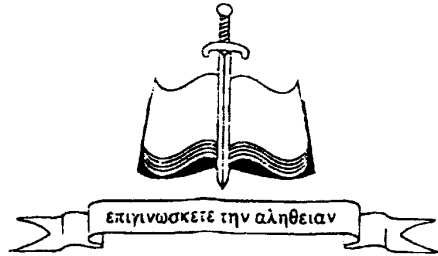


EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



PSALMS 90 - 106
(The Numbers Psalms)

BY

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[BOOK 49-K]

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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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For further information contact Dr Peter Moses at PO Box 163 Armadale WA 6992 or email Brian Huggett brianhuggett@bigpond.com.au

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
PSALM 90	3
PSALM 91	7
PSALM 92	11
PSALM 93	14
PSALM 94	16
PSALM 95	20
PSALM 96	22
PSALM 97	25
PSALM 98	28
PSALM 99	31
PSALM 100	33
PSALM 101	35
PSALM 102	38
PSALM 103	43
PSALM 104	48
PSALM 105	53
PSALM 106	59
DOCTRINES REFER	BTB

PSALMS SECTION FOUR

THE NUMBERS PSALMS – PSALMS 90 - 106

INTRODUCTION

Psalm 90 begins the fourth book of the Psalms; the “Numbers Section”. The book of Psalms is divided into five books, each running a parallel course to the Pentateuch and assembled by the editors in the fourth or fifth century BC in a way that teaches and instructs the singers and hearers, and assists their worship as they hear the books of Moses read aloud.

From Psalm 90 through Psalm 106 are the Number’s Psalms. The book of Numbers is a book that records the journey from Horeb, the Mount of God, to the Plains of Moab, and the people’s last camp before entering the land. It begins with a census of the tribes and ends with the assigning of the borders of the land and instructions for their division of the land. The last chapter examines the case of the daughters of Zelophehad, and underlines the principles of inheritance in the land to which their God has now brought them.

It is a book that details the incredible leadership ability of Moses and the terrible rebellious history of Israel. It is a book that illustrates very fully the wonderful grace of the Lord, in keeping His rebellious people through their wilderness march, and bringing the children of the Exodus Generation into the land promised to their fathers. It is a reminder of judgement, for the entire adult generation that leave the land of Egypt, die in the wilderness march and are buried in unmarked graves in the wilderness, but their children enter the land and are blessed.

The two godly men of the Exodus Generation, Joshua and Caleb, who didn’t fall into unbelief, both enter the land and prosper there as very old men. There is blessing and judgement, side by side, and the message over the book is GRACE, MERCY, and BLESSING for all who will embrace the PLAN and GIFTS of God.

PSALM 90

INTRODUCTION

These Psalms begin with the message of death, for that is where the book of Numbers begins, with the judgement of the Lord over the people in the Wilderness of Sin where they fail to follow the Lord’s instructions for the last time. The Exodus Generation is given the judgement of the SIN UNTO DEATH. Numbers 14:26-37. There are more rebellions and individual acts of disobedience right up until the children of the Exodus Generation enter the land.

Death is the subject of Psalm 90, and then Psalm 91 carries the message of life and power within the PLAN OF GOD. Just as the book of Numbers brings the people right to the borders of the Jordan River ready to enter the land, so these Psalms bring us to the entry of the believers into the Millennial Kingdom and many of the Psalms here speak of the glory and worship of the Millennial Kingdom and its King. Psalm 92 records the praises of the Sabbath Rest of the Millennium. Psalm 93 records the praises of the Millennium, and Psalms 94-100 are “Kingdom Songs”, with 101-106 being songs of praise to the King.

All these songs are songs of faith; songs sung before the Kingdom is established, sung on the basis of the assurance that it will be established. We are called to live in this sort of faith. Like the Psalmist we live before the kingdom is established but we are to live with the assurance that it will be established, and with the praises of the Lord that affirm aloud our firm belief in the present and future work of the Lord.

PSALMS 90:1-17

1 Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. 3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. 4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. 5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. 6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. 7 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. 8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. 9 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. 10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. 11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. 12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. 13 Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. 14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we

may rejoice and be glad all our days. **15 Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. 16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. 17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.**

REFLECTION

1 Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

We are in the hands of the God who made the Universe; why should we be concerned about our life or our death. We are in the wonderful hands of God and underneath are the everlasting arms. Deuteronomy 33:27-29. We live upon the earth, but our “dwelling place” is within the loving fellowship circle of the Lord our God. We are in the world, and in the world we have tribulation, but we are in Christ Jesus, and so we are centred in the circle of God’s love. Matthew 28:19-20, John 15:4-17, 16:33.

He has enabled us to sit and fellowship at His table in the presence of our enemies, and His banner over us is love. Psalms 23:5-6, 60:4, Song of Solomon 2:4. The CHARACTER OF GOD and the PLAN OF GOD is secure and stable, and we rest in this life upon the eternal reality of the Creator God’s plan for us.

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

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

This psalm is likely a true Psalm of Moses, as the superscription notes. When we think about this it makes the thoughts and emotions expressed even more amazing. Moses reflects upon nearly 400 years of Egyptian exile and sees in that time, that they were “in God”, not in Egypt. God was their dwelling place, not Egypt. Where-ever we are, we are “in God”, not in the local situation only.

Moses looks back through the days of the Patriarchs and through the days of Egyptian bondage and sees the grace of God in the midst of the genocidal desires of the Egyptian Pharaohs of the last days of their exile there. The Lord has been with them through the Exodus, and in all their troubles they can see the hand of God guiding them and protecting them. Psalms 71:1-5, 89:1, 91:1-2, 1 John 4:16-19. Our days are in the Lord’s hands, and we are secure in Him, for life, and through death into ETERNITY.

The destruction that was visited upon the people of Israel, (both in the genocide in Egypt, Exodus 1:11-22, and during the rebellions of the Wilderness wanderings), was a result of their sin. Deliberate sin results in a deliberate decision of God to discipline His people, but the Lord prefers to be gracious. Isaiah 28:21ff. Refer to the BTB study NATIONAL DIVINE DISCIPLINE. When the Lord disciplines He does so to bring His people back to living fellowship with Him, not to punish them without a good purpose behind the punishment. The Lord dealt with the Israelites, as He deals with all believers through the centuries, to bring them closer to Him, and to bring blessing to them.

The purpose in having time to live upon this earth is that we might serve and glorify the name of the Lord who placed us here. The correct attitude to TIME is an important part of our life and service. As we get older we see this more accurately, but the challenge is to apply the message of the shortness of time. A thousand years of history is but a wink of the eye, and man’s life is very short. Let us “number our days”, and that means let us use every one of them for the glory of the Lord. Ephesians 5:15-18, Philippians 3:7, 13-14, Colossians 3:1-5.

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

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

The Lord will use this very illustration to remind His hearers that the life of man is fragile and we all go from this earth like the grass. The Lord uses it to remind us that if the Lord looks after the grass that withers, will He not look after us also? Matthew 6:30. It is powerfully used earlier by Isaiah in Isaiah 40:6-8. Peter quotes this, and reminds us powerfully, “All flesh is as the grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of the grass. The grass withers and the flower fades away, but the Word of the Lord endures forever.” 1 Peter 1:23-25. James also refers to this Isaiah passage in James 1:10-11.

We may feel we are very powerful and useful in our work, but we are all just like the grass, and only the “well done” of the Lord gives our work any lasting significance. Matthew 25:21-23, Luke 19:16-26. The parable in which the Lord has the master say “well done” to faithful servants reminds us that He holds us accountable for our service, and we will certainly be judged for time wasting and lack of performance.

