 13:21, Mark 4:17, John 16:1, Matthew 24:9, 10.

5. The disciples all were offended at the Lord at his death. Matthew 26:31, 33-35, cf. 67-75.

6. Falling from grace is another way of expressing backsliding. Colossians 1:23, Galatians 5:4, 2 Peter 3:17. It means to fall from a place where you stand for grace and adopt an inferior way of living the Christian way of life, like legalism.

7. God disciplines the backslider, but their eternal security is secure. Hebrews 12:5 -13, 16, 17, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, 1 Peter 1:4, 5, 2 Timothy 2:11- 13, John 1:12, Ephesians 1:13.

8. The Lord is able to keep us from falling, although we can walk away from his provision by following our pride rather than his truth. Jude 24. 1 Corinthians 10:11 -14, 1 Timothy 3:6, 7.

9. At the end of the church age the Lord prophesied that there would be a time of almost total backsliding on the part of the organised church. 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 1 Timothy 4:1-6, 2 Timothy 4:3, 4.

10. The Lord warns all backsliders very directly in Revelation 2:5. No fruit for too long = sin unto death! John 15:1-5.

#### 11. Backsliding and Recovery

##### Seven Steps Downwards

- a) Trifling with Sin Romans 13:14
- b) Yielding to Sin Romans 6:13
- c) Habitually Serving Sin 2 Peter 2:8
- d) Abandoning Ourselves to Sin Ephesians 4:19
- e) Being Abandoned by God to Sin Romans 1:24, 26, 28
- f) Encouraging Others to Sin Romans 1:32
- g) Experiencing Hell on Earth James 3:6, 1 Timothy 5:6

##### Seven Steps Upwards

- a) Resisting Sin in our Attitudes James 4:7
- b) Overcoming Sin by Faith in Christ Galatians 5:16
- c) Habitually being Victorious over Sin Romans 6:14, 1 John 5:4-5
- d) Entering into the Secret of a Victorious Life Hid with Christ in God Romans 8:37, 2 Corinthians 2:14, Colossians 3:1-3
- e) Being Taken by God into Deeper Fellowship 1 Timothy 1:12, 1 Corinthians 4:2
- f) Delivering Others from Sin. Jude 22-23
- g) Experiencing Heaven on Earth Jude 24-25, Philippians 4:6-7

#### CHRISTIAN LIFE – SOLDIER IN EPHESIANS 6

1. General Scripture Ephesians 6:11-17.

This passage relates to the armour which the Roman soldier wore and analogises its use into the spiritual realm.

2. USE OF THE ARMOUR Ephesians 6:11

"Put on the whole armour of God." Ephesians 6:11a. We are instructed to "put on" (ENDUO Gk) - this means "to clothe" - it is a command by God to the Christian soldier. We are to "clothe ourselves" or to "dress ourselves". "Whole armour" (PANOPLIA Gk) - the complete armour "of God" (THEOS Gk) true source of the armour is God.

The whole armour of God is given in Ephesians 6:14-17. It comprises:-

- a) The Belt of Truth Ephesians 6:14a
- b) Breastplate of Righteousness Ephesians 6:14b
- c) Boots Ephesians 6:15
- d) Shield Ephesians 6:16
- e) Helmet of Salvation Ephesians 6:17a
- f) Sword of the Spirit Ephesians 6:17b

#### PRINCIPLES:

- i) The Roman soldier wore all his armour for his own safety and protection.
- ii) When the Roman soldier was highly disciplined he ruled the world.
- iii) When the Roman soldier became degenerate the Empire declined and fell.
- iv) The Roman soldier was in the army 7 days a week.

#### 3. SPIRITUAL ANALOGY

- a) As Christian soldiers we wear our armour for our own safety and protection.
- b) When we are highly disciplined in the Christian life we are very effective in our warfare.
- c) If we become degenerate or apostate our Christian witness and effectiveness declines and we become casualties in the spiritual warfare.
- d) The Christian soldier is in the battle 7 days a week. A part time soldier never amounts to an effective soldier.

"That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Ephesians 6:11 b.  
 "to stand" (histemi Gk) - to hold your ground. We are in a spiritual warfare and the purpose of the armour is to hold our ground against the foe. "the wiles (methodeia dia Gk) - tactics, cunning or fraud" "of the devil" (diabolos Gk).  
 We therefore have the whole armour of God to enable us to stand firm against the devil's tactics.

PRINCIPLE: By learning the tactics likely to be employed by your opponent the Christian soldier is able to go on the offensive using the sword of the Spirit - the Word of God. (verse 17).

#### 4. THE ENEMY (Ephesians 6:12)

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world against spiritual wickedness in high places. "

"Wrestle" - "the wrestling" (he pale estin Gk) hand to hand combat not wrestling as a sport.  
 "not against flesh and blood"  
 – not against other members of the human race, but against:-

- a) PRINCIPALITIES (arche Gk) Ruling demons.
  - b) POWERS (exousia Gk) - Demons with authority, officers in the demon army.
  - c) RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD (kosmokrator Gk) - world rulers, demons close to the seats of government such as the demons of (Daniel 10:13, 20).
  - d) SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES (pneu matikos poneria Gk) - the demon army.
- Quite clearly our fight is against a spiritual foe. From Hebrews 2:7 we know that as human beings we are inferior to angels. Therefore in order to have success against superior forces we must have God's armour.



#### 5. BE PREPARED (Ephesians 6:13)

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand."

Since the resurrection ascension and session of Jesus Christ the attack of Satan has moved from the line of Christ to the individual believer. Our dependence on the whole armour is imperative yet many believers reject part or all of the armour.

There are many casualties as a consequence.

We are again exhorted to put on the whole armour of God.

#### 6. THE BELT OF TRUTH (Ephesians 6:14a, Isaiah 11:5)

"Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth."

The Roman belt was a wide girdle of leather worn around the waist from which hung the scabbard for the sword and loops for rations and equipment. The leather belt was supported by a cross shoulder strap studded with metal plates with thick leather strips hanging down to protect the lower body. The belt therefore was the basic armour on which the defence of the soldier was based.

PRINCIPLE: Our basic defence is the truth contained within the Word of God. The sword of the Spirit hangs securely to the believer by means of the promises contained within it. The greater our trust in the truth of God the greater our protection against the enemy.

#### 7. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Ephesians 6:14b, Isaiah 59:17)

"and having on the breastplate of righteousness."

The breastplate (thorax Gk) was usually made of leather overlaid with metal strips. Shaped like a sleeveless coat it was in the higher ranks often covered with gold or silver. The belt held the breastplate firmly in place, its primary function being to protect every vital area of the soldier's body.

PRINCIPLE: The righteousness of Christ protects us. We stand in his righteousness alone. He gave us his righteousness at the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21). Our continued protection through his righteousness is through the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) (See topic Holy Spirit: Filling of the Spirit).

#### 8. THE BOOTS (Ephesians 6:15, Isaiah 52:7)

"And your feet shod, with the preparation of the gospel of peace".

The boots (caligae Gk) were made of hobnail studded leather soles 15mm (1/2") thick secured with a leather tie over the instep and round the ankles. Good footwear is essential for the soldier with infantry still being essential even in these days of sophisticated armaments.

PRINCIPLE: In spiritual terms the feet are often analogised to service. The feet take one towards the enemy. The gospel of peace is a direct attack on the enemy. Peace in this context talks of reconciliation between God and man. (Romans 1:1 4-16, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

#### 9. THE SHIELD OF FAITH (Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:4)

"Above all taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

The Roman shield (thureos Gk) was shaped like a door being made of glued planks wrapped in canvas or calf skin, the top and bottom edges being protected by iron. The

shield was the most active of the defensive armour carried by the Roman soldier. Loss of shield often meant death to the soldier.

**PRINCIPLE:** The Christian soldier's shield is walking actively in the promises and principles set out in the Word of God. If we do not use our faith we can become spiritual casualties. Using the shield of faith we can claim -the 7,000 promises for the Christian walk including Isaiah 41:10; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 John 4:4.

#### 10. THE HELMET OF SALVATION (Ephesians 6:17a; Isaiah 59:17) "And take the Helmet of salvation."

With the exception of the standard bearer who wore a wolf's head, every Roman soldier wore a metal helmet (perik Gk) usually of bronze over an iron skull cap. This protected the most important part of the soldier - his head.

**PRINCIPLE:** Before a person can be a soldier for Christ, he has to be born again. He has to wear the helmet of salvation. One of the wiles of the devil is to make the believer feel that he has lost his salvation. If a believer loses his assurance of salvation he takes his helmet of salvation off and is totally vulnerable to the attack of the foe.

#### 11. THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT (Ephesians 6:17b), "and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. The sword referred to is the machaira or Roman short sword. The sword represents the basic offensive weapon for close combat. It was only effective when out of its sheath.

**PRINCIPLE:** The sword in its sheath is potentially devastating but it is only effective when it is used to combat and defeat the enemy. We must therefore conquer using principles, promises and doctrines from the Word of God.

### CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The filling of the Holy Spirit produces fruit in the life (love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance). (Galatians 5:22-23) Note that "fruit" is singular - all the characters are produced at the same time in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

2. The Fruit of the Spirit is also listed as follows:-

Romans 14:17 - Righteousness, Peace, Joy

Colossians 3:12-15 - Compassion, Kindness, Humility, Gentleness, Patience, Forgiveness, Love, Peace, Thankfulness

1Thessalonians 1:3 - Faith, Love, Endurance, Hope

3. In principle, it is the imitation of God (Ephesians 5:1). The reason we are left on the earth after salvation is to produce fruit. (John 15:16, Philippians 4:17)

4. We produce fruit by hearing the word (Mark 4:20-28) and applying it to our lives. (Hebrews 4:2)

5. Failure to grow and produce fruit means divine discipline even to the point of the believer's early departure from this life. (Luke 13:6-9 John 15:2)

6. Rewards in eternity are distributed on the basis of faithful production. (1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10)

7. Fruit is not to be confused with spiritual gifts. These are listed in (Romans 12:6-8; 15:18-19; 1Corinthians 12:8,10; 1Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:1) and other places.

8. One can know Christians by their fruit (Matthew 7:16-20; Luke 6:43-45; 1John 3:10 & 11; John 15:8) especially by their love (John 13:35) but not by their gifts, as Satan can imitate them (2Thessalonians 2:9).

9. Three natural fruits represent some of the facets of the fruit of the Spirit: Apples - love, Grapes - Joy, Pomegranates - Peace.

10. In Galatians 5: 22-23 the fruit of the Spirit is divided into three sections

[a] Love, Joy and Peace towards God;

[b] Patience, Goodness and Kindness towards others;

[c] Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control towards oneself.

## ANGELS – SATAN’S STRATEGY AND TACTICS

### STRATEGY

Whilst God is trying to call out personnel for the angelic council Satan is trying to confuse and blind minds as to what God’s plan is. He does this by deceit. He tries to keep the gospel from the unbeliever and to keep doctrine from the believer so that they will not grow.

His other strategy is to try and eliminate Israel by pogroms and anti-Semitism. It is said that Christ will gather the Jews not Zionism as is happening at the moment. If he could destroy all the Jews which he cannot he will destroy the Plan of God.

### TACTICS

These are the techniques used by Satan to try and achieve his strategy. His main tactic is implied in John 8:44 where he is seen as the father of lies. There is no truth in Satan. He is a liar and has been from the beginning. The only truth is Christ the Word. Any one who deliberately distorts the truth is working for Satan. Rejection of Christianity is a rejection of the truth. By application all religions are therefore false.

Christians as a whole have failed to move out into all the areas of life and therefore have not claimed leadership in these areas and they have been forfeited to the unbeliever. Such areas as literature, history, philosophy, music, science and the like.

The Christian should be a conqueror ideologically and not militarily. During this time Satan tries to cause conflicts such as creation versus evolution, relativism versus absolute values, internationalism versus nationalism. In the international area he causes war and strife.

Satan tries to confuse the believer. In Romans 6:6-11 the Bible says that the sin nature shall not have dominion over you. We are told to resist the devil and he will flee from you. Sometimes when we resist it does not work because the temptation is from your sin nature. You need to apply relevant Scriptures to your situation.

Satan will try and mislead you in the area of divine guidance. Satan can set up situations that will lead you out of the geographical will of God which can even extend to martyrdom. You need to do things in the Lord’s timing. Satan also perverts Scripture as seen in Luke 4:11 with the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ where he misquotes Psalm 91:10,11

When people wrote the Scriptures they did not sit around with a blank mind. They used their minds and were led by the Holy Spirit as to what to write. When they had visions or dreams their minds were not turned off. When confronted by the Lord Jesus Christ Paul spoke to Him, He used his mentality.

In 2 Corinthians 11 ministers can act as messengers from Satan. Part of the Satanic attack is to get people to look inwardly rather than at their position at the right hand of the Father. With the case of suffering and sickness its source is sometimes difficult to determine as it can be the purpose of God or it can be an attack of Satan. This is hard to discern.

Often the more spectacular manifestations is the method used to distract one from more important things such as studying and applying the Word.

With regards to the Word we have the teaching of false doctrine such as saying that Christ did not actually die on the Cross, that He was not truly human nor divine.

In relation to the gospel we have the picture in the parable of the Sower and the Seed of the bird coming down and taking away the seed that is sown. In regard to worship he will mock God through senseless words. Matthew 16 tells of Christ commanding Peter to get behind him as Peter is enthusiastic but has wrong concepts which Jesus saw as Satanic in origin as they did not conform to the Word of God. In Acts 5 Satan filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphira. He works in the children of disobedience.

Later on we will look at the strategies and tactics of the church. Spiritism and Occultism is something that the Christian should not dabble in. In Deuteronomy 18:9 the Jews were told not to seek guidance from spiritism or occultism. The main attacks on the church nowadays is not through cults but through spiritism and eastern religions and drugs. This is an attempt to break down the mentality of the soul. By these means you are opening the person up to demonic forces.

### **CHURCH OFFICERS – PASTOR-ELDER**

1. Acts 20:17,28 shows that the elder/pastor/bishop/overseer are the same. Each word simply emphasizes a different role.

2. Greek words used of the pastoral role and responsibility.

- a) Presbuteros (elder) - the authority in the church (cf. the elders were the wise judges who sat at the gates of ancient cities). Acts 20:17
- b) Poimenos didaskalos (pastor-teacher) - the shepherd, to feed the flock and protect them. Jeremiah 3:15
- c) Episkopos (bishop/overseer) - the leader/overseer of the church. Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7
- d) Diakonos (servant/minister) - the servant in humility.

3. It is therefore concluded that an elder is a pastor holding the office of bishop, overseer or shepherd in the Church. They deal with spiritual matters within the church, shepherding, feeding and protecting the flock.

4. An elder should have the spiritual gift of Pastor/Teacher or Evangelist.

5. Function

- a) To rule. (1 Timothy 3:4,5; 5:17) - the pastor/elders in a church are the authority in the church, under God.
- b) To guard the body of revealed truth from error and perversion. (Titus 1:9).
- c) To oversee the Church as a shepherd of his flock. (Acts 20:28; John 21:16; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3).
- d) Elders are given to the church by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28).
- e) Great stress is laid upon their due appointment. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)
- f) At first they were ordained by an apostle. (Acts 14:23)
- g) Later Church guidance was required in such appointments. (Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 3:1-7)

6. Qualifications (1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1)

- a) Blameless - you will be blamed for many things - make sure they are not true. You must deal with sin in your life.

- b) Be the husband of one wife or a one-woman man (i.e. faithful, not lusting after other women) - v 11 He may have been legitimately divorced according to scripture.
- c) Be vigilant - clear headed or cool.
- d) Be sober - has self control.
- e) Be of good behaviour - orderly and well co-ordinated, respectable.
- f) Be hospitable - always ready to invite people into your home.
- g) Be keen to teach - keen to share the Word of God with them.
- h) Not given to wine - he should not be addicted to alcohol.
- i) Not be a striker - he must not be a hot head.
- j) Must not be greedy of filthy lucre - he must not be greedy for money.
- k) Must not be a contentious arguer.
- l) Must not be covetous - not envious or resentful of others wealth.
- m) If married, his wife and children must be dignified and under control.
- n) Not a new convert. Train candidates for ministry as deacons, in Sunday Schools and youth groups before appointing them.
- o) He must have a good witness to the unbelieving world.

7. The appointment of pastors is described in (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11).

8. The gift of pastor-teacher is given to men only - it is not the role of the woman to teach or exercise authority over men in the church (1 Timothy 2:12, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35).

9. Pastoral authority is not a cause for boasting, it is based on service with all humility (John 13:5 -17 2 Corinthians 10:8, Galatians 6:3-5). The pastor's authority is to teach the Word of God so that all will see the truth clearly.

10. Age is not a barrier (1 Timothy 4:9-12).

11. If the pastor does not fulfil his responsibilities

- a) He is to be warned, then rebuked by the elders if he continues (Titus 2:15, 2 Corinthians 13:10, 2 Timothy 4:2).
- b) The Lord will discipline him (1 Timothy 6:3-5, James 5:19-20).

12. The reward of the pastor (Hebrews 6:10; 1 Peter 5:4).

13. Key verses for the pastoral role - 1 Peter 5:4, Ephesians 3:7-13, 1 Timothy 2:24-26, 3:1-9, Colossians 1:23-29, Titus 1:6-9, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 6:10.

## CHURCH – ORDINATION

1. In Acts 14:20-23 we have Paul founding churches and ordaining elders in each church. There is a plurality of elders in each church. It is done through Prayer and Fasting.

2. In Titus 1:5-9 Paul gives Titus the authority to organise the church in Crete. In this he says that there will be certain people ordained. The bishop and the elder are the same with the pastor being the elder who rules.

3. Appoint or ordain is in the form of two Greek words "cheirotoneo" which in the Greek culture involved a show of hands. Appoint is "kathistemi" which is also used in Acts 6:3

4. In Acts 6:1-6 is a group of church members looking at men who have these spiritual gifts, you vote for them and we will appoint them.

5. There is a group in the church that appoints people but the congregation themselves have a part in doing it. We do not have a dictatorial situation. The church is involved but it is the people in charge who will eventually ordain.

6. Titus, as the apostle's delegate was the one in authority so he ordained the elders and deacons.

7. What is an ordination service? It is a formal recognition by the church that the person being ordained has the gift and qualification for the ministry. That person is being set aside for the job for which they are qualified by both gift and fruit. Ordination is not giving people authority from a bishop but it is the church recognising that the person has the gift and is demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit in their life. A person with a gift but no fruit in their life is not qualified to hold that position.

## Notes

## **PSALM 46**

### **INTRODUCTION**

We are rock solid with the Lord as our God. There is no security apart from the security that the creature has within the protective arms of the creator. Underneath the believer are the everlasting arms of God. Deuteronomy 33:27. We are worshipping the God who made the world and all that is in it. We serve the Lord of hosts who is the one who is always there for us and will never leave us or forsake us. Psalms 41:13, 90:2, 100:5, 103:17, Matthew 28:18-20, Hebrews 13:5.

This psalm has been linked by commentators with two others of similar theme, Psalms 47 and 48. They have been referred to as a "Trilogy of Praise". The "God of Jacob" is a lovely phrase of encouragement, for Jacob is old Israel's name associated with his weakness, and it reminds us that the Lord is there for us in our weaknesses.

### **PSALMS 46:1-11**

**1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 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. 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. 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. 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.

## REFLECTION

**1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.**

**2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;**

A living faith in the real Lord God over the Universe is a powerful thing. Genuine faith allows the believer to find security in the truth about themselves, their world, and their God. This means they can orientate themselves in all situations, for they know the mind of God through His revealed truth. A refuge is a place of safety in difficult times and situations. The truth is a refuge in difficult times because it is stable and secure. Lies are never any refuge at all, because the only thing you can be sure about them is that at any minute they may unhinge, and your world will unhinge with them. Deuteronomy 4:1-9, Psalms 62:6-9, 91:1-9, 145:17-18.

God's character is stable and His word is trustworthy. These certainties are refuges and sources of strength in dark days. When the days darken we need to trust our lives into the stability of certainties and we can be sure that the Lord is a certain help in trouble. God has the power and the will to assist us. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all might come to a knowledge of the truth, but always within the exercise of their free will. 2 Peter 3:9.

Prayer is our means of fellowship with God, and our connection with the Lord's will for us. God is a present help, but we must be connected with Him in prayer. The local Fire Service can be very helpful, but your phone must be connected to the Emergency Services in order to call them and get the help you need. 2 Samuel 22:1-8, Psalms 18:1-6.

FEAR is a subject that is well discussed today, and yet the simple solution to fear is often not discussed directly; we fear when we are not stabilised in certainties. The only certainty that we can have is that of the knowledge of God's Word, His Will and His Plan for us. Its only absolutes that stabilize us, not relative value systems. Once we are sure of the Lord's will for us we ought to be able to relax and do the work that we are required to do. There is nothing to fear if we are working and walking along a path that God has called us to walk.

It doesn't matter if the foundations of the earth are removed and shaken by the most violent earthquake; the believer will be stabilised in the truth throughout the shaking of the earth. There are some serious earthquakes and other frightening things coming to the earth in the last days, but believers at the time can stabilise themselves in the promises of God; they are secure and safe while they do the things the Lord has ordered them to do. The Lord will keep us while we are doing His will. Luke 21:8-11, 2 Peter 3:10-18.

Since writing these words in late 2009 the Christchurch area of New Zealand has experienced over 12000 felt earthquakes since September 2010, four of which were extremely devastating with nearly 200 lives lost and a major part of the city flattened. We have had to claim these verses in passionate love for the Lord for we have faced things that most have never seen before except on television. I was personally involved in the recovery work as a psychological consultant on trauma and stress and went through many quakes myself as I cared for the engineers in their work.

**3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.**

It is not wrong to be afraid of seriously scary phenomena, and so the evil actions of awful people can raise big fears, but it is always wrong to listen to our fears, and not do what is right. Fear is normal, but it is not to be heeded or attended to; what is right is to be done irrespective of the emotions attached to that path. Psalms 93:1-5. When the waters roar above and around us we are to pay attention to the doctrines of God's Word, not the scary sounds in our ears. We are to get into the habit of obedience and do what the Lord requires of us.

Even though the earth moves beneath our feet we are not to shake in our spirit or quiver in our body. Let the mountains shake beneath us, but do not let our spirit shake within us! The promises of the Word of God are to be more real than the things that cause us to fear that are around us. The Creator God is our Lord; who then shall we fear, for the Lord made all things and can unmake all things, and make them all anew. Psalms 114:4-8, Romans 8:28-39.

**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.**

The vision here becomes an important part of the picture of the New Heavens and New Earth that later prophets see and John draws upon in Revelation 21-22. It is a vision of the future rulership of God as Lord and King over all the new creation without any sin entering in to blot the picture. Our present world is a fallen world through the ANGELIC CONFLICT in ETERNITY PAST. The future is one that is entirely different to our present world in ETERNITY FUTURE, and the vision of it in our mind reminds us of the PLAN OF GOD, and the certainty of the victory of that plan.

Today we await the fulfilment of the Plan of God, but then we will see its glory, for the Lord has by then moved to judge, and the evil days are over forever. The Lord's move will be "right early"; a phrase that means in exactly the right time for the Plan. Ezekiel 47:1ff, Revelation 21-22.

Pause and reflect upon the phrase, "right early"; exactly the right time in the plan of God. A verse immediately comes to mind. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9. Presently we see in terms of space and time in sequences of events, but we must remember that the Creator God is beyond space and time and sees all things as one, and so there is no past, present or future with Him. The Plan of God is certain, for it has already occurred in the context of eternity! All this is too marvellous to understand with our presently limited minds, but we will one day.

I got a glimpse of this truth within the deaths of my two godly old parents over this last week. I had prayed for them to be released from their old and tired earthly tabernacles, and the Lord answered my prayer, but not as I had wished; my father died in the night following my mother's funeral. Looking back I could see however that his death was "right early" – "in exactly the right moment for him and her". Psalm 116:15, 68:20. She had gone on to heaven first, and she had her funeral day to be honoured alone by her church for all her good works, and then he followed after she had been honoured in her own right, not just as his wife. In these little things we see a glimpse of the Lord's plan unfolding and we can be sure of all its details into the future.

The certainty and mental stability of the believer is based upon their knowledge of the Plan of God, and that knowledge comes from their hearing, understanding, and believing the Word of God. An important image of the Word of God is that of the washing of water over a person. It is a great picture of the living Word, as a fresh and life giving stream to be drunk from deeply, and also used to wash the person clean. Both images of washing and drinking are used of the water of the Word. Refer to the BTB study BIBLE – WORD OF



GOD IN HEBREWS 4:12. Refer also to Exodus 15:23-27, Deuteronomy 6:1-9, Psalms 1:1-3, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Ezekiel 47:12, John 4:9-13, 7:37-39, 13:5ff, Ephesians 5:26.

The image of the Eternal City in Ezekiel 47 records that the stream of life flows from under the great altar and heals the world with its life giving waters. Is the image that the Psalmist also sees in this vision of the ultimate victory of God over the forces of Evil. All the reformed earth is made holy in the end; for all evil is dismissed from the earth and the entire universe. Revelation 20:10-20. All things of the old space-time creation are made new and clean and holy until the new heavens and earth are revealed forever.

This process begins at the point of salvation for the believer, when we are transformed, and continues through death into eternity, where all things are “made new”. 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Peter 3:10-18, Revelation 3:12, 21:1- 5. In this creation we see God if we look for Him in the details, but in the new creation God will be in the midst, and we, freed from the shackles and limits of space and time ourselves will see Him as He is. 1 Corinthians 13:12, 2 Corinthians 3:16-18.

**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.**

Remember the phrase, “the heathen raged”, for this is a reminder of the hatred of unsaved and unrepentant mankind against their Creator and Judge. Psalms 2:1-4, 83:2-8, Isaiah 8:9-10, 37:21-36. The enemies of the Lord our God have always hated and raged against all genuine believers. They always have and they always will, until the end when they join their master in the Lake of Fire. We may look at the raging of the enemies of the Lord today and take heart from their evil works and know that their days are short. We may take comfort from our sure knowledge of the end of all things, and rejoice in the Lord’s final and perfectly timed deliverance. Habakkuk 3:17-19. God is our refuge!

We get used to looking around us at the natural world and marvelling at its many wonders. It is a good thing to do this and remember the creative power of God that even the fall of man and the entry of sin and evil into the world has not dimmed. Let us remember that the Bible teaches us clearly that just as the Lord made this present universe, so He will unmake it one day and remake a new “universe” – if that be the right term for the eternal state.... The best is yet to come for saved mankind.

Even the modern scientists speak about nuclear implosion and the “black holes” of the universe into which all matter is being steadily sucked. The Bible has spoken of such things for at least two thousand years! Read carefully again 2 Peter 3:10-18. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on this passage and really reflect upon its content. The present space-time universe will implode and so the entirety of this present universe will be “folded up” like a cloth and put away forever.

God has something better than what we see now! Pause and reflect upon this for a moment and all concerns about the future disappear. God is with us, for us now, and waiting for us later! We are secure in the arms of the one who could love Jacob; because if Jacob could be loved, there is hope for every man and woman upon the earth! Refer to the BTB study on JACOB.

**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 breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder; he burns the chariot in the fire.**

The Lord has made the earth, and so the Lord has the right and the power to destroy the earth and reform this universe, and the Bible teaches us that He will. 2 Peter 3:10-18, Revelation 21-22. The psalmist urges the people to look at the state of the earth after the Lord has moved to judge a people through natural catastrophe, and direct judgements upon the earth by acts of God. He also encourages them to simply see the results of

natural forces that remind us of exactly how fragile our hold upon life and the planet really is.

Our modern “Green” political movements are trying to “save the planet” but the Bible is clear, the earth cannot be saved, for it has a time frame to go through, and it will be restored, but “for a limited time only”, and then it is to be destroyed and replaced. We are to be biblically minded not earth bound in our logic and thinking processes about “global warming”, for the Bible also teaches about this phenomenon, with the associated pollution. Read the EBCWA Commentary by Dr Moses and myself on Revelation 6:12-17, 8:5 - 13, 9:2. Greenpeace and other so called “Green” groups won’t save anything; only the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus will save this earth, and then it will be only for a further 1000 years for then it is to be imploded for it has played its part by then, and a new earth made and eternity begins. Refer to the BTB study, SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS.

The final references in this section are to the abolition of warfare, by the removal of the weapons and means of warfare from the earth. The two powerful weapons were the spear and the bow and both will be shattered into pieces, for they will not be needed again. Swords and knives can be implements, but the bow and the spear are to kill only, and even the killing of animals will likely be banned in the Millennium except for free will sacrifices. This is hinted at in Isaiah 11:1-10, 65:17-25. The war chariots had no other purpose than as fighting platforms, and they will be used for fuel in that day, for there is no fighting to be done at all. War is abolished by the arrival of the Lord Jesus, and only then! Refer to the BTB study on WAR.

**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.**

What is to be our response to the pressures of life and worries about the state of our health, our marriages, our families, our nations, and our world? We are to be quiet and “sit with” our problems in light of the realities this Psalm has raised. If we panic and rush about in confusion and fear, then our confusion will deepen. The challenge of the psalmist is to draw quietly close to God and quietly remember the facts of life about this universe and the evil that is presently in it.

We are to remember that sin and evil entered this universe and they will be exiled forever at one point. God will be glorified in the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the name of the Lord will be exulted amongst all the non-Abrahamic nations, for all will bow their knees one day. The Lord of Hosts is with us, and His plan will be fulfilled at one point and there will be total victory over sin and evil and all they brought into the world.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us ensure we preach the Plan of God in certainty and strength. If each believer understands the plan of God into eternity, they have a solid foundation to look forward with. It is seeing the end that gives us perspective from our place in the battlefield. If we are certain of the final victory and have a clear picture of what it looks like we can be stable in our thinking in the midst of terrible pressures, for we know the ultimate end of them. Let us preach doctrinally pastors, so that the Lord’s people have clear focus forward and absolute assurance in their hearts as to how things are going to end.

2. With a clear understanding of the Plan of God there is no room for fear to dominate our thoughts on the way. Fear is an ankle tapping emotion that is normal, but for the doctrine filled believer an unnecessary hindrance. Let us feel the fears that are normal to the Old Sin Nature, but then label them as such, and advance anyway towards the battle that the Lord has asked us to fight. Let us be strong in the Lord and walk in the power of His might, and not be weakened by the fears of the Old Sin Nature’s dark side. Luke 11:21, 1 Corinthians 16:13, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Ephesians 6:10, 2 Timothy 2:1, Hebrews 11:34.

Strength is to characterise the mature believer, and it will as we fulfil our duty as pastors and train God's people to be strong in the Lord through their faith in the Word. Let us teach strongly and so enable the people to become stronger by the day in the power of the Holy Spirit upon the living Word of God in their hearts.

3. The limits of space and time are worth pondering, but not for too long lest you lose your mind in the process. We are creatures of this present world, but in and through our new position in Christ Jesus we are people of eternity also. This world is not as solid as we think. The light from the stars has been travelling towards the earth we are told for millions of light years. What this means is that the light from the galaxies that we see may be simply photons still travelling through space; the galaxies that produced them may have already exploded into stardust millions of years ago, and we will only see this in years to come.

We are told that during the Great Tribulation Period, a third of the star systems will be seen (from earth) to fail and their light coming to the earth will cease. Revelation 12:4. Reflect upon this phenomenon if you doubt the Plan of God. Some of the star systems are 100 million light years away and many are further away! This means that millions of years before man existed God had pre-timed the death of a third of the stars to coincide with the Great Tribulation period! Rejoice in the Lord believer, for in His person and His plan you have no worries!

4. The end of time gives meaning to the times of our lives. If we recall the details of the end of time we are in the right place to celebrate now the Lord's victory. Even in the midst of our troubles now we can celebrate the victory that the Lord will achieve in his perfect timing. We are certain of his victory, and we can be certain now of our deliverance from whatever situation the Lord has placed us in.

## DOCTRINES

### FEAR

1. Fear is seen in two ways in scripture.

[a] Firstly as a mental attitude sin that is incompatible with our status as children of the most high, the ruler of the universe.

[b] Secondly it is used to describe the correct attitude towards God the Lord for all his creatures.

There is godly fear, awe, and respect for God as God, and there is inappropriate fear, which is the cringing fear of one who believes the other is able to hurt them. This second kind is wrong for us as children of God, for none can harm us without God's permission for we belong to Him.

2. Our occupation with the persons and majesty of God is often spoken of as "fear" in the legitimate sense for believers. 2 Samuel 23:2-3, Nehemiah 5:9, Job 28:28, Psalms 19:9, 34:11-12, 111:10, Proverbs 1:7, 9:10, 10:27, 22:4, Malachi 3:16, Ephesians 5:21.

3. Fear as a mental attitude sin is spoken of in, 1 Samuel 17:11, 24, Proverbs 29:25.

4. In God's grace plan for us fear has no place. His plans for us are always divinely good, and any testing situation is for our good. Romans 8:28.

5. Fear is an expression of a failure of faith in the plan. Exodus 14:13-14, Deuteronomy 31:6-8, Joshua 8:1, 1 Chronicles 28:20, Isaiah 41:10, 2 Timothy 1:7.

6. Spiritual death is one way of describing Satan's kingdom and is the place of the source of fear. Hebrews 2:14,15

7. In spiritual death, Adam was afraid. Genesis 3:10, this fear motivated Adam to produce religious activity (fig leaves) and lies. Genesis 3:7
8. Salvation removes the basis of fear, which is condemnation from the Justice of God (spiritual death).
9. Spiritual maturity provides freedom from fear. 2 Timothy 1:7; Hebrews 13:6, 1 John 4:18, 1 Corinthians 13:5b
10. Carnality and any form of religious activity that leads us away from grace and daily obedience to the Word enslaves the believer to Satan through fear. Galatians 5:1; Romans 8:15
11. The mature believer is commanded to fear nothing he may suffer in life, for by means of God's grace provision all we ever may need is provided for us. Revelation 2:10
12. The baby believer is sustained by believing God's Word, obeying his commands hour by hour to daily life, and rest upon his promises. Hebrews 4
13. As we become mature believers we continue with this resting on the promises but in addition to this we are sustained by our understanding / application of entire categories of God's Word - we have then moved beyond the promises to confidence in the very character of God itself.
14. Illustration: A woman who asks every hour, "Do you love me?" needs assurance through many promises, and many actions backing the promises up. Once she gets to truly know her husband, and her love is fully established in him through his faithfulness to her, she has absolute assurance, and doesn't need constant reminders of his love by specific words. She is full of confidence through knowledge of her husband's character.
15. Chapter's 3-6 of Hebrews deal with the falling away from growth and confidence by these believers. The spiritual principle of Chapter 4 is the means of getting them back on target.
16. In Hebrews 13:6, we see the objective of the writer, freedom from fear by their daily, moment by moment living the awareness of the love of Christ for them, and the power of Christ available to them.
17. The writers of Scripture identify correctly that when the believer is fearful, he imitates the unbeliever ("cowardly" – Revelation 21:8), and that is not right given our great position. Hebrews 11:27 "By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is unseen." This is our standard!
18. Fear is a mental attitude sin that shows our mind has moved away from thinking of the Lord. 1 Samuel 17:11,24
19. Fear is a sign of falling back into domination by the "prince of this world". 1 Samuel 18:12,29, 21:12, 28:20
20. Absence of fear is a big part of maintaining a dynamic mental attitude. Hebrews 13:6, 11:27
21. There is only one legitimate fear; it is the fear of failure to enter spiritual maturity. Hebrews 4:1
22. Love demands absence of fear. 1 John 4:18 They are two opposing mental attitudes.
23. Fear is not part of the Divine Plan for the Believer. 2 Timothy 1:7; Exodus 14:13-14; Joshua 8:1; Isaiah 41:10; 2 Samuel 1:7

24. Courage and lack of fear is a sign of mature spiritual status. Psalm 3:6, 56:3; Hebrews 11:27

25. Fear is the power by which the Evil of Satan rules among mankind. Hebrews 2:14-15; Genesis 19:30 (Lot); 1 Kings 18:9-14 (Obadiah), both Lot and Obadiah show how the failing believer lives in constant fear.

26. Fear is the word used to mean "Occupation with Christ" when related to the attitude of the mature Believer toward Christ. 2 Samuel 23:3; Nehemiah 5:9,15; Ephesians 5:21; Job 28:28; Psalm 19:9, 34:10; Proverbs 1:7, 9:10, 10:27; 1 Peter 2:17

**GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD** See page 18

**GOD – PLAN OF GOD** See page 19

### ANGELS – ANGELIC CONFLICT

1. There is an angelic conflict and it is intimately related to our presence in this world.

#### 2. ETERNITY PAST

[a] Initially God created angels. At creation we are told that there was unity as all the angels sang in unison.

[b] Satan as Lucifer with the title Son of the Morning was the head of the angels. Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28:12-15

[c] It is noted that the Lord Jesus Christ is now called Son of the Morning in 2 Peter 1 showing that the Lord replaced Satan as a result of His victory at the Cross.

#### 3. FALL OF SATAN

[a] Satan became proud and attempted a coup d'état against God in Isaiah 14:12-17

[b] When Satan fell he took one third of the angels with him. Revelation 12:9.

[c] The angels who exist forever therefore fall into two permanent groups:

(i) Elect Angels who remained faithful to God (1 Timothy 5:21)

(ii) Fallen angels who chose to follow Satan fall into two categories:

(1) Imprisoned ones who were made inoperative at the time of the Flood (Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4)

(2) Demons who are currently operative (1 Corinthians 10:20,21, Mark 5:1-20)

[d] There is therefore a spiritual warfare between elect and fallen angels, which affects the human race. (Ephesians, 6:12, Revelation 12)

#### 4. SENTENCE ON THE FALLEN ANGELS

[a] In eternity past Satan and the fallen angels were judged and sentenced to the Lake of Fire - Matthew 24:51

[b] It would appear that Satan appealed against his sentence and said "how can a God of Love sentence any of his creatures to the lake of fire?"

[c] The answer is in the character of God who is HOLY as well as LOVE. His holiness can only judge sin and rebellion.

[d] The lake of fire therefore was not created for man. Man ends up in the lake of fire due to his own negative attitude towards God.

#### 5. MAN'S ROLE IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

[a] This sentence which was given before man existed has not yet executed and will not be so until the end of the Millennium in Revelation 20:10.

[b] There must be a long lapse of time before the sentence is executed with this period being taken up with the whole of human history. Therefore the purpose of the existence of the human race and its relation to God can only be explained as a testimony to the angels.

[c] Through the creation of man God provides a clear legal witness to Satan and his angels of their sin. The whole of human history is to prove certain points to the angels. Things can happen in your life as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and these can only be explained as a testimony to the angels.