7 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

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

Nothing is hidden from the Lord. There are no such things as “secret sins” before the Lord. If the believer moves steadily away from the Lord into sinful paths they will firstly experience the “troubling” of the Lord and then the “wrath” of the Lord. God’s discipline of believers is progressive, from the gentle urgings and conviction of the Holy Spirit, through to

serious physical discipline upon the body and mind due to lack of repentance. The Lord's purpose is that the believer might repent and be restored to spiritual work and usefulness, but if they refuse to repent, then the Lord winds the pressure up upon them.

The psalmist sees that this is exactly what has occurred in the Exodus period, and it has led finally to the ultimate discipline; the SIN UNTO DEATH has been pronounced upon most of that first generation. Numbers 14:26-37, 26:63-65, Hebrews 3:17 – 4:4.

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

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

The Exodus Generation all died in the wilderness, most not even reaching their 70 allotted years. They died under maximum divine discipline of the "Sin Unto Death", but before they died they did pass on the truth to their children and they entered the land in obedience to Joshua. Their days passed away under the wrath of God. Their lives became an example for later generations of what not to do, but they did not achieve as a generation what the Lord intended for them to achieve.

I had an early experience of the judgement of the "Sin Unto Death" as a young believer in our Baptist Youth Group in the late 1960s. A woman from the local Anglican Church came to speak to us, as she had to each of the local youth groups. She had been involved in the occult while a believer, and had been involved in séances. The Lord had made it clear to her that, as a result of her refusal to stop before it was too late, that she had been placed under the "Sin Unto Death" for her evil activities. When she spoke to us she was dying of an aggressive cancer that had come upon her suddenly in full force, and she spoke with passion and forthrightness, urging us not to follow her bad example and suffer her punishment.

She knew she was saved, and that the Lord had forgiven her, but that she was to die this way because of the evil done, exactly as the Exodus Generation died in the wilderness, as a solemn warning to others. I still remember her words, her sorrow, and her passion for our lives and witness fifty years later. She was passionate in her desire to save us from such evil foolishness. Moses felt exactly the same way about his own generation, for only two of them (Joshua and Caleb) passed into the land, the rest dying under the Sin Unto Death.

Even if we do not persist in sinful life patterns and suffer the Sin Unto Death we all die at an "early age" as a result of the sin of our father and mother, Adam and Eve. Man was made to physically live forever, and we lost that in the Garden of Eden as a result of the Fall of Man. Initially the ages of men after The Fall are extremely long, but the Lord drops the expected age first to 120 years, and then to 70 years, and just to emphasise the truth of this we get some people living to 120 years or more occasionally. Genesis 6:1-3. Refer to the BTB study ADAM – THE FALL.

The ages that people live in the early years of human history are recorded in scripture as being very long indeed, but after the pre-flood vapour canopy is destroyed to create the flood, the protection of the earth from cosmic and other rays is gone and aging begins to accelerate. Initially the post flood patriarchs occasionally live to and beyond 120 years, but gradually the ages slip back to the finally assigned 70 years. Moses lives robustly and well for a longer time, but he and Aaron are exceptions. Moses doesn't suffer the health problems that most face if they get beyond 100 years of age, but he clearly faced some serious issues, but we only know that he wasn't blind or impotent. Deuteronomy 34:7.

Even in today's world we have had people live to 120 years, (the birth certificate certified oldest woman died in recent decades in France at 128 years of age), and the oldest man in English history appears to have lived to around 152 years, (although actual birth certificate doesn't exist in this age) but he was blind for the last twenty years. He was Thomas Parr and is buried in Westminster Abbey, and the foremost physician of the day, Dr Harvey, conducted the autopsy and you can read it today. Isaac also suffered the blindness problem in that exceptional great old age. Genesis 27:1ff. If we get beyond 70 years it is normally with some serious health problems to struggle through, and Moses is clearly speaking from experience here. Jacob expresses the same thoughts about extreme old age as Moses. Genesis 47:7-9.

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

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

Mankind has no idea of the ultimate power that resides in God, and the anger of the Lord is a thing not to be tempted. Just look into the heavens, and if you doubt the power of God go to the web site of the Hubble Space telescope and see the amazing universe that the Lord has made and reflect upon the power of God to make this, for He will also wrap it up again. Many of the star systems we know do not now even exist, it is just their light travelling towards us from the vast reaches of space and time.

We are told that one third of the stars will fail in the last years of the Great Tribulation Period. Revelation 6:12-13, 8:12. These stars have been sending their light to the earth for millions of years. The Lord must have extinguished them all millions of years ago so that only their light now travels towards us. They will be seen to fail at one point in the future, but in truth they were extinguished many millions of years before man was even made! How great is our God? Let us reflect upon the plan of God and so let us number our days here and use them to the full for the glory of God.

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

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

Moses prays for the return of the blessing of the Lord. We have the record in Numbers of their wilderness march, but it is only a summary of stops on the journey and covers 39 years which otherwise are silent. They are silent because all that occurs is the seasonal farming cycle and the deaths of the disobedient old generation. Moses' cry here would date this psalm to before the final move of the people back to the Wilderness of Sin and then finally into the land. At some point in the wilderness of Arabia and the events of Numbers 20 this psalm is written as the heart felt cry of Moses for the Lord to pick the people up again and restore them to their promised path.

The older generation is nearly all dead and Moses can see that the time is drawing near and he prays for it. This is the encouragement to us today, as we see the events of world history preparing the way for the Great Tribulation period to begin, we need to focus our prayers upon crying out to the Lord for revival, renewal, and for evangelism in these last days. As the days darken we need to turn up the power, focus, and intensity of our prayer lives.

**15 Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.
16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.**

Moses looks forward to the joy of the Lord being experienced by the new generation that will enter the land; he longs to see the blessing of the Lord received by the new generation. As they have been afflicted for forty years due to their sins, so Moses wants to see equal blessing pour upon God's people, and he asks that for the next forty years they might have blessing in equal measure to their previous discipline. He wants this new generation to see the power of God as their parents have and that it might be glory for these children of the Exodus, and that they might walk powerfully in this glory and not fail as their parents did. This prayer is answered. Joshua 1-7. Let this prayer of Moses be our prayer for our own churches today; that the Lord's people might see His power work through their lives to His glory.

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

The work of the Holy Spirit within us produces the beauty of the Lord's character in our life. This is referred to as the FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. The Lord wants to "go to work" upon our character and produce His character within us so that we show forth the glory of God through our daily life. 1 Corinthians 3:7-15, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, 1 Thessalonians 5:9-24, 2 Thessalonians 3:16-17. God's purpose is that we bring glory to His holy name by holy works that bring men to a thorough knowledge of Christ. Our lives are to be a testimony to the truth and power of God. Let us pray for the work of the Holy Spirit.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Lord teach us to number our days and use them all to the full for your glory! Let this be our prayer every day we arise, and let us ensure that every day we head to bed with a sense that we have sustainably achieved all we could for our Lord. I use the term "sustainably" for good reason. We are not to work to the point of exhaustion every day, or we will burn out in months. The Lord calls us to walk a steady path and serve all the days of our life. It is a marathon we are called to, not a sprint. We are to steward our energy and work sustainably for the Lord. Let us pour ourselves out for the Lord's service and give all we can so that every day we arise we are ready to advance in our service again.

2. Life is short, and even when men live for many years they all say in old age how fast the years went by them. Let us ensure that we do not waste our life on things that have no eternal value or significance. The Lord will judge our works and we will either be rewarded for good work done, and proper use of our time, or judged as being unworthy due to our poor performance. We have no excuse for poor performance for we have the power of the Holy Spirit to bring glory to the Lord upon the earth.

3. Divine Discipline upon believers is not a subject that many enjoy teaching or hearing, but it is a subject that we must share with other believers. God's people must understand that if they refuse to follow the Lord's directions for their life that they will come under divine discipline. We are not our own people, for we were bought with a price, and we are left here to serve the Lord, not seek our own ends. If we walk away from what the Lord wants us to do we walk into paths that will bring discipline upon our heads. Let us preach repentance and thereby deliver our brothers and sisters from unnecessary suffering, and urge them daily to return to the Lord's path of blessing.