## 6. FALL OF MAN AND VICTORY OF THE GOD MAN

[a] Man starts off lower than the angels. Hebrews 2:9 tells us that Jesus Christ made Himself a little lower than the angels.

[b] Although Adam failed to be victorious the Lord Jesus Christ replaces Adam in history and won the battle in His humanity. 1 Corinthians 15:22 tells us that in Adam all die, in Christ shall all be made alive.

[c] A new form of creature judges come into existence and will judge the angels 1 Corinthians 6:1-3

## 7. SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ANGELS AND MAN

[a] Angels and mankind have a number of parallels with human free will being tested in exactly the same way as angelic free will.

[b] Angels began in innocence and full obedience to God (Job 38:7 Ezekiel 28:14-15)

Man began in innocence (Genesis 2:25)

Angels sinned - rebellion of Satan (Isaiah 14:12-14)

Man sinned - rebellion of Adam (Genesis 3:1-7)

Angels are divided into two categories - elect or fallen.

Man is divided into two categories - believers and unbelievers. (John 3:36)

## 8. ADAM AND FREEWILL

[a] God created Adam and Eve, to show Satan that mankind, created lower than angels (Hebrews 2:6-7), would choose to obey God. Mankind therefore, by a choice of freewill, would decide whether to obey God and be blessed, or to disobey God and be judged (the same choice that Satan had).

[b] A test was instituted for man's freewill - obedience to God or disobedience. (Genesis 2:16-17). Adam - and therefore all mankind - sinned and thereby rebelled against God. All of mankind, therefore, is in the same condition of sinful rebellion as Satan.

[c] However, God instituted another test of freewill for mankind - will they choose to return to God through Jesus Christ, or will they choose to continue in sin and rebellion (John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9).

[d] Anyone who chooses to return to God will be saved; anyone who chooses to remain in rebellion to God will be judged in the lake of fire, the same fate as Satan (Matthew 25:41)

[e] Therefore, by the work of Christ on the cross, and man's freewill faith in Christ, God has vindicated His love to save and His justice to judge.

## 9. RESOLUTION OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

Stage 1 - Salvation - by faith, man is saved and made positionally superior to angels (Hebrews 2:6-7)

Stage 2 - Christian Walk - by faith, the believer overcomes Satan (Ephesians 6:10-17)

Stage 3 - Eternity -in Christ, the believer will judge Satan and his fallen angels (Hebrews 2:8, 1 Corinthians 6:3)

## 10. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Angels watch the human race. (1 Corinthians 4:9, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:21, 1 Peter 1:12) Elect angels rejoice

every time someone is saved (Luke 15:10)

## 11. THREE BASIC QUESTIONS

The angelic conflict answers three basic questions:-

[a] Why man? Inside man is a soul with mentality and freewill which when linked together resolves the angelic conflict, (Colossians 2:14-15, Hebrews 2). The cross is the real victory in the angelic conflict.

[b] Why sin? Sin resolves stage 1 of the plan of God (see paragraph 9). At the cross sin was judged and the barrier between man and God was removed so that man's relationship

with God depends on his free will. Every time a person accepts Christ, elect angels rejoice. In the garden man was innocent and all he had to do was stay away from one tree. Now man is guilty he has to come to a tree (the cross). (Genesis 2:17, 1 Peter 2:24).

[c] Why suffering? Suffering resolves the issue in Stage 2. Suffering involves the promise principle. (1 Peter 1:7-8, Romans 5:2-4). Suffering is designed for blessing and is a further blow to Satan. It is to demonstrate the love of God in a way that cannot be done in eternity as in eternity there is no more sorrow, pain or death. (Revelation 21:4)

## 12. STAGES IN THE CONFLICT [SEE SATANIC ATTACK ON THE PLAN OF GOD]

[a] From the fall of man to the ascension of Christ the line of Christ and Jesus Christ himself were the target of attack. Once the ascension was a fact in history Satan was unable to attack the line of the Saviour.

[b] The resurrection, ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ caused intensification in the angelic conflict.

[c] Once Christ is glorified at the right hand of the Father the angelic conflict becomes intensified in the Church age.

[d] Every Church Age believer is now a target and because of this every believer has had special provisions made for him:

- (i) Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (John 14:17)
- (ii) Indwelling of Jesus Christ (John 14:23)
- (iii) Completed canon of Scripture (1 Corinthians 13:10)

## 13. PROGRESSION TO THE LAKE OF FIRE

This explains the actions of the Lord Jesus Christ from the time he sat down at the right hand of the Father until the Last Judgement. Psalm 110:1 says "The Lord [God the Father] said to my Lord [God the Son], Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

[a] The first stage – Insurgency warfare – Pentecost - Rapture

During this time He calls out the personnel who will replace the angelic council members who have been condemned 1 Corinthians 4:8, 6:1-3, 2 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 3:21

The angelic council comprises God and all the angels as seen in 1 Kings 22:19-23 and 2 Chronicles 18:18-23

[b] The second Stage – Rapture to Second Advent - Confrontation

During this time the new members of the angelic council are evaluated in relation to their divine and human good, rewarded [1 Corinthians 3:11-15], they lose their old sin nature and have a resurrection body. The rebellious members, Satan and his followers are cast out of heaven Revelation 12:4

[c] The third stage – Second Advent – Victory Stage

Christ casts Satan and the fallen angels into hell for a thousand years and rightfully asserts His authority.

[d] The fourth stage – The Last Judgement. The Lake of Fire was created for Satan and his angels Matthew 25:41

Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire with the demons and the unbelievers. Unbelievers join them in the Lake of Fire because they have not accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The old creation is destroyed and a new heavens and a new earth provided by God. At that point all knees shall bow and the promise of making His enemies His footstool will have been fulfilled.

## 14. THE BELIEVERS AND RESULT OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

The result of the angelic conflict:

Stage 1 - Salvation - saved mankind is positionally superior to angels;

Stage 2 - Christian Walk - through suffering the believer develops his faith towards Christ to such an extent that he thereby shows the fallen angels the certainty of their doom;

Stage 3 - Heaven - In eternity the believer in his resurrection body will be physically superior to angels.

## 15. CONCLUSION

Through the fall of man Satan obtained control of the world though not necessarily control of mankind.

What makes it possible for man to live in the Devil's world and not be under his control? - Free will.

By using The Word of God you can make decisions that are completely against Satan and his concepts.

Satan is the ruler of this world. (2 Corinthians 4:4, John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, Ephesians 2:2)

However we have the Bible - the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16) We should know it and use it.

## ETERNITY PAST

1. Jesus Christ existed before the foundation of the world in glory with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (John 1:1-2; 17:5,24).

2. In eternity past the Godhead agreed to permit sin to become manifest in the world of men before being eliminated forever from the universe (Hebrews 9:26).

3. In eternity past the Son of God agreed to come to earth as a human being to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8).

4. In eternity past it was ordained that Christ would be slain for the ungodly (1 Peter 1:18-20; Hebrews 10:5-10).

5. In eternity past the world and stars were created by Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:10; Colossians 1:16).

6. Man was placed on the earth to be made "a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men (1Corinthians 4:9).

7. In eternity past believers were chosen in Christ (Ephesians 1:4). Christ is chosen, we share as believers his election.

8. In eternity past a book was written containing the names of those who would believe and survive the destruction of the universe (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 17:8; 20:15).

However, whilst God knew who would believe, he did not coerce human free will.

## ETERNITY FUTURE

In eternity future:

1. God reveals to us exceeding riches of His grace (Ephesians 2:7).
2. God brings many sons into glory (Hebrews 2:10).
3. Believers enjoy an inheritance (1 Peter 1:4).
4. It is God's purpose for the church to know the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10).
5. All former things pass away. There will be no more death, sorrow, pain, crying, sea, night or sun. (Rev 21:1-5,23)
6. The curse will be lifted (Revelation 22:3).
7. All things in heaven and earth will be gathered in Him (Ephesians 1:10).
8. The present creation will be forgotten (Isaiah 65:17).
9. A river of water of life will run (Revelation 22:1).
10. The tree of life will be seen again (Revelation 22:2).
11. The Son of God will rule eternally (Daniel 2:44; 7:13,14).
12. He will still be subject to the Father (John 10:29; 1 Corinthians 15:28).
13. The lake of fire will continue forever (Isaiah 66:24; Revelation 14:11).



**BIBLE – WORD OF GOD – HEBREWS 4:12**

4:12 “For the Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

How powerfully this verse points out the marvellous work of the Word of God in our lives. The word truly cuts us about if we let it loose within our hearts and minds. This is God's purpose. Note the characteristics of the Word of God here:

1. It is always living. Religion and its way of life is dead, but God's Word is alive, and makes the hearer alive and able to enjoy life. John 10:10.
2. It is powerful. It is energetic in the soul, always achieving its desired results once it is let loose in the soul of the believer. Power is only effective when the switch is turned on, and we must ensure that the filling of the Holy Spirit is operational (no unconfessed sin in our life and the Bible open before us) so that God's power is able to channel through us.
3. God's Word then will do its work and it is “sharp” as a sword. The Word cuts through to the truth and shows us how we must sort out our life.
4. It is compared to the short fighting sword of the Roman Army, the machaira. This was a weapon that revolutionised warfare, for the soldier was never off balance when using it, and was able to defeat an enemy with a far larger weapon. It was designed to thrust straight through an enemy to their heart or head, and that is what God's Word does; it penetrates our very life.
5. God's Word pierces us and gets to the real issues straight away, right to joints and marrow. This was the way in the ancient world that you said, it gets to, “the heart of the matter”.
6. It separates us from misconceptions, and from the errors of thinking that so easily lead us astray from the path of truth, be they emotional attachments(heart), or false categories of thinking(mind).
7. The word is a discerner. God's Word alone lets us see our motivation and its implications, and lets us see, as an astute critic does, exactly what we have forgotten or fallen short in. It corrects us in both the thinking and the emotions, correcting facts and will; showing us if our love has grown cold, or our thinking slack!

**JACOB – THE PATRIARCH**

1. SCRIPTURE - Genesis 25:21 - 50:13; Hebrews 11:21.

**2. BIOGRAPHY**

Jacob received his name at birth when he was born second, clutching the heel of his elder brother Esau. Jacob means "he clutches" or "the supplanter". The eldest son received rulership of the family. He was the priest and had the double portion as a birthright. Esau sold Jacob his birthright for a meal. This custom of selling the birthright is confirmed on the Nuzi tablets which were found south east of Nineveh. Isaac blessed Jacob irrevocably (Genesis 27:35f.) thus Jacob became the inheritor of Canaan (Romans 9:10-13). Esau received Edom. After the blessing Jacob fled to Bethel where his grandfather had built an altar (Genesis 12:8). Here he received the vision of Jacob's ladder. Continuing to the north east he travelled to Haran where he met Rachel at the well as Eleazer had met Rebekah (Genesis 24:11) (see Isaac). Jacob served Laban 20 years, seven for Leah, seven for Rachel and six for flocks. Whilst there he was blessed with eleven sons and a daughter. He became very prosperous and left Haran while his father-in-law Laban was out shearing (Genesis 31:22f.). Laban pursued Jacob to Gilead where a pact was drawn up between

them. Travelling to Mahanaim, Jacob sent out scouts to discover Esau's attitude (Genesis 32:1f.). Just as he was about to ford the river Jabbok, he wrestled with a "man", receiving a permanent hip injury. His name was changed here from Jacob to Israel, and is probably the place of Jacob's conversion (Genesis 32:24-30, cf. Genesis 28:20,21; Hosea 12:4). Jacob now purchased land at Shechem. After Isaac's death he settled in Hebron (Genesis 35:28,29). Jacob the patriarch gave one of the three great prophecies in Genesis - the prophecy of the twelve tribes (Genesis 49) prior to his death at the age of 130. He was buried at Machpelah near Hebron (Genesis 50:13).

### 3. EVALUATION

- a) Jacob is considered the child of favour (Malachi 1:2; Romans 9:10-13).
- b) He is described as the heir of the divine promise (Hebrews 11:9).
- c) Jacob is a man of blessing (Hebrews 11:20,21).
- d) He is linked with Abraham and Isaac (2 Kings 13:23; Mark 12:26,27).
- e) Israel is called the house of Jacob (Isaiah 8:17; Micah 2:7).
- f) Israel is called the sons of Jacob (1 Kings 18:31; Malachi 3:6).
- g) Israel is called the seed of Jacob (Isaiah 45:19; Jeremiah 33:26).
- h) Israel is called the community of Jacob (Deuteronomy 33:4).
- i) Israel is called Jacob (Hosea 10:11).
- j) God had a plan for Jacob's life, to form a major role in His nation Israel.
- k) Jacob went from Bethel, "the house of God", to Haran, "a dried up place".
- l) He spent a night at Bethel and twenty years at Haran.
- m) He eventually entered fully into God's plan after a long and arduous struggle.
- n) The supplanter Jacob became the prince Israel.

### 4. PRINCIPLES

- a) God in His foreknowledge loves the believer even prior to his birth (Romans 9:10-13).
- b) Yet He does not coerce the free will of the believer (Revelation 3:20).
- c) We become new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- d) Preferential treatment in a family causes jealousy (1 Samuel 1:5,6).
- e) God can convert our weakness of character and stubbornness to His glory (2 Corinthians 12:10).
- f) The plan of God is always superior to the plan of man (Job 42:2-6).

### TRIBULATION – SIGNS

#### 1. One World

- a) One Worldism (Revelation 13:7, 16-18)
- b) One World Church (1 Timothy 4:1, Revelation 17)
- c) One World Economy (1 Timothy 6:10, Revelation 13:16, 17)

#### 2. Political Signs

- a) Israel (Luke 21:29-32)
- b) King of the North (Ezekiel 38:1, 12)
- c) King of the East (Revelation 16:12, 9:16)
- d) King of the West (Daniel 11:40-45)
- e) King of the South (Daniel 11:40-45)

#### 3. Natural Signs

- a) Earthquakes (Luke 21:11)
- b) Famines (Matthew 24:7)
- c) Weather (Luke 21:25)
- d) Diseases (Luke 21:11a)

#### 4. Man made Signs

- a) Wars Hot and Cold (Matthew 24:6, 7)
- b) Preparation for War (Joel 3:9, 10)
- c) Knowledge and Technology (Daniel 12:4)
- d) Travel (Daniel 12:4)

- e) Pollution (Revelation 8:10-11)
- f) Moral Decline (Luke 17:26, 2 Tim 3:3)
- g) Homosexuality (Luke 17:28-30)
- h) Apostasy and False Prophets (Matthew 24:5, 24)
- i) Witchcraft and Occultism (1 Timothy 4:1, 2)
- j) Drugs (Revelation 9:21)

## WORLD

1. World under control of Satan:
  - a) ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
  - b) god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4)
  - c) he deceives the world (Revelation 12:9)
  - d) Satan is filling the world with his propaganda (1 Timothy 4:1).
2. Jesus Christ created earth (Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 45:18). He gave control to original mankind (Genesis 1:28) but man lost it at the fall (Genesis 3:6).
3. Sin and spiritual death are the basis of Satan's rule over this world. Therefore, God so loved the world that He gave a Saviour (John 3:16), hence Christ as a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5).
4. Therefore Christ is the saviour of the world (John 3:17; 4:42; 1 John 4:14). The Saviour who gave His life for the world (John 6:33); hence Christ has a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5).
5. Therefore Christ has overcome the world (John 16:33), so that the believer can overcome the world (1 John 5:4,5).
6. Consequently believers in Christ must not love the world (1 John 2:15,16). Nor must believers conform to the world (Romans 12:2). Worldliness is what you think, which may be demonstrated by what you do.
7. World control by Satan will stop at the Second Advent. However, believers will continue forever (1 John 2:17).
8. Also, the Word of God abides forever (1 Peter 1:23,25), and is designed to overcome the ruler of this world (1 John 2:14). Therefore, not conforming to the world and overcoming the world are accomplished through Bible doctrine, by which God has made foolish the wisdom of the world (1 Corinthians 1:20; 3:19).
9. It is therefore of greatest importance that the believer's attitude is based on the Word of God (Philippians 2:5; 2 Timothy 1:7; Isaiah 26:3,4; Philippians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 10:4,5; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 1:5,6,8).
10. Backsliding is characterised as friendship with the world (James 4:4).

## WAR

1. Wars and rumours of war will occur until the Second Advent (Matthew 24:6).
2. Christ is the Prince of Peace - peace will only exist in the Millennium (Isaiah 2:2,4).
3. The role of a government is to judge evil (Genesis 9, Romans 13). This includes war (Numbers 35:33, Jeremiah 34:7).

4. All wars are not in the will of God, e.g. the Crusaders attempted to restore Jerusalem before God's appointed time.

5. Eight basic principles of war:-

- a) The concept of fighting for your country is Biblical.
- b) In Israel, those 20 years old and above were to train for war (Numbers 1:3).
- c) You need trained people and good weapons (Numbers 31:3-5, Luke 14:31-32, 11:21).
- d) Only those with a courageous, positive attitude should fight (Deuteronomy 20:1-8).
- e) If war is to eliminate evil, then eliminate it fully (Joshua 11:23).
- f) War is to be based on selective destruction - those responsible for evil (Deuteronomy 20:10-15). It is not wholesale destruction (Deuteronomy 20:19-20).
- g) Peace is a viable option if there is repentance/change.
- h) You need good military leadership (Proverbs 24:6).
- i) If the Christian finds a particular war unjust in relation to the Word/will of God, he has two alternatives:
  - i) he leaves the country if he can
  - ii) he may have grounds to disobey the authorities (Acts 5:29).

6. A walk of faith is not contradictory to warfare (Nehemiah 2:9, 4:9-20).

7. God's face is set against the war monger and against the pacifist (Psalms 68:30, 55:20, 21, 120:6, 7, Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11, 15, 14:19, Ezekiel 13:10, 16, Micah 3:5 -7).

8. Mankind will never totally destroy himself, either by war or pollution. God has a purpose for Christ to reign (Revelation 20:1-6)

**PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS** See page 45

## **NOTES**

### **PSALM 47**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm, the second in the trilogy, amplifies the sovereignty of God and praises the Lord for who He is and His creative ruling power. This Psalm records praise for the character of God, and as such is true WORSHIP. Today the term "worship" is used to describe song services that may be about any and all subjects, but biblical worship was always seen to be praising God for who He is and what He has done, is doing and will do.

Let us be challenged by this Psalm to return to the roots of worship and truly lift up our voices in praise and honour to the Lord of glory. Worship will stabilise the doubting soul, for reminding ourselves of the character of God reminds us we are in good hands. Deuteronomy 33:27-29, Isaiah 61:1-3.

#### **PSALMS 47:1-9**

**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. 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. 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. 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.

## REFLECTION

**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.**

My dear old father had many spiritual blessings last week before he died. He had never said “Halleluiah” aloud in worship, nor ever clapped his hands in his old church, but he praised the Lord and His Word in his last week as he heard his minister and myself read it to him. It was both sad and enjoyable to hear him softly say that word aloud. I was sad because his very polite and conservative faith had never given him permission to really express any passion for the Lord, but I was happy for him that at last, as he headed out of his earthly body to meet his Lord forever, that he found his voice to praise the Lord aloud.

All too many of us are constricted by our backgrounds in the area of worship. The psalmist urges us to “clap our hands” in joy and raise our voices in a shout of exultation and triumph. He urges us to praise the Lord for whom He truly is; He is the Lord “most high”, and He has “terrible” (awesome) power, and rules over the entire universe. The awesome sovereignty and power of the Lord is the starting point for worship, for when we accept His true power and position as creator and judge, all else in this life falls into its correct place.

Traditionally this psalm is assigned to Solomon, and it is thought to have been written to celebrate the return of the battered old Ark to the centre of national worship in the new Temple he had built. The story of the Ark’s arrival into the new temple high above the old city of David is told in 2 Chronicles 7. It was a day to remember the grace and mercy of God towards His people.

The battered old Ark had been captured by the Philistines, and then returned, and was hidden away for over twenty years, and then spent the next decades in temporary tents until the days of Solomon’s temple. 1 Samuel 4ff. Solomon’s praise and worship excelled even his father David’s as he had brought the ark into the City of David over forty years before. That was a day of open rejoicing for the king and the people when the Ark was brought into the old city of Jerusalem by David. 2 Samuel 6:1-19, 1 Chronicles 13:1-8, Psalms 132:1ff.

David had desired to build a Temple for the Lord, but the Lord forbade him from doing so because of his blood thirsty past. 2 Samuel 7:1-29. Read this chapter in the EBCWA Commentary, as it demonstrates David’s great spirit of humility, and his grace oriented way of thinking. David accepted the Lord’s verdict over his life. He was forgiven and he knew that, but he realised that his warlike life had a consequence for him, and excluded him from some service for the Lord. We can be forgiven for all sins we confess before the Lord, but the flow on consequence of some sins is such that we cannot serve in some areas of the work later because the earlier sin has ruined our reputation in the community.

David had a reputation for blood letting, and he would sadly go on to adultery and murder. 2 Samuel 11. He repented of his evil deeds, Psalms 51, but he was excluded from the Temple building project because of his sins. He couldn’t build the Temple, and he accepted the Lord’s words, but he could prepare for it to be built later. He prepared nearly all the items and funds that Solomon would need to build the temple and David gathered them on the site that would later be used for it. 1 Chronicles 21:18 – 22:19.

He would sow and Solomon would reap, and both would do the work of the Lord by each playing their part! 1 Corinthians 3:6-15. Solomon would build the temple when spiritually most switched on in his life, but he would drift downhill over the years and the glory of the temple and its gold would be lost to Egypt within five years of his death.

Let's hear the words of David from that earlier time and reflect upon the true nature of worship.

**Psalm 98**

*1 O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.*

*2 The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed 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.*

*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 fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*

*8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together.*

Does our joy mirror David's joy here? This is a great example of biblical worship; let us ensure that we do not fall short of this standard, for we have since the Cross, even more to thank God for than David and Solomon had.

**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.**

It is the Lord who protects us; no other power is able to keep us safe. As a keen historian all my life I have delighted through the years to study how many times the Lord alone has moved to save His people and protect His Word in situations where humanly speaking all should have been lost. The study of World War 2 is very clear on this.

Germany and Japan should not have lost the war! They lost because of amazing, incredible mistakes that Hitler and the Japanese made, and because of many extraordinary acts by Allied forces that halted their otherwise invincible foes. No force can stand against the will and plan of God. Japan and Germany were on the wrong side of history, and practising evil, so they fell. As we see the days darken around us, let us be mindful of the certainty of the final victory of the Lord that will occur, and have faith and courage, and keep doing our assigned task upon the earth. God's eventual victory is only a matter of timing, not of any doubt! Psalms 18:46-47, 81:13-16.

Our REWARDS AND CROWNS are in the Lord's hands for assigning to us. We will receive the Lord's inheritance for eternity; for He is the one who assigns each of us our eternal rewards. Matthew 25:31-46, 1 Corinthians 3:12-23, Ephesians 1:15-18, 1 Peter 1:3-5. All too often believers pray for what they want when the best that we can have in this life and the next is what the Lord wants for us. Let us pray the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done". Matthew 26:42. What God wants for us will always be better than what we desire for ourselves.

As with the earlier Psalm in this trilogy, Jacob is again mentioned, and we are reminded by that reference, that if the Lord could love Jacob, then He can love us. Just as Jacob was forgiven his short comings so are we, and just as he was guided so will we be guided if we draw near to the throne of grace in prayer. Hosea 14:1-9, Ephesians 2:4 – 10, Hebrews 4:12-16, 13:5-6. Refer to the BTB study GUIDANCE – THE WILL OF GOD, and PRAYER.

**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.**

The Lord has entered His temple with a shout of exultation; God has blessed the Temple at its inauguration with His cloud of presence. 2 Chronicles 7: 1 – 14, Psalms 24:7 – 10. The Lord will move with a shout, and we must be ready to move forward in obedience with a shout of joy, or a shout of courage and determination, also. We have nothing to fear in the presence of the Lord on his path for us through our life. “To the Lord belong the issues of our death”, for precious in his sight is the death of his saints. Psalms 68:18 – 20, 116:15, Jeremiah 15:1, 24:4 – 7. God is with us; who shall we fear? Romans 8:28-34.

The Lord’s glory in our life is to be proclaimed to all through our open and private praise and worship. We are to raise our voices in praise to the Lord. Three times the psalmist orders the believers to sing, sing their hearts out to the Lord. We are to sing aloud in praise to the Lord. Let us say “enough” to polite and weak kneed worship, and embrace passionate and forthright worship.

We are praising our King, who loved us and gave himself for us; so let us abandon ourselves to his praise, for He is worthy of all our praise. Psalm 118:21-26, Zechariah 9:9, Revelation 4:11, 5:9-12. Let us praise with all our heart and mind, and not be guilty of any lukewarm faith, for such a faith is no faith at all. Revelation 3:17-20.

**7 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.  
8 God reigns over the heathen: God sits upon the throne of his holiness.**

Notice the phrase at the end of verse seven; “sing with understanding”. I feel like standing up at this phrase and singing a loud “Hallelujah!!!” So much of our worship music is brainless repetition, and we need to train people (through their singing) to think as they worship. Worship needs to be intelligent and focused upon the Lord. We need to have our thinking engaged and we need to encourage people to worship with all their hearts and minds. We worship the king, and He reigns over all the earth.

Even though Satan may have his people in positions of power, the Lord actually still reigns and his will is always finally done, for He alone controls when each person dies. Matthew 4:8-11. Satan tries to deceive his followers into thinking he is more powerful than he in fact is. God is on the throne of heaven and Satan may do what he does by permission only; he is a creature, not the creator! Job 1:6-12, 2:4-6. Even though the Fall of Man allowed Satan to have power through sin his power is limited. God remains upon the throne of the heavens and the earth.

**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.**

When all the people of Israel gathered before their king they gathered fully armed, with their shields and spears in a great army. It is this assembled host that the psalmist pictures here. Shields were often made of hides or wood covered in bronze and were burnished to shine like gold in the light of the sun. The bronze covered shields were used to try to blind any enemy they fought by shining the reflection of the light of the sun off their shield. It is this shining and glittering host that the writer pictures; a host that stands for dignity, power, glory, and might. All the sons of Abraham are together in power and might and they are gathered to glorify the Lord their God.

Notice that it is the sons of Abraham, not just the sons of Jacob, and all the sons of Abraham includes many of the Arab and Gentile nations as well as the Jews. This is the picture of the prophets of the end of the Great Tribulation. The Arab nations have as many believers within them as the Jewish nation has, and as the joint “sons of Abraham” they worship the Lord together in Jerusalem. The Lord is “highly exulted” by this victory over all their hatred, for they are finally united in welcoming back the Lord Jesus. Isaiah 60:1-14.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. How long is it since you clapped your hands together in joy? How long is it since you lifted your voice in exultation and triumph? How long is it since you did such things in the church worship service? The psalmist encourages us to be abandoned in joy in our worship and express our loving appreciation to the Lord for all He has done for us. We must always work within our own temperament nature and some people are naturally reserved, but the psalmist encourages us to be as open and expressive in worship as we would be in our meeting with a long-lost friend or loved one. Be challenged pastor and challenge the Lord's people under your care to show love to the Lord openly.

2. Have we taught the CHARACTER OF GOD enough in our churches recently? The Lord's people need to understand the awesome power of God as the creator of space and time, and the universe that is in this present creation. When we understand the power of God all our problems are placed into the right position; which is at the foot of the Cross. We are in the hands of the one who made the universe! How secure are we? Let us teach more of the creator's power, so that believers might truly rest into the arms of the one who holds the universe together and has pre-programmed the stars to fail at exactly the right time for the Plan of God. Revelation 12:4. The stars that are programmed to fail in the Great Tribulation period have already died; it is only their light that still travels towards us. Reflect upon this fact and ask yourself, if God can pre-arrange for the stars to fail millions of years before that failure will be seen from the earth, cannot that God deal with your problems now?

3. David was denied the right to build the Temple, and he accepted God's verdict over his life and set his heart to do what he could to enable his son to build the Temple. David's role was to prepare all that was required for the later building. He was faithful to this task and got the non-perishable building supplies ready and gathered the funds for construction. Solomon used all this material and wealth and gathered the perishable supplies (the wood) and built the Temple. Each played their part and each was blessed. Let us encourage the Lord's people regarding this vital truth in ministry. Let us challenge the Lord's people to find their task and do it alone. Let us challenge them all not to be envious of another person's tasking, but to do their own before the Lord. 1 Corinthians 12:14-30. It doesn't matter what the reasons for the Lord's choice of tasks for each of us to complete are, let us simply apply ourselves to the tasks and do them.

4. The Lord our God is king indeed. Let us worship him as our king, with all our hearts and minds.

## **DOCTRINES**

**CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE** See page 21

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS** See page 29

## **GOD – DIVINE GUIDANCE – THE WILL OF GOD**

1. Three categories of will in history

- a) Divine will (sovereignty)
- b) Angelic will.
- c) Human will.

2. Main areas of the will of God (1 John 3:23)

- a) For the unbeliever - salvation (2 Peter 3:9)
- b) For the believer - spirituality (Ephesians 5:18)

3. Christ has free will (Matthew 26:42, Hebrews 10:7, 9)



- a) No free will in mankind would imply no free will in Christ.
- b) The basic principles of divine guidance however are based on the fact that man possesses free will to choose for or against God.

**4. Type of will of God as related to the human race (e.g. Balaam)**

- a) Directive (Numbers 22:12) - What God directs
- b) Permissive (Numbers 22:20) - What God allows
- c) Overruling (Numbers 23) - When God overrules

**5. Principles of Guidance**

- a) Knowledge of biblical principles in the believer (Psalm 32:8, Proverbs 3:1-6, Isaiah 58:11, Romans 12:2)
- b) Surrender and filling of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:13, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:17-18, 1 John 1:9)
- c) Growth - to eat meat and not rely on milk (1 Corinthians 3:1-4)

**6. Categories of the will of God**

- a) Viewpoint will of God - What does He want me to think?
- b) Operational will of God - What does He want me to do?
- c) Geographical will of God - Where does He want me to be?

**7. An example of the will of God (Acts 11) - the Guidance of Peter**

- a) Guidance through prayer (vs 5)
- b) Guidance through the mind (vs 6)
- c) Guidance through the word (vs 7-10)
- d) Guidance through providential circumstances (vs 11)
- e) Guidance through the filling of the Spirit (vs 12)
- f) Guidance through fellowship and comparison of data (vs 13-15)
- g) Guidance through remembering Scripture (vs 16)

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – PRAYER** See page 16

**GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD** See page 18

**PSALM 48**

**INTRODUCTION**

This song is truly a song of my youth as a believer. I was saved in the late 1960s and the choruses that we sung were taken from the Psalms and other places. Called "Scripture in Song" they taught many of us the Psalms in modern musical arrangements. We sang them with passionate gusto and all of us have remembered their words. Singing scripture is a marvellous way of remembering scripture. We need to sing the Psalms again in our churches, for they are an "ever present help in times of trouble". Psalms 46:1.

As my father died this last week he desired above all the visiting pastor read him the Psalms. It is the Lord who breaks our bonds, and it is the Lord who delivers us through death into eternity. Let us praise the Lord with the words that encouraged the Israelites 3000 years ago. We stand on good ground as we sing the psalms, and let's not worry about whether we sing traditional tunes, modern tunes, with or without music, for all these things were done through the centuries.

**PSALMS 48:1-14**

**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. 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. 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 loving kindness, 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 judgements. 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. 14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

## REFLECTION

**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.**

“Great indeed is the Lord”, and “greatly He is to be praised”. Psalms 86:10, 99:3-4, 145:3, 147:5. Do we praise the Lord enough? Do we praise the Lord greatly, and magnify his holy name as we ought? The Lord is GREAT; far above what we can even imagine, and yet we act as if the Lord has limits, and we are in danger within his plan for us. Praise the Lord for who He is believer, and then you will receive the inner power of the Holy Spirit, that will always flow from heart felt worship. Worship revives the spirit of mankind. Let us worship as we ought every day, Hallelujah! The beauty of this hill is hidden to us today because of the events upon its slopes over the centuries and the graves down its slopes.

The city of Jerusalem was the city of God for Israel, for the Lord had chosen it as the place for the Temple to be built. Two have stood upon the hill there and a third will stand there for 1000 years during the Lord’s reign upon the earth. The mountain of the Temple is the “holy mount”. Today the two mosques stand there, but the Millennial Temple will one day be there. Refer to the BTB study KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM, CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD.

This mountain is a place of tension and violence today; with Arab and Jew in conflict over it, and violence at times around it. This place is blood -oaked ground from the thousands of years of battles over this hill. It is truly the centre of the world, for the worlds three great religions centre upon this hill and look at its Eastern Gate (The blocked up “Golden Gate”) as the place where Jesus will ride back into this city to take rulership over the entire earth from this place. It is the city from where the Lord will rule the earth, and the Millennial Temple from heaven upon this mount will be the throne of the Lord.

**3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.**

**4 For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.**

The only true refuge we ever have is the peace within our heart that comes from knowing we walk in the plan of God for us. God is our refuge, and his promises are our security in tight places. Refer to the BTB study PROMISES. No palace is a refuge, for evil men can break into palaces and destroy them. All the great palaces of the ancient world are ruins today. Palaces do not last, but the plan, power, promises, and presence of God does last.

God is our refuge and God alone! We are secure in his hands! Deuteronomy 33:27-28, John 6:36-40, 10:27-30. We have ETERNAL SECURITY in our position in the Lord. All the kings of the earth will pass before the Lord and do him homage as their Lord, but before that all will rebel against him. Zechariah 14:9-11.

**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.**

Many kings will assemble in the LAST DAYS of the GREAT TRIBULATION PERIOD to attack the Lord's people in Jerusalem and they will try to destroy the Jewish people totally in those days. Many of the people will be killed or captured, but others will fight on and be relieved by the coming of the Lord Jesus to deliver them. Zechariah 13:7-9, 14:1-5, 9-15. The last battle will be horrific and the use of Nuclear weapons is described in the scriptures relating to that last battle. Isaiah 29:5-6, Zechariah 14:12-13.

It will be a fearful time, with only a third of the total population of Israel surviving the last battles, and only half of the city of Jerusalem surviving. FEAR will be the normal thing for most people in that day, but calm will characterise the believers, for they know the timetable for the Lord's return and can calculate the day of his return from the prophetic information given in the scriptures once certain events occur. Refer to the BTB study SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS, TRIBULATION IN MATTHEW 24, TRIBULATION – SIGNS.

**7 You break 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.**

The naval forces and ships of the West will be smashed to pieces in that time by the fierce winds the Lord sends upon the seas. Man will be defeated by the forces of nature in the hands of the creator, and by the Lord's direct intervention. Man learns by what he sees and hears. The people of God have seen the Lord act in history in Jerusalem. They have heard the words of the prophets as they spoke upon her streets, and they have seen the actions of God upon her streets, both the blessings of the opening of the Temple and the cursing associated with judgement as the city fell to invaders.

God's promise is that while time lasts this city will be his place, and it has been a city that has spiritual power throughout its time. Even when the Romans sought to make it a Roman city after the second Jewish war in the 130s AD the city drew believers back to it, and by the days of Constantine it was the centre of faith again. Remember, the word "forever" is a time word, and means while time lasts. This earth will be gone one day, and eternity begins, beyond space and time, and in that state there will be a New Jerusalem. Revelation 21-22. Refer to the BTB study JERUSALEM.

**9 We have thought of thy loving kindness, 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.**

How long is it since you have thought of the "loving kindness of God"? It is amazing the impact upon ourselves of the death of our parents, even when very old. My parent's death over this last week has made me so thankful for the loving kindness of God shown through them that I have been surprised just how many times I find myself giving thanks for them and all the grace, mercy and love of God I received through them.

God is loving and kind, and we are to be like him towards others. The FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT includes loving kindness as a key element of the character of God that a genuine believer manifests. We are called to show the character of God towards others. Psalms 40:10-11, 63:1-4. The Lord's character is seen "in the midst of the Temple", because the Temple portrayed the grace provision of God for the salvation of mankind through the BLOOD SACRIFICE and FEASTS OF ISRAEL. Everything about the Temple system spoke of the character and plan of God.

Our praise is to be offered, "according to the name" of the Lord. Our worship is to take its cue from the character of God and the names of God. The NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT are themselves a source of worship, for each name tells us about the power

and majesty of the Lord our God. It is good to simply pray our way through the list of the names of God. God's power (right hand was the way to symbolise power in the ancient world) is righteous power and always used in accordance with the plan that has been working out since the world began. Our God is a righteous God. 1 John 2:1, Revelation 16:5-7.

**11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgements.**

**12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.**

The Lord will be victorious and Mount Zion will indeed one day rejoice, for her King will establish his kingdom from her top and a new temple will be built to cover her old blood soaked stones. Finally all Judah will be glad, because all the Jewish people will rejoice in their Lord. All Israel will see that the Lord was righteous in all He did. Zechariah 12:10-14. It all begins when Israel "looks upon him whom they pierced". Jeremiah 31, Romans 11:1ff. Refer to the EBCWA Commentaries on these chapters and rejoice in the future plan of God for his people.

The people are encouraged to walk around the walls of Jerusalem, and at each tower announce the glory of God and proclaim his praise. This occurred after Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of the city, and the completion of those walls began the prophetic countdown to the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nehemiah 8:1-10, 12:27-42, Daniel 9:24-27. Refer to the BTB study DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS. After each military victory the people were encouraged to walk the walls in holy and worshipful procession again, for it was the rebuild of these walls that looked forward to Messiah coming.

**13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.**

**14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.**

The psalmist urges his people to walk about the city and look hard at her defences and then reflect upon the stronger defences of the character and plan of God for them all. The psalmist wants his people to reflect upon the beauty of the great palaces of David and Solomon, and the great walls that were built then. The palace of Solomon was twenty years in the building, and he had several thousand workmen on the project!

Its foundations have now been removed, but in its day it probably covered a great deal of the hill to the west or north of the temple Mount. It was a vast place, with his thousand wives plus servants living there, it was a small city itself. All this glory was swept away and as we walk around the walls today we can reflect upon the temporary glory of man in this place, but then remind ourselves of the great glory of the Lord that will last until the end of time. We are in the Lord's hands for our life and for our death, for our days are in his hands. Psalms 68:20, 116:15. Refer to the study on DYING GRACE. All the glory of man is but for a moment, but the glory of God is forever.

## **PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS**

1. Let us praise the greatness of the Creator-God, and the greatness of his plan and purposes as we move through history. Let us praise the Lord for his mercies in the past, but let us lift up our voice and praise him for his glorious plan into the future.

2. Loving kindness characterises the Lord's attitude towards us, and the same spirit ought to characterise our dealings with others. Let us be sure that the Holy Spirit rules our life and produces the fruit of the Holy Spirit for us.

3. Let us praise the Lord for who He is. Let us proclaim the power, person, and plan of God. Let us worship the one who has the whole world in his hands, for our destiny is secure with Him.

4. Let us remember the plan of God both from the past and into the future. The study of biblical prophetic truth is vital for the stability of believers as we enter the last days of this present Age. The Lord's Plan goes right through from eternity past into eternity future with glory, and so let us preach and teach the truth about the past and the future destiny of this world and ourselves. Refer to the BTB study DESTINY OF BELIEVERS.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM**

1. "Thy will be done on earth, " will be fulfilled in the Millennium. (Matthew 6:10)
2. The Kingdom is the Millennium, the first 1,000 years of Jesus' eternal reign. It will be after the second advent, on the old earth. (Revelation 20:4-6)
  - a) Promised (2 Samuel 7:8-17, Psalm 89:20-33)
  - b) Prophesied (Isaiah 2:1-5, 2:11, 12, 35, 55, 56, 62:11)
  - c) Presented (Matthew, Mark, Luke) (Israel, not the church)
  - d) Postponed Epistles of New Testament (for church age)
  - e) Proclaimed (Revelation 10) (Angelic herald) (Revelation 11:1-14) (Human heralds)
  - f) Plagiarized (Revelation 13)
  - g) Perfected (Revelation 11:15-19)
3. Issues relating to the Kingdom
  - a) The Character of God - will He keep His word to Israel? Yes. Jesus Christ will reign.
  - b) Unconditional Covenant - will He keep Covenant? Yes. Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, New - all fulfilled in the Millennium.
  - c) Dispersion of Israel - will He recover them again? Yes. At the Second Advent.
  - d) Advent - will He return to earth at the worst period in history? Yes. At the end of the Tribulation.
  - e) Millennial - The Kingdom of Jesus Christ is eternal, why the emphasis on the first 1,000 years? Jesus will do what Satan has been trying to do for 6,000 years; He will create perfect environment in an instant, as a demonstration to prove that perfect environment is not the answer; regeneration is.
4. Principles from Micah 4:1-8
  - a) The Kingdom will be supreme. (Micah 4:1)
  - b) The Kingdom will be universal. (Micah 4:2)
  - c) The Kingdom will be peaceful. (Micah 4:3)
  - d) The Kingdom will secure universal prosperity. (Micah 4:4-5)
  - e) The nation of Israel ruled by the Lord for the Kingdom. (Micah 4:6-8)

## **NOTES**

### **CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD**

This is the hope of the church from the day it was announced at his ascension - Acts 1:10,11, and recalled at every communion service, where the believers took the cup with the words, "until he comes" - 1 Corinthians 11:26. This was the focus and confidence (hope) of the early church, the Lord is risen and he is coming again.

The great truth of the Lord's coming and all it will mean for mankind and the earth brings Paul to the point of praise filled worship towards the Lord, and he "sings" a doxology to the glory of God – 1 Timothy 6:13-16.

The Lord is referred to as the:

1. "Blessed and only potentate". The Lord is perfectly happy/blessed as he is in control of the universe and his plan is working out. He is the real ruler of the world and this will one day be seen by all.
2. "King of kings", emphasises that he is ruler over all men who have ever ruled the earth as kings.
3. "Lord of lords", indicates his victory over the angels, so that he is recognised by all as supreme ruler. Every knee will bow to him. Isaiah 45:23, Romans 14:11, Philippians 2:10.
4. "Who only has immortality". He alone has by nature and deed true immortality, in that as God he has always been in existence and as man he has defeated sin and death through the cross and resurrection, and it is in his power and because of his position that we have everlasting life (we had a beginning but we will like him, have no end).
5. "Dwelling in the light". Light was the clothing of Adam and Eve before the fall and is the clothing of the resurrected Lord. He lives in the purity and radiance of unapproachable light. This made the elders of John's vision in Revelation sink to their knees and sing praises. Revelation 4:3-11.

We do not have the right "vision" of the Lord today in many churches; we see him only as he was on earth, not as he is in heaven now. The phrase of Paul directs Timothy to look up and get a clear view of the Lord as he is in glory and so worship and serve him more appropriately.

6. "Who no man has seen or can see". This is a confusing passage for the Lord has been seen in his resurrection body and visions of his glory have been given to John and Paul at least.

What does Paul mean? He means that we see only the Lord in resurrection body since the cross, but not in his full glory as God, for that would completely and literally "blow us away".

Even John who was granted such a great series of visions that he recorded for us in Revelation, says, "no man has seen God at any time", 1 John 4:12, John 6:46. Maybe we will see him fully as he is, in heaven when we have our resurrection bodies. 1 Corinthians 13:12.

7. "To him belong all honour and power everlasting". The only one fully deserving honour or reverence is the Lord and he is the only one with true power that lasts forever.

Paul ends this doxology with the "amen", or "so be it". It is the way of saying, "I believe it, it is so", and we must all say amen to the above points, or we will continue worshiping an inadequate view of the Lord.

Do we serve the Lord with an accurate picture in our minds of how he is today? It is easy to be slack when we think of him only as the one who walked the lanes of Israel, but consider the visions of John and bow down before him as he sits or stands in radiant light the all powerful King of kings and Lord of lords, the true ruler of the universe in his full power.

The Lord's coming for the church, terminates the church age and opens the door to the Great Tribulation and then for his final victory over sin and death and the establishment of his kingdom.

## PROMISES

### 1. FROM GOD'S VIEWPOINT

When a person promises you something the promise is only as strong as the character of the person making the promise. The character of God is perfect therefore His promises are totally reliable.

- a) Unchangeable - A promise in the Bible is the same for us in the 20th Century as it was to Paul.
- b) All-knowing - God knows all our problems so there is always a promise or doctrine to cater for our difficulties.
- c) Love - God will provide for His children.
- d) Truth - All the promises are totally true.

### 2. FROM MAN'S VIEWPOINT

- a) We must know the promises.
- b) We must believe the promises.
- c) We must want to trust in God.

### 3. THERE ARE ABOUT 7,000 PROMISES THAT DEAL WITH THE CHRISTIAN ON EARTH

### 4. TYPICAL PROMISES FOR VARIOUS STAGES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- a) Stage 1 - Salvation (John 3:16; Acts 16:31)
- b) Stage 2 - Christian on earth (1 John 1:9; Romans 8:28; 1 Peter 5:7)
- c) Stage 3 - Believers in Heaven (1 Peter 1:3-5; Revelation 21:4)

### 5. FOR THE CHRISTIAN ON EARTH - HOW DO WE MAKE THEM WORK?

- a) We must be a believer in Jesus Christ.
- b) Take every promise to mean what it says.
- c) Confess all your known sins using the promise in (1 John 1:9)
- d) If a promise says to do something, do it (i.e. pray, believe, confess etc.)
- e) Wait for answers, the Lord will answer in His time.
- f) Keep a promise notebook, learn the promises.

### 6. GENERAL SCRIPTURE ON THE PROMISES OF GOD (Hebrews 3:7 - 4:11)

- a) The geographical areas in which the Exodus generation found themselves can represent stages in the Christian.
  - i) Egypt - unbelief.
  - ii) Red Sea crossing - salvation by faith (i.e. leaving Egypt)
  - iii) Wilderness - the carnal and immature Christian life claiming only some promises and failing regularly.
  - iv) Jordan crossing - full realisation of God's favour by faith.
  - v) Promised land - the mature Christian resting in God and only failing occasionally.
- b) The author of Hebrews in (Chapter 3:7,19) exhorts the Jews at Jerusalem and us not to fall into the same traps as the Exodus generation in unbelief.
- c) Questions And Answers on Hebrews (Chapter 4) refers to the Christian on earth.
  - Verse 1: What happens if we fail to claim a promise? - We lack peace of mind.
  - Verse 2: What characteristic of God does this verse highlight? - Unchangeable.  
How are the promises made active? - By being mixed with faith.
  - Verse 3: Which came first, man or the promises of God? - The promises, God is all-knowing.
  - Verse 4: Why did God rest? - Because He had provided all things necessary for man.
  - Verses 5 & 6: Will any succeed in this area? - Yes, some will.
  - Verse 7: Are the promises still available today? - Yes.  
What must we do? - Accept God's provision.  
What must we not do? - Harden our hearts.
  - Verse 8: Jesus in some translations is, in fact, Joshua.
  - Verse 9: To whom are the promises available? - Believers only.
  - Verse 10: What choice have we as a Christian? - Human works or God's works and provision.

Verse 11: What is the great trap? - Unbelief. We should actively pursue the promises of God.

## 7. MAJOR PROMISES

Learn to claim these when:

- a) In difficulties (Romans 8:28)
- b) You have sinned (1 John 1:9)
- c) You are worried (1 Peter 5:7)
- d) You have been wronged (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- e) Prayer (Matthew 7:7)
- f) You are lonely (Hebrews 13:5)
- g) You have doubts (Philippians 4:13)
- h) The Bible (Hebrews 4:12)
- i) You cannot sleep (Psalm 4:8)
- j) You are unhappy (Psalm 147:3)
- k) You are tempted to retaliate (Romans 12:17,19)
- l) You are in danger (Psalm 23:4)

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – ETERNAL SECURITY

1. When a person truly trusts Jesus Christ for salvation, he is saved forever. He cannot lose his salvation.

### 2. POSITIONAL APPROACH (Romans 8:38-39)

We are united with Christ ("in Christ"). Absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ.

### 3. LOGICAL APPROACH (Romans 8:32, Romans 5)

As unbelievers we are enemies of God (Romans 5), as believers we are his children. If he did the most for his enemies what will he do for his children? This excludes loss of salvation for he saved us while we were his enemies.

### 4. GOD'S HANDS APPROACH (John 10:28, Psalm 37:24)

Neither shall anyone seize them out of my hand. God is all powerful.

### 5. EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH (2 Timothy 2:12-13)

If we deny Christ He is going to deny us rewards (context=suffering and rewards). If we renounce Him, HE REMAINS FAITHFUL. The believer is in Christ and Christ indwells the believer. He cannot deny Himself.

### 6. THE FAMILY APPROACH (Galatians 3:26, John 1:12)

When you believe in Christ you are born again as a child of God. You cannot be unborn, once a child always a child.

### 7. THE INHERITANCE APPROACH (1 Peter 1:4-5)

We have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God. Perfect tense - it will always be reserved, since it is kept by God, not us.

### 8. THE SOVEREIGNTY APPROACH (2 Peter 3:9, Jude 24)

He is not willing that any should perish - refers to the whole human race (2 Peter 3:9) Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling (from perishing). Once you are saved, it is His will that you don't perish.

### 9. THE BODY APPROACH (1 Corinthians 12:21, Colossians 1:18)

Christ is the head, we are the members of the body. If any are lost, the body of Christ is incomplete.



**10. THE GREEK TENSE APPROACH (Ephesians 2:8-9)**

"For by Grace are ye saved". Perfect tense of the verb "sozo". For by Grace have you been saved in the past so that you go on being saved forever.

**11. THE SEALING MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT APPROACH (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30)**

In the ancient world the seal was a guarantee for protection. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit guarantees our security.

**LAST DAYS – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST DAYS** See page 46

**FEAR**            **see page 79**

**PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS** See page 45

**PROPHECY – DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS**

**1. Scripture:- Daniel 9:24-27**

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. " (Daniel 9:24)

2. What is a week? In the ancient world both Greek and Latin philosophers knew the week, as the week of years. In this system one week equals 7 years. Thus seventy weeks equal  $70 \times 7 \text{ years} = 490 \text{ years}$ .

3. What Type of Year? The year used in scripture of Daniel's time was the Jewish year which Abraham had preserved from his Chaldean home. Abraham's year was the lunar year and consisted of 360 days. The period stated then is  $70 \times 7 \times 360 \text{ days}$  giving a total of 176 400 days.

4. Who are Involved? 'Thy people, thy holy city' refer to the Jews and Jerusalem or Judea. We therefore have a period of 490 years involving the Jews and Jerusalem.

**5. When Does this Period End?**

a) In the second half of verse 24 the end of the period is given by six separate events:

- i) to finish the transgression - the start of the Millennium at the 2nd advent.
- ii) make an end to sins - perfect environment starts at the 2nd advent and continues for a thousand years. (Romans 8:19-21)
- iii) make reconciliation - since AD 70 the Jews have been dispersed amongst the nations, they will continue to be dispersed until Jesus Christ calls them back to their land at the 2nd advent.
- iv) bring in everlasting righteousness - the millennium starts a period of everlasting righteousness with the reign of Christ, this everlasting righteousness continues into the eternal future. This period starts at the 2nd advent.
- v) to seal up the vision and prophecy - the 2nd advent fulfils the Abrahamic, Palestinian and Davidic covenant and this prophecy.
- vi) to anoint the most Holy - at the 2nd advent Jesus is anointed King of Israel.

b) The terminal point in all six statements can therefore be said to be the 2nd advent of the Lord Jesus Christ or the midnight hour of (Matthew 25:6). We thus have a period from (Daniel 9:24) of 490 Jewish years each having 360 days terminating at the 2nd Advent.

c) In the next three verses the period of 70 weeks is carefully divided into three sections.

d) "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks (49 years) and three score and two weeks (434 years): the streets shall be built again, and the wall even in troubled times. " (Daniel 9:25)

e) We have therefore three periods into which the 70 weeks is split - 7 weeks + 62 weeks leaving a balance of 1 week.  
Expressed in years we have 49 years + 434 years + 7 years.

6. What is the Starting Point?

a) There were three edicts issued by Persian princes dating after the time of Daniel and relating to the Jews returning to their homeland, they were:-

- i) The edict of Cyrus in 538 BC to rebuild the house of the Lord (Temple) (Ezra 1).
- ii) The edict of Darius in 520 BC to rebuild the temple which is found in (Ezra 6)  
Darius' edict was to confirm Cyrus' previous order, the temple works having been stopped after the death of Cyrus.
- iii) The edict of Artaxerxes Longimanus to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 BC (Nehemiah

2)

b) Inspection of Daniel 9:25 shows that the critical commandment which starts the 70 weeks clock ticking was the order to rebuild Jerusalem not the temple. The correct order was the edict of Artaxerxes in 445 BC. The practice of Persian Kings was to issue such orders on their New Years day, the 1st of the month of Nisan. Using the services of the Astronomer Royal in London, Sir Robert Anderson, was able to determine that the 1st Nisan of 445 BC occurred on 14th March 445 BC. We therefore have the following date:-

c) 14th March 445 BC -- 490 years -- 2nd Advent

d) It also states that Jerusalem will be rebuilt with its walls completed after 49 years (7 weeks) in difficult circumstances. There is considerable biblical evidence that Jerusalem was rebuilt under very difficult circumstances.

e) "And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself." (Daniel 9:26a)

7. Who is the Messiah? - Jesus Christ!

In Luke's gospel on entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, just prior to his crucifixion, the crowd welcomed Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah (Luke 19:38) this being the only time when he was so called by the mass of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

8. When was He cut off?

According to (Luke 3:1) Jesus Christ was baptised in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar. As his ministry was three years in length, the entry into Jerusalem occurred in the 18th year of Tiberius. Searches of literature including, 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' by Gibbon, has shown that Tiberius became Caesar in 14 AD. Entrance into Jerusalem was therefore on Palm Sunday 32 AD. Again by computation the date of Palm Sunday 32 AD was 10th Nisan or 6th April AD 32, the crucifixion occurring on 9th April AD 32.

9. If this is correct, we should find correlation between the 483 Jewish years to the cutting off of the Messiah and the time between 14th March 445 BC and 6th April AD 32. The time between these two dates is 476 years and 24 days. Total number of days are therefore as follows:-

476 years x 365 days = 173,740

14/3 to 6/4 = 24

Leap years = 116

TOTAL = 173,880 days.

Jewish time: 483 x 360 = 173,880 days

10. Our scale now shows:-

14th March 445 BC -- 483 years -- 6th April 32 AD

11. The following questions now arise:

Has the second advent of Jesus Christ occurred? - No.

Is it longer than 7 years since Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem? - Yes.

Therefore there must be a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.

445 BC -- 483 years -- 32 AD -- GAP -- 7 years -- 2nd Advent

12. This gap has been filled in God's view of history by the church age. (see topic of Intercalation).

The 70th week which is 7 years in length therefore starts at the end of the church age - at the Rapture. These 7 years of the 70th week are the worst 7 years in the history of man - the tribulation.

13. **CONCLUSION** The course of this 70th week is denoted in (Daniel 9:26b, 27).

a) "and the people of the prince (the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire) that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and until the end of the war, desolations are determined.

b) And he (the dictator) shall confirm the covenant (mutual defence pact) with the many (the Jews) for one week (7 years) and in the midst of the week (3 1/2 years) he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, (this refers to the erection of a statue in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, see Revelation 13:11-15). even until the consummation (the 2nd advent) and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (the dictator will be judged and cast into hell, see Revelation 19:20)."

c) We thus have Daniel's 70 weeks divided as shown:-

d) 445 BC -- 483 years -- 32 AD -- CHURCH -- unspecified period of time -- RAPTURE -- 7 years -- 2nd Advent

## **TRIBULATION IN MATTHEW 24 page 88**

### **TRIBULATION – SIGNS OF THE TRIBULATION page 87**

#### **JERUSALEM**

1. Jerusalem is the Holy City of three monotheistic faiths.

a) **JUDAISM:** Jerusalem has always been the focus of the Jewish homeland as it was the capital of the first Jewish kingdom. The Western Wall (the Wailing Wall) is a remnant of the great temple, built by King Herod and is the most sacred of all Jewish shrines.

b) **CHRISTIANITY:** For Christians, Jerusalem is the site of Jesus Christ's last days on earth. It is the place of His trial and crucifixion, and also of His resurrection.

c) **ISLAM:** The Arabs call Jerusalem "Al Quds", which means "The Noble (or Holy) Sanctuary". After Mecca and Medina, it is the holiest city in the Muslim world. On the place where the Temple stood now stands the Dome of the Rock (or mosque of Omar). It is built over a rock from where Mohammed is said to have ascended to Heaven.

2. The name 'Jerusalem' is sometimes abbreviated to "Salem" which is the Hebrew word for peace (Genesis 14:18; Psalm 76:2). Jerusalem means "City of Peace" (Psalm 122:6,7; Isaiah 66:12; Haggai 2:9).

3. It was the city of Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18).

4. Although the Israelites captured its "suburbs", they never took the citadel of Mount Zion (Judges 1:8,21; 19:12; Joshua 15:63). This fortress was called Jebus, after its inhabitants the Jebusites, descendants of Hittites and Amorites (Ezekiel 16:3). It was finally taken by King David and renamed City of David (2 Samuel 5:6-9).

5. It was a suitable place for a capital as it had not played a role in the history of any of the tribes and was not in any of the tribes' territory, but on the boundary between Benjamin and Judah (Joshua 15:8; 18:16).

6. It was a strong fortress and had its own water supply in the spring Gihon. This could be reached from the city through a tunnel (2 Samuel 5:8), later improved by King Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:30).

7. The real spiritual meaning of Jerusalem began when King David brought the Ark of the Covenant to the City of David on Mount Zion (2 Samuel 6:16). Zion became synonymous with Jerusalem as the place where God dwelt among His people. (Psalms 48:1-3; 50:2; 87:2,3; 132:13,14; 137:5,6; 1 Kings 12:26-28)

8. Jerusalem the "City of Peace", was the scene of many battles and it changed hands many times during its 4,000 year history. Since 1967 it has been back in Jewish hands. (Luke 21:24)

#### 9. ITS FUTURE:

a) A new temple is to be built on the old temple site. The Antichrist will enter this temple to declare himself God. (2Thessalonians 2:4)

b) The armies of all nations will be drawn against her. Its inhabitants will suffer terribly but they will be delivered by the Lord. (Zechariah 14:1-9)

c) The Lord will enter the city through the East Gate (Golden Gate) which, at present, is bricked in. (Ezekiel 44:1,2; Psalm 24:7-9)

d) Jerusalem will be the capital during the Millennium. (Zechariah 2:10-13; 8:22; Isaiah 2:3,4)

e) But this Jerusalem is only a shadow of things to come. (Hebrews 11:10,16). After the Millennium there will be a new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. (Hebrews 12:22; Galatians 4:26; Revelation 3:12; 21:2,10).

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** See page 68

### **BLOOD SACRIFICE**

1. Ever since the earliest recorded time God has required a blood sacrifice for sin. It is implied by the coats of skin provided by the Lord in the garden after Adam and Eve had attempted to clothe their nakedness with leaves. Abel brought an acceptable animal sacrifice, unlike Cain's who brought an unacceptable bloodless offering.

2. The requirement for blood sacrifices was continued with Noah after the flood; (cf. the near sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham); and was established as a requirement not only by the Passover lamb but also in the Levitical offerings.

3. When recording the will of God for Israel in the matter of food and the abstinence from eating "any manner of blood" Moses states "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Leviticus 17:10,11)

4. It is clear from the above that the life of an innocent victim (the animal sacrifice) acted as a shadow until the once and for all payment was paid with the true sacrifice of Christ.

5. There is an absolute necessity of the unique sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ as indicated by the phrase "the blood of Christ". (Romans 3:25, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:22)

6. Up to the time of the once and for all sacrifice the sins of believers were set aside adjacent to them (Gk. para) but since the cross they have been taken fully away.

7. The twelve elements of grace which involve the blood of Christ:-

a) The New Covenant. (Hebrews 8:8, 9:20-21)

- b) The blood is the life. (John 6:53)
- c) Purchase and Redemption. (Acts 20:28, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18-19)
- d) Propitiation. (Romans 3:25)
- e) Justification. (Romans 5:9)
- f) Sanctification. (Hebrews 13:12)
- g) Cleansing. (Hebrews 9:14, 1 John 1:7, Revelation 7:14)
- h) Victory. (Revelation 12:11)
- i) The blood of sprinkling. (Hebrews 10:22, 1 Peter 1:2)
- j) Made nigh. (Ephesians 2:13)
- k) Peace. (Colossians 1:20)
- l) Boldness to enter. (Hebrews 10:19)

8. It is of interest that the resurrection body consists of flesh and bone but apparently no blood.

## FEASTS OF ISRAEL

1. In the Jewish calendar seven feasts were ordained by God for the Jews to follow and to be a sign to all believers.

2. In order the feasts were:-

- a) Passover
- b) Unleavened Bread
- c) First Fruits
- d) Pentecost
- e) Trumpets
- f) Atonement
- g) Tabernacles

3. THE PASSOVER (Deuteronomy 16:1-8, Leviticus 23:5)

Historically

- a) This feast originated on the night when the angel of the Lord passed over the land of Egypt immediately prior to the children of Israel leaving their bondage under Moses.
- b) A male lamb without blemish was killed on the 14th Nisan having been brought into the house 4 days before, great care being taken that not a bone in its body was broken. (Exodus 12:1-6)
- c) The lamb was roasted, eaten with bitter herbs and any portion left was burnt. (Exodus 12:7-10)
- d) In the original Passover the blood of the Lamb was daubed on the doorposts and lintels, any such house being spared from the last plague against Egypt. (Exodus 12:21-28) All plagues were against the gods of Egypt.
- e) The Passover was on the anniversary of the promise to Abraham. (Exodus 12:41)

Fulfilment

- a) The sacrificial lamb represents the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 5:7)
- b) Christ died on the 14th Nisan on the cross having entered Jerusalem, the Holy city 4 days before on the 10th Nisan.
- c) When the Roman soldiers broke the legs of the thieves they found Jesus dead so no bone in His body was broken. (John 19:32, 33)
- d) The roasting of the lamb represents judgement, the bitter herbs representing sins or failures.
- e) The eating of the lamb represents faith in the work of Christ i.e. eating and drinking at the communion table.)
- f) By faith in Christ we are protected from the final judgement of God. (Romans 8:1)

Currently

- a) Each time we celebrate the Lord's Supper we are looking back to the cross and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
- b) This could also represent salvation to the believer.

#### 4. UNLEAVENED BREAD (Leviticus 23:6-8)

- a) This feast lasted for seven days starting on the 15th Nisan and portrays the provision and fellowship with God.
- b) The bread was unleavened due to the need to leave Egypt with utmost haste. In addition the wine was without leaven or alcohol - the wine being boiled during this feast. This has been found in Chaldean army instructions when it was feared that the Jews could revolt during the time of unleavened bread if they were served with alcoholic Chaldean beer.
- c) As God can have nothing to do with sin God's provision is without leaven as leaven represents evil in the scriptures.
- d) There are various forms of leaven in the Bible:-
  - i) Leaven of the Sadducees - human viewpoint (Matthew 16:6)
  - ii) Leaven of the Pharisees - ritualism (Mark 8:15)
  - iii) Leaven of Herod - worldliness (Mark 8:15)
  - iv) Leaven of the Corinthians - wantonness (1 Corinthians 5:6, 7)
  - v) Leaven of the Galatians - legalism (Galatians 5:9).
- e) Bread made without leaven shows the perfection of Christ (Leviticus 2:11).
- f) This could represent the Christian walk for the believer.
- g) The unleavened bread was cooked on a griddle which caused the bread to have stripes. It also had holes. By his stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5) They will look upon him whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12:10).

#### 5. FIRST FRUITS (Leviticus 23:9-14)

- a) This feast always occurred on a Sunday and was celebrated on the 17th Nisan.
- b) This feast portrayed the resurrection of Christ and occurred half-way through the feast of Unleavened Bread.
- c) Christ is said to be the first fruits of them that sleep. (1 Corinthians 15:20)
- d) Christ rose 3 days after his death on the Passover.
- e) The Jews crossed the Red Sea 3 days after leaving bondage.
- f) The ark rested on Ararat on this very day after the flood. (Genesis 8:4)
- g) This could represent the resurrection body for the believer.

#### 6. PENTECOST (Leviticus 23:15-21)

- a) Pente - fifty - this occurred always on a Sunday 50 days or a week of weeks after the first fruits, generally in May or June. (Leviticus 23:15)
- b) It represents the dispersion of the Jews which occurred historically in AD 70 and there followed a long gap to the next feast representing the long time the Jews would be out of the land.
- c) Pentecost in the year of the crucifixion was the day on which the Church age started with the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem. (Acts 2:1-4).
- d) At Pentecost, 3,000 were born again; at the giving of the law, 3,000 were killed.

#### 7. TRUMPETS (Leviticus 23:23, 24)

- a) This occurred in September, the blowing of the trumpets representing the coming of the king. It is the Jewish New Year Day.
- b) This represents the return of the Lord Jesus Christ for his Church at the Rapture. The Jews recognise this as the day on which God would again have a relationship with the Jews.

#### 8. ATONEMENT (Leviticus 23:26-32)

- a) This occurred ten days after the feast of trumpets. It represents the fact that believing Jews only enter into the Millennium.
- b) From evaluation of (Daniel 12:11 & 12) and parallel passages it is apparent that there is a period of judgement at the second advent of some 45 days. This is a period of the wheat and tares, the sheep and the goats. The unbelievers are baptised with fire. (Matthew 3:11,12.) The believers enter the Millennium.

c) This was the only day of the year that the high priest was able to enter the Holy of Holies bringing a bowl of blood, once for himself and once for the nation. (Hebrews 9:6-7). His entry represents the sacrifice of Christ.

d) Christ's sacrifice is the fulfilment of this ritual. Christ only had to make one offering, as he was sinless, for the sins of the world. (Hebrews 9:11-14) On the feast of Atonement red wool, the Atonement Lot, was tied to the temple pillar. After the blood was spilt the lot turned white until the time of the cross. Afterwards it stayed red. This sign showed Christ's once and for all sacrifice.

#### 9. TABERNACLES (Leviticus 23:33-36)

This occurred five days after the feast of Atonement and lasted a week. It represents the Millennial Reign of Christ and the perfect provision and environment provided. (Deuteronomy 16:13-15, Romans 8:19-22)

10. It is of interest that the two feasts that speak of God's perfect provision - Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles - were a week duration whilst the others were for a day, speaking of a point in time occurrence such as the crucifixion, resurrection or rapture of the Church.

#### 11. SUMMARY

- a) PASSOVER fulfilled at The Crucifixion on Passover AD 32
- b) UNLEAVENED BREAD fulfilled at Burial of Christ on Unleavened Bread AD 32
- c) FIRST-FRUITS fulfilled at Resurrection of Christ on First-Fruits AD 32
- d) PENTECOST fulfilled at End of Jewish Age on Pentecost AD 32
- e) TRUMPETS to be fulfilled at Rapture of Church
- f) ATONEMENT to be fulfilled at Second Advent of Christ
- g) TABERNACLES to be fulfilled at Millennial reign of Christ

12. As Paul had seen the literal fulfilment of the first four feasts in some 8 weeks in AD 32 it is hardly surprising that he would expect to be in the "rapture generation" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Thessalonians 2:1)

**GOD – NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT** See page 10

**GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD** See page 18

#### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – DESTINY OF BELIEVERS**

1. He who believes in Jesus Christ has eternal life now (1 John 5:11-13). He will never die (John 11:25,26, John 8:51)

2. Believers are said to "fall asleep" at their death (1 Thessalonians 4:14). The soul departs to be consciously present with Christ, but the body "sleeps" in the grave until the resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

3. When Christ comes at the Rapture, the bodies of those in Christ shall be raised from the dead (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23)

4. Our physical bodies will be replaced by immortal bodies (2 Corinthians 5:1-4) - conformed to the body of Christ (Philippians 3:20-21)

5. We shall be like him (1 John 3:2) seeing His glory and reflecting it in ourselves (Colossians 3:4, John 17:22).

6. We will be rewarded because of works of faith (Luke 19:12-19) which will vary in proportion to our faithfulness in serving God (Matthew 6:20, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

7. In the Millennial Kingdom, we shall reign with Christ as priests of God and Christ (Revelation 20:6).

8. To the overcomer (1 John 5:4-5) Christ will give to eat of the tree of life (Revelation 2:7) and shall not be hurt by the second death - the lake of fire (Revelation 2:11). He will be given authority to rule over nations (Revelation 2:26-27) Jesus will acknowledge the believer before God (Revelation 3:4-5) who will be made a pillar in the temple of God. (Revelation 3:12) and will be seated with Christ in His own throne. (Revelation 3:21)

9. God will wipe away all tears from his eyes; sorrow, crying, pain, and death shall be no more (Revelation 21:4)

10. We shall know all things perfectly (1 Corinthians 13:12)

11. We will receive an incorruptible inheritance. (1 Peter 1:3-5) kept by our all powerful God in heaven.

**DYING GRACE** See page 28

## **NOTES**

## **PSALM 49**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm runs a parallel course to the theme of Ecclesiastes. It records the futility and pointlessness of what one commentator calls “worthless worldly wealth” that has no eternal value. Man, apart from a vital relationship with God that provides meaning and purpose, is just like the beasts that perish. All our life evaporates away, and it doesn’t matter how rich and powerful we are, we all turn to dust and blow away.

These themes have become very powerful to me as I have faced the death of both my parents over this last ten days in 2009. After each of their deaths I had to visit the Old Folks Home where they were living and clear out their rooms. Their entire worldly goods amounted to five sacks of clothes each. As I carried these from the Home each time I reflected upon the frailty of man, and the emptiness of worldly goods. I thought of Paul at the end of his life, with some manuscripts and parchments to pass on, and one set of good clothes. 2 Timothy 4:13.

What matters is our spiritual legacy, not our physical belongings. Everything we own goes eventually to others, but only our spiritual legacy lasts the years and bears fruit eternally. My parent’s legacy is far more than their old clothes, for they loved the Lord and brought me up in the love of the Lord, and so their faithful service has borne fruit in my life, and that of my children who also love their Lord.

The legacy of the most powerful unbelievers like Nero is nothing, but the legacy of Paul and Peter, whom he executed, is everything, both now and forever. The legacy of once



powerful people in my society is also nothing, but my godly old parent's legacy is blessing forever.

It is this perspective that the psalmist wants us to get clearly in our minds and sing about through the months, weeks, and days of our life. 2 Timothy 4:1-8. Earthly wealth is a vapour, and soon is gone forever, but earthly service for the Lord bears fruit eternally in the universe to come. Matthew 6:25-34, Luke 12:22-34, James 4:13-17.

## PSALMS 49:1-20

**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. 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? 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: 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. 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. 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; 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.**

## REFLECTION

**1 Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world:  
2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.**

The preacher has the responsibility to communicate truth and communicate it clearly and effectively. If the herald is not heard, then they have not done their job for the King. Our responsibility as HERALDS is to preach clearly and as often as we can, but the responsibility of each person hearing our words is to respond to them. Jeremiah 1:17-19, Ezekiel 2:1-8, 3:8-11, 16-21.

Once the truth is clearly presented, the herald has done his job, but if they haven't presented the words clearly, then the King will require explanation from them. All people are to hear the truth, but what they do with the truth is over to them. Let us be sure we have the urgency to ensure that all who hear have opportunity to hear the truth about the Lord. Psalms 34:11, 78:1, Proverbs 1:20-23.

The rich and the poor are equal in God's sight; there is no "blessing" upon the rich that makes them spiritual or special above the poor. It is the content of the heart and work done from the heart in the power of the Holy Spirit that sets people apart in time and with blessings that last into eternity. Proverbs 22:1-2, Jeremiah 5:3-9, Matthew 5:3-8, James 1:9-11, 5:1-8. All the peoples of the earth are "together" in the end; we all are heading towards death and the execution of our will that passes everything over to others.

I had a discussion with a pagan lady this week who has nightmares every night. She dreams in vivid colour of the violent death for herself and her son. She had this boy to a violent man and he has continued to harass her. She has no hope for time or eternity and yet has avoided facing the questions of faith and her end. I challenged her directly with the truth; she is on a track in life that ends at death, and only a fool ignores the destination as they live on the path. She understood this immediately and has begun her search for a faith that works. There is only one faith that truly works and my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will open the door for her to see that in the days and weeks to come. John 16:8-11.

**3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.**

**4 I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.**

As Moses did in his last speech to Israel, as recorded in Deuteronomy 32:1-4, so the psalmist does here. He announces that he is giving the doctrines of God in this Psalm, and that the people must understand his words or their lives will head in the wrong direction. He refers to his words as “wisdom”, which is the technical term for a biblical doctrine. This was a way for the authors of scripture to call attention to their words and underline their significance and urge the believers to strongly and urgently apply them. The believers need to hear the truth, believe the truth, and apply the truth.

The psalmist has meditated upon these things for a long time and he knows them as God’s Word to His people. He will communicate them by means of parable and song, so that by two easy memory tools the people might hear, understand, believe, and remember the truth. Parables and stories are easy to remember and songs are easy to remember, and the importance of bible doctrine is such that these two means form the best way for believers to recall truths that they need to remember. God’s truths are “dark sayings” only to those who reject God. 2 Corinthians 3:13-17, 4:3-4, Ephesians 2:1-5.

**5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?**

**6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;**

“Days of evil” come to all of us at some point in our lives. On this journey through life we will have many times when we face sickness, distress, and for some, quite terrible and traumatic events. When these things occur what will be our stability? If we serve the Lord, we will face great attacks at times and may experience a hatred towards us that resembles that towards our Lord. John 15:18-27.

FEAR is however not an option for the believer in the Lord, because we are part of the Lord’s eternal plan and are safe within that plan. Those who hate the Lord and His servants may actually surround us at times, but we are urged to keep our focus upon our position in Christ Jesus, our role for the Lord, and our destiny with Him forever, and so keep doing our work. We are not to be distracted from the Lord’s task for us by any threat or attack; we are to serve Him and leave our protection in His hands.

The most powerful enemies of the truth will always be “prosperity gospel” people. This ought not to surprise us, for Satan, down the centuries, has always promised prosperity in time to his servants, and he delivers it for a time to them. WEALTH is no evidence of spirituality any more than POVERTY is evidence of divine discipline or judgement. Psalms 52:4-8, 62:10. This last verse is the most powerfully direct verse in the Old Testament about the deceitful nature of wealth. Wealth flies away like a bird over time! Proverbs 23:5. Wealth is not to be trusted, it is to be used for the Lord’s work on the pilgrim path. Luke 12:16-31, 16:19-31.

**7 None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:**

**8 (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)**

No matter how much money we have we cannot redeem our brother from eternal judgement. No indulgences can ever be purchased to redeem a soul from hell fire. It is incredible that the Old Roman Church of the Middle Ages ever stooped to the level of selling indulgences. No one can pay the price for the sin of man except the Saviour God who perfectly paid the price. The staggering blasphemy of indulgences is a real satanic fruit sign of the state of that church at that time! Sadly, for the lost, their life is also “forever” but it is forever with the angels who also rejected God’s claims upon their lives. Revelation 20:10-15.

Every man’s and every woman’s money and other goods are all passed on to their descendents; we take nothing with us into eternity to barter our way with God. We either have either accepted the cleansing of “the precious blood of Christ” or we have not! Refer to the BTB studies on SALVATION and REDEMPTION. The only action that “lasts forever” for eternal blessing is an action achieved by God’s power and received by grace through faith. Mankind as fallen creatures, are simply not in the “blessed forever” category, unless we change that through salvation and spiritual growth. The redemption of a soul is the most precious thing, and the curse of sin and death upon mankind ends forever for that soul, when they accept God’s remedy and leave their arrogance and rebellion against God behind. 1 Peter 1:3-5, 18-25, 2:4-10.

**9 That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.**

**10 For he sees that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.**

ETERNAL LIFE and ETERNAL SECURITY are both there for the believer in their POSITION IN CHRIST. As believers in the Lord, we enter a new and special place even as we live upon this fallen earth. At the moment of salvation, the believer enters into union with Christ and is beyond the attack of the Angel of Death. Our death is now simply a transition into heaven, and is precious in God’s sight.

When death comes to the believer it comes as a friend; for “precious in the sight of God is the death of his saints”, and “to the Lord belong the issues of death” for the believer. Psalms 68:20, 116:15. In and through our relationship with our Creator and now Saviour God we enjoy rest from worry about death, for it is truly now, absence from this body, and being face to face with the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. Galatians 2:20. Refer again to the BTB studies on DEATH, and DYING GRACE. We do not see death, we see Jesus, John 5:24, 8:51-58, Acts 7:51ff..

Once again I rejoice in this Psalm in the light of the recent deaths of my parents Matthew and Marcia McEwan and now my wife’s cousin Charles Makaea, over these last ten days. Each of these three people died as believers in the Lord and they died in grace and with absolute confidence of resurrection. They will receive resurrection bodies at the Lord’s return, at the place where their bodies were laid in their graves.