4. Let us reflect upon the PLAN OF GOD and remember that the Lord has already extinguished most of the stars, for a third of them will be seen to fail in the Great Tribulation period and the rest will be wrapped up and put away at the end of the millennium. 2 Peter 3:10ff. The God who made the universe and has pre-arranged it to implode at the right time in accordance with His plan has all the power He needs to deal with all the details of our life. The power of God is not to be tempted by any sinful stupidity on our part. Let us walk humbly before our God and obediently do what He has called us to do. Let us pray earnestly for the revival in these last days that the Lord has called us to lead.

DOCTRINES

GRACE

MERCY

CHRISTIAN LIFE – BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

CHRISTIAN LIFE – GIFTS GIVEN AT SALVATION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – ETERNAL LIFE

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

ETERNITY PAST

ETERNITY FUTURE

ISRAEL – NATIONAL DIVINE DISCIPLINE

TIME

ADAM – THE FALL

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

PSALM 91

INTRODUCTION

Through the long forty years of the wanderings of the people of Israel in the wilderness the people learned to trust the Lord and they learned to be obedient day by day and do the things that the Lord instructed them through Moses. Facing the daily challenged of their long march around the pastoral lands of the Arabian Peninsula they saw the Lord's goodness and learned that they were forgiven, and they readied themselves to seize the land that their parents had failed to do. They saw that the discipline of their parents, even though it was the SIN UNTO DEATH, did not stop the Lord's love towards them.

As they repented of their own sins and all age groups focused upon obedience, they entered the place of the Lord's blessing again as a people. After 39 years of wandering they returned to the Wilderness of Sin, and there they faced the same tests that their parents had faced, and even though they did not fully pass the test, they did not fully fail either.

They followed Moses and they went where he directed them to go. The sinners amongst them who still resented this were dealt with on the plains of Moab and the saved remnant of the people supernaturally passed over into the land. Numbers 20:1ff, Joshua 3:1ff. The believers amongst them learned that the Lord was indeed their refuge and their help in all times of trouble, and all they had to do was obey His Word to them. It is the same challenge for ourselves to learn this and apply it into the fabric of our daily lives.

This Psalm is one that we are in no doubt about who it refers to 100%, for Satan himself gives us the clue during the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 4, Luke 4. This Psalm about life in the fellowship of God applied 100% to the Lord for he alone was 100% obedient, but it applies to us in proportion to our own obedient walk with God. We can confidently claim these verses as we walk closely with the Lord, just as Jesus was able to. Remember His words; that we would do greater things than He did, if we utilised all the power He left us to utilise after His departure from the earth! John 14:11-17.

PSALMS 91:1-16

1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. 3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. 4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. 7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. 8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. 9 Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; 10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. 11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. 13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. 14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. 15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. 16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

REFLECTION

**1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.**

The challenge for each of us is to live in the secret place of the Most High. This is a phrase from the ancient world that meant to be hidden with the King within his most secure fellowship and in his most secret hiding place. It meant safety from all enemies and security from all worries. To be hidden by the King was to be safe for your life and welfare. It is this close fellowship that the Lord desires for us to enjoy; we are to be safe within His presence. Moses summed it up in the following verses.

Deuteronomy 33:27-29.

"27 The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. 28 Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. 29 Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

The person who is secure in the arms of the Lord is safe under the care and protection of the Lord so that none can harm them. If any enemy attacks they are dealt with directly by the Lord, and He destroys them and thwarts their evil plans. We are overshadowed by the holy presence of the Lord and He is our refuge in trouble and our fortress against evil attack. We are urged to trust in Him.

**3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.
4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.**

There are enemies that are open about their hatred, and are violently abusive. There is no doubt about their intentions and they are easily countered once their plans and presence are known. The more dangerous enemy is the covert one who does not disclose their malice and lays secret traps for you. These men operate like game poachers and their snares are hard to see and lethal if you are caught in them.

The other attack that is hard to counter for you cannot see it is the attack of disease. The microbes of diseases are unable to be seen and attack lethally. God's promise is that He will keep those who are close to Him safe from both of these secret and lethal attackers. The image is that of the eagle overstretching her wings over her young, and making the little ones safe from other predators and the heat of the sun. God is our shield and our weaponry to defend ourselves with. Isaiah 40:28-31, 43:1-7.

**5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.**

There are things that frighten the toughest people, and there are sounds in the night in the wild places of this world that will frighten the biggest man. When we cannot see our foe we are vulnerable and we are likely in such situations to be scared. The Lord calls us to faith and courage but it is normal to be frightened at times. It is what we do with our FEAR that determines whether we are in sin with it, or just human and still walking in faith. Walking in faith means we feel the fear, but we do the right thing anyway. Faith means feeling the fear, but seeing that the reality of God's Word is more real than our fears.

We cannot see the source of a scary sound by night, nor can we see the arrow or bullet as it flies in towards us by day. We cannot take any evasive action against a missile or a bacteria; we are at their mercy, and yet we are not at any power's mercy if we walk with God, for we are under the "tender mercies" of God. The roaring power of a tornado at

noon, or the arrow's flight, or the bacteria's infective power, all are easily countered by the power of the Lord our God. We are in the Lord's hands, and we are secure in His tender mercies. 2 Samuel 24:14, Psalms 25:6, 40:11, 69:16, 77:9, 79:8, 103:4, 106:7, 45, 121:1-8, 1 Corinthians 10:6-13.

**7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.
8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.**

In battle the men may fall dead to your right and left and the test of a good soldier is to keep his focus forward and advance against the enemy forces with real energy and determination. David had that quality as a commander and his strength came from the assurance that the Lord gave him at every step of his way. He knew he had been called by the Lord and he was determined to be the servant of the Lord all the way until his death. He had the assurance of a believer who knew his Saviour, and this is our challenge also.

If we know the Lord and trust the Lord we can advance in any situation and have the confidence that David had in battle. Bravery stems from the absolute determination to do what is right irrespective of the odds against us. This is the challenge the Lord gives to us as His followers. Psalms 32:6, Jeremiah 24:4-7, 39:17-18. We are to focus upon the Lord alone, for His work alone is what matters. All else is fluff and nonsense; only the work of the Lord brings temporal blessing and eternal rewards.

**9 Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;
10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.**

Through the work of the Lord Jesus He has become the "most high", the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords. There is no greater power than the Lords, or any greater Person in the universe than the Creator-Saviour God. By making the Lord our refuge the Lord makes us His children and we come under the "much more" care of God. If God died for us while we were yet His enemies, will He do less for us as His friends now? This is the logic of grace, and is our reminder that we are cared for and looked after in Christ Jesus. Romans 5:6-11, James 4:6.

No evil will befall us while we walk with the Lord, and no enemy may strike a successful blow against us as we follow the Lord faithfully. No plague will come to our house if we are walking with the Lord totally. Matthew 7:13ff. It is our total OBEDIENCE to the Lord that guarantees our safety, for 100% with the Lord, is 100% safe in His hands on His path. The will of the Lord is to be our will as His servants, and if we are ready to do all we can to serve the Lord then the Lord will support all we do in accordance with His plan for us. John 15:7-17.

**11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.
12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.**

This passage has been applied specifically to the Lord, and it certainly does apply to the Lord, and is quoted by Satan to Him in that regard. Matthew 4:5-7. Do not stop with that application however, for that is not the whole story. Even though the Lord has special angelic protection, we all have guardian angels assigned to us. This is the clear teaching of this scripture and the other key passage from Hebrews 1:13-14, 2:5-9. Refer to the BTB study ANGELS.