Right now each of them are rejoicing with the Lord in heaven, in what Paul calls an “intermediate bodily form” ( 1 Corinthians 15:1ff, 2 Corinthians 5:1-8), awaiting that final day when the entire Church receives their Christ-like body in the last day of the Church Age. Refer to the BTB study RESURRECTION. This is Paul’s very clear and precise teaching to the Thessalonian and Corinthian churches. We bury our dead in sure and certain hope of resurrection. Read the two Corinthian passages in the EBCWA Commentaries right now if you do not have assurance and clarity of thinking on this matter.

Our dear Cousin Charles Makaea was a great church leader and mentor for the Niuean Island Church Community. He loved the Lord and served the Lord’s people all his older years since meeting the Lord and having his life turned around by Holy Spirit power. He was a living testimony of a changed and triumphant life in Christ and a joy to be around. My wife and I will miss his cheery smile and ready humour and his church will miss his

biblical and practical wisdom. We are sad at his death because we are sorry for ourselves! We would have liked more time with him, but he was ready to go to be with his Lord and he said as much to his wife and children, and we have eternity with him. Death actually robs us of nothing at all by way of fellowship.

My own parents were also ready to go to be with their Lord and we farewelled them both at a great old age in the confidence that we will be going to be with them one day. As David was confident of seeing his dead child again, so are we that we will see our loved ones in Christ Jesus. 2 Samuel 11:17-23. We bury the bodies of our loved ones and they “see corruption”, and these earthly bodies rot away, but for the believer this is not the end, but the beginning of a new phase of their existence in heaven.

**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 abides not: he is like the beasts that perish.**

The arrogance of many foolish people is seen in the grand names they give for their houses and the large or significant items of wealth that they treasure (like their great jewels, or boats). They call their palaces, jewels and yachts after themselves, and yet these grand and expensive things are only “for a brief time” before thieves destroy, enemy armies burn, frauds eliminate them, or other people inherit them and the names are either changed or they are lost to rust or decay anyway. If our fame and fortune is earth bound then it will last as long as the moths don’t eat it and the rust does not destroy it. Jesus will speak directly of these things and challenge His hearers to value the things that last eternally rather than the things of time that rot or decay. Matthew 6:19-21.

The scriptures are filled with warnings about these things. Proverbs 23:4-5, Ecclesiastes 3:18-21, Luke 12:16-34, 1 Timothy 6:5-10, James 5:1-8. Anyone foolish enough to be still clinging to the false beliefs of the so called “prosperity gospel” should be casting their system away from them after reading the above verses. If this is an issue for you believer, please study each of these passages in an EBCWA Commentary and be corrected and relieved of such nonsense.

We all live and die, just like the animals, and the only thing that separates us is the resurrection reality that is in Christ Jesus for those who are His. No matter what the “honour” other people give us, the fame we enjoy lasts no longer than the people who give it to us. All that man gives is temporary and temporal. The honour of man does not abide; only those who love the Lord and are the objects of His love abide forever. Let us ensure we, “abide in Him, and His word abides in us”. John 15:4-10, 1 Timothy 2:13, 1 Peter 1:23, 1 John 2:6-17, 24-28. Refer to the BTB study ABIDING IN GOD.

**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.**

The future of the godless rich is misery, but the eternal future of the believer is joy forever with their Lord. The way of the godless is indeed “folly”. It is foolishness to base your life and destiny upon things that obviously do not last beyond this life, and yet so many deceive themselves in their lifestyles. Our newspaper this very day spoke of a “celebrity drug ring” where sportsmen and socialites all have been exposed as drug takers and immoral people through the arrest of one con man who sold them their drugs. Their lives are proven a sham and their futures are now in doubt as prison awaits many of them. Their lives were “folly” built upon the escapism of the drug world.

Satan loves to deceive foolish people who do not want to bow their knee to the Lord but who are quite happy to bow their knee to a drug dealer and bar owner. We must bow our

knee to someone in this life, and each person decides who they will worship, and Satan will prove himself every time to be a bad master.

“Time will tell” is the saying we have in English to repeat the principle at the end of verse thirteen. The posterity of fools will often repeat their foolish words, and at the funerals of the lost I have heard all sorts of foolishness said about where the lost person now is! This saying may have two explanations; the first is that the children follow the foolishness of their parents, but the second is that the children see the foolishness of their parents. Sadly, the second option is less common.

It is more common for fools to be followed by greater fools. It is only the work of the Holy Spirit that changes lives, not fools seeing the truth. John 16:8-11. When a fool sees the truth they are simply more driven to hide from it with drugs or alcohol. Let us be the Lord’s heralds who tell the truth and proclaim the truth so that the fools are without excuse before God.

The end of the lost is not just to have their corpse laid in the grave, but just like the bones of the animals that are slaughtered for food or sacrifice they are buried, and their soul is in hell. In the ancient world of Israel bodies were laid in a tomb for a year until the flesh rotted off the bones. The “corruption” of the body was well known because of this, as the stench of rotting flesh was readily smelt when graves were reopened for new burials. After a year the bones of the dead person were then gathered, washed, oiled and reburied in the family tomb, often in a bone box or Ossuary.

The people who were in charge of the bones and burying were “righteous/upright” people who did this service to the dead. It was a noble and good thing to do to care for the body of the dead, for to touch a body made that person unclean and unable to worship in the community for a number of days. The person who cared for a body was putting their own religious life on hold to care for and honour their godly dead. Numbers 19:11-22.

It was a gift of love to the dead to care for their body, and no matter how lowly the person who did this, they were, in doing it, superior to the dead! The greatness of the past status of the now dead person, did not alter the fact of the decay of their body, nor their total reliance upon the loving care of a righteous person who cared for their body. All the power structures were overturned by death; they always are overturned! The most beautiful person becomes just an ugly rotting skeleton after death. Beauty is but for a season upon the earth for the lost, but praise God in eternity we have the beauty of the Lord forever.

The psalmist is really singing of dark things here, and yet he is singing of good things to reflect upon, for the believer has no worries in the area of death and burial. We have an heavenly destiny and the fate of our body is irrelevant to us, except that we want our funeral to be a testimony to our living faith, which by the time of our funeral, has come to its triumphant goal in the arms of Jesus.

**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;**

The psalmist’s assurance is now contrasted strongly to the doubts, fears and confusion of the pagans of whom he has spoken so far. The psalm will end with a strong statement of faith in the resurrection power of the Lord, and the assurance of the believer in the face of death. The believer may strongly state, “I know my redeemer lives!” Job 19:25.

The pagan commentators upon the scripture, who delight in mocking the truths of the Word of God, attack the very thought of eternal life and speak of the “evolution” of such “ideas”. Their falsehood is easily exposed by serious students of the Word of God, for from the beginning of the journey through space-time, the people of God sought to bury their

dead loved ones in the company of those they sought to stand with on resurrection day. From the oldest book (Job) to the third youngest book (Revelation) the Bible speaks of the confidence of the saints in physical bodily resurrection.

In light of the reality of death, and the certainty of the end of all earthly things, believers are urged to have a different attitude towards the wealth of others. Many people, even believers themselves get envious and jealous of the wealth of others. They look and lust after the things of others. This is foolishness for the believer who by their envying has lost their eternal life perspective. We seek a city that does not pass away, not the temporary glories of man that do pass away! Hebrews 11:10, 11:16, 13:14.

The order for believers is clear, "Do not be worried about others becoming wealthy, when you are still poor!" Do not think that the Lord is judging you by this, nor that you are somehow being treated badly by the Lord, and that it is "unfair". Relax and trust the Lord to give you what you need to do what He has called you to do, for He will always do that! Philippians 4:4-13.

**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.**

Wealth is deceptive, and all who trust in it are to be disappointed, but all who trust in the Lord will be delivered and they will praise Him forever. Ecclesiastes 12:1-14. It is resting in the love of the Lord for us that stabilises our hearts and minds. All else is a vapour other than the grace, mercy, love and gifts of the Lord God who loved us and gave Himself for us. When we die we carry nothing away with us except our status as the friends or enemies of God. The glory of all men dies with them, and only the eternal rewards given by God last for eternity. While men live they bless themselves by their deeds, and others will also bless them as they do well, but it is not the "well done" of men that lasts. Matthew 25:21-23.

**19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.**

**20 Man that is in honour, and understands not, is like the beasts that perish.**

"Always look on to the end". (W G Scroggie). The race takes its meaning from the winning post and all who fail to break the winning tape are just "also-ran losers" of the race. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, 2 Timothy 4:1-8, Hebrews 12:1-3. Refer to the BTB study ATHLETICS. We are called to run our race with an intelligent focus upon the end, and the end for our humanity is death, but the end for our spiritual life is heaven with the Lord where REWARDS AND CROWNS are assigned for spiritual performance upon the earth. It is only the finish line that defines the race results, no actions beforehand count unless they lead to the final triumph. Let us keep our eyes fixed forwards.

The ungodly dead will not see the light of day again, for their fate is judgement and eternal death. They die, without Christ, without hope and without eternal life, but they do share with Satan eternal death. They had their "day in the sun" and they wasted it upon things that do not last. They sought honour and the fame that foolish men like themselves give to other fools, and so they died. Luke 16:19-31.

They died without hope, without purpose, without joy, and without eternal life, for they died without a real relationship with the only One who gives life. John 3:16-36, 10:10. They died like the animals they petted, and they are gone like the vapour from their cigarette smoke. It's not however "over" for them, for they do not escape judgment by any soul "extinction", they must face eternal judgment for their despising of the Creator-Saviour God who they ignored or despised.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. All that we build materially in this life is gone in a few years. Let us not be attached to the things of this world but rest our hearts and minds upon the things that last forever. Let us serve the Lord with confidence in our eternal destiny and a focus upon the eternal rewards that the faithful will receive rather than any temporary baubles given in time by men.

2. Let us ensure that we abide in the Lord in daily living fellowship with the One who loves us, and let us ensure that His Word abides in us as our strength to stabilise us in difficult times and places. What separates us from the animals is our eternal destiny with the Lord forever in a resurrection body like our Lord's.

3. Do not give way to envy believer. Do not give way to jealousy or bitterness at another's wealth and your own poverty. You are called to be content in all places you find yourself and trust the Lord to bring you through all the places the Lord has led you into. God can be trusted, but riches cannot be trusted. Riches grow wings and fly away. Proverbs 23:5.

4. Let us ensure we preach the doctrines of eternal life and eternal rewards, so that all might know the truth and focus their lives intelligently upon their eternal destiny, not the temporary baubles and praise of time. Let us live with our eyes fixed upon eternity.

## DOCTRINES

**HERALDS** See page 41

**FEAR** See page 79

## POVERTY

1. God can raise the poor out of the poverty of their circumstances. (1 Samuel 2:8, Psalm 113:7)

2. There is a special happiness for those who help the poor. (Psalm 41:1, 2, Proverbs 19:17, Proverbs 29:14)

3. The poor are not only delivered by God from poverty but in the reality of their poverty they often see their need of salvation and respond to the gospel. (Psalm 72:12-14, Matthew 11:5)

4. Whilst charity is good and honourable, it can be abused (Proverbs 14:30-31, 19:17) Charity is for the poor, but excessive dependence upon welfare makes the poor lazy (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11)

5. There is a special curse for those who ignore helping the poor. (Proverbs 21:13, 22:16, 28:3). There is also a special curse for those who take advantage of the poor. (Proverbs 22:22-23)

6. Until the Millennium there will always be poverty in the human race. (Mark 14:7)

7. The poor are a target for hypocrisy and its victim. (John 12:5). They are also the victims of backsliders. (James 2:2-4)

8. Poor believers have the same spiritual privileges as rich believers. (James 2:5). A person can be poor in material things but rich in doctrine.

**WEALTH**

1. Wealth may be in the form of money, gold or silver, goods or land. Wealth is always relative to the values within a society. What is wealthy within a poor culture is poor within a more wealthy culture. What individuals feel is wealthy will differ from person to person; some will never feel they are wealthy enough. The believer is urged to be content with what he has received, in his position, from the Lord. 1 Timothy 6:6-10, Philippians 4:11-13, Hebrews 13:5-6.
2. Money has a legitimate function, and wealth generally is, like money, a neutral thing; something to be used to facilitate daily life. Money and goods are used to pay taxes Matthew 22:17-22, Luke 20:20-26, buy goods needed for the family, and give towards the Lord's work in the church. Money is not evil. Genesis 29:3, Jeremiah 32:44.
3. It is no evil to have wealth or lots of money, it is the lust for money and goods that corrupts a man, as it did Baalam, Jude 11.
4. Money and wealth generally, are great slaves but terrible masters. Wealth is deceitful if a person believes it will buy him happiness, provide him with security, or give him immortality. Matthew 6:24-33, Luke 12:16-21 Proverbs 18:10-12, Proverbs 13:7.
5. Money and wealth will not buy respectability with God, nor will it purchase salvation. Mark 8:36,37, Acts 8:18-24, Mark 10:23-27.
6. Wealth may get in the way of the simple message of salvation, as the Rich Young Ruler found. Matthew 19:16, Luke 18:19,20, Mark 10:17-27.
7. Money may get in the way of spiritual growth, when we pay more attention to our wealth than we do to applying doctrine in our lives. Solomon in Ecclesiastes 5:10 6:2, Baalam in Jude 11, Ananias' and Saphira in Acts 5:1-10, All of us in James 5:1-6.
8. God is not impressed with money and pride filled shows of wealth. Luke 16:10-31, Proverbs 11:4,28.
9. Wealth can be a great blessing received by believers in maturity, and if it is it is to be used for the Lord's work, as well as for life style. Proverbs 13:8ff, Hebrews 13, Refer Doctrine Of Giving.

**SALVATION – SIN - MAN'S NEED FOR SALVATION**

1. Sin means to fall short (like an arrow falling short of the target) of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
2. Therefore, anything which does not meet God's standard of righteousness and holiness is sin.
3. It is clear to see, then, that mankind, in his own strength, cannot achieve the righteousness of God. (Romans 3:9-10)
4. The sin of Adam
  - a) Sin entered the world with Adam. (Genesis 3:1-5, Romans 5:12)
  - b) The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23)
    - i) spiritual death - separation from God in time (Genesis 3:8)
    - ii) physical death - separation of the soul from the body (Genesis 3:19, 5:5)
    - iii) eternal death - separation from God in the Lake of Fire Revelation 20:13-14)
  - c) The man, Adam, as head over the woman, was therefore held responsible for sin (Romans 5:12)



- d) The penalty of sin is imputed to all people, and, apparently, passed down through the male in birth.
- e) Because Jesus was born of a virgin, He did not inherit the sin nature from Adam.
- f) As a sinless man, He was therefore qualified to offer Himself as a sacrifice to pay the penalty of sin (death - spiritual and physical).
- g) Because Christ has paid the penalty for sin for us, those who trust in Him are no longer condemned (Romans 5:19, 8:1)

5. All of creation is corrupted as a result of sin (Genesis 3:16-19, Romans 8:20-22)

6. Three types of sin:-

- a) Adam's sin is imputed to all mankind
- b) As a result, we all inherit a sinful nature
- c) As a result, we therefore commit personal sins

7. Sin manifests itself in three categories:

- a) Sins of action/deed
  - i) Examples include murder, adultery, stealing
- b) Sins of the tongue/spoken
  - i) Examples include lying, slander, gossip, blasphemy
  - ii) Out of the seven "worst" sins, three are sins of the tongue. (Proverbs 6:16-19)
  - iii) Can result in the sin unto death. (Psalm 12:3)
  - iv) God protects and blesses the believer who is victimised by the sins of the tongue. (Matthew 5:11-12)
  - v) Troublemakers are always characterised by sins of the tongue. (Psalm 52:2)
- c) Sins of the mind
  - i) Examples include pride, coveting, jealousy, bitterness, hatred, vindictiveness.

8. Recovery from sin

- a) When a believer sins his fellowship with God is disrupted. The Holy Spirit is grieved, and can no longer control your life.
- b) Confess the known sin. (1 John 1:9, Psalm 66:18) God forgives these sins upon confession and cleanses from the unknown sins in the believer's life as well as known sins.
- c) Examine your motivation - this involves full surrender to God. (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 13:5)
- d) Move on from the sin which you have confessed. Don't get tied up with guilt - this is another sin. (Philippians 3:13-14, Psalm 103:10-12)
- e) Resume your active spiritual walk. Avoid areas where you might be tempted. (Hebrews 12:12-13)
- f) Be reconciled to others once you have been reconciled to God. (James 5:16)
- g) In human forgiveness we are told to forgive others even as God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).

9. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples John 13:10

- a) The body is clean - we were eternally forgiven once and for all at the cross. (Hebrews 10:1-12).
- b) The feet need regular washing - we must confess our sins to the Father to restore fellowship (1 John 1:9)

10. Satan constantly accuses us of our sins before God (Revelation 12:10). However, the Lord Jesus Christ is our Advocate/Lawyer in heaven (1 John 2:1). He pleads for us by saying that the penalty for that sin has been paid in full.

11. Names for sin include:-

- a) Unbelief - denial of the truth. (John 16:9, Hebrews 3:12)
- b) Lawlessness - rejection of rules of life. (1 Timothy 1:9)
- c) Iniquity - evil acts. (Acts 8:22, 23)
- d) Trespass - encroachment on God's authority. (Ephesians 2:1)

- e) Disobedience - refusal to obey. (Hebrews 2:2)
- f) Transgression - violation of law. (Luke 15:29, Galatians 3:19)

12. The sin unto death is the physical death of a believer, due to habitual unconfessed sin or rebellion against God. (1 John 5:16, 17, 1 Corinthians 11:31, 32) Examples

- a) The Corinthian Pervert - (1 Corinthians 5)
- b) The Corinthians who habitually came to the Lord's table in an unworthy manner. (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)
- c) Moses (Deuteronomy 32:48-52)
- d) Achan (Joshua 7:16-26)
- e) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1 -11)

13. There is only one sin which can't be forgiven - the unpardonable sin - rejection of Jesus Christ.

- a) It is based upon rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. Genesis 6:3, John 16:7-11, Hebrews 10:29.
- b) Synonyms for the unpardonable sin are: wilful sin Hebrews 10:26-31, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit Matthew 12:31, resisting the Holy Spirit Acts 7:51, insulting the Holy Spirit Hebrews 10:29

14. The first recorded sin was that of Satan - pride (Isaiah 14:12-14)

15. God is not the author of sin nor the author of temptation. It is incompatible with the nature of God for Him to create sin because of His divine character. (James 1:13).

16. Temptation comes from the world, the flesh (sin nature within man), or Satan. If he entertains the sin, man then chooses to sin - sin is therefore a result of man's own free will. (James 1:14)

## SALVATION – BARRIER BETWEEN MAN AND GOD

### INTRODUCTION

1. The Character of God:

- a) God is sovereign, absolute righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, all powerful, all knowing everywhere, unchangeable and truth.
- b) God is one in essence but three in personality: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three personalities have the same essence.
- c) God the Father is the planner of man's salvation; God the Son is the executor of the plan of salvation, and God the Holy Spirit is the revealer of this plan.

2. God's Divine Plan:

- a) A conference was held in eternity past between God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Divine Planning) whereby it was made possible for man to have fellowship with God.
- b) God's foreknowledge recognised a barrier would exist in time and that all people would be behind this barrier. (Romans 3:23)
- c) Sin is a failure to measure up to God's perfect righteousness, a failure to possess "The perfect righteousness". Man cannot remove this barrier. God's Righteousness and Justice must be satisfied before His love can come to man.
- d) God the Father is the author of a plan whereby He decided to treat the human race on the basis of Grace (all the Father does for us). Grace is receiving a gift. It is undeserved and unmerited, and contrary to all human concepts.
- e) God the Son removed the barrier by His death on the cross. We receive Him as our personal Saviour, and perfect righteousness is credited to us. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

### AN EXPLANATION OF THE BARRIER AND ITS REMOVAL

1. Problem of Sin:

- a) Sin exists in three categories: imputed sin, (all sinned when Adam sinned) inherent sin (the sinful nature) personal sin (sins committed).
- b) Man is a sinner because Adam sinned and passed down the sin nature to the human race. The penalty of sin is spiritual death (Romans 5:12, 6:23) Every member of the human race is a sinner as far as God is concerned. (Romans 3:23)
- c) In John 8:31-32 Jesus Christ addressed the Jews who believed on Him and told them to go on in truth and use what He provided. Truth sets us free from the Mosaic Law to serve the Lord and operate in grace.
- d) The unbelieving, religious Jews (v 33) said they were Abraham's seed and not in bondage. They were actually in bondage to the Roman Empire, their religious leaders, and the Mosaic Law. He told them about the bondage of sin.
- e) They are all born in the slavery of sin, for no member of the human race can free himself or other members of the human race. Jesus Christ became true humanity to liberate the human race. He was born outside the slavery of sin by the virgin birth as the God-Man. He paid the price for freedom of the human race - this is redemption.

## 2. Solution to the Problem of Sin: Redemption and Atonement:

- a) The "son abides in the house forever" (John 8:35), for Jesus Christ is "the son". He is eternal life and holy and when man believes on Him man is free and enters into union with Jesus Christ. Christianity is a relationship to Jesus Christ, not a religion.
- b) The purchase price of our redemption is His blood (1 Peter 1:18,19, Ephesians 1:7, Revelation 1:5, Hebrews 9:11-14, Galatians 3:13) , representing His death. Jesus Christ bore the sins of the whole world (past, present and future) on the cross.
- c) God is absolute righteousness and justice; the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23, Colossians 2:14). Jesus Christ cancelled the "IOU" the human race owed God. The human race owes God perfect righteousness.
- d) God is perfect righteousness and we cannot pay perfect righteousness. Jesus Christ died on the cross, paying the penalty of our sins. This is expiation (Romans 5:8)
- e) The doctrines of Redemption and Expiation are found in Psalm 22:1-6. God the Father and Holy Spirit left the Son because He was bearing our sins on the cross. (Matthew 27:46)

## 3. The Problem of the Penalty of Sin solved by Expiation (Colossians 2:14)(Romans 6:23)

- a) Expiation and Propitiation are two sides of the same coin with propitiation being in relation to God while expiation looks at the problem from man's side.
- b) By expiation the offence which renders the person guilty in the sight of God is covered from the eyes of God by the effective dealing with the problem by propitiation.

## 4. The Problem of Physical Birth (John 3) and its Solution: Regeneration:(John 3:1-15)

- a) Nicodemus (v 1) was a Pharisee. He was a very religious man, attending church three times a day and praying seven times a day. He was sincere and was a product of "salvation by works".
- b) He was also a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night because he was too busy during the day doing "good". (v 2)
- c) He called Jesus Rabbi or "Doctor". He admitted more than most Pharisees for he said they knew Jesus came from God, for no one could keep doing the miracles He did except God was with Him. (v 2)
- d) Jesus interrupted, knowing his problem. "Except a man be born again". Nicodemus needed to be born again. (v 3)
- e) Why is the new birth necessary? Man is born in this world with a soul (ability to understand and categorize human phenomena), a conscience (standard by which we judge right or wrong), and a sin nature (the source of all personal sins). The human spirit is inactivated. We are born physically alive and capable of having fellowship with members of the human race, but we are spiritually dead and cannot have fellowship with God (Ephesians 2:1). We need to be born again.
- f) Nicodemus' response (v 4). He cannot think in terms of spiritual things for he has no human spirit. He asked if he could be born again physically.
- g) The new birth is a spiritual birth (v 5), so Jesus Christ uses spiritual language, - water.

- i) The context determines the meaning of "water" (1) Salvation - (Isaiah 55:1, Revelation 22:17) (2) God the Holy Spirit - (John 7:37-39) (3) God's Word - (1 Peter 1:23, Ephesians 5:26, James 1:18)
- ii) Here "water" is used symbolically for God's Word. The new birth is a spiritual birth. The Kingdom of God is the kingdom of eternal relationship with God.
- h) Contrast of two births (v 6). "That which is born of the flesh is flesh (physical birth). That which is born of the Spirit is spirit (spiritual birth)." Nicodemus should not be surprised (v 7). He needed to be born again.
- i) The illustration (v 8) the wind. It can be heard but not seen. The new birth is not visible. Nicodemus still does not understand (v 9).
- j) Jesus Christ used sarcasm (v 10,11) to shock Nicodemus. He is a doctor of divinity and does not understand. The Trinity ("we") knows what they speak (all knowing). Nicodemus does not have an open mind.
- k) No member of the human race (v 13) ever ascended, but Jesus Christ who came from heaven (as the God Man). As God He is everywhere, and as God and Man, Jesus Christ is on earth at the same time.
- l) How to be born again (v 14,15). Jesus Christ refers to (Numbers 21:4-9) the incident of the brazen serpent which was raised on a pole. This pictures Jesus Christ hanging on the cross bearing the sins of the world. (Colossians 2:14,15)
- m) The result (v 15). Whoever believes in Jesus Christ shall not perish but have eternal life. The problem of physical birth is removed by the new birth. We are born spiritually by regeneration or the new birth.

#### 5. Problem of Human Righteousness and Its Solution: Justification and Imputation:

- a) Man has no righteousness in himself as far as God's viewpoint is concerned although he may be more righteous than other members of the human race when he compares himself with them. (Isaiah 64:6)
- b) God is absolute righteousness and He cannot have fellowship with us when we have human righteousness. Good deeds put us more in debt to God. (Romans 4:1-4)
- c) Perfect or absolute righteousness is credited or imputed to us at the moment of salvation. (2 Corinthians 5:21) -imputation.
- d) We are justified or made righteous on the basis of the absolute righteousness which God gives us.

#### 6. Problem of the Character of God and Its Solution: Propitiation and Reconciliation.

- a) Propitiation is an act of God whereby He is satisfied with the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Jesus Christ satisfied the righteousness and justice of God.
- b) Reconciliation looks at the cross from man's viewpoint. Man is reconciled to God. God is never said to be reconciled. Propitiation looks at the cross from God's viewpoint.

#### 7. Problem of Position in Adam and Its Solution: Positional in Christ

- a) At the moment of salvation we enter into union with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:38,39, 2 Corinthians 5:17). This is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13)
- b) By our first birth we are "in Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:22). By the new birth we share Christ's eternal life, His righteousness, His destiny, His sonship, His priesthood. etc. Everything He is, we are-, and all He has, we have.
- c) Christianity is a relationship to Jesus Christ that cannot change. The barrier between God and man has been removed by Jesus Christ on the cross.
- d) The issue now is the person of Jesus Christ. He has solved the problem of sin in the human race.

### SUMMARY OF THE BARRIER AND ITS REMOVAL

#### BARRIER

#### WORK OF CHRIST

#### SIN

(Romans 3:23)

Redemption (1 Corinthians 1:29-30, Colossians 1:14)  
Atonement (1 John 2:2, 2 Peter 2:1)

PENALTY (Romans 6:23)	Expiation (Colossians 2:14)
BIRTH (John 3:6)	Regeneration (John 3:3, Galatians 3:26, John 1:11-12)
CHARACTER OF GOD (Romans 3:23)	Propitiation (1 John 2:2, Romans 3:25)
RIGHTEOUSNESS OF MAN (Isaiah 64:6)	Justification (Romans 3:24, Romans 5:1) Imputation (Romans 3:22, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
LIFE (1 Corinthians 15:22)	Position in Christ (1 John 5:11-12)

### **SALVATION – REDEMPTION**

1. Redemption is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ towards sin. The implications of the Greek words (lutron, lutrosis, apolutrosis, antilutrosis) is ransom, redeem, pay money to set a slave free, pay a price, or (exagorazo) purchase from the slave market (of sin).
2. The principle of redemption is found in (John 8:31-36).
3. The Lord paid the price for us, redeeming us from the slave market of sin by his perfect sacrifice for sin on the cross. Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 2:14.
4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only qualified redeemer. Through His virgin birth he has no inherited Old Sin Nature, by His perfect life He had no acquired sin or sin nature, and through His hypostatic union He is equal with both parties: God and man. Isaiah 53:9, John 8:46, 19:4, 2Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 1:3,4:15,7,25,28, 1 Timothy 3:16.
5. In the Old Testament redemption was taught by means of the shed blood of an animal sacrifice. Hebrews 9:22, Job 5:19,25,26.
6. Blood was the purchase price for redemption. Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, 1 Peter 1:18,19. The blood of Christ relates this work of redemption to that which was pictured in these Old Testament sacrifices. 2 Corinthians 5:21.
7. The soul of the believer not the body is redeemed. Psalm 34:22, Matthew 8:17.
8. Redemption removes the demands of the Old Testament Law. Galatians 3:13,10, 4:4-6.
9. Redemption is a doctrine which the believer can apply in times of pressure and catastrophe (Job 19:25,26), thereby finding both blessing and happiness.
10. Redemption results in adoption (Gal 4:4-6).
11. Redemption provides the basis for the believer's eternal inheritance (Heb 9:15).
12. The blood of Christ is the ransom money or the purchase price of redemption (Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 1 Peter 1:13,19; 1 John 1:7).
13. Redemption includes forgiveness of sin (Heb 9:22).
14. Redemption provides the basis of justification and immediate cleansing at salvation (Rom 3:24).

15. Redemption is the basis of our cleansing from sin during our Christian walk. (Lev 4:5; 6:1-6; 1 John 1:7,9).

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – ETERNAL LIFE** See page 62

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – ETERNAL SECURITY** See page 104

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – POSITION IN CHRIST**

1. We have a position with Christ rather than a position with the cosmos system. We are separated from the world and are different from them. We have a new position in Christ - Ephesians 2:6

2. We have a new position of partnership with Christ, we are never alone - Colossians 3:4, John 17. We have a communion with him. He says that he will never put us in a situation without a way of escape. The way of escape is through Christ.

3. We are workers together with God; we are in his service - 2 Corinthians 3:9, 1:9, 6:1

4. We are ministers of a new covenant, we have a new message to man. 1 Corinthians 3:6, 6:4

5. We are ambassadors for Christ - 2 Corinthians 5:20

6. We are living epistles; we are letters to a lost and unsaved world. Our lives should be such that Christ should be read from the book of our lives. Our life and lips should tell of Christ and Him alone.

7. We are members of the Royal family - Galatians 6:10, 1 Peter 2:9

8. We are united with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit:

- a) We are in the Father, he is in us - Ephesians 4:6,
- b) We are in Christ - John 14:20,
- c) He is in us - Colossians 1:26,
- d) We are in the Spirit and he is in us - Romans 8:9.
- e) We are united forever to God.
- f) We are not part of a universal soul. That is new age.
- g) We have been entered into a living union with a personal God.

9. We are members of his body, branches of his vine, living stones, his building, sheep of his fold, part of his bride, priests in his kingdom, saints set apart for his glory.

### **DEATH**

1. In essence, death means "separation".

2. Types of death:

- a) Physical death - is the separation of the soul from the body (Genesis 35:18).
- b) Spiritual death - is separation from God, having no relationship with God (Ephesians 2:1,12, Genesis 2:17,3:8)
- c) The second death - this is the Great White Throne Judgement followed by the lake of fire for unbelievers - separation from the presence of God, punished forever (Revelation 20:12-15, 21:8)

- d) Positional death - Christians are identified with Jesus Christ in His death (separation from sin) and in His resurrection (living in righteousness) Romans 6:3-14 Colossians 2:12-14
- e) Sexual death - inability to procreate (Romans 4:17-21, Hebrews 11:11-12)
- f) Operational death - faith without works is non operational (James 2:26)
- g) Temporal death - a carnal believer, out of fellowship with God (Romans 8:6-8,13, Ephesians 5:14, 1 Timothy 5:6, James 1:15, Revelation 3:1)

3. Reasons for death:

- a) The work is finished. (John 19:30 cf. Luke 23:46, 2 Timothy 4:7)
- b) For the glory of God - martyrdom (John 21:19, Acts 7:55-60)
- c) The sin unto death - extreme discipline for believers with hardened hearts against God (1 John 5:16)
- d) Suicide - superimposing your will over God's will for your life (1 Samuel 31:4, Matthew 27:5)
- e) The unique death of Christ - committing His own spirit to the Father (Luke 23:46)

**DYING GRACE** See page 28

**RESURRECTION**

1. The resurrection of Christ is central to the gospel. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
  - a) Had there been no resurrection then we would all still be in our sins. (1 Corinthians 15:17).
  - b) Resurrection indicates completion of justification. (Romans 4:25, 2 Corinthians 5:2 1)
  - c) Resurrection is a guarantee of ultimate sanctification. (1 Corinthians 15:20-23)
  - d) The resurrection is the Father's seal on Christ's completed work, and the public declaration of its acceptance.
  - e) Without the resurrection it is impossible for Christ to be glorified. The humanity of Christ is glorified higher than the angels. (John 7:39, John 16:14)
2. Historical proof of the resurrection:
  - a) The empty tomb. (Matthew 28)
  - b) Many of witnesses died rather than change their testimony.
  - c) Subsequent changes and confidence of the disciples after the resurrection.
  - d) The day of Pentecost. The reality of the resurrection was so well known that when Peter preached the first two sermons in Jerusalem over 8000 people were saved. (Acts 2:41, Acts 4:3-4)
  - e) The observance of the first day of the week as the worship day. (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10)
  - f) The historic existence of the church. The church worships a literal risen Saviour, and not merely the memory of a dead martyr. (Romans 5:12,14,17, 6:3-9, 8:2, 1 Corinthians 15:26,54-55, Hebrews 2:14)
3. Baptism is a sign of the new resurrection life. (Romans 6:3-11, Colossians 2:12).
4. The Lord's Supper is a reminder of the expected return of the risen Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
5. Order of the resurrections:-
  - a) The first for believers only including Jesus Christ which is divided into four parts.
    - i) The resurrection of Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:23, Romans 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 1 Peter 1:3)
    - ii) The Rapture of the church (1 Corinthians 15:51-57, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)
    - iii) The Old Testament saints and tribulation martyrs at the end of the Tribulation. (Daniel 12:13, Isaiah 26:19-20, Revelation 20:4)

- iv) The Millennial saints and those who survive the Tribulation to enter the Millennium in their physical bodies.
  - b) The second resurrection occurs at the end of the Millennium and is for unbelievers only. They are judged and cast into the lake of fire forever. (1 John 5:28, 29, Revelation 20:12-15, 2 Peter 3:7, Matthew 25:41)
  - c) Jesus, who must be the first eternally resurrected human, was not raised until three days after the crucifixion.
  - d) People in the Old Testament who were "raised from the dead" were merely resuscitated, and later died.
  - e) Matthew 27:52-53 is a transfer scene not a resurrection scene. The transfer is one of saints from paradise to the third heaven (Ephesians 4:8). Some were given resuscitated bodies to witness to the Jews.
6. The sequence of events at the Lord's resurrection is as follows:-
- a) Mary Magdalene, Salome and Mary the mother of James and Joses head towards the tomb followed by other women carrying embalming spices.
  - b) The three find the stone rolled away. Mary Magdalene goes back to tell the disciples. (Luke 23:55-24:9, John 20:1-2)
  - c) Mary the mother of James and Joses draws near to the tomb and sees the angel. (Matthew 28:2)
  - d) She goes back to the women carrying the spices.
  - e) Peter and John who have been advised by Mary Magdalene arrive, look inside the empty tomb and go away. (John 20:3-10)
  - f) Mary Magdalene returns weeping, sees two angels and then Jesus. (John 20:11-18)
  - g) As instructed by the Lord she goes to tell the disciples.
  - h) Mary the mother of James and Joses meets the women with the spices and returning with them they see the two angels. (Luke 24:4-5, Mark 16:5)
  - i) They also receive advice from the angels and, going to seek the disciples, are met by Jesus. (Matthew 28:8-10)

## ABIDING IN GOD

1. The word "abide" speaks of perfect provision, supply, sustenance and fellowship - Deuteronomy 33:27-28
2. The key to "abiding" is living in the reality of God's provision - John 13:17
3. "Abiding" means there is total provision for every need for every believer at every point in his life - Psalm 23:1,5, Psalm 91:1-10; John 15:4; James 1:2-4.
4. Abide in John 15:4 is in the aorist imperative ingressive, a command possible at all times because of absolute provisions Psalm 91:1-2
5. There is never a time or condition under which the child of God may not "abide" - Psalm 91:1, 4, 9-10a
6. Earthly problems are temporal and variable but divine solutions are absolute - Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28
7. The only time Jesus Christ is at home in us is when we abide in Him - Ephesians 3:16,17; Colossians 3:15, 16

## ATHLETICS

1. Paul uses the athlete, the soldier and the farmer as analogies for us to see the virtues of the Christian life illustrated. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Philippians 3:15-17, 2 Timothy 2:5, 4:5-8, Hebrews 12:1-3. Refer SOLDIER, ARMOUR, and passages referred to in EBCWA commentaries.
2. The Angelic Conflict requires concentrated effort and spiritual power to be safe, let alone victorious, and this mental attitude is illustrated by these three activities. Refer ANGELIC



CONFLICT, ATTITUDE. Paul would not let his body's desires stop him reaching his goals. 1 Corinthians 9:27, 2 Corinthians 6:3-10, 11:23-31.

3. The rules of the athletic contests of the ancient world were as strict as our own Olympic rules. It is this concept of operating within the rules (the Plan of God) that Paul appeals to, as well as to the virtues and mental attitude needed to win. Unless the rules were followed the athlete did not even have a chance to compete, certainly not to win, and unless they operated perfectly and with 100% commitment they had no chance to be victorious. These principles apply to us as believers.

4. The rules for the Ancient Games were as follows:

Every athlete had to be a citizen of the place they represented; no foreigners could compete.

During their training they had to live in the Gymnasium.

The gym ran by trumpet calls, and all calls had to be obeyed totally.

They could wear only oil and sand, not matter what the temperature.

All exercises had to be completed well. Failure to complete all exercises well was not tolerated.

All distractions were banned; no sex, no business, no visits from relatives.

Strict dietary rules were enforced; only certain foods were allowed.

Each contest had it's own rules which were strictly enforced.

Any deviation from any of the rules meant disqualification and loss of all crowns of victory.

5. We are warned that God will not tolerate any unholiness at all. 1 Peter 1:15-16. refer HOLINESS. If we are to run our Christian race, we must run in accordance with God's spiritual standards for life, and with 100% commitment or we will be disqualified and our life will be run in vain. Refer REWARDS. We are urged to be fearful of falling short of the standard of success for eternity, for if we fail to run our race as God directs we enter eternity without the best that God desires us to have. Luke 12:41-48, 13:23-30, 2 Corinthians 13:3-6.