We will stub our toes at times, and we will have things go wrong at times in our life, but the angels are there to keep us from any disaster that will stop us achieving the plan and purposes of God. We are secure with the Lord as we walk with the Lord to achieve His purposes alone. Let us devote our attention to that.

**13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.
14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.**

The greatest of the wild and dangerous animals is of no concern to us, and the smallest of the deadliest creatures is of no concern while we walk with the Lord 100%. To tread upon the neck of an enemy was to achieve total victory, and the treading here indicates victory over the forces of nature. The Lord has set His love upon us as His children and we will be blessed in this life, even if at times in the midst of adversity and troubles. His banner over us is love. Song of Solomon 2:4.

During the Millennial Kingdom, when the Lord Jesus rules over this earth, these verses will find their total fulfilment for all mankind, for all that is fierce will be gone, or tamed, and the goodness of the creation alone will be seen. To know and worship the name of the Lord is to be in the place of blessing under the Lord and it is to be in the place of total safety with the Lord's protection over us. The most wonderful thing about our relationship with the Lord is that He knows our name; we are known by the Lord, and are special recipients of His grace, His love, and His mercy.

**15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.
16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.**

Through the psalmist the Father makes solemn promises to the Son here, and to all who stand with the Son in the power and plan of the Lord their God. We will cry aloud to the Lord, and we will be heard. We will be heard, and we will be delivered by the Lord, when we cry unto Him. We will live "long"; that is, we will live right up until the time allotted to us upon this earth and our life will be full before the Lord. No believer serving the Lord in spirit and in truth dies "early". We

all die in exactly the right time for our entry into heaven. Psalm 68:20, 116:15. To us some deaths appear early, but they are "long life" to the Lord, for that obedient believer has lived their full allotted time upon the earth. Only the SIN UNTO DEATH stops the believer living a full and long life.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us trust in the Lord and rest secure in His care and protection over us. The Lord alone can deliver us from the plans of evil men and so let us affirm His care over us and celebrate His love and plan for our future. Our life is in His hands and we are safe there. Let us advance forward in this life without any concern for our life, for in the Lord we are secure until the right time to go home to heaven. Let us relax about life or death and focus only on doing what the Lord has called us to do.

2. We are thoroughly protected people, with the Holy Spirit within us and the angels around us. The believer is secure within the care of the Lord and we are called to stand in the strength that the Lord, the Holy Spirit and the Word give us. We are safe while we walk 100% down the path the Lord has called us to, neither deviating to the right or the left. We are to focus only on walking where the Lord wants us to walk, and then our safety is in His hands 100% and we can relax 100%. Let us claim this promise and walk in confidence.

3. We walk with the Lord, and so let us pour our heart out to Him and fellowship with Him every day of our life. To the Lord belong the issues of death. Psalms 68:20, 116:15.

NOTES

DOCTRINES

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

FEAR

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FAITH

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FAITH – OVERCOMING BY FAITH

CHRISTIAN LIFE – OBEDIENCE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUBMISSION

ANGELS

PSALM 92**INTRODUCTION**

This is a song for the SABBATH DAY. The Sabbath was the day of worship for Israel, a day when they remembered the completed work of God in creation, which looked forward to the completed work of God for their salvation. The LEVITICAL OFFERINGS all spoke of this expectation of a complete work for the salvation of mankind through the BLOOD SACRIFICE of the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom all the sacrifices spoke.

The Sabbath sacrifices all spoke of the GRACE of God in action to provide for His people's every need. The Sabbath was the Lord's celebration of the grace provisions He had made for man, but it quickly was distorted by sinful man and became LEGALISM. In this Psalm we see the spirit of celebration that was supposed to surround the Sabbath Day. Let us embrace this spirit here and now, for it is relevant throughout history and will be particularly the thing to grasp in the Millennial Kingdom.

PSALMS 92:1-15

1 IT IS A GOOD THING TO GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD, AND TO SING PRAISES UNTO THY NAME, O MOST HIGH: 2 To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, 3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound. 4 For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands. 5 O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. 6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. 7 When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever: 8 But thou, LORD, art most high for evermore. 9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. 10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil. 11 Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me. 12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. 14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; 15 To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

REFLECTION

1 IT IS A GOOD THING TO GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD, AND TO SING PRAISES UNTO THY NAME, O MOST HIGH:

It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord; it is a good thing to praise and worship. Let all the Lord's people say a loud "AMEN!" to this truth statement. Those who do not love praise and worship are suspect believers, for to love the Lord and receive His love for you is to seek any way to celebrate and praise the Lord for all the great things He has done for us. Being filled with the Holy Spirit means we overflow to worship. If people do not overflow, they do not have the Holy Spirit, and if they do not have the Holy Spirit, they are "none of His". Romans 8:9. There is no way around this truth, as it is a central one. If there is no fruit in the life of a person then serious doubt is cast on the reality of their relationship with the Lord. Matthew 7:15-23, James 1:22-25, 2:14-26.

**2 To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,
3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.**

When we have been blessed we will seek to proclaim that blessing to all who will hear our voice. When we are blessed we will shout that blessing aloud. It is incredible that people should receive great blessings and then say or do nothing to give thanks for them! It happens of course, but it is a great evil. If a believer does not shout aloud the joy of their salvation blessings it is an indication of serious problems in their life and walk with God. Indeed, I would go as far as to argue that if we do not praise the Lord we have not received the Lord's blessings.

All who receive His blessings will praise His holy name and give thanks for His goodness received. Luke 17:12-19. There were two prayer times in Israel that most observed in their working day; morning and evening prayers. At both these times a genuine believer will be praising the Lord. They will make a joyful noise on any MUSIC instrument they can.

**4 For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.
5 O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.**

God has made me glad! This is the cry of the believer as they look out at what the Lord has done for us. Ask yourself right now believer, has God made you glad? In the midst of your testing situations do you have a sense that the Lord has still made you glad? When is the last time that you praised the Lord for the GIFTS RECEIVED AT SALVATION? There are over 34 things that we have all received at salvation. Have we praised the Lord robustly for these things recently?

On the basis of the things we have received and the power that is available victory in all things on the path of God for us is assured. We have the assurance of victory in Christ Jesus. Our work is actually the work of "God's hands" through us. This is an exciting concept when we see that the creation alone is not the work of God's hands, but every act we do in the filling of the Holy Spirit is also an act of God. All that God does through us is an act of the Lord.

Let us triumph in all that the Lord allows us and enables us to do in His name and with His power. The Lord's greatness in using us is amazing. His grace and majesty in the creation is wonderful, but even more so is the graciousness in His use of others to save the lost and bring His joy to others. Let us rejoice in all the Lord has done, is doing and will yet do through His servants and by Himself. Let every voice cry aloud, "AMEN!"

6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

7 When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever:

People who follow after evil do not understand the things of God, for they are foolishness to them. 1 Corinthians 2:14. We make excuses for people's lack of spiritual discernment, but God's Word does not.

Man either is open to the Lord or he/she is not, and if they are negative towards the Lord they are responsible for that wickedness and will answer to Him for it. We may live like animals (brutish) or we may live as God intended us to live and be godly men and women. These people may prosper for a time and do well upon the earth, but their victories are limited to time and they all will be destroyed in the end. All human flesh is as the grass, here today and then gone forever, but the Word of God and those that love it abide with God forever. Psalms 73:18-23, Isaiah 40:6-7, James 1:9-12.

8 But thou, LORD, art most high for evermore.

9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

The Lord is the winner of time and into eternity, for the Lord is the One who alone comes from eternity. The Lord is most high forevermore. We must confront our limits as men here; the Lord is the Creator of space and time and we are creatures in these two dimensions. We are unable to get out of these two dimensions in our thinking at this point, but we know about the concepts of eternity and infinity and can glimpse their meaning. From this side of time we can know that there is a lot more to this existence than just what we see in space and time.

The enemies of this truth are determined to oppose God, even to the end of their lives, but they are fools and will reap their final reward in God's judgement. The Last JUDGEMENT is not a bad thing, it is the best thing, for it means evil is ended at one point and does not enter the eternal state that God has prepared for us beyond the boundaries of this present temporal universe. Let us see the reality of the greatness of the Creator God and not be held back by our present limitations, but embrace the revelation we have about ETERNITY.

10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of a unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

11 Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me.

The blessing upon the believer is great indeed, even to the level of rejoicing that makes others think we are mad at times. The "horn" was the symbol of plenty and power in the ancient world, and both images are meant here. As believers we are exulted in power and blessing above all that we could hope for and even think about. We will be anointed with fresh oil and set apart for the Lord's special purposes and further blessing. Anointing was for priests and kings and the Lord anoints us into service as His priests and members of His ROYAL FAMILY. 1 Peter 2:9-10.

We are anointed into the place of God's favour and that means that any who oppose and attack us in any way become enemies of the Lord God of the heavens and the earth. We are protected by the Lord's power and we are blessed by the Lord's great love for His own. Anyone who attacks us has attacked God Himself; only fools do this, and those who do this die as fools die. Let us relax about our enemies and see them as the Lord sees them, and pity them for their stupidity, for they will be dealt with by the Lord at the right time.

12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

Spiritual growth in power and service is the norm for all believers and we can rejoice in this growth in Christ Jesus. Our growth will be powerful through our reception of the Holy Spirit's ministries to us. We cannot do anything other than grow as we walk with the Lord. Growth in the fruit of the Holy Spirit is the evidence of real relationship with the Lord. Lack of fruit is evidence of lack of spiritual growth. God's desire for us is that we grow like the great palms in the courtyards of kings. We are to be well watered by the Word of God and stand as servants of the Lord in His house. Refer to the BTB study GROWTH.

14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

15 To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

Retirement is not a biblical concept! We are not meant to retire, grow old and stop working for the Lord. Our task is to work until death brings us into His presence. Old age does not slow the mature believer, for they always seek more powerful ways to bring glory to the Lord as they advance in years. As we grow older we can grow bolder and more productive. As we grow older we grow in service for the Lord and we proclaim His righteousness more fully and powerfully. He is our rock and we proclaim His majesty and power.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us praise the Lord often and powerfully. Let us enjoy our fellowship with the Lord and celebrate our relationship with Him in praise and worship. Let us make praise our tonic for despair, and let us see the value of praise and worship as a test for the reality of a person's faith. If a person is not living as a follower of the Lord Jesus should live then we have questions over the reality of that person's faith. The best test for the reality of faith is to ask that person to praise the Lord and ask them to pray to the Lord. By prayer and praise a person's faith is really known. Those who cannot praise the Lord do not know Him!

2. We are members of the Royal Family of God and have eternal blessings that we receive in Christ Jesus. Let us celebrate the great position we have in Christ Jesus and live in the place of spiritual blessing that the Lord has called us to. Let us pass over our enemies to the Lord, for He will deal with them so much better than we could ever do.

DOCTRINES

SABBATH AND THE LORD'S DAY

OFFERINGS – LEVITICAL OFFERINGS REPRESENT CHRIST

BLOOD SACRIFICE

GRACE

LEGALISM

MUSIC

CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – GIFTS GIVEN AT SALVATION

JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE

ETERNITY PAST

ETERNITY FUTURE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD

CHRISTIAN LIFE – MATURITY – CROSS TO THE CROWN

PSALM 93**INTRODUCTION**

The Lord is King indeed! This psalm celebrates the reigning of the Lord upon the throne of heaven on earth during the Millennial Kingdom. This psalm was the Friday morning psalm for the Second Temple worship service as the morning sacrifice was offered up. The others used through the week were; Sunday – Psalm 24, Monday – Psalm 48, Tuesday – Psalm 82, Wednesday – Psalm 94, Thursday – Psalm 81, Friday – Psalm 93, Saturday/Sabbath day – Psalm 92.

Now pause a minute and read these Psalms and reflect that they were sung as the Morning Sacrifice was shed for the sins of the nation, and see the Messianic quality of them. When Joshua the returning High Priest and later Ezra the great Scribe put together the worship services for the newly rebuilt Temple of Zerubbabel they picked these Psalms for the singers to sing. It may be they came from earlier memories of the First Temple services as there were those there at the dedication of the post exilic temple which had seen the first one and attended its worship.

The Exiles were instructed by the prophets Haggai, who urged them to build the temple, and by Zechariah who backed this urgency with visions of the centrality of Jerusalem and the Temple mount for future history. Zechariah is the one who sees the salvation of future Israel and proclaims that it will be in Jerusalem that the last stand of the Jewish fighters will take place in the closing days of the Great Tribulation period, and it is here that the Lord will reign. The small temple they have built is small in size, but great in its significance. Ezra 3:9-13, 5:1-2, 6:14-22, 7:1-7, 23-26, Zechariah 4:10-14 12:10-14, 13:1ff. This Post-Exile temple, beautified by Herod, will be the one the Lord comes to and speaks in.

PSALMS 93:1-5

1 The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved. 2 Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting. 3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. 4 The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea. 5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.

REFLECTION

1 The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

The Lord will reign in Jerusalem for the last great golden age of the earth. The temple site is the centre piece of history, and what the singers sang of through the Second Temple's life was the certainty that Messiah would reign from this place. It was this same messianic expectation that made the crowds roar aloud their greeting, and also their request to the Lord, when he rode into Jerusalem that last Palm Sunday, Hosanna! (Literally translated – "Save us now!") Matthew 21:8-11, Mark 11:8-10, Luke 19:37-40, John 12:12-19.

As Psalm 93 was sung aloud the people reflected upon the glory of their future king. They were servants of the Persian Empire, and later the Greek and the Roman, but they longed for the restoration of their kingly line. That line found its twin culmination in Joseph and Mary, with Joseph the descendent of David, through the line of Solomon, and Mary the descendent of the line of Nathan. Matthew 1:7-17, Luke 3:23-31. By Joseph Jesus obtained His legal right to rule as King, and through Mary His regal right. Refer to the BTB studies below on CHRIST.

The Second Advent of the Lord Jesus is prophetically seen by the psalmist and described here. Refer to the BTB study FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS. The Lord's return is an awesome event in the history of the world; it ends the ages of man and brings in the MILLENNIAL KINGDOM. It is a return in power and majesty to rule over saved men after judging those who have refused the free gift of salvation and attacked God's people. The Lord is clothed in strength and majesty, and the new world order He establishes is secure and stabilised in His ultimate power. There is no doubt about the outcome of world history, and the truth of this should encourage us in the dark days before the dawn of His victory is seen by all survivors of that time. Psalms 2:1-12, Isaiah 45:9-13, 20-25, Hebrews 1:1-12.

**2 Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.
3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.**

The Lord does not simply take the throne of the world; it is actually His from ETERNITY PAST, and He simply comes into possession of what was always His as Ruler of His own creation. He is the ALPHA AND OMEGA and He is the ruler of all He has made and then redeemed by His shed blood. This world is twice His; firstly by right of creation, secondly by right of REDEMPTION. All the powers of nature, here portrayed as a flood, cannot rival the creative power of the One who made all things. He is Lord indeed.