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS** See page 29

**Notes**

**PSALM 50****INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm is a frighteningly powerful vision of the final judgement of mankind. It is a glimpse of the absolute nature of God's judgement and the finality of it. It is a Psalm that the Lord echoes on His last night in the Olivet Discourse. Matthew 25:34-46. As He sets His heart and mind to go to the Cross, He tells the disciples that the destiny of all mankind will centre upon their response to Him demonstrated by their attitudes and actions towards others. Man will be judged by the fruit of their lives. Matthew 7:13-23, Revelation 20:10-15.

**PSALMS 50:1-23**

**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. **5** Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. **6** And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah. **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. **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 casteth 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.

**REFLECTION**

**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.

There is a coming day when the Lord of glory returns to this earth to judge it. This is, as C S Lewis said, "The visited planet", and it will be visited again. As the Lord left the earth after his First Advent, just so will He return to it. We have the angel's word on this and the Lord wanted us to reflect upon this truth at every Communion Service. Acts 1:6-12, 1 Corinthians 11:26. The entire earth will see His return, from the east to the west. His return will be a triumphant progress, possibly over one full rotation of the earth. It is clearly long enough in its progress for unsaved mankind to feel the fear of His return and for some to bow their knee and accept His Lordship in that eleventh hour. Isaiah 1:12-22, Hosea 10:8-13, Luke 23:27-31, Revelation 6:12-17. Refer to the BTB studies on FIRST AND SECOND ADVENT, RETURN OF THE LORD, DAY OF WRATH.

Out of the darkness of the 'GREAT TRIBULATION PERIOD' the light that shines is the light of God to end that time with judgement. There is hope in these last days because the survivors of Israel do repent and return to the Lord their God and recognise the great evils they have done. Zechariah 12:2-14. There is a great battle raging around Jerusalem and it involves "weapons of mass destruction". Atomic and other terrible types of weapons are actually described as being used in two passages of scripture. Isaiah 29:5-12, Zechariah 13:1 – 14:15.

The terrible battle that will kill two thirds of the population of Israel in that day is ended by the Lord's return to the Mount of Olives. He ensures the defenders are able to escape and then the attackers are wiped out. It takes the Lord directly to clean up the land after this last Great War; referred to as "the Battle of Armageddon". The battle ends with the Lord's return to Jerusalem, to Mt Zion itself. He will place a Temple on that blasted hill of Zion for His reign upon the earth, and this Millennial Temple will surpass anything previously upon this hill.

**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.**

Many will argue as we draw towards the end of this present phase of human history that God is silent and the coming again of the Lord is simply a "myth". 1 Timothy 4:1-11, 2 Timothy 3:1-4, 2 Peter 2:1 – 3:9, Jude 14ff. When the Lord comes He does not come as the "gentle Jesus", but as the Judge of mankind, with fire and tumult. The Second Advent is not a pleasant thing for the unbelievers, for it is the end for them, but for the believers it is joy in the midst of carnage, for His coming is deliverance for them. Psalms 18:7-12, 97:1 – 7, Daniel 7:9 – 14, (Revelation 20:1ff), Nahum 1:3-11, Habakkuk 3:3-7, Malachi 3:2-7, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-12, Hebrews 2:1-4, 10:28-31, 13:28-29.

As you read these passages recognise that the nature of the Lord's Second Advent is well described all through prophetic history. It is no myth and it is a judgement indeed upon those who have rejected Him. The Lord will judge His people, and none will escape, for He made all of mankind, and all people individually must give their account to Him. There is no escape for those who thought they could ignore His claims upon their lives. Isaiah 11:1-5, Revelation 20:11-15.

**5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.**

**6 And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.**

There is only one way to "make covenant with God", and that is by the blood of the sacrifice. In our Age of history this means to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Refer to the BTB study BLOOD SACRIFICE. Only the precious blood of Jesus removes the sin barrier between God and man. We are not saved by our own works, but by His perfect work alone. Ephesians 2:1-8, 1 Peter 1:17-25. We are saved by God's GRACE alone.

All the saints will be gathered by the power and direction of the Lord; none will be lost to the enemy who are not meant to go ahead into heaven through the doorway of death. The enemy will have victory over no believer at all, for even those the enemy is allowed to kill in the last days will receive eternal rewards as the Lord's martyrs. Refer to the BTB study REWARDS AND CROWNS.

In today's world we see the enemy rampant in power and influence. Our media mocks the truth and celebrates immorality and evil. We are surrounded by the sounds of evil and sin, and these things are celebrated. Many believers are slack towards the Lord. Matthew 24:9-14, 1 Timothy 4:1-4, 2 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 2:1ff. We do not see the heavens or the earth exult the name of the Lord today, except on rare occasions. It is intriguing just how wonderful the Lord is in this, in ensuring that the message of the reality of the wonder of His power as the Creator God gets out through media in spite of the dominance of evil.

The Louie Giglio DVDs on the Hubble Space telescope pictures are an amazing testimony to the creative power of God. The movie, the "Far Side of the Moon", on the Moon Missions of NASA, is another testimony to God's creative power from pagan Hollywood. Even from the very place where paganism dominates we have seen a small number of incredibly powerful movies that testify to the truth from the midst of the falsehood that chokes the life out of all else.

**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.**

The people of Israel are especially addressed in relation to this time of world history, for the days leading up to the Lord's Second Advent are referred to not only as "The Great Tribulation" period, but also as "the time of Jacob's trouble". Jeremiah 30:7, Zechariah 12:2-14. It is in this time frame that the Jewish people "look upon him whom they pierced". Zechariah 12:10. It is in this time frame of the worst persecution that ever breaks upon the Jewish people that they find their Messiah, and the remnant according to faith is delivered by the Lord's return.

The testimony of the Lord is "against Israel" in this day, for their track record has been one of rejection of the truth through until this time. They have kept up their sacrificial system through prayers and rituals after the Temple was destroyed in 70AD and the Lord does not reproach them for that, but they are held accountable for rejecting their Messiah. They missed the Lord, and kept on with the shadow, when the reality had come. Hebrews 10:1ff.

When they are convicted of the truth about Jesus being their Messiah there is national mourning by the remnant of the people who are left alive after the invasion of their land. They weep for the sins of generations of Jews who have died under discipline due to their rejection of the Lord their Messiah. Zechariah 12:11-14. They have kept their rituals going through the centuries, but they all looked forward to a Messiah who had already come and been rejected by them. Can you see the reason for the great weeping of Israel in that day? Read carefully the Zechariah passages and feel the pain of Israel in that future day.

**9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.**

**10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.**

They are not abused for their sacrificial system, but they are reminded that their sacrificial system was only bone fide while it looked forward to the Lord's sacrifice on the Cross. Once the Lord had died on the Cross the Temple sacrifices were redundant. Hebrews 8:1-13.

There was never any intrinsic value in animal sacrifices, for the Lord owns all the animals on the earth. The only value of the animal was in their depiction of the perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hebrews 9:18-28. Refer back to the BTB study of BLOOD SACRIFICE, LEVITICAL OFFERINGS. All the sacrifices in the world now amount to nothing, for the Lord's work upon the Cross is sufficient for all the sins of mankind. It is his work that is to be accepted and embraced, and man's works are to be ended in grace and thankfulness.

**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 fullness thereof.**

**13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?**

The Lord does not want offerings to be given to Him unless the heart is right. The death of animals needs to have significance or it is simply the waste of animals and birds that belong to the Lord anyway. God does not need the sacrifices of men. The mocking tone is deliberate in the Psalm, for the believer must remember they are worshipping the God who made the worlds, not some pathetic demon behind the pagan gods. God is not hungry for blood or sacrificial wine; God is hungry for our loving response to His mercy, love and grace. Psalms 51:17, Isaiah 57:13-15, Hosea 6:6, Matthew 9:13, 12:7.

**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.**

The greatest sacrifice to the Lord is the sacrifice of praise; the greatest offering is the life of the person coming before the Lord. God seeks our lives a "living sacrifice" to His service. Romans 12:1-2. God seeks our thanksgiving for grace received. Hosea 10:12-13, 13:9-10, 14:1-2. To "pay our vows", means to keep our promises to God. As believers we owe the Lord our life and service, and to pay our vow means to deliver our lives daily as a living sacrifice to His work and will.

When we are in fellowship with the Lord we have the confidence to call upon the Lord in our day of trouble and be assured of receiving His blessing, deliverance and direction. Our correct response to this deliverance is further service to the Lord that brings glory to the Lord's name. We are here to glorify the Lord in all we do. We are required to bring glory to the Lord as His servants and need to shoulder this responsibility and live spiritually and powerfully. Matthew 5:14-16, John 15:7-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11. Refer to the BTB study SPIRITUALITY.

**16 But unto the wicked God saith, What have you to do to declare my statutes, or that you should take my covenant in your mouth?**

**17 Seeing you hate instruction, and cast my words behind thee.**

The believers have been challenged strongly, but the unbelievers are warned in even stronger terms. The lost are to be warned of their fate if they do not repent. We cannot save the lost ourselves, for that is not our task, but we are responsible to give them the biblical truth, in order that the Holy Spirit may convict them of their sinful state. The biggest danger for the lost is that these unbelievers are religious and yet unsaved. They play-act "church" under satanic religious deception and yet reject the truth of God's Word and are lost with their bibles unread under their arms.

The hardest person to reach with the Word of God is the person who is absolutely convinced that they are saved and a friend of God, and yet their heart is far from God. These people "declare the statutes of God" and yet they do not know God! They speak of the covenant of God, and yet they have no fellowship with God. They speak of God and yet they ignore the claims of God upon their lives. They prove their unbelief by their absolute rejection of correction from God's Word and the subsequent life "fruit" of evil that

all can see except them. They hate instruction from the Word, and throw God's Word behind them and forge forward in immoral paths that violate the Word and will of the Lord for them. Proverbs 1:7, 28-29, 5:12-13, 8:36, John 15:18-27, Ephesians 5:11-13.

**18 When you saw a thief, then you consented with him, and have been partaker with adulterers.**

**19 You gives your mouth to evil, and your tongue frames deceit.**

These pious hypocrites described earlier are people who are happy with thieves stealing from others, and are content with the company of adulterers and will readily join them in their evils. Proverbs 1:10-19. There are many people who secretly rejoice in the exploits of the evil and the criminal. They themselves wouldn't partake of such evils directly but are happy to benefit from them or rejoice in the tales of evil. They are content with lies whenever they suit their purposes, and they are careless with words and their tongues readily speak evil things of others. They practise the "abomination sins" that the Lord hates. Proverbs 6:16-19.

**20 You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son.**

**21 These things have you done, and I kept silence; you thought that I was altogether such an one as yourself: but I will reprove you, and set them in order before your eyes.**

The sins of the tongue are many and wicked. To speak evil of others is a sign of great evil in the soul. If a person is evil, it is right to speak honestly about their evil, but it is wrong to speak wickedly of sinners who need a Saviour, for the goal of all believers is to be their salvation, not their slander. We are challenged by these words, not to speak evil of our brethren, even our false brethren, nor be bitter towards those who have wronged us when we can do good things for them later. This is hard to do, but a requirement for all believers.

The people of Israel were so used to getting away with these sins that they thought God didn't care about them. They were fatally wrong, for the Lord gave them grace to repent, not time to continue in their sins! Their error was thinking that God was just a man like themselves and that God could be "fooled" or impressed by the things that impress men. God makes it clear that they will see the truth very clearly one day, but it may be a day too late for their salvation. Revelation 20:11-15.

**22 Now consider this, you that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.**

**23 Whosoever offers praise glorifies me: and to him that orders his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.**

The danger is often not open rejection of God, but casual "forgetting" about God. It is the denial of reality that is the greatest danger for mankind. We forget the truth and so slip quietly and foolishly into greater error by the day. The slide is gradual at first, but when people forget the truth they lose discernment over error and their slide will become more and more rapid over time. Their end will be terrible the Lord warns. They will be torn to pieces by the Lord if they do not repent and there is none that can deliver them from the Lord's hands if they persist in rejection of the truth.

The alternative to their error is worship of the truth, and they need to find their voice to praise and honour the true God of glory before it is too late. God seeks real worship from transformed hearts, not the parroted phrases of people playing with religion. It is godly conversations that show transformed hearts, and God wants reality in life, lips and worship, not play acting from His people.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us preach the reality of the future Advent of the Lord. He does not come a second time as the "gentle Jesus", but as the King and Judge of fallen man. Let us be sure the people know that rejection of Him is a serious thing for they reject his person and his work on their behalf.
2. We are here upon the earth to serve the One who gave Himself for us, and to bring glory to the Lord's Holy name. Let's be sure we are worthy of the Lord's name in and through our service. Let us walk in the power of the Holy Spirit alone, and in the light of God's Word alone. Only then can we be sure of bringing glory to the Lord.
3. There is one unpardonable sin, and that involves full and final rejection of the claims of the Lord upon the life of the person. Let us remind the religious unbelievers we meet of their need to fully bow their knee to their Saviour and Lord, and not let their religion stand between them and saving faith.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **CHRIST – FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS**

1. Old Testament saints had difficulty in distinguishing between the two advents of Christ. (1 Peter 1:10,11)
2. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. (Isaiah 53:7)
3. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as the conquering King and Lion of the tribe of Judah. (Isaiah 11:1-12)
4. Jesus commenced his ministry announcing the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (Matthew 4:17) This connects the first and second advents.
5. Old Testament Prophecy showed that the Messiah would:-
  - a) Be born of a virgin. (Isaiah 7:14)
  - b) Be of the tribe of Judah. (Genesis 49:10)
  - c) Be of the house of David. (Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 33:21)
  - d) Die as a sacrifice. (Isaiah 53:1-12)
  - e) Be crucified. (Psalm 22:1-21)
  - f) Be resurrected from the dead. (Psalm 16:8-11)
  - g) Return to earth at his second advent. (Zechariah 8:3)
  - h) Be seated at the right hand of God. (Psalm 110:1)
6. It should be noted that the return of Christ for the Church (the Rapture) as given in (1 Thessalonians 4:14-18) was not revealed in the Old Testament - it is a mystery doctrine of the Church (Colossians 3:4-6)
7. The day of the Second Advent is characterised by supernatural darkness
  - a) When Christ returns every eye shall see him (Matthew 24:29-30) Christ is the light of the world and he will return to a world covered in darkness (symbolic of sin).
  - b) The darkness is similar to the darkness of the day of our Lord's crucifixion which hid the Lord Jesus Christ from man's sight whilst he was bearing our sins. (Mark 15:33)
  - c) The Second Advent delivers the Jewish believers besieged in Jerusalem by the King of the North. (Daniel 11, Zechariah 12:1-3, 14:1-4)
  - d) Other passages indicating that the day of the Second Advent is a day of total darkness on the earth. (Isaiah 13:9-10, Ezekiel 32:7-8, Joel 2:10-11, Joel 3:14-15, Amos 5:18, Zechariah 14:6, Matthew 24:29-30, Luke 21:25-27, Revelation 6:12-17)

## 8. Heralds of the Two Advents of Christ

A herald is a person who preceded a king in ancient times to announce his arrival. The King that we study is the Lord Jesus Christ.

### a) First Advent

- i) Human herald - John the Baptist (Matthew 3)
- ii) Angelic heralds - Angels (Luke 2:1-15)

### b) Second Advent

- i) Human heralds - Moses, Elijah (Revelation 11)
- ii) Angelic herald - The mighty angel (Revelation 10)

## **CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD** See page 101

## **DAY OF WRATH**

Zephaniah 1:15 "That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness"

1. A day of God's wrath is described in four word pairs:

- a) Trouble and distress in the lives of people.
- b) Wasteness and desolation implying destruction of the landscape.
- c) Darkness and gloominess as in blindness and hopelessness.
- d) Clouds and thick darkness, symbolic of the condition when light is hidden.

2. Each pair having their spiritual counterparts when people have turned away from God and are reaping the consequences of sinful lives.

3. It will be the lot of those in a soon coming age upon whom God will send "strong delusion...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:10,11.

## **DISPENSATIONS – THE TRIBULATION OR THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE**

1. The Tribulation is actually the last seven years of the Age of Israel (see above)

2. General Scripture (Revelation 4-19)

3. Limits: Rapture to Second Advent

4. Characteristics:

- a) Length of Age - 7 years. (Daniel 9:27)
- b) Means of Salvation - faith in Christ.
- c) Scripture - completed Canon.
- d) Evangelists - 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Revelation 7). Also angelic evangelists (Revelation 14:6-7)
- e) Major judgements - a succession of judgements upon the unbelieving world (Matthew 24:21)
- f) At death believers - Heaven (Revelation 15:12)
- g) At death unbelievers - Torments, Hades.
- h) Priesthood - specialised priesthood - Jews.
- i) The Law - no Law (Matthew 5:17)
- j) Holy Spirit - assists believers but does not indwell.
- k) Environment - sinful - Antichrist and Satan rule the whole world.
- l) Satan - in Heaven or on earth for first 3 1/2 years; cast down to earth for second 3 1/2 years (Revelation 12:9)
- m) Rebellion - Armageddon, one world political and religious system



- n) Spirituality- resting in the promises of God.
- o) Three sets of Judgements - seals (Revelation 6), trumpets (Revelation 8), judgements (Revelation 15,16)

**TRIBULATION IN MATTHEW 24** See page 88

**PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS** See page 45

**BLOOD SACRIFICE** See page 109

## **OFFERINGS – LEVITICAL OFFERINGS REPRESENT CHRIST**

1. The Levitical offerings and sacrifices were a picture of the work of Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 10:1)

2. There are five offerings in Leviticus 1-6

- a) Burnt animal offerings Chapter 1 The work of Christ.
- b) Cereal offerings Chapter 2 The person of Christ.
- c) Peace offering Chapter 3 Reconciliation.
- d) Sin offering Chapter 4 Unknown sins.
- e) Trespass offering Chapter 5-6v7 Known sins.

3. Burnt animal offerings (Leviticus 1)

An innocent perfect animal was killed for the sins of the offerer. A representation of Jesus dying for our sins on the cross.

a) Bullock v2-9 Offered by the rich person.

Bullock is a male without blemish = Jesus Christ as a perfect person.

Offering is on the brazen altar = The death on the cross.

Offered voluntarily = Faith in Christ is on the basis of free will.

Sinner, (offerer) puts his hand on animal's head for an atonement. = Sins laid on Christ on the cross. Christ died for the sins of humanity . (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Killing of the bullock = The death of Christ

Blood covering the altar = Total cleansing from sin.

Flaying of animal to check that there were no inner blemishes = Jesus was perfect and free from sin both outwardly and inwardly.

Wood burnt = Human good removed. (1 Corinthians 3:12, 15)

The head is burnt = The perfect mentality of Christ

The fat is burnt = The outward perfection of Christ.

The gut washed with water from the brazen laver. = Cleansing from sin. (1 John 1:9)

The legs washed. = Cleansing from sin allows for service.

Bullock is burnt. = The solution to the sin problem at salvation and during the Christian life has been accomplished at the cross.

b) Sheep v10-13 Offered by the middle class.

c) Birds v14-17 Offered by the poor.

4. The Cereal Offerings (Leviticus 2)

a) The Gift Offering = the gift of Jesus Christ.

Fine flour = Perfection of Christ

Oil = Holy Spirit

Frankincense = Satisfaction to God the Father

Salt = Preservation

Leaven (not included) = Sin

Honey (not included) = Human Good.

Take a handful of the mixture = Appropriating salvation personally by faith.

Burnt on the altar = Judgement of Christ on the cross.

Oil = Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit.

The priest eats the remainder. = the priest is sustained by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.

b) The Oven Offering

Unleavened bread = Christ had no sin.

Baked offering hidden from man's view = Godward side of the Cross. Golgotha shrouded in darkness during the period of judgement of the sins.

Fire = Justice of God

Offering = Perfect humanity of Christ

Oven = Cross

Oil = empowerment of Christ.

Frankincense = God is propitiated or satisfied.

c) The Flat plate Offering

Fine flour with oil = Perfection of Christ

Unleavened = No sin or sin nature

No frankincense = No propitiation until God judged the sins of the world.

Part into pieces = Crumbled - something completely destroyed - Christ's body broken for us. Crushed with our sin. (Isaiah 53)

Oil poured onto crumbs = Oil of appointment - Messiah or given one. God the Father appointed God the Son to go to the cross cf. dove at baptism.

d) The Frying Pan Offering

Partly closed, partly open - Unseen = Godward, propitiation. Seen = manward, reconciliation.

The offerer gives offering to priest who takes it to the altar, takes part as a remembrance (memorial) for (judgement) = compare with Lord's Table remembrance  
rest eaten by the priests - how we appropriate Christ - faith.

e) Rules of Cereal Offerings

Prohibited leaven = sin or evil

Honey = Human good or human sweetness

Garnished with salt = a contract between God and man.

f) Cereal offerings were made at the

Passover (with burning = judgement = cross)

First fruits (without burning = resurrection)

Day of Atonement (with burning = judgement = cross)

g) The Memorial Offering

Green corn = Christ in resurrection

Dried = Roasted by fire, Judgement

Beaten = Bruised or crushed

Full ears = Perfection of Christ

Put oil on = Messiahship appointment.

Frankincense = Propitiation, satisfaction.

Burnt = Reference to the cross

Memorial = Lord's Table of the Old Testament.

5. Peace offering Chapter 3 Reconciliation.

Similar to the burnt offering, with both male and female animals sacrificed.

6. Sin offering Chapter 4 Unknown sins.

Confession and repentance from sin, equivalent to 1 John 1:9 (and cleanse us from all -unknown sins - unrighteousness)

7. Trespass offering Chapter 5-6v7 Known sins.

Confession and repentance from sin, equivalent to 1 John 1:9 (forgive our - known/confessed - sins)

**GRACE** See page 11

**SALVATION – BARRIER BETWEEN MAN AND GOD** See page 125

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS** See page 29

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – SPIRITUALITY-CARNALITY.** Page 27

## **SIN – ABOMINATION SINS TO THE LORD**

Proverbs 6:16-19 shows what God hates - the seven worst sins. God's hatred for immorality is even more for these seven sins.

1. Proud Look: God hates a proud look, a look of self righteousness, people who look down on others. God's justice is even more on his own where they have accepted His son yet still harbour sin. You may be in such a church. Or you may be in a church which has no immorality but they have many mental attitude sins.

2. Lying Tongue: Another sin pattern is lying tongues. These can consist of lying flatterers, lying pastors who should be teaching the truth but are not.

3. Hands that Shed Innocent Blood: Hands that shed innocent blood are those who murder including abortionists, drunken drivers, thugs, drug dealers and the wealthy doctors and lawyers who protect them.

4. Hearts that Devise Wicked Imaginations: Hearts that devise wicked imaginations, minds that are full of lust, they are thinking it all the time, lust for money, lust for power, lust for sex, full of anger and hatred, jealousy. It is very important to confess your sin.

5. Feet that are Swift to Run to Mischief: These are people who dwell on things that are wrong and explain it to people in great detail. These are voyeurs, people who lack the courage to do things themselves but love to see others wallow in it. People who look at pornography. It is people who gossip on the basis that you will pray more effectively.

6. False Witness: False witnesses are people who lie to injure the innocent.

7. Sowers of discord: These are those who have hidden agendas, they pervert and distort discussions.

## **SIN – OLD SIN NATURE, FRUIT OF THE**

1. The fruit of the old sin nature falls under four categories (Galatians 5:19-21)

- (a) Sensual
- (b) Religious
- (c) Social
- (d) Personal

### **2. SENSUAL**

(a) fornication – porneia – illicit sexual activity or any sexual activity other than with your partner.

(b) uncleanness - akatharsia - all acts of indecency and uncleanness that shock people, this includes abnormal sexual acts.

(c) lasciviousness - aselgeia - unrestrained lust - people who are having sex for their own personal gratification, treating other people as sexual objects for their pleasure. Paul recognises that we are tempted in all these areas. Matthew points out that it is not only the doing of these acts but the thinking of these acts which are sins.

### 3. RELIGIOUS

- (a) idolatry - eidoltria - worship of things other than God
- (b) witchcraft - pharmakeia - this involved magic, astrology, séances and sorcery.
- (c) hatred - echtros - this is unrestrained rage without a reason. You get so angry that no one can talk to you at all.
- (d) strife - eris - contentiousness - this is argumentation in regard to Bible teaching and spiritual matters.

### 4. SOCIAL

- (a) jealousy - zelos - a bitter hatred towards another person who has something that you want. This is the father of all the other sins.
- (b) wrath - thermos - this is getting hot headed or flaring up. If the person does not control the power of a hot temper they are under the power of the old sin nature and not the Holy Spirit. If you get this type of trouble at a church meeting you turn to the Word of God.
- (c) seditions - - this is faction forming
- (d) heresies - this is one step forward from seditions and is a person who wishes to build on the factions. An example would be the KJV group. By separating on the basis of the KJV alone you have fallen into far more evil than is present in variations in the versions.
- (e) evil - this is tied into jealousy eating away at the souls of people who harbour resentment.

### 5. PERSONAL

- (a) drunkenness - methai - drinking alcohol to excess is not a sickness it is a sin. It is an inherited weakness, if your father is an alcoholic you should not touch alcohol at all because it is a weakness in the family. Avoid places where you could be tempted. If you have a weakness towards alcoholism you must deal with it.
- (b) revellings - jomoi - which means hell raising, a person who cannot bear silence but has to be drowned in noise all the time. Their life is empty and has no purpose but as long as they party vigorously and run from function to function they do not have to worry about their sin and the pointlessness of their life. When you are tempted to sin think about the Lord. Paul now adds and such like which means that if he has not hit their particular weakness they should fill in the blanks.

6. We all have weaknesses and unless you are on guard you fall every time. You have to ascertain your weakness and set your guard against it. God's way is to walk in the Spirit that is the way to deal with it.

## SIN – UNPARDONABLE SIN

1. DEFINITION. This is the sin for which Christ did not die on the cross, and is the only basis for condemnation before the Lord at the last judgement.

It is the sin of volition of total and final rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. John 3 : 18, 36.

2. Rejection of the Lord is called "sin" in Scripture. John 16:9.

3. It is based upon rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit within. Genesis 6:3, John 16:7-11, Hebrews 10:29.

4. Those who have committed this sin believe the Bible message of salvation is foolishness. 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2:14.

5. Synonyms for the unpardonable sin are:

Wilful sin - Hebrews 10:26-31

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit - Matthew 12:31

Resisting the Holy Spirit - Acts 7:51  
 Insulting the Holy Spirit - Hebrews 10:29

6. This sin is characterised by "strong delusion", and has its own path of false religion/evil. 2 Thessalonians 2:11,12, 2 Peter 2:19 -22, Romans 1:22-32.

## **PSALM 51**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm is well known as David's Penitential Psalm after his adultery with Bathsheba and his conviction of sin by God through the prophet Nathan. Read the EBCWA Commentary on the chapters of 2 Samuel that are relevant to this Psalm now, as seeing the extent of the sin, and the way the Lord deals with David immediately will give you the background that is useful to understand here. The passage is 2 Samuel 11-12. These two chapters plumb the depths of a man's lust, but also they open David up to the grace, mercy and justice of God like no other event in his life or history itself. I know of no other recorded incident in history that comes near this one as an illustration of forgiveness upon repentance. If David can be forgiven, then any person who accepts God's conviction can be forgiven.

This incident teaches more than simply the message of grace forgiveness, it also teaches the principle of the flow on consequences of some sins. David is forgiven, but the consequences of his actions over that terrible year when he was out of fellowship with the Lord flow into his kingdom for the rest of his life. He is forgiven, but there are evils he has let loose that must run their course. David will have to learn that the cost of his sins is great for all around him, but that cursing is turned to blessing even then, if the people involved cast their cares upon the Lord. 1 Peter 5:5-9. Refer to the BTB study CONFESION AND FORGIVENESS.

As a general of an Army he does the "unforgiveable" as far as his loyal men are concerned; he seduces and fornicates with his most loyal officer/servant's wife, and then he organises the murder of his most loyal and brave servants to cover his adultery. He then marries the woman he fornicated with and in a pious show of hypocrisy he "makes an honest woman of her". It is all a sham and as fake as it can be until Nathan enters the palace and convicts him of sin.

David's actions were not unusual for pagan oriental monarchs of the day and are not unusual in the world of crime through the centuries. The shocking thing was that this was God's monarch; this was God's servant, the "sweet psalmist of Israel". David had done more than betray the trust of his people and betray a loyal friend; he had betrayed God and made the name of the Lord despised amongst the pagans. He was known as the man of God, and he had brought the Lord's name into disgrace. At a human level he had let down his people and betrayed his friend Uriah, but at the level to which he was called as God's leader of Israel, he had betrayed God and disgraced the holy name of his Lord and God.

### **PSALMS 51:1-19**

**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. 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. 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 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. 9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. 12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. 13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. 14 Deliver me from blood guiltiness, 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. 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.

## REFLECTION

**1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.**

Nathan's words cut through David like a knife; "You are the man!" 2 Samuel 12:7. Nathan's words were measured and accurate. He had told David a story that excited David's sense of what was right, but his emotion was just pious hypocrisy by this point. Nathan blows away all his hypocrisy and the Holy Spirit nails David to the palace wall in true guilt.

Guilt is important in this case, for it correctly identifies the appropriate emotion for David to feel. He ought to be ashamed and shocked at himself. He is shocked to the core, for what he has seen in the evil man in Nathan's story is indeed himself and he correctly labels his deeds as evil and sinful. Until he confesses his sin he is right to feel guilt. His sin is the ultimate insult to his God who placed him as king over Israel. David is not responsible to his people, but to the One who placed him on the throne.

This is why the force of verse four is so powerful. We see sin in terms of the people affected, but that is simply the flow on effect of evil. Many will die as a result of David's sin; possibly as many as a hundred thousand people will die as a result of David's sin! Their deaths are all woven into the plan of God, so individually they are judged by God, so do not accuse God of unfairness in this – the total picture is within the Plan of God from eternity past. He himself will pay terribly for this sin through the rest of his life, for there are some consequences of this sin that cannot be stopped.

Many in the battle against Ammon will die, but far more Israelites will die in the Great Rebellion led by Absalom later. All of these things are terrible consequences of David's sin, but the sin was directly against his anointing as king by God. He has insulted the One who placed him on the throne to do His will; he has directly insulted God and turned away from righteousness and holiness. He has betrayed God's holy trust in him, as every pastor does who fails to protect and feed the sheep under his care. John 21:15-17.

David does the only thing he can do; he casts himself upon the mercy of God, who he has insulted so deeply by his actions. It is only mercy that he can claim, for that is a characteristic of the CHARACTER OF GOD and as such is his only hope for forgiveness and restoration. When we come before God we come on the basis of the character of God alone. When we come before God we cannot come on the basis of any character we have, for all our righteousness is as dirty rags in God's sight. Isaiah 64:6, Romans 8:5-11. When we have sinned we have no excuses that can be made; we have only God's mercy to cast ourselves before. We are sinners and fools without hope, except the hope of God.

David appeals to the mercy of God and the loving kindness of God. He bases his appeal in the Character of God. He knows that God's love is greater than man's sin, and he knows that God's loving kindness is greater than anything that man can imagine or think. Isaiah 55:6-11. He asks for the Lord to "blot out" his transgressions. He is not minimising his sins here, but actually amplifying them. He is recognising that SIN is a total violation of the standards, character, and plan of God.

He is recognising that his sins are multiple and unforgiveable under the Mosaic Law, because they are deliberate and determined evil actions. The Mosaic Law offered hope for sins of ignorance only. Leviticus 4-5, Numbers 15:24-29. There was only execution and eternal damnation for open, deliberate, and persistent rebellion against the holy standards of God. Refer to the BTB studies on SALVATION and GRACE below.

He knows he cannot offer up any sacrifice with the priesthood to be heard by God, for his sins were deliberate and malicious, and showed a total disregard for the holy anointed role he had been given. He had insulted God, and could not trot along to the Temple and offer a bullock and be forgiven in this situation. He needs mercy before he can offer any sacrifice. He asks that the record of his sins be "blotted out" of the book of works that is used as the basis of judgement for mankind. Revelation 20:12-15. Refer to the BTB study JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE.

He is asking for God to imitate the action of the scribe upon papyrus, whereby a written line was wiped away with a wet sea sponge. (This is called "Expiation"). He wants the very record of his sins removed from the record of God concerning his life. In grace, mercy and righteousness God will do this for David, just as he has done this for every believer through the ages. This is mercy in action on God's part. This is amazing grace, and it is the grace we receive also!

**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.**

David recognises he is unclean morally and ethically, before God and Men. He realises that he stands dirty before God and in need of God's help, for he cannot cleanse himself. God alone cleanses us from the stain of sin. Ezekiel 36:24-32. It is the blood of the Saviour that alone cleanses us from sin and washes away the stain that has come to us from the devil and our own temptations being surrendered to. Hebrews 9:11-15, 10:19-22.

Earlier in his life he had prayed Psalm 19, and in verses twelve to fourteen in that Psalm he had expressed his need for forgiveness and cleansing, but here he fully faces the true extent of his sinful state. Read and compare Psalm 19 with Psalm 51 and you will see that the first seems almost polite and respectable, but Psalm 51 is raw and passionate and painful. There is anguish in the words of Psalm 19 but there are tears and soul pain in between every line of Psalm 51.

David is holding nothing back, for he has sinned so greatly that he is rightly overwhelmed by his true guilt. Guilt is at times "false guilt" and as such, it is always destructive, self indulgent and of no value, but "true guilt" is useful and will work out in the life that "sits with its sin" to produce genuine repentance. Guilt alone does not mean repentance. Guilt may mean, "Sorry we are caught out in our sins", but repentance goes way beyond sorrow; it goes to a complete change of heart and mind, and it involves a sincere determination to walk another path than the sin stained path we have been on.

David recognises his sin and its consequences to his spiritual life. He has yet to see the full consequences of sin in his life and the lives of the others who will suffer in the years to come because he let such evils loose at the heart of his kingdom. He realises as he prays the full terrible enormity of his sin, and he seeks God's removal of the great burden he has placed upon himself through his lustful stupidity and evil.

His sinful actions are always flashing back in his mind and he does not experience any pleasure as he thinks of the sexual encounter with Bathsheba, he is thinking only of the murder of his friend and the terrible evil they have done. It is of interest to note that Bathsheba may have been a passionate mistress for a time, but their love was quickly over.

Within twenty years David barely even recognised Bathsheba! When she finally comes in to speak to him about Solomon being king, he barely even recognises her. She is not mentioned by name after their affair is over with Solomon's birth until David is dying. Do not speak of this "love affair" as anything other than what it was; a sinful affair that was falsely "sanctified" by marriage. The birth of Solomon is legitimate and he will be king, but he will continue the sexual sins of his father and will not have David's deep repentance until it is too late for him and his kingdom.

Bathsheba is not mentioned in the scriptures again until Nathan the now elderly prophet approaches her and seeks her assistance to ensure Solomon becomes king quickly and without any carnage. 1 Kings 1:11-31. Read this passage and see the cold formality of the last meeting with this lover and recognise the terrible truth that illicit love affairs nearly all peter out! Things built upon dishonesty don't have a good foundation to build great things upon.

The cold embers of fornication nearly always blow away as the dust they are. Bathsheba is lacking in discernment even after the ascension to the throne of her son Solomon, and she quickly loses her influence when she backs a foolish request by another lust filled son of David as recorded in 1 Kings 2. She is a non-entity in the court before and finally also after David's sin with her. She made a play for him, and she won him, and she gained a king as her son, but she lost any real happiness she might have had as the loved and loyal wife of Uriah the Hittite. The couple does however have another son, Nathan, and possibly named after the great prophet who convicted them both, he will be the ancestor of Mary. 1 Chronicles 3:5.

I have worked with many who commit adultery and run off with their lovers, both male and female. None finds the long term happiness they claim they are seeking with adultery; you simply cannot get gold from lead! You cannot find glory from the ground of disgrace: you cannot find joy from the misery of others. The old fornicator's statement rings true; "If I leave my wife for you, then the only thing you can be sure of, is that I will leave you for someone else one day". Isaiah 59:12-15, Jeremiah 3:21-25.

**4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou might be justified when thou speak, and be clear when thou judge.**

David's sin was ever before his face, for every day he saw Bathsheba he was forced to think of her loyal murdered husband Uriah, and he was forced to remember the evils he did to cover his sins. He also was forced as time went on to reflect upon the flow on evils that occurred in his court, from the rape of Tamar to the Great Rebellion of Absalom. His great sin was against God directly, for it was a direct insult to the great position He had anointed David to hold. The sin wasn't against Uriah, or Bathsheba, or his people, for they were all simple victims of David and Bathsheba's lust; the sin was directly against God – they had insulted their eternal king.

Let us pause and reflect upon this for the truth of this statement of David's remains powerfully correct for us all. All sin by a believer is directly against God, who has called us His children. We are members of the Royal Family of God in Christ Jesus and need to live lives worthy of our calling. 1 Peter 2:9-12. Our eternal spiritual wages are to be REWARDS AND CROWNS of God's grace, but the "wages of sin" is eternal death. Romans 6:23, Revelation 2:11, 20:12-15, 21:8.



Sinful acts violate our holy calling as believers and members of the Royal family of God, and are direct insults to the Lord's grace shown to us. The order given to all believers is clear; live lives that are worthy of your high calling in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 4:1, Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12, 2 Thessalonians 1:5-11, 1 Peter 1:18-19, 2:9-10. David recognises that all sin is done "in God's sight". Nothing is hidden from the Lord God, and David sees now that he is seen! Adultery behind closed doors is never behind any doors at all as far as the Lord is concerned. All is open to God's sight and no man may hide any action from the Lord.

Let us remind ourselves and each other of the Lord's moral standards, and the Lord's omniscience. Nothing is hidden from God who made all things. Some people have argued with me regarding the guilt associated with sin, and said that the pleasant memories of their past sins are enjoyable to reflect upon, and at least they have lived and not been boringly moral! In any situation where this has been said I have pressed that person, and their "sweet memory" of their past sin very quickly evaporates and what they then speak of is the bitterness of their memories and the regrets at hurts caused by their sins. There are no sweet memories of evil, only depression, and that is what David appears to suffer from for the rest of his life.

**5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.**

**6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.**

David is not insulting his mother (and father) here. His mother conceived in a sinful state, because we always do conceive as fallen human beings, in a sinful state. We are fallen people, and we bring a sinner into the world when we bring a child into the world. Children are not innocent, but inheritors of their father's Old Sin Nature. This is why the Virgin Birth needed to occur, so that Jesus was born in His humanity without an Old Sin Nature, so He could be the perfect sacrifice for sin and our Saviour. One of Bathsheba and David's sons, Nathan will be the ancestor of Mary, who alone brings hope to mankind through the birth of Jesus.