**4 The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.
5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.**

We can get a wrongful attitude towards the Lord and His power, for He is more powerful than any other power or force in the universe, for He made the universe. No natural power, or any angelic power can match his power. The waters of the sea were awe inspiring to the Israelites and a source of fear to these land loving people. The vastness of the sea was overwhelming to them and the sounds of the sea, especially in a violent storm were the most powerful of all the ordinary forces of nature known to the ancients. The powers of nature are scary but secure under God's mighty power, and the testimonies of the Lord are secure forever. There is nothing in God's Word that cannot be trusted, for all the words of God are reliable, for history and the entire universe is in His hands. Psalms 102:25, 111:7, Hebrews 1:10.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. The Lord Almighty will reign one day over this earth, and all will see His majesty and salute their King in glory. Let us rejoice in His majesty now and celebrate His ruler ship now. Let us see His final victory as the reality it already is from the perspective of eternity, and celebrate it every day as we worship the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords.
2. The world is the Lord's and all that is in it, and the day draws ever nearer when He will take what is His and rejoice over it as its Lord. Let us celebrate this truth now with praise and worship every day of our brief lives until He comes.
3. We are in the hands of the God who made the universe and all that is therein, and so, can there be anything too hard for the Lord to do for us? If we are in the Lord's hands, then we are safe and secure, and nothing can hurt us. Let us praise the Lord for our place of security, safety, and service.

DOCTRINES

CHRIST – THE LORD JESUS CHRIST – EMMANUEL

CHRIST – HYPOSTATIC UNION: GOD - MAN

CHRIST – LIFE OF CHRIST

CHRIST – NAMES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

CHRIST – PROPHETIC PSALMS ABOUT CHRIST

CHRIST – TYPES – TYPES OF CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

CHRIST – VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

CHRIST – FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

ETERNITY PAST

CHRIST – TESTIMONIES BY CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

SALVATION – REDEMPTION

PSALM 94**INTRODUCTION**

This was the psalm sung at the Wednesday Second Temple services for the morning sacrifice. It is a psalm from after the return of the exiles from Babylonian Captivity, and may date from the days of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, or the later days of Ezra and Nehemiah, or the even later prophet Malachi. It assumes that the Lord is in power and has authority, even if He is not on the throne as yet, and the psalmist's requests are made in light of this reality.

It is not a psalm of the Millennial Kingdom, as the psalmist mentions enemies, which will not exist then. It is a psalm that awaits the day of deliverance and the establishment of the kingdom. It is a special Psalm for the soldiers of the last days of the Great Tribulation period as they fight to the last day when the Lord personally returns to save them. Refer to the BTB study TRIBULATION. The righteous will certainly be delivered, and the wicked will certainly be destroyed. There are no doubts about the end of history, only the fears of those not stabilised in the promises of God's Word.

It introduces the first of two groups of Psalms in the Numbers section. This first group is Psalms 94 – 100, and they form a record of the increasing praise and worship of the people of the last days, or even day, of the Great Tribulation period as they contemplate the Lord's imminent arrival in Jerusalem. The second group of Psalms in this section, Psalms 101-106, from the abandoned praise of the survivors of the last great battles around Jerusalem, as they celebrate the entry of the Lord into the Temple and his enthronement there in glory.

PSALMS 94:1-23

1 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. 2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. 3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? 4 How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? 5 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage. 6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. 7 Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. 8 Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? 9 He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? 10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? 11 The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. 12 Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law; 13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. 14 For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. 15 But judgement shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it. 16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? 17 Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. 18 When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up. 19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul. 20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law? 21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood. 22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge. 23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

REFLECTION

**1 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.
2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.**

The cry of the psalmist lifts up above the pressures and dangers that surround him. He calls for the Lord's vengeance upon those who attack and murder the people of God. The Post-Exilic prophet Zechariah spoke of the terrible battles of the Jewish people in the last days of the Great Tribulation period, with the majority of the people of the land of Israel (two thirds of the population dead or captured) in enemy hands or dead, and the city of Jerusalem ransacked, but just holding on. Zechariah 13:8 – 14:7.

There will be many atrocities to be avenged, and many injustices and evils to be accounted for, but the people need to rest upon the justice of the Lord their God, for they do not have the power to exact the vengeance they seek upon their wicked foes. The enemy are proud and arrogant in their assaults upon the holy city and they believe they have defeated the Lord and His people. The Lord alone can change this and overturn their evils. Revelation 18:4-10, 19:11-21.

**3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?
4 How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?**

It is the last days of the great battle for Jerusalem and the wicked enemies are raping and robbing in the captured parts of the city. The screams of the dying fill the ears of the surviving defenders as they fight on. There are hours to go before the Lord's arrival but often despair is worst just before deliverance. It is this very psalm that is the encouragement to the besieged people still fighting. Over one third of the city's fighting population is still free and resisting the evil

enemy forces. All who have surrendered are raped and then murdered, or marched off to captivity. There is no hope for the Jewish people at this time except to believe the teaching of the Word of God and fight on until the Lord returns.

The enemy will be filled with pride and arrogance, thinking they are just about to crush the last of the Jewish people when the Lord's return destroys them. Wicked men will resist to the end and refuse to heed all the clear heavenly and earthly SIGNS that occur in this period. Revelation 16:1-11. Satanic deception will try to get them to do everything else, but those who resist and "endure to the end" will be saved! Isaiah 62:6-12, 64:1-4, Zechariah 13:1ff, Matthew 24:9-31. Refer back to the previous BTB studies on the GREAT TRIBULATION.

5 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

The malice of the enemies of Israel knows no bounds of humanity because it is satanic. The evil wickedness of the enemies who assault Israel in the last days will be every bit as terrible as that of the Nazi SS troopers of World War II, but their fate will be far worse. Many of the worst of the Nazi SS escaped from War Tribunals after WW II because the Americans desired to build a strong Germany and wouldn't prosecute them thoroughly. This will not occur with the Lord's Second Advent because justice will not be in the hands of liberal and politically manipulated lawyers, but will be directly in the Lord's hands. All who stood against the people of the Lord, and deliberately worked evil, will be executed immediately by the Lord at his Second Coming. Isaiah 29:5-6, 63:1ff, Zechariah 14:1-13.

In both the early Isaiah passage and the prophecy of Zechariah in verses 12-13, a thermo-nuclear device appears to be described. It blasts the people to atoms, but leaves the buildings intact, and this sort of bomb has only been in existence for the last decade or so. These are amazing prophetic words and only in our day can we see this reality as being possible and having been tested.

The evil men who assault Jerusalem will be judged and eliminated from the earth in the most dramatic fashion. Don't however jump to the conclusion that many of the nations of the earth will be gone, with 100% of their people destroyed in unbelief, for many will welcome the Lord's return from all nations. The Arab nations have many within them that welcome the Lord back. Isaiah 61 details this. Refer to the EBCWA Commentaries on these passages of Isaiah and Zechariah.

7 Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

8 Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?

These people genuinely believe there is no God. Psalms 10:11-13, 14:1-4. These are satanically deceived people and they mock the truth of the Creator-Saviour God. We are told that "mockers" of God will increase in number as the days darken towards the end. This is the picture we see here and the hatred of the atheists towards God's people is intense.

The Nazi regime of Germany gave the world a foretaste of the hatred that was possible to be expressed towards believers, but in these last days the extremes will be terrible to behold as Satan looses all his malice towards mankind. Galatians 6:7, 1 Timothy 4:1-5, 2 Timothy 3:1-7, Hebrews 11:36, 2 Peter 3:1-7, Jude 4, 8-19. Do not be a fool in this matter yourself believer. Many foolish believers speak of a great revival ending this Age of human history, but sadly this is deception, for this age ends with the great apostasy, not any great revival. Luke 18:7-8.

Let us rejoice in any revival we can be a part of, and let us throw our energy into being a part of any revival we can be a part of, but let us remember the clear teaching of scripture regarding the darkening days in which we live. As the days grow darker we are not to be discouraged, but rather open ourselves more thoroughly to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and so be channels of blessing to any who will hear the Word in dark times.

Believer, do not let discouragement grip your heart when the majority turn away to nonsense, even within the churches. There will be false revivals and emotional "victories" for those who do not value God's Word, but these will evaporate like the hot air they are. Strengthen yourself in the power of the Holy Spirit, and work prayerfully in God's power for all the genuine revival you can see worked out in people's lives through the Holy Spirit's power. In the darkest times we are called to pluck those that can be saved from the very fires of hell themselves. Jude 22-23.

9 He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?

God is the Creator of all things, and the Creator of mankind. Atheists have a logic problem. Is it logical to believe that the One who made the ears of mankind does not hear all that man says? What can it be that stops men from thinking through the logic of the existence of God? If there is a Creator of the universe, then they have all the details of their creation under control. There are no limits with the Creator as with us as creatures. The only reason men and women mock the all seeing and all knowing nature of God is that they want to believe that they can escape judgement. They scatter their ashes in an attempt to avoid the resurrection of the unsaved dead, but all such things are to no avail; they will be raised and they will be judged. Revelation 20:5-15.

The Lord is a God who is involved in His creation. The bible does not teach the concept of the "divine watchmaker" who has wound up the universe and then gone on a long holiday and left us to run things with no consequences. This was the view of the polite, but pagan, deists of the 18th century and remains the viewpoint of the so called "liberal theologians"

of today. God directly deals with all the pagans who attack His people, even today. The Lord is active in His creation and He protects His obedient people. The only reasons for attacks upon us and suffering generally are explained in the BTB study of SUFFERING.

11 The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

12 Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

God knows the pathetic nature of men's philosophies when they reject His reality. Man is truly stupid and pathetic when he fights his Creator; when the one who gives him life is despised, that man is truly a fool. The thoughts of mankind apart from the reality of God are foolishness and emptiness. Psalms 49:10-14, 1 Corinthians 1:18-29. The terrible moral consequences of rejecting God are spelled out in Paul's letter to the Romans. Romans 1:18-32.

If we are under pressure and being disciplined by the Lord by events, then we ought to be thankful, for it means the Lord is taking personal notice of us and seeks our moral and spiritual recovery. When God works upon a man or woman it means there is hope for them. If God really is working upon us in divine discipline, then it is because we are children in need of correction. Let us be corrected and let REPENTANCE open the door to blessing again. Refer to the BTB studies on CONFESSION and WALKING. Micah 6:6-9, Hebrews 12:6-15.

13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

14 For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

Both the believer who is under discipline, but repents, and the believer who is under pressures or persecution, and stands firm in faith and perseveres, are blessed. All who walk with the Lord are blessed, and all who cling to the truth of the Word of God in the face of pressure, are blessed abundantly. God will give us rest from pressures, and give us joy in the midst of adversities as we look to Him alone for our strength. We will be delivered; it is just a matter of timing. The Lord digs a pit for the wicked and they will fall into it when they are ripe for judgement, and when they have firmly and finally walked away from any possibility of repentance. God does not forsake us; He does not cast us away in any shape or form! Ephesians 1:15-23, 2 Timothy 2:11-13.

15 But judgement shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

For a time it may appear that there is no justice, and that proper judgement is not occurring, but this is a temporary thing, and reflects only the timing of the Lord in His judgement upon the lost. The wicked will suffer judgement, and the wicked and evil enemies of the truth will suffer the disaster that is the result of their rebellion. Deuteronomy 32:35-36, Malachi 3:16-18, 2 Peter 3:8-10. The psalmist calls on his people to stand against evil and all the workers of iniquity, but there are few to do so. At times we may feel this, but it doesn't matter that few men stand with us, for the Lord stands with us, and that is the psalmist's thought in the next verses.

17 Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.

18 When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

How many times over the last nine years of incredible pressure that I have faced have I said this aloud to the Lord in my prayers? I give thanks to the Lord that He has been my rock and my salvation, my help in my dark hours of need. Many times I have felt my "foot slip" beneath me on my path, and sanity slide away from me, but at all times the Lord has held me. Even when I have felt very fragile the Lord has held me and enabled me to worship and keep serving Him.

At times we can face pressures where our very mind unhinges and our thinking unravels, but the Lord will hold us together as we walk closer and closer to Him in prayer and worship. Often prayer is a weeping and crying out to the Lord, and that is all right; we are in very good company when we pray at the end of our coping power. Romans 8:26-28. The PROMISES of God need to be clung to at such times. It is the MERCY of God that holds us together mentally and spiritually. Isaiah 40:28-31, 41:9-15.

19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?

How filled up is your mind with the thoughts of God believer? Does Bible doctrine fill your thinking? If we fill our minds with positive thoughts of the truths of God we are protected in times of pressure and assured in times of suffering. Meditating on God's holy Word delights our soul and brings comfort to our hearts. Psalms 43:2-5, Habakkuk 3:16-19, Malachi 3:16-18, Philippians 4:4-13. The evil people and their powerful political allies have no power with God, nor will God deal with them by negotiation and diplomacy; God's dealing with evil men and women is by judgement only. God is not mocked by these people and they will be judged for their evils, in time and for all eternity. Revelation 20:5ff.

21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.

22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

The final days of the Great Tribulation period will be times of incredible violence and malice by satanic forces, for Satan knows his time is very short at that point. He launches all his malice towards the believers, but the Lord's return destroys his forces and he is captured and incarcerated for the entire thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom. Revelation 19:11 – 20:10. They will gather their forces and fight against the believers of Jerusalem, but they will be defeated by the Lord's coming. Zechariah 13-14.

The Lord is the refuge of believers; He is our tower of defence. Let us stay safe within our living fellowship with the Lord who is our God and our defender. Refer to the BTB study on CHRIST – ROCK. The wicked will receive exactly what they deserve. The wages of sin is death and the Lord makes sure that those who work iniquity receive their wages in full! No-one will be in Hell Fire who did not choose to go there through their wicked rejection of the Lord. The Lord Jesus could do no more for man than He has done, and all who reject His person and work must face the reality of the consequences of their choices to walk away from God.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. It is vital for believers of all ages to get their instructions clear and obey them. For the believers of the Great Tribulation period it will be crucial to get their instructions clear and be 100% obedient to them. Let us remember this principle correctly applied ourselves and walk in the Holy Spirit's power and in the light of the Word of God now. Refer to the BTB study WALKING AND LIVING IN THE LIGHT.
2. God will judge, but He will judge in his time, in accordance with His Plan. Let us wait upon the Lord and trust in His care and power, and rejoice in His deliverance before it comes, as well as when it comes.
3. The Lord is our rock; He is our strong tower of defence. The Lord is our place of safety, and so let us walk close to the Lord, in fellowship with Him and let us rest secure in His arms.

DOCTRINES

TRIBULATION – SIGNS

TRIBULATION IN MATTHEW 24

SIGNS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUFFERING

CHRISTIAN LIFE – REPENTANCE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING

PROMISES

MERCY

CHRIST – ROCK: CHRIST AS THE ROCK

CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING AND LIVING IN THE LIGHT

LIGHT

PSALM 95**INTRODUCTION**

These verses are powerful ones of praise to the Lord for His arrival on the earth to deliver His people. You can see the soldiers of the last day of the Great Tribulation singing these words aloud to the Lord as He approaches the city in the sky bringing destruction upon the enemies of truth and deliverance to those who await His coming. As He comes there is the reminder of the dark days of the Exodus where the people tempted the Lord with their disbelief, and the reality around the survivors of Jerusalem of the disbelief of the people of their own day.

Those that have not trusted the Lord and walked with Him in faith before His arrival have not survived to enter the “rest” of the Millennial Kingdom, just as those who failed to trust the Lord in the Exodus generation failed to enter the Promised Land. Numbers 14:26-37, Zechariah 13:6 – 14:15, Matthew 24:9-14. The Psalms from this one through until Psalm 100 have been called “Coronation Psalms” and may be sung when the Lord takes His throne.