We are all born sinners and need a Saviour from our first breath. Now David himself identified that children who die early are automatically saved by the Lord, and he expressed this confidence in the salvation of children who die when his first child to Bathsheba dies. 2 Samuel 12:23, Matthew 18:10. Only one child has ever been born as Adam was made; without the Old Sin Nature, and that was the Lord Jesus Christ. Refer to the doctrines in the BTB below, OLD SIN NATURE, and VIRGIN BIRTH. The Lord is the Saviour of all, reversing the curse brought by the first Adam's sin.

Foolish woman and men delight in deceiving themselves and being deceived by Satan the enemy of mankind. We fool ourselves about the nature of truth and the nature of error. All adulterers that I have ever worked with deceive themselves about the nature of their actions, and only over time do they confront the full stupidity and evil of their actions. It is when their lust dies, or they see the many weaknesses of their lover, that they face the truth about their actions. Deceivers have deceitful weaknesses!

Read through the story of David in the EBCWA Commentary in 2 Samuel and you will see that there is no happy ending for David and Bathsheba; they have no happy married life after their adultery. She becomes just another wife in the harem and shares "her man" with wives and concubines. David's own weakness will be writ large in the pathetic life of his son Solomon.

God's will for all mankind is for faithful monogamous MARRIAGE not POLYGAMY, and all who err in this reap a whirlwind of distress through their later life. David realises his sin, but he keeps thinking at that point and asks what God really wants for him and his life now. Many get so emotional that they stop thinking, but David keeps going and reflects upon the

Word of God that he knows and seeks the Will of God for him. He knows that the Lord wants him to walk in the "light of the Word".

After the nation has gone into Babylonian Captivity a later psalmist will sum up the lessons learned by the people from their sinfulness that led to the captivity, and it will centre in the revival of the Word of God in their lives. Psalms 119:25-35, 79-89, 105-107. God doesn't want academic knowledge in His people, He wants life changing doctrinal truth to transform them and make them truly the children of the living God. God wants inner transformation of His people, so that Bible doctrine is at their very heart. Romans 12:1-2.

**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.**

Don't run off and speak of "medicinal herbs" in relation to the hyssop, for that is not the purpose of David's reference to this herb. This was the herb, branches of which were used to dip into the blood of the sacrifices and sprinkle the door posts in the Exodus, (Exodus 12:20), and then later the blood of the sacrifice for leprosy. The cleansing of the leper was done by sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice upon them by means of the hyssop. Leviticus 14:5-7.

The hyssop was also used in the sacrifice of the Red Heifer which was a crucial sacrifice for the preparation and consecration of the priesthood. It was burnt in the sacrifice, and also used for the sprinkling of the "holy water" of purification. Numbers 19:1-7, 17-19. This "holy water" was then to be used to purify all who had come into contact with a dead body, either by accident or deliberately as part of a funeral.

If we put all these references to hyssop together we can see what David meant by his phrase, "purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean". It refers to the blood on the lintels that covered the Exodus Generation, the sanctifying sacrifice that set aside the priests for service, and the cleansing blood and water that recognised the cleansing of the leper from leprosy. It was a powerful symbol of the need for thorough spiritual cleansing from sinfulness.

On the Cross the "blood and water" that came from His side after His death was a sign that brought together all these symbolic elements and proved to the Apostle John that the sacrifice for sin that had occurred was perfect and complete. John 19:31-37. It speaks of the grace provision of God for the washing away of the stain of the sins of mankind. It speaks of the perfect work of God to deal with the sin of man. David is asking for the supernatural work of God to cleanse him from his sins.

He recognises that only the blood of the perfect sacrifice for sin can take away sin, and only the washing of the pure water of God's provision can cleanse from its stain upon the life. He places himself under the gracious provision of God for his salvation; only the Lord can wash the terrible stain of his sin away. Isaiah 1:15-20, Revelation 7:13-17. All David hears in his sinful state is his busy mind telling him how evil he is, and he longs for the cleansing of God so that he can know joy again. He seeks the FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT's presence.

David's deep pain is expressed in the picture of a broken bone, and for any who has had such a thing they know the pain he is describing. He is feeling such deep pain that he can barely speak, but he knows that at the hands of God he will be cleansed and restored to a place of joy and gladness. Salvation and forgiveness are sweet indeed, and only God can transform such a guilt ridden and tortured soul. These verses are indeed the promise of salvation and joy for all, for all sinners may know God's peace, if they will only come to Him and cast their sins down at the foot of the Cross. Matthew 11:28-30.

**9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.**

**10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.**

Once again David seeks total and complete forgiveness, and that means the Lord forgets the sin! This may seem incredible to us at first sight, but it is actually what the Lord does with our sins. We are told by the Psalm of David this very truth, upon which he now rests his petition to the Lord. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us". Psalms 103:9-17, Ephesians 3:18-19. David understands the heart of God, just as he now realises the heart of man is desperately and deceitfully wicked. There is no peace for those who are wicked in their hearts. Isaiah 57:20-21, Jeremiah 17:7-9. David will suffer depression as a result of his evils, but he is forgiven them all!

One of the great truths about the way God deals with us is that we never get what we deserve for our sins. Genesis 33:11, Psalms 103:10, Joel 2:26. The Lord has dealt with David in grace, not in vengeance. God was entitled to destroy David for his great sins, but in grace he confessed and appealed for mercy and grace and judgement was turned to grace and mercy through David's repentance here expressed in this Psalm. David's prayer is for a transformed life and heart, and for his spirit to be restored so that he knows the sweet fellowship with God that he had enjoyed before his sinful carnality. His prayer of confession is answered by God, as is every repentant sinner's prayer answered in grace and mercy.

He will feel great sadness at what he has done, and the depression regarding this will dog him every day of his remaining life. That is not God's punishment, but natural human consequences of betraying your friend to death for lust. He must sit with his sadness, for he worked hard to produce it! Depression over the past is not a sign of lack of forgiveness it is simply a sign that now you understand holiness! There are two ways to learn about holiness; Bible Class or the school of divine discipline. Learn holiness now believer in bible classes and avoid the guilt later!

**11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.**

**12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.**

In the Old Testament period the MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT differed to our period since Pentecost. The Old Testament believers were not all filled with the Holy Spirit, who was only given to special people for special tasks and then was withdrawn. Our present Church Age is the first in which there is for believers the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament believer could lose the ministry of the Holy Spirit in their life due to sin or simply to the completion of their spiritual tasking.

We are blessed indeed in the Church Age to have the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and we need to walk worthy of the Lord so that we are always filled with the Spirit and powerful in our service. Refer to the BTB studies below on the ministries of the Holy Spirit in both the Age of Israel and the Church. David has lost the filling and the fruit of the Holy Spirit and he longs for that joy again. Romans 6:21-23, 7:4-6, 9:16-23, Galatians 5:22-26, Philippians 1:9-11, James 3:17-18, 5:1-6.

**13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.**

**14 Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.**

David realises that if he is forgiven and restored to full spiritual power again, that it is not for himself, but that he might serve others in his spiritual state. We are not here to relax and enjoy spiritual gifts and fruits, but to share them with the lost and the brethren that the blessing of the Lord might be multiplied to all who will receive them. His role as a believer

is to minister salvation to the lost and blessing to the saints, and his sin has hindered both ministries. Sin stops ministry dead in its tracks.

David takes full personal responsibility for his sins without blaming Bathsheba or even referring to her. He refers to his “blood guilt” and truly he was guilty of military murder; he carries the blood of Uriah on his hands. He takes the full responsibility for his sin and leaves Bathsheba to take responsibility for her part in the drama that unfolded between them.

David is ready to praise the Lord for his deliverance and sing to all of the grace that he has received, which means he is ready to be publicly humiliated for his sins also. He is ready to make his sin public and his confession public in order to praise the Lord for his salvation and deliverance. He is ready to put his “privacy” aside and look to ways that his experiences can assist others. This is the sign of genuine repentance; life change and openness about the past.

We need to be very suspicious of those who have “gaps” in their CVs. Those who are not open about their past are hiding things, and that means they have some elements of narcissism and that means more sinful patterns remain within them. When there is life changing repentance from a sinful life pattern there will always be a genuine desire to help others afterwards. If people have no desire to help others they have not been genuinely changed by God!

**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.**

David understands the heart of God towards mankind. God seeks life change and morality in life, and then open and free worship. David knows that he cannot worship unless the Lord “opens his lips”; unless he is forgiven and restored to Holy Spirit filled status. True worship is only ever Holy Spirit filled worship, for man alone cannot truly worship in their human strength. It is the Holy Spirit that produces real and powerful worship amongst men and women.

God doesn't want us to spend money on sacrifices and doing rituals that lack reality; God seeks genuine life change and then expression in worship. Sacrifices were the way to worship in David's day, but these sacrifices needed to be offered from a pure heart that had already done business with God through confession of sin. It is not the ritual that matters to God but the reality behind it. John 4:23-26.

**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.**

Arrogance is the enemy of truth. Arrogance and self centeredness is certainly the enemy of godliness. It is a broken spirit towards sin that is the start of knowledge of God and self. God wants each man and woman to be real in their assessment of themselves and their spiritual state before God. Brokenness is not abusive, it is liberating as the Lord means it, and as David means it here. God is not wanting people broken in spirit all the time, but He wants us to break down the smugness we feel towards sins that will destroy us over time. God wants us broken towards sin and evil. Psalms 34:18, 147:3.

We are sinners and need to come to terms with that fact bluntly and honestly. Genuine sorrow at sin is a good thing to experience and not try to explain it away or avoid it. We have a saying in English, “To take it on the chin”, and it means to accept total responsibility and the consequences of any action. David is “taking it on the chin” here. He knows that the Lord will not despise his sacrifice of sorrow, and at times we all need to bring the sacrifice of godly sorrow to our God.

He recognises that the Lord alone can “rebuild the walls of Jerusalem” and protect him. Now the stone walls are still standing at this point, but he realises that his sin has opened the kingdom to attack and he pleads for the Lord to protect his people from the evils he has brought upon them. Isaiah 57:15, 61:1-3. He now thinks of others and realises that had he been in this place during the war against Ammon then he would not be in this mess.

**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.**

Only when his heart is right before God can David know that his Levitical sacrifices will be accepted. Psalms 66:13-19, 118:27, Malachi 3:3, 6-7. It is important to see how repetitive David is on this point, for it exercised his mind greatly as he thinks of his sin. All the Levitical sacrifices speak of forgiveness through the blood of the offering, but they must be brought by a heart that is truly repentant, and they could only be brought for sin committed in ignorance or stupidity, not deliberate malice.

David was guilty of such gross sins that the Levitical System didn't provide for him unless he truly did business in his heart first and received the Lord's permission to bring the sacrifice. No sacrifice could be offered for Achan. Joshua 7:24-26. David was beyond hope, but not beyond God's grace when he bowed his knee fully before his God. He ends his prayer here with the sacrificial offerings that were prescribed for sins and that his heart-felt confession has led to God giving him permission to bring.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. We cannot bring anything to God to demand a hearing, nor can we offer any explanations or excuses for sins committed. We can however cast ourselves upon the mercy of God, for His character is secure and His grace stable. We have nothing to bring to the Lord except our humble sorrow and embarrassment at our state. We are met by the Lord where we are and we are lifted up by His mercy and grace. Let us preach this message to the lost, for they need to know that salvation doesn't depend upon them but upon God.

2. The wages of sin is death. Let us speak more of Hell and the Lake of Fire than we do, for the enemies of God will find their reward for their evil, as their wages for sin are all paid in full. Jesus spoke a great deal of Hell and the final judgement of mankind. We need to speak at least as much as our Lord did of the subject. Look up in a concordance the topic of Hell and be amazed at the words of the Lord concerning it and the fate of those who resist the calling of the Holy Spirit.

3. Have you given thanks today for the loving grace, mercy and peace that the Lord delivers to you through confession of sin? We do not pray and give thanks enough for the grace and love of the Lord. We have a man's prayer meeting each Wednesday night at the church I attend, and what a time of open rejoicing and praise we have standing together as men and celebrating the grace, mercy and love of God. Pastors, get organised and run praise and prayer sessions more often. Prayer and praise is the power house of any church.

4. Let us warn believers of the dangers of carnality. We need to be sure of our spiritual status when we walk into this world on a daily basis. It is an unsafe battlefield and any believer walking through it without the filling of the Holy Spirit is in grave danger. Arrogance and self centeredness is the path to spiritual and moral disaster. Let us be very suspicious of those who claim they have changed but are reluctant to assist others and are obsessed with their own privacy, rather than being focused on sharing anything that will assist others.

## DOCTRINES

### CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS See page 26

### GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD See page 18

### SIN – OLD SIN NATURE

1. We are born with a nature, inherited from Adam, which is against God and prone to sin (Ephesians 2:1, Romans 5:12).
2. The old sin nature is perpetuated in the human race by physical birth (Psalm 51:5, 1 Timothy 2:13, 14).
3. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth (Romans 5:12).
4. Names for the old sin nature:
  - a) Flesh - Galatians 5:16
  - b) Old Man - Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:9
  - c) Carnal - Romans 7:14
  - d) Sin - Romans 5:12
  - e) Heart - Jeremiah 17:9
  - f) Member - Colossians 3:5.
5. The believer continues to have an old sin nature after salvation (1 John 1:8, 1 Corinthians 3:1).
6. The believer under the control of the old sin nature is called carnal (Romans 7:14, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3).
7. The old sin nature frustrates true production of the Christian life (Romans 7:15).
8. The old sin nature has two tendencies (Romans 6:6)
  - a) Area of weakness - pushes us towards lawlessness and sins (Hebrews 12:1)
  - b) Area of strength - pushes us towards asceticism and self-righteousness (Isaiah 64:6).
9. The old sin nature is not found in the resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:56, Philippians 3:21, 1 Thessalonians 5:23).
10. Victory over the old sin nature is achieved by considering your old life dead, surrendering to God, confessing sin and relying upon the filling of the Spirit (Romans 6:6, 11, Colossians 3:9-10).

### SALVATION – BARRIER BETWEEN MAN AND GOD See page 125

### SALVATION – ATONEMENT – UNLIMITED ATONEMENT

1. Definition:
  - a) The totally effective work of Christ on the cross to pay the penalty of sin on behalf of mankind.
  - b) Atonement as a noun means reconciliation after enmity and includes reparation made for wrong or injury.
  - c) The verb has several related meanings such as to be at one, to be in accordance, to make reparation or amends, to make up for errors or deficiencies, to reconcile.
  - d) In the Old Testament, the true meaning of atonement is related to the Hebrew verb "to pass over, to cover" - it is also the word for 'pitch' used to seal Noah's Ark.
2. In Old Testament times, animal sacrifices were used to cover sin.
  - a) God forgave and restored where sin was covered by the blood of animal sacrifices.
  - b) However, the true basis for atonement was not found in these animal sacrifices. This is why the sacrifices needed to be repeated time and time again.

c) Animal sacrifices were used as a cover for sin until the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, could be offered on the cross.

d) Atonement in the Old Testament refers to the use of animal sacrifices to picture the saving work of Christ.

e) The two concepts of atonement (Old and New Testament) are brought together in Romans 3:23-26)

3. Atonement is unlimited

a) When Jesus Christ was judged on the cross for sins he paid for the sins of the entire human race, not just the elect. (Romans 5:6, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 1 Timothy 2:6, 4:10, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2:2)

b) "Limited Atonement", the concept that Christ died for believers only is incorrect.

4. Unlimited Atonement eliminates sin in the unbelievers' indictment at the Last Judgement.

a) When Christ died on the cross, He was judged for all sins of the human race.

b) Therefore the issue in salvation is not sin, but faith in Christ. People choose either to accept the work of Christ (John 3:18,36), or their own "good" works to gain the approval of God.

c) Therefore, human good will be the basis of the unbelievers' indictment at the Last Judgement. (Revelation 20:12)

## **SALVATION – EXPIATION AND PROPITIATION**

1. Expiation and Propitiation are two sides of the same coin with propitiation being in relation to God while expiation looks at the problem from man's side.

2. By expiation the offence which renders the person guilty in the sight of God is covered from the eyes of God by the effective dealing with the problem by propitiation.

3. The Mercy Seat (the top of the Ark of the Covenant) in the Tabernacle was the place of propitiation.

4. The concept of the Mercy Seat must be understood in the light of the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10-22, 37:1-9).

5. The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden box (45" x 27" x 27") constructed of acacia wood (the humanity of Christ) overlaid with gold (the Deity of Christ).

6. Contents of the Ark: the golden pot of manna, the tablets of stone and Aaron's rod that budded (Hebrews 9:4). The tablets of stone represented man's transgressions against God's perfect standard, the rod that budded stood for man's rebellion against established authority, the pot of manna showed man's rejection of divine provision.

7. The content of the Ark is a picture of Christ bearing our sins in His body on the tree (2 Corinthians 5:21).

8. The Mercy Seat was a solid gold lid which fitted over the ark and bore two golden cherubs, one on each end representing God's holiness (Hebrews 9:5).

9. Once every year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered twice into the Holy of Holies with a bowl of blood (once for his own sins and once for the sins of the people) (Hebrews 9:7). He sprinkled the blood on the Mercy Seat. God's righteousness and justice were satisfied.

10. Because of propitiation, or satisfaction of His holy character, God is free to love the believer.
11. The Mercy Seat represented propitiation with emphasis on the person of Jesus Christ, our own great High Priest.
12. "Mercy Seat" in Hebrews 9:5 has the same concept as the word propitiation (Gk. hilasterion) in Romans 3:25.
13. Propitiation is used to express the true and perfect love of God for all believers regardless of their status (1John 4:10).
14. Propitiation is used to relate the person of Christ and the "covering" of God's character (Romans 3:25).

### **SALVATION – IMPUTATION**

1. Abraham is the pattern of imputation of divine righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)
2. Divine righteousness is imputed only on the basis of faith in Christ. (Romans 3:22)
3. Many Gentiles of Old Testament times found God's righteousness by believing in Christ while many Jews, relying on the Law, missed imputation. (Romans 9:30-33)
4. Imputation is the basis of Justification. (Romans 4:22, 5:1)
5. Imputation encourages faith in Christ. (Romans 4:24, 25)
6. Imputation is based on the work of Christ on the Cross. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

**SALVATION – REDEMPTION** See page 129

**GRACE** See page 11

### **JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE**

1. The judgement of the Great White Throne is the last judgement. (Revelation 20:11, 15)
2. Only the unsaved are judged at the last judgement as there is no condemnation for Christians. (Romans 8:1)
3. The last judgement occurs at the end of the Millennium. (Revelation 20:7-15)
4. The unsaved are judged according to their works from the Books of Works (Revelation 20:12)
5. The judgement is to show that the Human works of man cannot satisfy the justice of God. God is totally fair and shows that He is only satisfied by "The Good Work" – the death of Christ on the Cross.
6. Having shown the unsaved they have failed to satisfy the holiness of God, the condemned are cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:15)

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS** See page 29



## CHRIST – VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

1. Jesus Christ had to be born of a virgin to fulfil prophecy. (Isaiah 7:1 4)
2. Jesus had to be born of a virgin to confirm the curse of Coniah. (Jeremiah 22:28-30)
  - a) Coniah was a believer but an evil king at the time of the Babylonian captivity.
  - b) Coniah is also in the direct line of Christ in Joseph's lineage from David (Matthew 1:6, 1:11, 1:16) through Solomon. This is the kingly line.
  - c) Mary was also in the direct line of Christ from David (Luke 3:23, Luke 3:31) through Nathan. In Luke 3:23 Joseph is the son-in-law of Heli, Mary's father.
  - d) Both lines, Solomon's and Nathan's meet in the person of Jesus Christ but by the virgin birth Coniah's line is cut off as Joseph is the legal but not natural father of Jesus Christ.
3. Jesus had to be born of a virgin to not have the sin nature of Adam. The sin nature of man comes down through the male. (1 Timothy 2:14)
  - a) Adam, as the head, was responsible for his wife.
  - b) Eve was deceived and sinned.
  - c) Adam made deliberate choice.
4. In order to be the God-Man Jesus had to be conceived of the Holy Spirit to Mary.
5. The virgin birth is therefore critical especially in the doctrine of Redemption, Imputation and Propitiation. NO virgin birth - NO salvation.

## GOD – DIVINE INSTITUTIONS – MARRIAGE See page 57

### GOD – DIVINE INSTITUTIONS – MARRIAGE – POLYGAMY

1. Polygamy was never authorised by the Word of God (Leviticus 18:18; Deuteronomy 17:17).
  - a) Polygamy is never the will of God.
  - b) Only man in apostasy or humanism condones polygamy.
2. Polygamy is related to apostasy.
  - a) Found in the time of Lamech because of apostasy (Genesis 4:19).
  - b) Jacob's polygamy (Genesis 29) set a precedent for the Jews but was not approved by God.
3. Polygamy violates the doctrine of marriage.
  - a) By an act of free will, a man can destroy his wife.
  - b) Man is not designed for an intimate relationship with more than one woman.
4. Polygamy is a form of self-induced misery and unhappiness for man.
5. Monogamy is God's order (Genesis 2:24).
6. Many great believers had one wife, therefore they understood the principle of monogamy e.g. Noah, Joseph, Joshua, Samuel.
7. Trouble related to polygamy.
  - a) Concentration of jealousy of wives under one roof illustrated by Jacob's wives (Genesis 29, 30), and Elkanah's wives (1 Samuel 1:6ff.).
  - b) Gideon's polygamy compounded the problems in the children and the discipline carried to the second generation (Judges 8:30 - 9:5).
  - c) David's polygamy compounded the problems in the children, and the discipline carried to the second generation (1Chronicles 3:1-9).

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT See page 68

### HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not indwell all believers, since Christ was not yet glorified (John 7:39). Instead, He only came upon some Old Testament saints to perform special functions.

- a) JOSEPH, a believer who was a prime minister. (Genesis 41:38)
- b) Believers who were artisans occupied in the construction of the Tabernacle. (Exodus 28:3, 31:3)
- c) Believers involved in administration. (Numbers 11:17, 25)
- d) A believer who was both a political and military leader - JOSHUA (Numbers 27:18)
- e) Certain Judges: OTHNIEL (Judges 3:9, 10) GIDEON (Judges 6:34) JEPHTHAH (Judges 11:29) SAMSON (Judges 13:24, 25, 14:5-6, 15:14)
- f) Kings of Israel (1 Samuel 10:9, 10, 16:13)
- g) DANIEL (Daniel 4:8, 5:11, 6:3)
- h) Post exilic rulers (Zechariah 4:3, 12-14)

2. Believers in Israel could be disciplined by the removal of the Spirit:

- a) SAUL (1 Samuel 16:14)
- b) DAVID (Psalm 51:11)

3. A believer could obtain the Holy Spirit by request, but not as an indwelling presence. (2 Kings 2:9, 10, Luke 11:13)

4. Jesus gave the Holy Spirit without request to the disciples just before the ascension. Purpose: To sustain them for the ten day interim before the Church Age would begin. (John 20:22)

### HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

#### 1. TO THE UNBELIEVER

a) RESTRAINING (2 Thessalonians 2:7)

If unbelievers were unrestrained in the Church Age the one world system which Satan is trying to establish would come. After the rapture of the Church it will come.

b) CONVICTING (John 16:7-11)

- i) Sin - the barrier which remains in unbelief.
- ii) Righteousness - God is totally righteous, man is only relatively righteous and needs God's righteousness for salvation.
- iii) Judgement - Satan and all unbelievers are judged.

c) REGENERATION (John 3:5)

Man without the spirit cannot understand spiritual things. The Gospel is spiritual, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel a reality to the unbeliever when one believes and is "born again" or regenerated. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

#### 2. TO THE BELIEVER AT SALVATION

a) Regeneration (John 3:1-16, Titus 3:5)

b) Baptism (Acts 1:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:5) We are baptized into union with Jesus Christ and become part of the body of Christ. This is not to be confused with the Filling of the Holy Spirit.

c) Indwelling (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) From salvation on the believer is indwelt by the Spirit.

d) Sealing (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). This ministry relates to your future with God, the guarantee of eternal security.

e) Distribution of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11) Each believer receives a spiritual gift at the point of salvation in order to function in the body of Christ.

### 3. TO THE BELIEVER AFTER SALVATION (Spirituality)

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit after salvation is the means by which we live the Christian life ordained by God (Ephesians 2:10, 5:18)

- a) The Filling of the Holy Spirit (spirituality through confession of sin and surrender of the life). (1 John 1:9 Ephesians 5:18)
- b) The character of Jesus Christ is produced by the believer when he is filled with the Spirit. (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23)
- c) Glorification of Christ (John 7:39, 16:14, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)
- d) Fulfilment of the Law. (Romans 8:2-4)

## HOLY SPIRIT – FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. We are commanded to allow Him to fill (or fully control) our lives (Ephesians 5:18).

2. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be broken by:

- a) Grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) - sin, doing something you shouldn't.
- b) Quenching the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) - not doing something you should (like quenching a fire, allowing the flame to go out).

3. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be restored by confession of sin and full surrender to do the will of God (1 John 1:9)

4. The Spirit produces the very character of the Christ in the believer: (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23, Ephesians 3:16, 17, Philippians 1:20, 21, 2 Corinthians 3:3)

a) The fruit of the Spirit:

- i) Galatians 5:22-23 - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.
- ii) Romans 14:17 - Righteousness, Peace, Joy.
- iii) Colossians 3:12-15 - Compassion, Kindness, Humility, Gentleness, Patience, Forgiveness, Love, Peace, Thankfulness.
- iv) 1 Thessalonians 1:3 - Faith, Love, Endurance, Hope.

b) Rejoicing in Christ (Philippians 3:1, 4:4).

c) Loving one another (John 15:12, Romans 12:10, Ephesians 5:2).

d) Striving for the faith (Philippians 1:27, Jude 3).

e) Putting away all sin (1 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 12:1).

f) Abstaining from all appearances of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

g) Submitting to injuries (1 Corinthians 6:7).

h) Subduing the temper (Ephesians 4:26, James 1:19).

i) Shunning the wicked (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

j) Abounding in the works of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58 1 Thessalonians 4:1).

k) Showing a good example (1 Timothy 4:12, 1 Peter 2:12).

l) Following after that which is good (Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 6:11).

m) Perfecting holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Timothy 3:17).

n) Hating defilement (Jude 23).

o) Overcoming the world. (1 John 5:4-5)

p) Adorning the gospel. (Philippians 1:27, Titus 2:10)

q) Forgiving injuries. (Romans 12:20)

r) Living peaceably with all. (Romans 12:18, Hebrews 12:14)

s) Visiting the afflicted. (James 1:27)

t) Sympathising with others. (Romans 12:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:14)

u) Honouring others. (Romans 12:10)

v) Submitting to authorities. (Romans 13:1-7)

w) Being content. (Philippians 4:11, Hebrews 13:5)

- x) Walking worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
- y) Walking in the newness of life. (Romans 6:4)
- z) Walking as children of light. (Ephesians 5:8)
- aa) Glorifies Christ in his body. (Philippians 1:20, 21)
- bb) Christ is at home in his body. (Ephesians 3:16,17)
- cc) A lifestyle which honours God in the presence of men. (2 Corinthians 3:3)

5. The filling of the Holy Spirit in every believer only occurs in two dispensations:

- a) Church age Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22,23
- b) Millennium - Joel 2:28, 29 (characterised by ecstasies)

## **HOLY SPIRIT – SINS AGAINST THE SPIRIT**

1. RESISTING THE HOLY SPIRIT (Unbelievers only) (Acts 7:51, John 16:8-11) This is hardening to the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit.
2. BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT (Unbelievers only) (Matthew 12:31) The purpose of the Holy Spirit was to reveal the person of Jesus Christ. The Pharisees rejected this by claiming He was demon possessed.
3. LYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT (Believers only) (Acts 5:1-3) A sin of false motivation. - Ananias and Sapphira.
4. GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT (Believers only) (Ephesians 4:30) Any sin which the believer commits.
5. QUENCHING THE HOLY SPIRIT (Believers only) (1 Thessalonians 5:19) A believer who is not allowing the Holy Spirit to exert His full influence.
6. UNPARDONABLE SIN (Matthew 12:22-32)
  - a) Rejection of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour is the only sin which cannot be forgiven. This unbelief is shown in Matthew 12:24, denying the person and power of Jesus.
  - b) It is impossible for a believer to commit the unpardonable sin. (Isaiah 1:18, Isaiah 44:22, 1 John 1:7)

## **NOTES**

**PSALM 52****INTRODUCTION**

There are evil people in this world and there are some who are just malice filled towards us. The Lord warns us that there will be those who hate us as much as they hated Him. John 15:18-27. This Psalm comes from the time when Doeg the Edomite came to Saul, betrayed David and tried to get David killed, and succeeded in murdering all the priests at the Tabernacle site at Nob. It was a terrible thing for Saul to allow this malice filled pagan to execute the priests, and it was a sin and evil that led to the execution of Saul's entire house and the end of his own line. 1 Samuel 21:1-15, 22:9-23.

The evil malice of the enemy knows no bounds, and the believer at such times is required to rest upon the Lord's plan and Person and trust Him to lead them through and right the terrible wrongs done by the evil men. God is not mocked and judgement will fall in the end upon all who abuse God's people. Those who mock God and His people face terrible judgement. Luke 18:32, 22:63, 23:11, 36, Galatians 6:7, Hebrews 10:31, 12:28-29, Revelation 20:11-15.

**PSALMS 52:1-9**

**1 Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? The goodness of God endureth continually. 2 The tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. 3 Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah. 4 Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue. 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. 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. 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.**

**REFLECTION**

**1 Why boast yourself in mischief, O mighty man? The goodness of God endures continually.**

**2 The tongue devises mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.**

The boasting of evil men will be a constant challenge through the life of every believer. Psalms 10:2-11. You will always meet Satan's people who have great earthly success and who boast of it in your ears and throw their success and your struggles in your face, with an insult to God in the midst of it. In this world we will have tribulation at times, but we need to remember the Lord's promise, that He has overcome the evil forces behind this world. Matthew 28:18-20, John 16:33, 2 Thessalonians 3:16.

Those who hate the Lord and reject the Gospel delight in celebrating their temporal successes, for by their drunken boastings they forget that they head for death and total uncertainty. They want to believe that there are "no certainties" after death, but the Bible tells differently and our job is to confront them with the truth of judgement if they persist in their rebellion against their Creator and Saviour. God's goodness endures forever, and the boasting insults of unsaved men against God do not alter or affect the wonderful and perfect character of God. Psalms 103:17-18, 107:1-2, 121:1-8, 1 John 4:7-10.

The uncontrolled tongue of evil men and women is indeed a terrible weapon. More deaths have been provoked by careless or hate filled words than by any other means. Psalms 64:2-6, Proverbs 6:16-19. Notice how many of the biblical “seven deadly sins” in the Proverbs passage are sins of the tongue. Once evil words are said they keep on working. Gossip does not rest but keeps moving from person to person and doing more evil as it goes. The tongue may be used for health or death. Proverbs 12:18. We must guard our tongues, for the evil done by false witness and gossip is great and keeps working its poison for years after the words are out. Let us be a blessing to others and say nothing in public that is not for the blessing of others. 2 Corinthians 4:1-4, 11:13-15.

**3 Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.**

**4 Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.**

The evil person is identified by the fruit of their lips and life, for these are the outworking of their life choices. Matthew 7:13-23. They love evil and delight in the works of evil. Refer to the BTB study on EVIL, for it is Satan’s policy as opposed to God’s policy, and we need to recognise the subtlety of the enemy’s plans. There are people who love lies more than truth, and deception more than honesty. In today’s world they are called “Personality Disordered People”, but the Word of God is clear and forthright; they are evil and they are fools. Let us not mince words and provide meaningless psychological descriptions of people’s behaviours; let us spot the source of their evil and name it for what it is. When a person has a deceitful tongue, identify their fruit and call them the sons and daughters of evil that they are.

**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.**

**6 The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:**

The Lord will judge these people finally, and they will face eternity in the Lake of Fire if they do not repent of their evil, but our job here and now is to identify them quickly and avoid them thoroughly. The evil people of this world do not expect God to act in history and are mortally offended when God does act. They expect to get away with their sins and act surprised when we challenge them that the Lord will judge eventually.

God will “pluck” all people from their dwelling places eventually, for we live upon this earth by permission only, and the day comes when our time here is up. We are all alive at the pleasure of the Lord also, and the godless rich and healthy overlook the fact that they live and move and have their being courtesy of the Lord’s grace alone. The smallest cell going crazy inside the body will cause a fatal cancer, and it doesn’t matter how great and wealthy that person is, they are just as dead as the poorest and most insignificant person.

Let us remember the fragile state of our life and leave behind us any arrogance at all. The day will come when the righteous, who have been abused by the godless, will laugh aloud as the arrogant and evil are caught by God. It is not wrong to seek the judgement of others, especially those whose evil has created carnage for God’s people. We seek the salvation of the lost, but it is not wrong to seek the judgement of those who have rejected the Gospel and are doing evil to the godly.

Many believers feel that they cannot seek the judgement of God upon the evil, and that they must always be seeking their salvation and never their judgement. There is a time when we ask for judgement, and it is all right to do so. Remember the picture that John draws in Revelation when the saints who have been executed for their testimony ask the Lord, “How long before justice is done?” Revelation 6:10, 6:9-11, 7:9-17.

**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.**

What is said when the once rich and powerful fall into judgement? The words of verse seven are heard and they are words of rebuke. When people trust things that can evaporate away they trust a mirage. All material things are just mirages; they have no lasting substance. There is no fellowship in hell, just mutual loathing for those who in time lorded it over other pagans! Isaiah 14:9-11.

Things are temporary and if we trust our riches rather than our relationships we are on unstable ground. When people trust God who cannot let them down, they rest upon certainty. Rich people who are focused upon their own wickedness are heading towards judgement. Psalms 73:7-11, Hosea 12:7-8. Refer to the BTB study WEALTH, MONEY, WORLDLINESS.

**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.**

When a person trusts in their temporary wealth, they will fail through time. When people trust in the deep resources of Almighty God, they will succeed in all God requires of them over time. We are to be like the "green tree". This is an image of drawing up water and nutrients from roots that are deep into the resources of God. Psalms 1:3-6, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Ezekiel 47:12. Our task before the Lord is to put our roots deep into the Word of God and draw up biblical truth daily and apply it daily. We live in this world, but through our living relationship with God, we are actually living in the Temple of God. We are where God dwells at all times, because we are in living and powerful relationship with God.

**9 I will praise thee forever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints**

The result of realising the greatness of our powerful relationship with God is joy in the heart and praise from the lips, and this will overflow into both individual and corporate worship and rejoicing. Refer to the BTB study PRAISE AND WORSHIP. Have you ever felt the emotion of verse nine believer? How long is it since you expressed this as David does here? Have we seen that "God does it" in our lives?

God does all the things that matter in our lives! It is this grace realisation that must overwhelm us if we want to really experience the power of God, for our most secure source of power and focus is praise and worship that flows from realising the truth. The truth is seen most clearly through accurate and strong doctrinal biblical teaching. Let us teach the Word of God in power and let us follow it up with open praise and worship.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us guard our tongues from evil words. If we cannot bless, let us not speak. We are called to be heralds of the King of kings and so we need to ensure that our words are the oracles of God. Let us be fearful of saying things that are wrongful. Romans 3:2, 1 Peter 4:11.
2. Let us be vigorous fruit inspectors for evil fruit. We must identify the evil fruit of negative people and learn to label them for what they truly are and avoid them. Let us call evil for what it is and stop making stupid excuses for nasty people. They are nasty and they need to be identified as such.
3. Let worship be our strength and power, and it will be as we allow the Holy Spirit to go to work on our hearts and minds through biblical and doctrinal study, for the overflow of all true biblical study is praise and worship.

## DOCTRINES

**EVIL** See page 58

**WEALTH** See page 122

## **MONEY**

1. Money in coin form was unknown until the 7th century BC Prior to coins, money or valuable metal was measured in terms of ingots or rings. Croesus, King of Lydia first preserved his money in coins. When Cyrus the Great conquered Lydia, he picked up the concept of coinage and gave it to the entire world.
2. Money is not evil. It has a legitimate function. (Genesis 23:9, Jeremiah 32:44)
3. The believer is urged to be content with what he has received, in his position, from the Lord. 1 Timothy 6:6-10, Philippians 4:11-13, Hebrews 13:5-6.
4. It is the lust for money and goods that corrupts a man Jude 11.
5. The giving of money is an expression of the believers' priesthood. (1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 8 & 9)
6. Coveting money makes one a slave to his desire. (Matthew 6:24). Money is a useful servant but a harsh master.
7. The danger of money to the unbeliever.
  - a) Salvation cannot be purchased with money. (Mark 8:36-37)
  - b) Money causes the rich man to put his trust in the wrong things. (Mark 10:23-25)
  - c) Money often hinders the unbeliever from seeking salvation. (Luke 16:19-31)
  - d) Money has no credit with God. (Proverbs 11:4,28)
8. The danger of money to the believer:
  - a) Money can become part of a slavery to a vain search for happiness. (Ecclesiastes 5:10-6:2)
  - b) Love of money becomes a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:6-12, 17-19)
  - c) Money can contribute to pride and self-centredness. (Acts 5:1-10)
9. Wealth is deceitful if a person believes it will buy him happiness or provide security Matthew 6:24-33, Luke 12:16-21. Proverbs 18:10-12, Proverbs 13:7.
10. It is the believer's duty to wisely use his possessions, time, abilities and spiritual gifts which God has entrusted to us.
11. Three illusions about money.
  - (a) Money can bring happiness:- for the believer the Christian way of life is the only source of happiness.
  - (b) Money provides security:- grace provides the only real security. (Matthew 6:24-33)
  - (c) Money can buy many things such as salvation, love, happiness, tranquillity:- all these are spiritual assets.

## **WORLDLINESS**

1. Worldliness means to follow the beliefs and philosophy of man rather than that of God
2. Worldliness is the opposite to godliness; it is thinking/doing in opposition to God's revealed word. Titus 2:11-14.



3. All people are faced with the constant choice of following God's way or the world's. Romans 5:12, 3:19, 1 Corinthians 1:21, Ephesians 2:12, James 1:27, 2 Peter 1:4, 2:20.
4. Satan is the "prince of this world", and has power to deceive those who are negative to God's plans. John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, 1 Corinthians 4:4, 1 Peter 5:8,9.
5. We must not love the world, 1 John 2:15-17.
6. We must hate all the world stands for, in thought and in deed. 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 11:30-32, Galatians 6:14, James 1:27, James 4:4, 2 Peter 1:3,4, 1 Corinthians 3:18, 19.
7. We must not return to our old behaviour patterns, Ephesians 2:1-7.
8. This evil world system and the prince of this world will be condemned. Matthew 18:7, John 12:31, 16:11, 1 Corinthians 6:2, 2 Peter 3:7, 2 Peter 2:1ff.

**CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE** See page 21

## **PSALM 53**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The entire book of Ecclesiastes will flow from this Psalm (possibly in its earlier form as Psalm 14). It explores the philosophy and viewpoint of the "fool" who has excluded God from his/her thinking. The foolish person makes temporary things appear important to their mind's eye, when they will all rust, rot, or disappear in other ways. They cling to the temporary as if it is permanent, when the only permanent thing is relationship with God the Creator and Saviour of mankind.

David lays the foundation for the philosophical exploration of his son Solomon later. Man without relationship with his Creator is a fool indeed; it is like getting on a plane that is going to crash and saying, "I'll worry about it when we get closer to the end of the flight". We are created beings heading for an appointment with death, and only a true fool ignores that reality. Matthew 5:22, Luke 12:16-21.

### **PSALMS 53:1-6**

**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. 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.**

## REFLECTION

**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.**

It is foolishness to say there is no Creator. It is foolishness to look at order and system and cling to the belief that it all evolved from chaos and disorder! It is a violation of reason to argue that order came from chaos to create this world without a mind behind the universe. The reality is that people don't really reject the logic of a creative mind behind the universe, they are rejecting accountability. They do not want God because they do not want to be accountable for their actions. Psalms 10:4-14, Romans 1:21-28.

I have met people who call themselves atheists, but they are anti-theists; they actually hate God, because they don't want to be answerable to anyone. They want to live to themselves only. Atheism is actually ultimate narcissism! Atheism is not morally neutral; it is wickedness, for it is rejection of the Creator's right to tell the creature what is expected of them. Those who speak and believe this way are workers of iniquity, and cannot do things that are "good", for they have rejected the grounds of goodness, for only the Creator can set that ground truly in place. All else is speculation if we do not have the word of the Creator as to how we are to live. They are caught in the Day of Judgement facing their Maker with no hope, for their works are evil. Galatians 5:16-21, Ephesians 5:11-12, Revelation 20:13-18.

**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.**

The Lord is not the "absent watchmaker" who has wound up the universe and is letting it run down by itself; He is the active Creator and Saviour who watches and actively seeks the best for mankind. God watches the good and the evil and notes their actions, and for all of mankind there is a day when man must give account. For the unsaved this day is the GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT, for the believers in the Lord, this day is the JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST. Psalms 11:4, 33:13-19, Romans 14:10, Hebrews 9:27, Revelation 20:13-18.

God actively seeks for the hearts of mankind. None will ever say in the end of time that their damnation is unfair, for all will know that they walked away from the truth and resisted the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Refer to the BTB studies, HEATHENISM AND GOD CONSCIOUSNESS, and, HOLY SPIRIT-OPERATION. The Lord our God has provided the path that leads to salvation, and it leads to the foot of the Cross of Jesus. Isaiah 53:3-12, 64:6-9, Ezekiel 36:24-27.

We can seek the Lord only through His work for us, and His greatest work is the work of salvation. The work of creation is "finger work" for God, but the work of salvation is the

great work. The work of Jesus upon the Cross is greater than the work of the creation of the entire universe. Psalms 8:3, Ephesians 2:4, Hebrews 2:3.

**4 Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.**

David asks the question that is on every wise believer's mind; why do the unbelievers persist in such foolishness? Does the unbeliever have no brains at all to persist in their atheism? There are no such things finally as "intellectual difficulties". The problem with the unbeliever is that they do not want to bow their knee to God. To fight against God is the act of a fool. Who can win as a creature against the Creator of the universe? These people are not just intellectual and moral fools, they are evil to the core once they have settled into their active rebellion against God.

Have you ever noticed that believer? An unbelieving friend may be a true friend until the day they fully and finally reject the Gospel message, and then they will become negative to an extreme towards God, the Church and believers generally. They will "eat up" the people of God if they can. This is a reference to the full extent of the malice of Satan towards believers; from open hatred, verbal abuse, to financial attack, and even to murder. John 15:18-27. We need to rest upon the Lord, and His protection over us in such situations. Psalms 27:1-3, 48:14, John 10:28-30.

**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.**

Those who insult God and His people have no fear until it is too late to save them. Fear is meant to be protective for mankind. We feel fear that activates our Adrenal system, in order that we might fight or fly from danger. Fear is designed to assist us with an appropriate action, but the unbeliever has rejected the fear of the Lord, and so they are unable to act appropriately in the presence of God.

They continue in their rejection and rebellion, and so they finally come to the place of judgement when they see God. It is only then that they truly know the truth about the One they have rejected, and it is then that the fear they feel is overwhelming, but it is too late to save them. They have despised the Lord their God, and finally their rebellion is crushed in judgement. There is no mercy shown to those who have shown no mercy! God is not soft in judgement; God is final and just. There is no hope for the person who dies in a spirit of rejection against their Maker.

**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.**

Prophetically David sees the coming captivity of his people and their return from their final exile when the Lord returns to be their King. David sees right to the end of the Age of Israel; to the last actions of the Great Tribulation period. David sees that the people of Israel will be delivered fully and finally, even though they have been rebellious and evil. David sees that there is hope for them when they embrace their Saviour. Zechariah 12:10.

There is the greatest rejoicing in all of human history when the Jewish people find their Redeemer and Saviour, but it comes after great remorse and mourning. Zechariah 12:11-14. There is no rejoicing like that of people who have discovered the love of the Lord for them. Let us rejoice in the Lord and praise His name for who He is, for the wonder of His saving plan, and for what He has done and is doing in history, but also for what He is yet to do, and most certainly will complete. Isaiah 12:1-6.

**PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS**

1. We will all be held accountable for our actions upon this earth. Man is on the road to judgement; either for eternal damnation, or eternal rewards for service. Let us preach the judgements of God so that the saved and the unsaved might know the "fear of the Lord" and be challenged to the core of their being.
2. Let us pray for the conviction of the Holy Spirit upon the lost in accordance with John 16:8-11. The Spirit will convict the lost of their need of a Saviour and will lead them to Jesus, but they are personally responsible for their response. Let us pray for conviction and a broken heart that will bow before the Lord on the part of all the lost we know. Let us recognise, and preach the truth about the Last Judgment. The only ones who join Satan in the Lake of Fire will be those who have deliberately decided to join him there, because they have ultimately rejected God's righteous claim upon their life. They will, too late, discover that what they insulted as "boring" time with God is vastly superior to any experience of the Lake of Fire...
3. The godly "fear of the Lord" will keep us from the panic stricken fear of men. We will be the target for the malice of evil men, but we can relax in this if we rest in the power, plan and person of God. Let us teach the Word and encourage the believers to walk in the Holy Spirit's protective power, for then and there alone they are safe.
4. There is hope for each person only in and through their acceptance of the Gospel message. Let us preach the Gospel message every time we have opportunity to do so. All men will know the "fear of the Lord" one day, but our desire must be that the lost might know the "fear of the Lord" now and be saved, rather than wait until they receive fear on the Day of Judgement.

## **DOCTRINES**

**JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE** (Unbelievers Only) See page 161

**JUDGEMENT – JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST** (Believers Only)

1. There are three types of judgement for believers in the Church Age.
  - a) Judgement of Sins:- The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross substituted the payment of all man's sins. The penalty of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) There is therefore no judgement for those in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1). The substitutionary death is given in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21, Galatians 3:13.
  - b) Judgement of Self:- We are told that if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged. Failure to do so brings discipline. (1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 11:31, 32, 2 Corinthians 2:5-7, Hebrews 12:7, 1 John 1:9)
  - c) Judgement Seat of Christ:- This is the evaluation of the production of believers for the purpose of reward (2 Corinthians 5:10)
2. The Judgement Seat of Christ is a time of reward. Our human works (wood, hay, stubble) will be burned, our works in the power of the Spirit (gold, silver, precious stones) will be rewarded. (1 Corinthians 3:11-16).
3. At the Judgement Seat of Christ the believer can be denied reward but can never lose his salvation. (2 Tim 2:12-13)
4. Backslidden believers have no reward at the Judgement Seat of Christ. (Hebrews 6:7-12)

5. The Judgement Seat of Christ is illustrated by the famous athletic games in the ancient world. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
6. Rewards at the Judgement Seat of Christ are based on grace. (James 2:12, 13)
7. Since we will be judged by Christ, we are not to judge each other (Matthew 7:1-2)

## HEATHENISM AND GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

1. Three systems of human understanding:
  - a) Empiricism - understanding through experimentation and observation.
  - b) Rationalism - understanding through logic and reason
  - c) Faith - believes an established fact as the basis of reality.
2. Faith is the only means of understanding which does not rely on our own abilities - there is no earned merit in faith. Therefore, everybody, even a young child, is able to believe.
3. Faith is compatible with God and grace - God provides, we trust Him and accept. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
4. God-consciousness: The existence of God:
  - a) Religious
    - i) God must exist because man universally believes in his existence.
    - ii) In this case the human mind establishes faith as the criteria for reality.
    - iii) Men do seek after God. (Psalm 42:1-2, Acts 17:27)
  - b) Moral
    - i) Man possesses a conscience with the urge to choose right over wrong.
    - ii) Human recognition of virtue and truth. The ultimate virtue - God.
  - c) Rational
    - i) The human mind possesses the idea of a Perfect and Absolute Being, therefore such a being must exist.
    - ii) In this case, the mind uses rationalism for reality.
  - d) Design
    - i) Structure of the universe demands a designer (Romans 1:19,20)
    - ii) In this case empiricism is the criteria for reality.
  - e) Cause and Effect
    - i) The law of cause and effect demands the existence of God.
    - ii) This is process of rationalism plus logic.
5. The reaction to God-consciousness:
  - a) When man becomes conscious of God he then exercises his freewill.
  - b) Acceptance - desire to know God and have fellowship with God.
  - c) Rebellion - no interest in fellowship with God.
  - d) Once a person reaches God-consciousness and has no desire for fellowship with God, God has no further obligation to that individual.
  - e) In the case of acceptance, God is responsible to provide gospel information on which to be saved. (Jeremiah 29:13, John 7:17, Acts 17:27, Luke 11:9)
6. Heathenism: What about the people who have apparently never heard the Gospel?
  - a) Application of Divine Character
    - i) Since God is perfect justice it is impossible for Him to be unfair to any member of the human race.
    - ii) God promises that every generation will be evangelised. (Isaiah 51:8b)
  - b) Application of Unlimited Atonement
    - i) Christ died for all members of the human race. (2 Corinthians 5:14,15,19, 1 Timothy 2:6, 4:10, Titus 2:11, Hebrews 2:9, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2:2)

- ii) Therefore obviously God desires salvation for everyone. (2 Peter 3:9)
  - c) Application of Divine Sovereignty
  - d) It is God's will that all members of the human race be saved. (2 Peter 3:9)
    - i) If people are not saved, it is because of their own rejection of Christ as Saviour, not because of God.
  - e) Application of the Principle of God-consciousness
    - i) Human free will is tested in the two areas in which a decision must be made.  
 At the point of God-consciousness – Do I want a relationship with God?  
 At the point of gospel hearing – Do I want to be saved?
    - ii) If anyone desires relationship with God, God will reveal Himself to them (Jeremiah 29:13, John 7:17, John 4:9,10, Acts 17:27).
- Man has the ability to arrive at God-consciousness through observing creation. (Romans 1:20, 21)
- When a person reaches the point of God-consciousness, he becomes accountable to God. This age varies with cultures, languages and circumstances.

7. From the above it is obvious that any person can come to a saving knowledge of God.

## HOLY SPIRIT – OPERATION

This contrasts the different ways in which the Holy Spirit works in different circumstances and location. The locations under examination are Antioch and Iconium. It clearly shows that the outworking of the Holy Spirit varies from place to place. (Acts 15:22-35) (Antioch) (Acts 14.1-7) (Iconium)

1. In Antioch there was preaching only. At Iconium there was preaching and miracles.
2. Believers cannot base a system of procedures on one successful operation.
3. Because the Holy Spirit permitted miracles in Iconium it does not follow that there will be miracles everywhere.
4. The same success was obtained at Antioch by the preaching and teaching of the word without miracles.
5. The ministry of the believer must be related to the Holy Spirit. Such a ministry may be communicated by doctrine or verbally and may or may not contain accompanying supernatural phenomena.
6. The believer cannot compel the Holy Spirit to a type of procedure as at Iconium such as the tongues and healing that was used in the ancient world. Because God permitted these things in the past it does not follow that they will be used in the present.
7. The demand for healing miracles and tongues is tantamount to dictating to God and this places the believer in opposition to the plan of God.
8. Miracles were always used to focus attention on the message from the word and were never used as a sign of spirituality and power:
  - (i) The message and not the miracles was always the important factor.
  - (ii) Emphasising miracles we either detract from the message or have no message at all. The Holy Spirit always emphasises the message.
  - (iii) Today emphasis on miracles, tongues and healing obscures the issue of God's Word.

## Notes

**PSALM 54****INTRODUCTION**

David was plagued in his early years by treachery at the hands of men of his own tribe of Judah. When he hid himself in the wilderness of Ziph to the south east of Hebron he was betrayed to Saul by the men of Ziph. David was faithful to those who assisted him and ruthless to those who did not. 1 Samuel 23:19-29, 26:1-25. In both situations where David is betrayed by the men of Ziph he is delivered by the Lord, and enabled to turn the last instance into a blessing and open the door to a time of peace for himself from Saul. God enables him to turn cursing into blessing. 2 Samuel 16:12, Micah 7:5-8, Romans 8:28-39, 12:9-16.

**PSALMS 54:1-7**

**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. 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.**

**REFLECTION**

**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.**

David understands the basis of all prayer requests. All prayer rests upon the holy character of God. We make requests to a God who will honour His holy name by delivering His holy people. Refer again to the BTB doctrinal study on PRAYER, and THE CHARACTER OF GOD. When Moses was in doubt about his holy call to lead the Israelites he was encouraged by the giving of the name of God to him. Exodus 3:13-17. By reflecting upon the reality of the holy and dependable character of God Moses stilled his doubts and focused his mind forward.

This is our daily challenge; as we face the little “daily disasters” to stabilise ourselves upon the reality of the Person, power, plan and purpose of the Lord for us. The joy of the Lord is

our strength. Psalms 30:5, Nehemiah 8:10, Habakkuk 3:16-19, Zephaniah 3:17, James 1:2.

Let us remember the things that must be in place before prayer is heard and answered. Firstly we must have a saved relationship with God. Let us “examine ourselves” and ensure that we are indeed the children of God. Those who stand in doubt of their salvation, who have never known the fellowship and fruit of the Holy Spirit need to humble themselves before the Lord and accept Him as Lord and Saviour. 1 Corinthians 11:28, 2 Corinthians 13:5.

Having been assured of salvation and the gifts received at that point, the believer needs to examine their lives for any sin that may have affected fellowship with the Lord and CONFESS that sin. (Refer to the BTB study GIFTS RECEIVED AT SALVATION). Having been assured of SPIRITUALITY the believer may now address their attention to their petition and their desire in their prayer.

Before prayer is uttered aloud it is good to examine the heart's desire that is being expressed in the prayer and the way that desire is being expressed to ensure that both are aligned with the plan and purpose of God for the believer. Having prepared our prayer in a formal request, then let us pray as David prays and pour our heart's deep desire to the Lord who loved us and gave Himself for us. Galatians 1:4, 2:20.

David knows he is heard, and that every word registers with the Lord who loves him, and so do we. We make our prayers in the assurance of God's love and care for us, and the certainty that He has a plan for our life, and that anything that occurs to us will “work together for good”. Some things will not be good or pleasant, but in God's plan they will work together for good. Romans 8:28.

**3 For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.**

The people of Ziph were Israelites, members of David's own tribe of Judah, therefore all distantly related to him. They had become “strangers” to him. How is this possible? How is it today that fellow believers can become strangers to us, and enemies of our very soul, and even opponents of God's purpose? The betrayal of the Ziphites is a fact of life for David, and the betrayal and opposition of other believers towards us is a fact of life in the Church today. Our enemies are often close to us, and even members of our own church fellowship. These people may be carnal believers, or make believers, but they will be more dangerous to our ministry than any open pagan ever is. Psalms 55:12-17, 59:3-5, Micah 7:6, John 13:18.

In this world we will have persecution, but the Lord has overcome the powers of this world. Matthew 5:11-12, 1 Peter 4:12-19. When persecution and troubles come we must stand upon the promises and reality of God's Word. This means we must have walked with God in the light of His Word and sent the root of our faith deeply into the doctrines of the Word. God's plan and Person are revealed through the Word of God, and if we are stabilised in the Word we are safe under pressure. Psalms 1:1-3, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Matthew 13:18-23.

We are to stabilise ourselves in the truth of the Word of God, and we will notice that those who attack us most vigorously are those who do not value the Word of God. They do not have the presence of the Lord before their face; indeed you will notice on your walk through this world, that the more people avoid the Word of God, the more serious opponents of the work of God they will be.

**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.**



God is our helper, and He is a helper who has far more power than the princes and politicians of this present world. Psalms 118:5-9, 13. The Lord helps us, guides us and delivers us within and through His power and plan! The Lord not only delivers on the outside from the pressures we face, but He delivers our soul from anguish and despair on the inside also. Romans 8:31-32. Notice Paul's logic in this passage from Romans Chapter Eight. If the Lord our God did not withhold the Person of the Lord from us, but sent Him to the Cross to be our Saviour, will He withhold anything else from us that we need to fulfil His plan for us? This is the "logic of grace", and it is logic we need to remember under pressure.

The Lord will reward all believers for their work done in the power and plan of God. 1 Corinthians 3:8-17, Colossians 2:18, 2 Peter 2:13, 2 John 8. We have great rewards in eternity for faithful service here. Refer back to the BTB study REWARDS AND CROWNS. While the believers who serve well are rewarded in eternity for their faithful service, so are the unbelievers rewarded with their wages for the evil they have worked. The devil has recruited them and he won't pay their promised wages, he will simply watch them die in misery, for he is a "liar from the beginning", (John 8:44), but the Lord does "reward" all those who have worked evil with Satan their lord for what they have done. All who have done evil get exactly what they are entitled to! 2 Timothy 4:14-15, 18, Revelation 18:4-8, 20:13-18.

**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.**

David has dealt with his sin, and he has passed the enemies of the plan of God over to God for judgement. He is able to bow before the Lord and be sure that he is heard. He can now approach the Lord and offer the sacrifice of repentance and praise and be sure he is heard by the Lord and that his prayers will be fully answered. He praises the Lord's holy name, for he knows that the Lord is good and all He does is good. Let us praise the Lord, for He is GOOD! Psalms 52:9, 92:1, 147:1.

All troubles that we are led into as part of our walk with God through this world will be just resting places on our journey. No trouble will end our life or witness in the Lord, for each and every hardship on the path that God has prepared for us, has within it a way of deliverance and a cause for rejoicing in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 10:11-13. We can bless the Lord as we walk through troubled times, for He is with us to deliver us from all that we have been led into by the Holy Spirit. On our pilgrim path of obedience to the plan of God for our life we will be empowered and educated so that we may serve more powerfully as we advance towards heaven.

As we have been led, so we will be delivered. Genesis 48:15-16, 1 Samuel 26:24, 2 Samuel 4:9, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 18. David sees with the eyes of faith, and recognises that the Lord has already dealt with his enemies and he can see that in his mind's eye, for what is in the plan of God is certain to David, even though it hasn't actually happened in time yet. Hebrews 11:1-2. Refer back to the BTB study on FAITH.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. The joy of the Lord is my strength! Nehemiah 8:10. Have you praised God with these words this day yet believer? We are told to daily put off the spirit of heaviness and replace it with the garments of praise. Isaiah 61:3. The remedy for a broken or stressed heart is always to apply the healing medicine of praise and worship. Let us teach the Lord's people about the power of praise, and let us apply this medicine daily into our lives and hearts.

2. Prayer is not us battering down God's reluctance to bless us. Prayer is connecting with God's Plan for us, and His active love towards us. Let us pray with powerful focus upon the will of the Lord for our life.

3. Have you been able to pass over to the Lord's discipline those who attack the ministry of the Word? Have you noticed that those who attack the Lord's work most seriously either hate the Word, or have some warped and heretical view towards it? Pass them over to the Lord for discipline as Paul does his strongest opponents. 1 Timothy 1:19-20. Having passed over to the Lord those who attack you, press forward in the work that the Lord has given to you to complete. Do not be distracted from your task by the assaults of those who hate the Word and the work of God.

4. Praise the Lord believer every day, for He is good! The goodness of the Lord is our confident strength under pressure, and He is the One who will lift us up and in His holy name we can praise Him and rejoice in His plan for our life. "Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we need fear no evil", for the Lord is with us to keep us and bring us through to the end He has prepared for us from before the foundation of the world. Psalms 23:4ff, Hebrews 1:10, 4:3, 1 Peter 1:20. We are secure in His person and plan, and so let us praise the Lord every day for the greatness of His grace towards us.

## **DOCTRINES**

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – PRAYER** See page 16

**GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD** See page 18

**GOD – THE PLAN OF GOD** See page 19

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS** See page 16

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE – GIFTS GIVEN AT SALVATION**

Listed below are the 34 things God provides for every believer at the point of salvation.

1. In the eternal plan of God. (Sharing the destiny of Christ)
  - a) Foreknown (Acts 2:23, Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:2)
  - b) Elect (Romans 8:33, Colossians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 1:4, Titus 1:1)
  - c) Predestined (Romans 8:29, 30, Ephesians 1:5, 11)
  - d) Chosen (Matthew 22:14, 1 Peter 2:4)
  - e) Called (1 Thessalonians 5:24)
2. Reconciled
  - a) By God (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19, Colossians 1:20)
  - b) To God. (Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 2:14-17)
3. Redeemed (Romans 3:24, Colossians 1:14, 1 Peter 1:18)
4. Condemnation removed. (John 3:18, 5:24, Romans 8:1)
5. Under Grace instead of judgement; God is satisfied with the death of His Son. (Romans 3:24-26, 1 John 2:2)
6. All sins judged by the death of Christ. (Romans 4:25, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 2:24)
7. Dead to old life - alive to God.
  - a) Crucified with Christ. (Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20)
  - b) Dead with Christ. (Romans 6:8, Colossians 3:3, 1 Peter 2:24)

- c) Buried with him. (Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12)
- d) Raised with Christ. (Romans 6:4, Colossians 3:1)
  
- 8. Free from the law.
  - a) Dead. (Romans 7:4)
  - b) Delivered. (Romans 6:14, 7:6, 2 Corinthians 3:11, Galatians 3:25)
  
- 9. Regenerated. (John 13:10, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Titus 3:5)
  - a) Born again. (John 3:7, 1 Peter 1:23)
  - b) Children of God. (Galatians 3:26)
  - c) Sons of God. (John 1:12, 2 Corinthians 6:18, 1 John 3:2)
  - d) A new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, Ephesians 2:10)
  
- 10. Adopted. (Romans 8:15, 8:23 (future) Ephesians 1:5)
  
- 11. Acceptable to God. (Ephesians 1:6, 1 Peter 2:5)
  - a) Made righteous (Romans 3:22, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:9)
  - b) Sanctified positionally. (1 Corinthians 1:30, 6:11)
  - c) Perfected forever. (Hebrews 10:14)
  - d) Made meet (qualified) (Colossians 1:12)
  
- 12. Justified (declared righteous). (Romans 3:24, 5:1, 5:9, 8:30, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Titus 3:7)
  
- 13. Forgiven all trespasses. (Ephesians 1:7, 4:32, Colossians 1:14, 2:13, 3:13)
  
- 14. Made nigh. (Heavenly citizenship based on reconciliation) (Luke 10:20, Ephesians 2:13, 19)
  
- 15. Delivered from the kingdom of Satan. (Colossians 1:13, 2:15)
  
- 16. Transferred into God's kingdom. (Colossians 1:13)
  
- 17. On a secure foundation. (1 Corinthians 3:11, 10:4, Ephesians 2:20)
  
- 18. A gift from God the Father to Christ. (John 10:29, 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24)
  
- 19. Delivered from the power of the sin nature. (Romans 2:29, Colossians 2:11)
  
- 20. Appointed priests unto God.
  - a) Holy priesthood. (1 Peter 2:5)
  - b) Royal priesthood. (1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 1:6)
  
- 21. Under the care of God as a chosen generation and a peculiar people. (Titus 2:14, 1 Peter 2:9)
  
- 22. Given access to God. (Romans 5:2, Ephesians 2:18, Hebrews 4:14, 16, 10:19, 20)
  
- 23. Within the "much more" care of God. (Romans 5:9, 10)
  - a) Objects of His love. (Ephesians 2:4, 5:2)
  - b) Objects of His grace.
    - i) For salvation. (Ephesians 2:8, 9)
    - ii) For keeping. (1 Peter 1:5)
    - iii) For service (John 17:18)
    - iv) For instruction (Titus 2:12)
  - c) Objects of His power. (Ephesians 1:19, Philippians 2:13)
  - d) Objects of His faithfulness. (Philippians 1:6, Hebrews 13:5,6)
  - e) Objects of His peace. (John 14:27)

- f) Objects of His consolation. (2 Thessalonians 2:16)
- g) Objects of His intercession. (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:25)
- 24. God's inheritance (Possession). (Ephesians 1:18)
- 25. Beneficiaries of an inheritance as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:17, Ephesians 1:14 Colossians 3:24, Hebrews 9:15, 1 Peter 1:4)
- 26. A new position. (Ephesians 2:6)
  - a) Partners with Christ in life. (Colossians 3:4)
  - b) Partners with Christ in service. (1 Corinthians 1:9)
  - c) Workers together with God. (1 Corinthians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 6:1)
  - d) Ministers of the New Testament. (2 Corinthians 3:6)
  - e) Ambassadors. (2 Corinthians 5:20)
  - f) Living epistles. (2 Corinthians 3:3)
  - g) Ministers of God. (2 Corinthians 6:4)
- 27. Recipients of eternal life. (John 3:15, 10:28, 20:31, 1 John 5:11, 12)
- 28. Members of the family and household of God. (Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 2:19)
- 29. Light in the Lord. (Ephesians 5:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:4)
- 30. United to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
  - a) In God. (1 Thessalonians 1:1) of "God in you" (Ephesians 4:6)
  - b) In Christ. (John 14:20 of "Christ in you" Colossians 1:27)
    - i) A member in His body. (1 Corinthians 12:13)
    - ii) A branch in the vine. (John 15:5)
    - iii) A stone in the building. (Ephesians 2:21, 22, 1 Peter 2:5)
    - iv) A sheep in the flock. (John 10:27-29)
    - v) A part of His bride. (Ephesians 5:25)
    - vi) A priest of the kingdom of priests. (1 Peter 2:9)
    - vii) A saint of the "new species". (2 Corinthians 5:17)
  - c) In the Spirit. (Romans 8:9) of "the Spirit in you"
- 31. Recipients of the ministries of the Holy Spirit.
  - a) Born of the Spirit. (John 3:6)
  - b) Baptized with the Spirit. (Acts 1:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13)
  - c) Indwelt by the Spirit. (John 7:39, Romans 5:5, 8:9, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, Galatians 4:6, 1 John 3:24)
  - d) Sealed by the Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 4:30)
  - e) Given spiritual gifts. (1 Corinthians 12:11, 27-31, 13:1, 2)
- 32. Glorified. (Romans 8:30)
- 33. Complete in Him. (Colossians 2:10)
- 34. Possessors of every spiritual blessing provided in eternity past. (Ephesians 1:3)

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – SPIRITUALITY-CARNALITY** See page 27

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – DIVINE DISCIPLINE OF BELIEVERS** See page 48

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS** See page 29

**CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE** See page 21

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – FAITH See page 31

## NOTES

**PSALM 55****INTRODUCTION**

Anyone who thinks that the life of a king was pleasant needs to read the Psalms daily to see how many times David despaired and struggled with his destiny. He had to daily “cast his burdens upon the Lord”, and every day he had to remember that the Lord alone gives stability and security as we walk the dangerous paths through this world. 1 Peter 5:5-9.

The betrayal of friends is even worse than that of enemies or acquaintances. The hardest thing in ministry is facing the awful reality of the malice of the attacks of those who have been close to us and yet betrayed everything we believed they stood for. Only in the fellowship of the Lord is there the strength to handle such things.

**PSALMS 55:1-23**

**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; 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. 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. 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. 15 Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them. 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. 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. 22 Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. 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.

## REFLECTION

**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;**

At times it can appear that the Lord is “hiding” from us. We can be waiting a long time for the answer to some prayers, but the wait is worth while if we are walking with the Lord, for even as we wait the Lord will be teaching us something, if we pay attention to the process. David asks to be heard often by the Lord, and we are to be encouraged by this when we also cry out to the Lord in deep distress and plead for the Lord to hear us. We can be assured that He does hear us. Psalms 5:1, 17:1, 64:1-4, 80:1, 7, 14, 84:8-12. We can pray with the assurance that we are heard by the Lord and blessed by Him.

The Lord “attends to us”, and this phrase means more than just hears our words. The Lord attends to every detail of our lives, and knows every detail about our past, our present and our future. Nothing is hidden from the Lord, and no care is hidden from our needs. “The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms”. Deuteronomy 33:27. God will carry us to the very end of our lives, into the tough years of old age. Isaiah 46:4. The very hairs of our head are numbered, and so the God who knows such inconsequential details also knows all the facts that have consequence for our survival. Matthew 10:30, Luke 12:7, 1 Corinthians 4:5.

It is fine to mourn for sin and to grieve for our losses in this life, even if they are only temporary. It is human to mourn, and the Lord Himself mourned for the state of man facing disease and death at the grave of Lazarus, and He was going to raise him from the dead within minutes. It is all right to mourn. John 11:33-37, 41-44. In the limits of our earthly body, and in the diseases that come to us, we may find ourselves “groaning” in our spirit. 2 Corinthians 5:2-4.

The Holy Spirit will assist us to pray about these deep groanings that we can feel in the hard places of this life. Romans 8:26. Do not feel guilty about groaning at times believer, just be sure you groan to the Lord alone. Cast yourself at the foot of the Cross, and “body slam” your problems onto that blood-soaked ground also! 1 Peter 5:5-9.

**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.**

The voice of the enemy was loud and angry in David’s ears. The enemies of Israel delighted in verbal abuse, and the enemies of God’s people still do. When people verbally

abuse you, either directly or to others with lies and negative observations about your faith, what do you do? We are challenged by the scriptures to take all things to the Lord in prayer. The verbal abuse of the enemy is to be taken to the Lord, and the physical abuse is to be taken to the Lord. Verbal attack and actual physical attack (oppression) are both covered in verse three. These people are 'wicked'; they serve the enemy of God and man, Satan himself.

Two things are mentioned about their attacks. They claim that David is working iniquity, when in fact they are. They are anger filled and they hate David. These two things remain true for all workers of iniquity and followers of Satan, at national as well as individual levels. We have seen this recently where certain states arrest members of other states who are foolish enough to come too close to their borders, and stage mock trials where the innocent captives are accused of all sorts of things and then jailed for their "crimes". It is a fake process and tissue of lies, but the hatred is real, and the malice is severe. Satan hates us, and we need to remember this fact. John 15:18ff.

**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.**

There is a deep anguish when you face the hatred of those who barely know you, if at all. It is a baffling and awful thing to confront nameless rage, and mindless hatred. David is pained by it, as I have been when I have met this sort of thing. The easiest thing to do, and the things most often done in history, is to try to kill such people, and this is the reason for so many wars through the years. Satan hates mankind and his goal is mankind's destruction; even in the Great Tribulation period he will try to kill all of mankind before the Lord returns to save the believers.

The Great Tribulation period is a time when the full malice of Satan is let loose upon mankind but God's plan calls for there to be deliverance, and there will be deliverance for the saved. Satan is not all powerful, and even when he has his "best shot" at being a tyrant he cannot pull off his plan. Satanic malice is limited by God's Person, plan and power, but it will still overwhelm us at times with its sheer malicious force unless we are ready for it.

David is not fearful of dying, but there is terror at times as to the manner of his death, as there is with each of us at times. When we face a slow agonising death with pain and distress as companions it is a fearful thing. David feels the "terrors of death", but as we will see, he deals with these emotions by taking them to the throne of God's Grace, and there he seeks the Lord's answer to his pain.

Fear, anguish, worry, and deep concerns about self and others will wash over us like a wave at times. They will fall upon us like an avalanche or rock fall, and that is the image that David uses here. He uses this same image in Psalm 18:1-5 and binds the solution together with the image in that Psalm. A full stress reaction is described in verse five and this affirms the normal reaction of man to being overwhelmed by real and powerful fears and worries. Deep soul fear, trembling of limbs, and a horror of what might occur to him, all sweep over David's soul and body.

This is what we today call a "Panic Attack", and it is worth noting this, and remembering that if David had these symptoms then they are normal and the challenge is simply dealing with them, not beating yourself up for having them. At times depression and anxiety will sweep over us as a result of what we have experienced. I recall the statement of Dr Viktor Frankl, who emerged from the Death camps of World War II. He said, "There are certain things, when they happen to you, and you don't lose your mind, it is only because you didn't have a mind to lose".

There are events that we face in this life that will cause depression to us, and there are events that will cause a strong anxiety reaction. It is not the reaction that is wrong; it is normal. The challenge for the believer is to take biblically sound action to deal with the

emotional reaction we have experienced. We will all be overwhelmed at times, but it is what we do with this feeling of helplessness that determines our spiritual status and usefulness in the crisis.

**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.**

The greatest desire of mankind is for rest and recharge activities, or lack of activity. We seek an easy road if we can find it. This basic urge of mankind is important to understand for it is our natural tendency when facing hard things. It is why so many fall into the trap of drugs and alcohol as the tranquilizers of lives that seek escape rather than victory. It is natural to seek to run away from trouble and flee from pain and hardship. We are however, as soldiers in the Lord's Army, called to stand and fight against evil, and we are called to take the road of battle and eventual victory. Ephesians 6:10-17, 1 Timothy 1:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:3-10.

It is the hard road that the Lord calls us to, and He does not lead us to believe anything else! Matthew 7:13-20, John 15:1-17. We are called to be fruitful as the Lord's grape vine, and it is well to remember that grapes grow best in the toughest land. It is not the rich and fertile lowlands that make the best wine; it is the rough, often dry, and barren soils that grow the best grapes. Famine and drought produce the best wine.

We are called to walk the narrow path and take the high road through the tough places. We are called to weed our soil of the sins that will grow up and choke us and avoid the distractions of "easy money" and an easy lifestyle that will seduce us away from the Lord's path for us. Proverbs 1:10-19, Matthew 13:18-23. It is always tempting to watch the birds fly away from the threat of the crouching cat in the garden and daydream of taking wing and flying off to a place where stress doesn't exist. Today we can do this, courtesy of the Airline Industry, but "life stress" is everywhere.

As believers it is not wrong to take regular holidays, in fact we ought to do so to recharge our batteries. C H Spurgeon was criticised by some dour saints for his annual holidays on the Mediterranean Coast. They spoke of "wasting money", but he countered with the correct point; that it is far more evil to "waste God's servants" by over work.

It is not wrong to dream of escaping from pressures for a time, and at times we can do this in our holidays. We are to take one day off every seven days to rest and recharge. That is ordered by scripture as a standard instruction for mankind's well being. Every twelve weeks, if we are under pressure, we ought to be taking a short break to rest and recharge, and certainly every year we need a holiday of some form or other. In days when I had no money I would seek holidays where no money was required; to do something in a place that was a rest and recharge place. There is always a place that we can find to rest ourselves after great exertions, and we need to pray for the Lord's open door to locate and utilise such places.

Paul did this. Read Titus 3:12-13. Paul spent the winter in a spa town of the Dalmatian Coast and rested and recharged with his team in prayer and Bible study. A holiday doesn't need to be sitting in a deck chair, but we need to make time to rest and relax; however that appears to us and our nature. The danger is not to take rest and recharge breaks that refresh us ready for the battle again, for if we don't have holidays, the day will come when we either die of stress or "go mad", and then we will wander off into the wilderness! That is what David fears for himself.

**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.**



David would do anything to escape the “windy tempest” of the rage and malice he faces. I know what he means, as under pressure too long we start to buckle, and we will think of anything we can do to escape the awful pressure. David seeks the Lord’s intervention to deal with the evil people attacking him. David sees their malice in the city and their strife filled mouths speaking evils. He seeks the Lord’s actions to deal with the tongues that assault him, and so ought we to seek the Lord’s help. The Lord can deal with those who assault us on His path, and He will. Let us rest in the Lord’s protection and claim it in times of stress.

David is coming to the end of his tether under the pressure he faces and he tells the Lord so. It is not wrong to tell the Lord bluntly that we are running out of energy and hope at times. God wants our honest conversations in prayer, not pretence that all is well. If we are at the end of our coping power, we need to pour our heart out to the Lord about that and claim 1 Corinthians 10:13 and ask for immediate action by the Lord. The Lord cares for us, loves us, and has had the plan for us ready from eternity past, so He is the One to lay out this before. Refer back to the BTB study GOD CARES FOR YOU.

**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.**

The walls of the city were the place for people to walk and talk in the ancient world. They were broad and often the only open and reasonably straight roads in ancient cities, as the roads within the walls were simply lanes connecting houses. The enemies of David were walking the walls every night and conspiring against him in whispers. He knew about this, for his spies and guards would report secret meetings and the details of some of the plots had reached his ears, and the result for him was sadness as he reflected upon these people’s malice. They planned mischief and if it was rebellion they planned, then it was mischief with great sadness, for many would die in such an event.

The later rebellion of Absalom led to the deaths of tens of thousands of people in the many battles and sieges. Once rebellion is being discussed there is an atmosphere of disease in the city and that is what David feels. Many ministers feel this same thing in the church where the elders or others plot against them in secret. It is a hard thing to lead people when you know that envy and malice drives many of them. Refer to the BTB study JEALOUSY.

**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.**

The worst thing about the planned rebellion and betrayal of the kingdom, was not that it came from enemies, but that it came from people who David had thought were his friends and family. The attacks of one’s sworn enemies is to be expected, and it is easy to take decisive actions against those whose malice is well known and who have a track record of evil against you. What is really hard is to see that the attacks come from those who are friends, and who could have been expected to be loyal, and to whom David had been thoroughly loyal in the past.

People who have a history of hating us we can be prepared to fight against, but someone who has loved us in the past is harder to guard against. We expected love, loyalty and dependability from them. Even harder is to be betrayed by a friend who also was a believer, and with whom we had worshipped together. David’s enemies are those of his own intimate friend network; men he had trusted and shared intimate moments with at prayer. These were people he had spoken of all sorts of intimate things (sweet counsel) together.

I have only had two examples of serious attacks upon me in my life in this category. The first was a fellow Naval Officer who let off two bombs to liven up a training exercise! I was the officer in charge and so had to be the last man out of the area after my sailors were all safe. Three years later I got back to work! That idiot who lets the bombs off was the only other Christian in the entire unit. He was a fool and I faced terrible consequences as a result of his stupid actions.

The other time was recently when I was attacked by a fellow counsellor-psychologist who falsely accused me of academic dishonesty. It took me a year to clear my name thoroughly, and it was very stressful. This man could have asked me any question about my qualifications and I would have answered him, but he cowardly attacked me through our professional ethics committee. Even though I was totally cleared of any wrongdoing, it was sad to think that another “Christian” (later I realised he was a religious “make-believer”) had done that to me. I know David’s sadness here. The greatest betrayal ever was that of our Lord by Judas, who had enjoyed sweet fellowship with Him for three wonderful years before. Our Lord knows what it is to face the worst that we can experience. Hebrews 4:14-16.

**15 Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.**

David is blunt here, and he is right. There is a time for mercy and forgiveness and there is a time for judgement and death. When people have betrayed their friends for evil purposes and so sold themselves out to evil that they have got to this point, they are too dangerous to be forgiven and restored to work with you again. To restore such people to their past positions without total repentance is to simply open the door to greater evil. We must be clear on this in ministry; when people claiming to be believers have proved themselves betrayers of what is precious, they cannot be given further opportunity to bring the Lord’s Holy name into disrepute.

We may personally forgive such people, but we must never restore them to a role where they can work evil again. I can forgive and have forgiven both men who did such evil to me, but I would never place them in any position with responsibility for the lives of people, or the fate of any ministry. They have proven themselves untrustworthy and cannot be given the chance to destroy good works again. We must understand forgiveness and apply it personally without danger to the Lord’s work and to missions that Satan loves to destroy by deceiving foolish people who won’t advance in application of bible doctrine. Refer to the BTB studies on CHURCH OFFICERS – PASTORS AND ELDERS.

I have seen two churches fail to apply these principles for pastoral leadership. In one case they appointed a convicted thief as their treasurer, and they lost their church building fund! In the other they appointed a paedophile to lead a youth group. Both men sinned as believers and had been jailed as church members. In both cases it was argued that after their jail time, “they had been transformed by the power of God”, but their previous actions indicated their Old Sin Nature weakness, and they were permanently barred from further service in leadership by the clear teaching of the Scripture. God’s Word is clear in the Pastoral Epistles that all leaders must be “well spoken of in the world”.

Transformed lives are great, but the sordid past of a believer permanently bars them from having the opportunity to disgrace the Lord again in key leadership positions. An unbeliever who is guilty of great sins may be lifted up to leadership once they have grown and been tested over time and found strong and stable; Paul is an example of a murderer and persecutor, but he was tested by the church for years before he was accepted as a leader. Galatians 1:15 - 2:2, 1 Timothy 3:3ff, Titus 1:7-16.

**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.**

David doesn't trust those who have proved themselves untrustworthy and he will not raise them up to any leadership role of responsibility ever again, but he will keep on trusting the Lord. People may fail us, but the Lord never will fail us. David sees that people cannot be trusted, but God can and that He will save David from the plots and schemes of evil men and women.

David will not have one time to cry aloud to the Lord but regularly through each day he will lift up his voice to the Lord and seek the Lord's guidance and deliverance. He has absolute assurance that the Lord will hear his words and answer his deepest needs. Psalms 5:1-3, 50:14-15, 73:28, 91:11-16, 109:4, Daniel 6:10-13. David prayed three specific times a day formally, as did Daniel later, but he also prayed fervently at other less formal times, and he casts his cares upon the Lord, as we are encouraged to do also. 1 Peter 5:5-9.

**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 abides of old. Selah.**

David is now looking back at the incident that led to the Psalm before us. He is delivered and he is relieved and secure in his relationship with the Lord. He now sees that there were many more with him than were against him, and the crisis is over with victory to his kingship. When we are under attack the enemy forces always look fierce and strong, but they may not be as strong as they appear to be. It is only as we set our faces for the fight and take on the enemy that we truly find out how tough they were. In most cases we find the enemy was not as strong as they appeared to be initially, for the Lord is with us, and so "greater is He that is with us than he that is in the world". 1 John 4:4.

David also has the complete assurance that the Lord will deal with these rebels, even if he personally hasn't done so. David can leave them to the Lord and not bother any more about these individuals after the rebellion itself is extinguished. The challenge for us all is to be able to "pass over" individuals to the Lord for discipline without feeling we must pursue them for "justice". God will deal with these people and there is no escape from the One who is eternal.

**19b. 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.**

**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.**

These men who are rebels against David have lived "charmed lives" and so they believe they are beyond the judgement of God and immune to prosecution. No terrible changes in their lives have occurred to date and so they foolishly think they are safe from all judgement and harm. They do not fear the Lord, nor consider that they will be held accountable at some point. Psalms 73:3-6.

These people are baffling when you have seen calamity come to many, for they act as if they are special and nothing bad will happen to them. When these people face calamity they really fall apart. Their problem, like most self centred and arrogantly evil people is narcissism; they believe they are "entitled" to only good things. They couple this with a total disregard for others rights, and for their own responsibilities. This is the profile of most evil people you will meet, and they are people who arrogantly trample over everyone else's rights but demand their own with vigour.

These people break their word whenever it suits them. They are natural and deliberate liars and con-men. They will say anything that will suck you in and deceive you, and then they will take your money and disappear. Their words are smoother than oil, but there is no reality behind their promises, except the certainty that you will be abused and stolen from!

These are evil deceivers and need to be identified and avoided. These people talk peace but their swords are already out to kill you suddenly. This is naked evil and believers must be ready for these people, for they have always been Satan's shock troops to destroy ministries. Believers who are not ready to spot evil by its terrible fruit will be abused and have their ministries destroyed by these wicked people. Matthew 7:13-25.

**22 Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.**

**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.**

David has learned from this experience of betrayal. He has seen who are evil and having prayed and then dealt with them is relaxed that the Lord was clearly in charge all through the process. Looking back, we always see the truth, but the challenge of faith is to affirm the truth before we see it clearly, and loudly affirm the deliverance of the Lord. Faith gives thanks for deliverance before it actually occurs, because the believer is so sure that it will occur. God will not see His righteous servants moved from their strong position as His children. The only reason the believer "gets moved" is when they leave their faith and wander from the path of God. If we stand fast and hold the Word as more real than our testing circumstances then we will live to see the deliverance of the Lord.

We are to cast our cares upon the Lord, for He cares for us. Psalms 27:14, 37:5, 42:10-11, Isaiah 50:1-9. God will sustain us, because He knew from before time what we would need and it is already there for us; all we are tasked with doing is to come before the throne of grace and ask for what we need. There is no shortage in God's provision, for it is already waiting there for us to ask for. Remember believer the Lord has had eternity to prepare for our needs and all is there in heaven ready for delivery! It is only lack of faith and/or our own unconfessed sin that separate us from the blessing that is there for us. Psalms 66:18, Isaiah 59:1-2.

We can leave the evil people to the justice of the Lord, and they will be dealt with by the Lord in the Lord's time. Psalms 7:14-16, 59:12-13. They will all go down into the pit of destruction eventually and will have their lives shortened. Our job is to trust the Lord and keep moving forward in the task the Lord has set us and leave the enemy to the Lord. Proverbs 10:27, John 3:36, 10:10.

## PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. It is not wrong to moan and groan at times, for in this present world we will be overwhelmed by sadness and pressures at times. The only thing that is wrong is to keep the pain we feel within to our self, for the Lord wants us to share our burdens with Him, for He died to take our burdens with our sins. Let us cast our cares upon the Lord and when overwhelmed by emotion, let us rest in the ability of the Holy Spirit to communicate our deep pain to the Lord who loved us and gave Himself for us.

2. It is not wrong to feel depressed at times, nor experience strong anxiety reactions when certain things occur. These reactions are normal when the causes are severe. It is where we go with our depression or anxiety that determines where physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually we will end up. Let us take our strong responses to events to the Throne of Grace and bring all matters of concern to the Lord in prayer. Let us turn our weeping into joy, and put off the spirit of heaviness by embracing and putting on the garments of praise. Isaiah 61:3.

3. We are called to be soldiers in the Lord's Army. That means we are to put our spiritual armour on each and every day, and we are called to stand and fight under pressure. Let us be spiritually strong and ready to deal with the difficulties that arise around us. It is not wrong to take holidays, as every soldier takes leave, to rest and recharge for the next battle. Let us care for our self and act and live as the spiritual soldiers we are called to be.

4. Discernment is required to survive in ministry, for if you trust the wrong people, they will destroy all you hold dear and show no remorse for their evils. There are wicked people about, and we need to recognise this reality or we will become their next victims. Let us teach discernment by teaching the words of Jesus, for they alone will keep God's people safe from the wicked servants of Satan who will attack us at times. To fail to teach the words of Jesus is to fail to prepare the Lord's flock under your care for reality.

## DOCTRINES

**GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU** See page 15

## SIN – JEALOUSY

1. Jealousy is the strongest of the mental sins. (Proverbs 27:3,4)
2. Jealousy is the most cruel of all sins; it turns a person into a monster.
3. Jealousy removes all happiness from a believer; it is a mental sin by which you make your own misery.
4. Some people cannot stand the success of others; consequently jealousy destroys the basis of friendship.
5. So great was the sin of jealousy that a whole offering of the Levitical Code was prescribed for it. (Numbers 5:11-31) It is the only offering that was designed for one sin only.
6. Jealousy is the basis for the destruction of married love. (Song of Solomon 8:6)
7. The same jealousy which destroys love can also destroy the normal function of the soul. (Job 5:2; Proverbs 14:30) This is the explanation of some cases of psychoses and neuroses.
8. Jealousy motivates to revenge. (Proverbs 6:34)
9. Jealousy of Joseph motivated his brothers to sell him into slavery. (Acts 7:9)
10. Therefore jealousy takes real or apparent wrongs out of the Lord's hand and intrudes on divine judgement. (Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19)
11. Jealousy split the nation of Israel. (Isaiah 11:13 - Ephraim's jealousy of Judah)
12. Jealousy was the motivator of the religious leaders who crucified Jesus Christ. (Matthew 27:18; Mark 15:10)
13. Jealousy rejects the teaching of the Bible truths. (Acts 13:45; 17:5)
14. False doctrine of apostasy produces jealousy (1 Timothy 6:3,4).

## CHURCH OFFICERS – PASTOR-ELDER See page 70

## CHRISTIAN LIFE – STABILITY

1. God is able to keep us and bless us (Ephesians 3:20, Hebrews 7:25).
2. Stability comes when we know God; when we have grown up in his Word. Maturity brings with it stability (2Peter 3:18, 2Timothy 1:12).
3. The alternative to a stable life of faith is to be tossed about by every pressure; this occurs when there is no doctrinal application in the life (James 1:6, Ephesians 4:14, Revelation 3:8).
4. Believers need stability to stand fast against the wiles of Satan who is a danger to those with no doctrine: We are told to:
  - a) Stand fast in the word 1Corinthians 16:13.
  - b) Stand fast in our liberty Galatians 5:1 cf. Romans 14:1ff, 8:9-13.
  - c) Stand fast in one spirit (no pettiness) Philippians 1:27.
  - d) Stand fast in the Lord (in fellowship) Philippians 4:1.
  - e) Stand fast in doctrine 2 Thessalonians 2:5, 16,17.
5. Strength and stability comes in a close relationship with the Lord. By faith we stand: 2 Corinthians 1:24, Psalm 59:17, 62:7, 144:1.
6. God has supreme power at His fingertips for us. Isaiah 59:1.
7. Our faith should stand secure in this power, for we are kept by it in all things, therefore we should be confident. 1Corinthians 2:5, 1Peter 1:5, John 16:33.
8. God is able to make us stand through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the word in our lives. Romans 14:4, Jude 24.
9. Strength and stability come from the impact of the Holy Spirit's work upon the word in our life as we believe and apply it, e.g. Sarah Hebrews 11:11, Paul 2 Corinthians 12:8-10.
10. Profile of the stable believer under pressure 2 Peter 1:3-16.

## NOTES

## PSALM 56

## INTRODUCTION

David prays again in this Psalm in absolute confidence in the promises of the Word of God. Refer to the BTB study PROMISES. He faces enemies who are malicious and vigorous in their assaults upon him. The number of attacks upon David is a surprise to many believers who wrongly expect an easy road as a follower of God. Remember also Moses faced thirteen significant rebellions against his authority. David's constant battling against evil men and women reminds us that all servants of the Lord are in the ANGELIC CONFLICT. This Psalm has been traditionally dated from the events in 1 Samuel 21:10-15. Read this passage now and reflect upon it before entering the Psalm and reading it through.

David faces his fear again, and he faces it in faith. He argues with his Old Sin Nature's tendency to fear and doubt, and wins the battle for his mind, and rests in his faith. It is another wonderful picture of the believer's daily battle with doubts and fears.

W G Scroggie, the great biblical commentator of the 1930s through to the 1950s observed of this Psalm the following. "When our foes are many, proud, cruel and determined, we should not look at them with fear, (verses 1-2) but to God with trust (verse 3), until we can altogether trust and never fear (verse 11)." This Psalm, like all of David's Psalms is an "out breathing of his soul to God" (Scroggie – The Psalms Volume 2 – page 38.) He completes his assessment of this Psalm by stating; "Only let your fear be of God, and not of the foe, for he who fears Him need fear no-one else. This does not mean that we shall ignore or belittle the foe, but that in God we shall always outlive him. Your step will be light when you walk in the light."

## PSALMS 56:1-13

**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. 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. 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. 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?**

## REFLECTION

**1 Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresses me.  
2 Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou most High.**

The enemy were assaulting David daily by words or deeds. They wished to "swallow him up". This is an image of evil, as of a great wild animal eating its prey whole so that not a scrap remains upon the ground. David captures in these words the "raging/roaring lion" who is Satan. James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8-9. The malice of the enemy reminds us that the challenge for all believers is to walk worthy of the Lord and be focused on WALKING with the Lord one day at a time. Each and every day we need to rest upon the Lord's everlasting arms and claim His promises. Each and every day we need to remind

ourselves of His care over us, His plan that includes us, and His power that upholds us. Deuteronomy 33:27, Matthew 6:25-34.

David appeals for the tender mercy of God. Once again, he begins in the right place for prayer to begin. He begins by speaking of the righteous and holy character of God. God's very nature is merciful. David begins his prayer by reminding himself of who God is, for it's upon the CHARACTER OF GOD that all prayer rests. Psalms 57:1-3, 69:13-16, 136:10-20.

Verse one begins by reminding man of the mercy of God and verse two ends by reminding us of the Omnipotence (All Powerful nature) of God. The enemies David has are many, but many men are no match for the One true "Most High God". All the powers of all the enemies that can come against us are no match for the smallest amount of the power of the God who made the heavens and the earth. Isaiah 57:13-15, Daniel 4:34-37, 1 John 4:4.

**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.**

The right way to deal with FEAR is to take it before the Throne of Grace. Hebrews 4:16. David recognises that there are times of fear, when we stand before obstacles or threats that overwhelm our emotions. It is not wrong to feel fear, for that emotional surge of power is a natural response to danger; it is however always wrong for a believer to stay in the place of fear. Our POSITION IN CHRIST gives us the privilege and the right to seek the Lord's mercy and deliverance from the situation that causes our fear, and from the fear itself. Psalms 34:4, 55:4-5, 2 Corinthians 1:8-10, 7:5-6. As we grow in the knowledge of the holy character of God, and really understand His awesome power, any fears of what men may do to us evaporates away.

Trust comes as a result of getting to know someone so thoroughly that you can relax in their company and rest upon the integrity of their character. This is true of people and this is also true in our relationship with God. Many believers are baffled about how they can trust the Lord in a situation they face, but the reason for their bafflement is that they have not drawn near the Lord in Bible study and prayer through their years upon the earth, and so the Lord is a stranger to them, rather than a well-known friend.

God seeks our friendship through His Word, and the Lord made this very clear to the disciples as is recorded in John 15:4-17. As we get to know the Word of God we get to know the Character of God, and we grow in the grace and the knowledge of God and trust Him more and more as the days go by. It is secure knowledge of the doctrines of God's Word that closes the door on fear, and opens the door to praise and worship in power. Isaiah 61:3.

**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.**

The greatest flattery of a person's ideas is imitation and plagiarism of those ideas. When you write great things you will find no end to the number of people with lesser minds who will steal your ideas and publish them. I have even had one copyright thief send me his work he was so impressed with the way he had reformatted my work! This is one form of attack upon us, but the one David refers to here is the twisting of ideas by malicious enemies. Paul also faced this, and Peter comments upon it. 2 Peter 3:14-18.

When you stand for the Lord, you can expect the enemy to try in every way possible to undermine you personally, your reputation, and your work. Malicious gossip and misquoting of words is a good way to undermine reputation and thereby discredit the teaching



of people, and this has long been a Satanic strategy towards good pastors and teachers. When attacked this way rejoice in the Lord, for it means that the enemy finds you a big enough threat to try to undermine you.

The thoughts of evil people towards God's people are always evil. Many believers are baffled by the malice of the followers of Satan, but we have no need to be baffled, for their hatred of us is to be expected. John 15:18ff. Their thoughts are evil, and their plans are for the death of the ministers of the Word, and the destruction of the ministries of the Word of God. Satan hates the Word above all else, and any who teach it thoroughly and well are his special targets. Every pastor-teacher ought to rejoice in attack for this very reason; you are clearly doing your job as a pastor.

The rebellious nature and strategy of these evil people is described. Firstly they harbour evil thoughts, then they gather together with others who also think evil, then they begin an intelligence gathering operation in order to later attack the believer. They watch the believer's steps to seek things that can be twisted against them. They hide and wait for opportunity to attack them. They seek the soul of the believer, but our soul is safely "hid with God". Colossians 3:3.

**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?**

These people look as if they may escape by means of further lies and deceit. At times it appears that evil men and women do escape the consequences of their actions in time. We have seen many evil greedy men and women escape with millions in dollars of other people's money over recent years as a result of the financial-banking crisis. The greed of these evil bankers destroyed many companies and individuals and many of these wicked people are still living in their mansions and have their "stolen" money in their banks. Because it was legally taken, it is safe from government intervention, or a corrupt government protects them.

How do we deal with this evil? Firstly, we forget greed ourselves, and we face our own deep jealousy and envy and recognise the truth about money; it lasts for time only. Study the great moves of the Holy Spirit through history and you will notice that God's work needs little money. God uses prepared, obedient, and devoted people who place themselves upon the altar of service. The money needed to achieve things will then come, but it will not be vast amounts, just enough to achieve the goals.

God hates the evils that have occurred over recent years before and after the WFC. Truly America's business system has become "Mystery Babylon", driven by all the evils of the Old Sin Nature of man and the malice and self-centred greed of the Satanic system of WORLDLINESS. Revelation 17:1-18. God will judge fully and finally the entire Satanic system of world government and finance in the Great Tribulation period, but right now He will deal with the evils we see in accordance with His Plan and in His timing. The evil ones will not escape by more iniquity, for the righteous anger of the Lord will cast them down to the lake of Fire with Satan, whom they serve. Revelation 20:11-15.

David knows that the Lord understands his "wandering ways", when he loses concentration and stumbles about. God knows the tears of His saints, and keeps our tears shed at the consequences of sin and evil. Our works are in God's Book and we will receive eternal reward for all we do in the filling of the Holy Spirit. David knows that his weaknesses are known, forgiven, and that the Lord sees his heart's desire, and his hearts pain. Malachi 3:16-17, Matthew 10:28-31.

**9 When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.**

**10 In God will I praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word.**

David speaks as if his prayer is answered as it is spoken aloud, and in fact our prayers are answered even earlier than that. Our prayers were known from eternity past, and have all been answered in eternity past, and have their fulfilment in time. We are challenged to stand like David in absolute certainty regarding answered prayer. We have been heard, we are heard, and we will be heard: we have been answered, and we will see the answers coming in time. Let us rest in the eternal plan of Almighty God. Refer back to the BTB study PLAN OF GOD.

As David prays, he pictures his enemies falling backwards and fleeing from the power of God. This illustrates a good habit to get into in prayer; it is the habit of seeing the answer to the prayer as we pray it. Let us be fully aware of our request as we make it, and so picture its answer coming from the Lord. Faith expresses a desire as if it has already been answered. Hebrews 11:1. This confidence is built upon the certainty of God being with the believer in power.

There is no doubt about the presence of God with us in our prayers as spiritual believers. Only carnality stops answers to prayer. Psalms 66:11, Isaiah 1:15, Jeremiah 5:25, Habakkuk 1:13, Acts 8:22. David does not wait to see the answer to his prayer before he bursts into praise and worship. David praises the Word of God because it is through the Word of God that he has his confidence. Even as an author of scripture, he praises scripture, for in it he finds his certainty and confidence in prayer.

**11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.  
12 Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.**

Verse eleven triumphantly repeats the earlier affirmation. Having gone through his petition and expressed his distress he repeats the basis of his faith; he rests upon the perfect character and power of the Creator-Saviour God. Psalms 27:1, 112:6-8, Isaiah 51:7-8, 12-13. Man is no source of fear if the Lord is in charge of your life. No men can harm you if the Lord is guiding you. Any attack upon you is by permission and for your growth and blessing forever if taken to the Lord and spiritually worked through.

David has made a solemn vow to the Lord in his prayer. This vow is not mentioned in the Psalm before us. The event that may be behind this Psalm is instructive for David had fled to Achish, Philistine king of Gath. He had fled from the demon possessed/influenced Saul of Israel to the pagan king of Gath. He quickly discovered that he had gone from the frying pan into the fire and as he pretended to be mad to escape, it appears he prayed his prayer and promised a sacrifice of praise when he was delivered.

Many of us have prayed this prayer; "Lord if you will deliver me I will do this for you...." Be very careful of such prayers for the Lord will hold you to your promises. These are not "deals" with God, they are promises to be fulfilled upon deliverance. We don't need to make deals with God for all the answers to our prayers are already there from eternity, so no deals can be made. Once we understand this fact, let us offer up a thanksgiving offering of praise at every opportunity, and seeing a prayer answered is a good opportunity to offer up a sacrifice of praise. Psalms 9:1-3, 21:13, 59:16-17, Isaiah 12:1-6.

**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?**

The threat to David in Achish's city of Gath was real at this time. It had been an act of foolishness on David's part to seek shelter there at this time, for as the killer of Goliath he was a marked man there. Even though he made this error of judgement and showed lack of faith in God, he was still delivered when he cast himself upon the Lord. When we have made any errors of judgement we are where David was here and we have the same path he took in the Psalm open to us. We are challenged by David to pour our heart out to the

Lord and leave our concerns with Him, with absolute assurance of an answer to our prayers.

David is thankful for deliverance from death in Gath, and he ends by praying that he may pay attention to the Lord's guidance in the future so that he never falls into such a trap again. He wants his feet kept safe from falling over into danger in the future. His desire is to walk with the Lord and show light, not be extinguished as the result of an error in judgement on his part. He seeks a closer walk with God. This closer walk leads to the salvation of many from Gath later and they join David's palace honour guard and will serve with him through the Absalom rebellion.

## **PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS**

1. Let us confront our fears in faith. Let us praise the Lord in knowledge of the Word of God. Let us encourage each other to grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord. Only as believers grow in their secure knowledge of God's holy character will they be able to trust Him more and more in the ups and downs of life. Pastors, let us teach with power and consistency so that the people might know the truth and the truth might set them free from their fears. John 8:32-36, 10:10.

2. It is good to remember where prayer is answered. God's Plan flows through time, but was made before time, so everything needed is already provided for us. Prayer grasps hold of an eternal storehouse of answered prayer and claims it into time. Let us see prayer as eternity touching time, and then any enemies will be put in their place of insignificance.

3. It is also good to remember that the sacrifice of praise is appropriate to offer whenever prayer is answered in time. It is good to praise the Lord for answered prayer well ahead of the answer being seen. Once we see the answer to prayer let us really rejoice in the Lord, and praise Him for who He is and what He has done, is doing, and will do.

4. David made an error of judgement in going down to Gath, but his prayer turns disaster into deliverance. He rests upon God's plan for his life, and it is always bigger than the potential disasters our foolishness gets us into. David is delivered from Gath, and by pretending he is mad he escapes from the fatal consequences of his "mad" decision to enter the city in the first place. This story in David's life is a great encouragement to us for it reminds us that our life is not over until we see the Lord face to face, and until then we are to pray to the Lord and trust the Lord's plan for us.

## **DOCTRINES**

**PROMISES** See page 102

**ANGELS – ANGELIC CONFLICT** page 81

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING** See page 28

**GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD** See page 18

**FEAR** See page 79

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – POSITION IN CHRIST** See page 130

**EVIL** See page 58

**WORLDLINESS** See page 171

**GOD – THE PLAN OF GOD** See page 19

## NOTES

**PSALM 57****INTRODUCTION**

This Psalm may date from David's flight to En-Gedi or from during his time in the cave Adullam. 1 Samuel 22, 24. It is not clear as to the exact occasion, but the themes are similar to the earlier Psalms in this group. David faces a series of extreme "calamities". He does not face one problem but multiple challenges to his faith and his hope for the future. David has found a safe place in his time of great distress, and it is not just the hiding place of his army, but the hiding place of the soul where he knows the power, Person, and plan of God for him. He faces great troubles but he experiences through his prayer great triumph. As W G Scroggie notes, "There can be no triumph where there is no trouble".

**PSALMS 57:1-11**

**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. 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. 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. 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. 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.**

**REFLECTION**

**1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusts in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be over and past.**

Once again David cries aloud for the loving kindness expressed in the mercy of God towards His children. It is to the God who loves us that we still appeal for mercy, and our pleas are met with grace. Hebrews 4:12-16. God gives "more grace" to us. James 4:6, 1 Peter 1:2. The prayer of Peter to the early churches was that Grace, mercy and peace might be "multiplied" to them.

It is abundant blessing that the early saints sought, and it is abundance that we need to focus upon in our prayer. God does not just want to answer our prayers, He wants to pour His answer in bounty upon us so that all who see might praise the glory of God. We are here upon this earth to bring glory to God and we bring that glory to God when we open the doors of heaven with our believing prayer. Psalms 56:1, 69:13-16, 119:76-77.

David affirms his faith; he trusts in the Lord's plan, Person and power. It is the Lord alone who he trusts in this situation of overload of pressure. No man can save him, but God can

and will, and he believes this fully. He pictures the Lord as a mighty eagle overshadowing its chick. David sees himself as the helpless chick of the eagle, dependent totally upon the Lord for his protection and food. Psalms 17:7-8, 36:7, 61:4, James 5:10-11. He knows that the calamities will sweep by eventually, for all trouble does pass, but it is surviving the process, and celebrating God's triumph that is important.

All trouble will pass in time, it's the damage it does as it flows over us that is the issue for the person in the eye of the storm. Some psychologists teach their clients to imagine the trouble they have passing, and then ask them what they will say looking back at it. From that perspective of "after it is gone", what insights do they gain about how to deal with it now? This is helpful, but the biblical approach is more powerful.

## **2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performs all things for me.**

When we let out cries of distress, to whom do we utter them? When we get distressed where do we take that distress? David took his deep emotions to the Lord who dealt with his distress, for he knew that the Lord alone could handle the "big things" in his life. God does all the things that matter for David, and he is under no illusion that he needs the Lord for all things in his life. Psalms 138:8, Philippians 1:6, 2:12-13, Hebrews 13:20-21.

## **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.**

God's connection with the earth is not distant. Salvation and deliverance is near to us. Isaiah 55:6, 56:1-2, Romans 13:11. We think in terms of heaven being "out there" millions of light years away, but that is thinking in terms of space and time, but God is the Creator of space and time, and eternity is as close as our hand or breath. We are not far from the edge of the universe at all, for eternity touches time in the presence of the Lord with us every day.

David knows that the Lord can send from the heavens to the earth in a millisecond; there is no distance at all. God sees and is active in the universe, and God will save David from the disaster he looks at in this situation. God will act; David is absolutely confident of that fact, and he is sure that God's actions will lead to his deliverance. Psalms 144:3-8.

## **4 My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.**

David feels like he is surrounded by wild Asiatic lions each ready to tear him apart. Psalms 17:12ff. The violent nature of those who hate the Lord and His servants can really surprise us at times. We must be ready to recognise this level of violent malice or we will be hurt badly by these people. James and Peter back up David's warning a millennium later. James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8-9. Satan is like a lion seeking to tear apart those who are not alert to his strategy and tactics. Refer to the BTB study below, SATAN'S STRATEGY AND TACTICS. The enemy will burn, stab, spear, shoot arrows, and cut at us.

David describes a full weapons arsenal as the tools of trade of the evil people attacking him. They will seek to destroy him in any way they can. Evil will try to destroy us from afar and from close by; only vigilance against the evil people around us will keep us safe from their sudden attacks. The challenge of every church is to keep their people safe from evil attack by vigilant Bible teaching and quick action when fake brethren are spotted in the group.

## **5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.**

David just bursts into song at this point. Having described the malice and serious weaponry of the enemy who are attacking him he looks up and praises God's glory. This is the clue to the best way to deal with pressure; it is always by means of praise. Isaiah

61:3. Whenever we face real pressure from evil the first thing to do is look up and praise God. Praise will lift the spirit and restore health and strength to the soul and body. God will indeed be exulted “above the heavens”, for as the Lord made them, so He will one day dissolve them and remake them. Isaiah 65:17, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 21:1ff.

This universe is temporary! Have you stopped and considered that fact this very day? In an earlier psalm we looked at this, but it is worth pausing and reflecting again. The Bible is very clear as to the fate of the stars we presently see in the heavens. The first great shock for mankind about the reality of the stars we see is during the Great Tribulation period. The light from one third of the stars will fail at a set point in the Great Tribulation period. Revelation 6:13, 8:12. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on these passages.

Given that the light from many of the stars has been travelling to the earth for millions of years, this revelation/prophecy means that most of the stars in our sky do not even exist at this point; it is only their light still travelling to us that we presently see. That light will be seen to fail in the Tribulation period, but it will give testimony to their destruction millions of years before, it is just that it has taken several million years for the light of their demise to reach us! Do you see how God will be exulted above the heavens, and above the earth in that day?

All men will see fulfilled scripture and will understand that these many stars had to have died millions of years before the event is seen, and they will know that the bible recorded this prophecy 2000 years ago. Can you see the shock in the faces of the unbelievers who don't want to believe in God at that time? They will be looking up at empty patches in the sky, and hearing about God's prophetic words! They will see the light of a third of the stars go out! God will be exulted above the heavens, for they will be gone in one day, but God will not be, and neither will the annoying believers!

**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.**

David has praised the Lord for his ultimate victory, and is looking up until he finishes his praise, and then he looks down again and sees the new attacks and plots of the enemy. Praise will not necessarily stop the assaults and plots of the enemy against us. Praise gives us temporary respite from assault and a rest and recharge for our spirit before we face the battle again.

In this world we will have battle and trouble! Remember the words of the Lord, “In this world you will have tribulation but be of good cheer for I have overcome this world”. Matthew 28:18-20, John 16:33. In the midst of the troubles and tribulation and warfare that will come to us we may have peace in our spirit, as we stabilise ourselves upon the Person, power and plan of God. Isaiah 26:3-4, John 14:27, 2 Thessalonians 3:16. Refer to the BTB studies on OVERCOMER, STABILITY, and THINKING BIBLICALLY.

David looks around and sees the on-going malice of the enemy towards him. He gets overwhelmed again as he sees them digging man-traps for him in the wilderness paths, and laying ambushes in places to try to kill him by either stealth or open battle. Many enthusiastic believers today affirm aloud, “Prayer changes things”, and it is true, it does, but it may not remove the threat, the attacks, and the anguish they cause at times. It is not sinful to be overwhelmed at times, even just after a prayer and praise session. The malice of the enemy does not sleep, and when we look around we will feel that hatred towards us again and be saddened by it. The challenge is to bring our feelings back to the Lord.

The challenge is also to see the end of their malice. Often the enemy will fall into the very trap they laid for us. The three men who have seriously and publically attacked me in the past have each fallen into their own traps over time. I have had to wait for up to seven years in one case, but each one fell into his own trap in the Lord's timing and justice. Let us see, with David, that leaving our enemies to the justice of God is far better than trying to

get justice upon the earth in a court of man's law. We cast our cares upon the Lord, trust in His Plan for us, and move forward in acceptance of His will for us. Psalms 142:1-3, 143:3-6, Matthew 26:39-44.

**7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.**

**8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.**

David feels great pain at the plans and schemes of the enemy, but he stabilises himself again in the truths of God's Word and the specific promises of God regarding his protection. David's "heart is fixed", and stabilised upon the promises of the Word of God. Psalms 108:1-2, 112:6-8. God's Plan for him is more real than the threats of the enemies of God and David. God's power is more real than the threats of those who work with Satan. David knows that he has a destiny upon the earth and into eternity, and that all the powers of hell will not prevail against God's Plan for his life. Matthew 16:18.

David will not stop praising God's holy name, and after facing the sadness of the malice of evil again he has re-fixed his heart upon the truth of scripture and the reality of God's Plan for his life. David will face the enemy and he will sing into their faces of the glory and majesty of the God who will judge them. It is this level of assurance that moved Paul steadily forward in his own life with praise in the midst of terrible troubles. Romans 5:1-5, 2 Corinthians 11:23-33.

Our path through this life may resemble David's and Paul's rather than the wealthy and relaxed pagans we may meet on our way. If we are genuine soldiers of the Lord we will be in battle at times and those battles may be very hard. If we have the same mentality that David and Paul had, then we will walk safely and with praise through all the enemy throws at us. Ephesians 6:14-18.

David is calling to himself to play the instruments of praise in verse eight. He is calling himself to shake himself out of any depression still felt about the malice of evil and expresses his faith in full orchestra of musical melody! We have to shake ourselves out of any depression or anxiety we feel when we face evil. The Lord won't shake us out of our emotions, we must do so! Hebrews 12:12-15. The reason the Lord leaves us to do this is that by shaking our self out of our emotional state we gain power over our emotions, and that builds our inner soul strength.

David needs to express his faith, for faith unexpressed is inadequate and weak faith that will evaporate away over time. It is only faith that is expressed in action that builds spiritual strength into the soul and spirit of man. James 2:14-26. David will get up early and praise God through his song writing and song singing, and he is singing bible doctrine. It is the Word that we ought to rise up to study each and every morning.

**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.**

David is ready to testify to the truth about God before his own people and those of other nations. Open testimony to the truth is important to utter, as it challenges the lost and strengthens the saints. Psalms 2:1, 18:39, 22:22-24, 96:3, 138:1-5, 145:10-12. The Lord is great in mercy, and all may be saved if they will respond to the Word and the reality behind it. Psalms 85:9-13. God is always able to "save to the uttermost" all who come to Him in faith. Hebrews 7:25. David proclaims this truth to his friends and enemies.

Paul's desire was by any means in any way that he might save some! 1 Corinthians 9:20-23. Paul has the mental attitude of David in this matter; he sees that the greatest praise we can give God is telling others the truth about the Person, power and plan of God for them. We want to serve the Lord in bringing glory to the name of the Lord. 1 Corinthians

9:24-27. David ends the psalm by singing again his hymn of praise to the glory of God, who has made the earth and the heavens and will remake them one day; he gives God the glory for his life, his destiny, and the plan that he is a living part of on the earth and into heaven itself.

### **PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS**

1. All trouble “comes to pass”, and one day it will be over. How do we want that time to be? Let us make it a time of triumph and rejoicing by making the process a prayer saturated time. By walking through troubles in prayer we secure the path of God for us through them, and so we can be confident of triumph in the end.

2. Let us remember the malice that is in Satan’s heart towards us as believers. Satan and his servants hate us and seek our destruction as a lion seeks to eat its prey. We are to recognise the truth about the malice of the enemy and keep ourselves and our loved ones safe from evil. Let us teach the truth solidly and share the truth passionately, and so keep young believers safe from the evils that will otherwise overwhelm them. Let us ensure that those who have the “fruit of evil” in their life are spotted quickly in our churches and exposed thoroughly and exiled totally so that they have no opportunity to lead the young believers astray into evil. Matthew 7:13-25, Galatians 5:19-21.

3. Let us look up to the heavens and remember two vital facts. Firstly, the Lord made the present heavens and earth and all that is in them. Psalms 8:4, Hebrews 2:6. We can presently look up with awe at the galaxies, and marvel at the wonders that the Hubble Space Telescope has revealed to us, but then we can marvel at the temporary nature of all these things. God made this universe as decoration for the Angelic Conflict; it is a giant backdrop to the drama of redemption.

The second thing to reflect upon is the prophetic truths in the Revelation of John which tell us clearly that one third of the stars will be seen to fail in the Great Tribulation period (they must already have gone out of existence, for their light travels to us through millions of years) and that the entire universe will be wrapped up and put away after the Millennial Kingdom is completed and the Last Judgement of mankind is done. A new heaven and a new earth, and the New Jerusalem, are then created by God for eternity. 2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 21-22. Let us pause and reflect upon these eternal realities revealed to us through biblical prophecy far more often.

4. Pastor, let us teach the people of the Lord to praise His holy name more than we do. Let us encourage God’s people to praise the Holy name of the Lord as they learn more of the wonders of His creation and coming recreation of all things. Let us truly see and render the sacrifice of praise and service to the One who has all things in His hands.

### **DOCTRINES**

**ANGELS – SATAN’S STRATEGY AND TACTICS** See page 69

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – OVERCOMER** See page 39

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – STABILITY** See page 196

### **CHRISTIAN LIFE – THINKING BIBLICALLY**

1. We must think with Holy Spirit filled discernment. Refer SPIRITUALITY.

2. Our discernment is determined by the amount of God’s Word we have read, understood and applied into our lives. Colossians 1:9-11. Refer EBCWA CD or website for detailed study Colossians 1.



3. Our human IQ is of no significance in thinking biblically, for the Holy Spirit will teach us as we seek to learn and are obedient to what we learn. 1 Corinthians 1:19- 2:16. Refer EBCWA CD or website for detailed study of 1 Corinthians 1.

4. To think biblically we must apply what we know. James 1:21-25. Refer EBCWA CD or website for detailed study of James 1. There is no such thing as knowledge that remains unapplied, for such “knowledge” is simply self deception.

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