PSALMS 95:1-11

1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. 3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. 5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. 6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. 7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

REFLECTION

**1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.**

The call goes out to all the people to cry aloud their praise to the Lord who has proved Himself to be the God of their salvation; their Deliverer from the wickedness of the Devil and his servants. Let us sing, and let us make a joyful noise to the One who is the ROCK of our salvation. The Lord is our ROCK, upon whom we can rest secure in dangerous places and difficult ways.

When is the last time you burst into song and celebrated the God of your salvation? A miserable face and a joyless life is not a Christian Life! A believer who cannot praise the Lord aloud with joy in their heart is a contradiction in terms. Even when we feel depressed at some really sad event, there is the ability in the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to rejoice in the Lord in the midst of the pressures we feel upon us. Refer to the BTB study PRAISE AND WORSHIP. Psalms 34:1-4, 66:1-9, 136:1-3, 138:1-8, 149:1-4, 150:1-6, Ephesians 5:18-20, Colossians 3:15-16.

**3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.**

The Lord is King of all kings, and Lord over all who are called “lords”. He is King over the angels and even the demons behind the pagan gods are subject to Him and will be judged by Him. Psalms 86:8-10, 96:4-5, 97:9. All the pagan gods that men have worshipped will be seen for what they are at that time of the Lord’s return, for all the demons will be condemned to Hell fire immediately and the only reason that Satan is released at the end of the Millennium for a short time is so that he can sift out the unbelievers from that period before time ends and all the rebels (angelic and human) are eternally judged. Revelation 20:5ff.

Whether we are tunnelling into the deep places of the earth, or scaling the highest mountains of the earth, the power of the Lord is seen and felt there. There is no-where we can be within this universe that is not in the power and plan of God. Jonah found that even in the great fish he was not away from God. Jonah 2:1-9.

**5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.
6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.**

The sea was a scary and mysterious place to the land dwelling Israelites, but the psalmist recognises that the Lord made the seas and the dry land. All of the vast expanse of the universe is the work of His hands, and nothing made was made without Him. Psalms 33:6-7, Proverbs 8:22-31. The right and proper response of created man is to worship the One who made the earth and all that is in it and the heavens and all that is within this universe. Let us bow our knee before the Lord in glory, not bow our knee to fear and anxiety. Hebrews 12:12.

In today's world we have many who will "bow their knee" to the powers of nature but will not bow before the Creator of the universe. When we see great and powerful things in nature, our first thought is to be of the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and our second thought is to be to worship. Let us make sure we have this mental attitude within us, and see the hands of God everywhere, for then we will feel His care for us everywhere we walk also.

7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

The writer to the Jewish believers of the 60s of our era embraced this passage and lifts it straight into his urgent pleading with them for repentance. The writer of the book called in our Bible "Hebrews" could see that the days were growing darker for the nation Israel in the 60s of the first century and wrote an urgent appeal to them to repent of their unbelief towards the Lord and embrace the truth of their Messiah. Hebrews 3:7 – 4:12. He calls them out of their traditional identity to become the "sheep of his pasture" again, and so be saved from the wrath that he saw was to come upon them in their unbelief. 1 Thessalonians 1:10, Hebrews 10:26-31, 12:1-3, 13:12-15.

The Exodus Generation failed to heed the words of Moses and persisted in their rebellion against the clearly revealed will and plan of God for them and as a result they died in the wilderness over the forty years of wandering. Numbers 14:18-39. Forty years is the maximum time of grace and warning for the people to repent, and the next generation did, and so they entered the land under Joshua. From the cross to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was forty years also! The city fell in 70AD, which is forty of the shorter lunar years of scriptural record from the time of the crucifixion.

The Exodus Generation tested and challenged the Lord and had forty years of wandering for the second generation to repent and be delivered, and the writer of the letter to the Hebrews knew that time was running out also for the children of those who executed the Lord Jesus. He writes around 62-65 AD and the rebellion broke out in 67 AD, being crushed by 70-71 AD with the loss of several million people to death or slavery.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I swore in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

The Lord's words to Israel are soft and mournful, for the judgement of God is His "strange work", not His preferred work. God prefers grace and mercy to judgement and destruction. Isaiah 28:9-21, 2 Peter 3:9-13. The challenge to all people is to bow our knee and our heart to the Lord. We are to open up our heart to the Lord and show love and care towards Him. The Lord makes it clear that there is no rest of soul or body to the wicked! We either rest in the Lord, or we have no soul or body rest. Psalms 37:7, Isaiah 30:15, 57:2, Jeremiah 6:16, Matthew 11:28-29. All men and women make their choice; will they have peace of mind or will they face the wrath of the Lord?

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. To rejoice in the Lord is a sign of a believer in fellowship with the Lord. To be unable to rejoice in the Lord is to be unable to express yourself as you truly have become in Christ Jesus! It is the sign of something radically wrong in the life of a believer if they are unable to rejoice in the Lord. Let us lift up our voices in the praise of the Lord. Let us magnify His holy and wonderful name. Let the people of God sing the truth aloud of His goodness, His love, His mercy, and His grace. Let us get in practise for heaven, and let us sing the praises of the Lord aloud in Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs.

2. Let us be sure that we are seeing the hands of the Lord in nature, and that we are bowing our knee and praising and worshipping the Lord often each and every day. It is the habit of thankfulness and praise that keeps us safe in the dark places. Let us get into the habit, if we have not this habit already, of praising God through every day, as we see the works of the Lord's hands in nature. Let us remember that the One who made the heavens and the earth keeps us on our path through this life.

3. Let us rest in the Lord and worship the God who has given us all things. There is rest nowhere else, for no power in the universe can give us rest except the Lord alone.

DOCTRINES

CHRIST – ROCK: CHRIST AS THE ROCK

CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE

PSALM 96**INTRODUCTION**

This psalm has been assigned to three time periods; to David's bringing of the Ark into Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 16:23-33), or to Isaiah after Hezekiah's reformation, or to the Post-Exilic period, possibly at the opening, or beautifying of the Temple. It is most likely that the last suggestion is correct, although it remains a "suggestion" only. It is a psalm that sings of world wide blessing under the reigning King Messiah. It is the third of the Coronation Psalms that will be sung to the Lord when He takes His throne for the first time in Jerusalem.

The Gentile nations are a part of this blessing, and the whole world is pictured as being blessed by the reign of the Lord. The closest chapter in the Bible to this same subject matter is the last half of Zechariah Chapter 14 which pictures the same situation; the Lord reigns and all the survivors of the nations rejoice in His victory and world wide government. Refer again to the BTB study WORSHIP AND PRAISE.

The psalm is in four verses. The first, verses 1-3, records the Jewish people being made the evangelists of the truth of the Lord's Messiahship. The second verse, verses 4-6, records the "twilight and extinction of the pagan gods", for they are seen as the demonic forces they always were, and are extinguished with their master Satan.

The third verse, verses 7-9, records the Lord's rule over the nations of the world. They come with the "meal offerings" to celebrate the person of the Messiah-King, not the blood sacrifices of the Levitical System, because the blood has been fulfilled many centuries before on the Cross. The fourth verse, verses 10-13, records the Lord's rulership over the entire created universe. The hope of the world is the return of the King to rule in power and majesty and destroy the gods who have held men captive for so long.

PSALMS 96:1-13

1 O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. 2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. 3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. 4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. 5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens. 6 Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. 7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. 8 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. 9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. 10 Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. 12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice 13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

REFLECTION

**1 O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.
2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.
3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.**

It is a new song, a new covenant, and a new creation that is in view in this psalm. Psalms 33:3, 98:1, 149:1, Revelation 5:9-10, 13, 14:1-3, 19:19 – 20:5. The Lord's return, imminent when this psalm will be sung on the last day of the Great Tribulation Period, (or possibly already just occurred) brings a glorious new day to mankind. The tired and nearly destroyed earth is rejuvenated by the work of the Lord and the surviving men under His instruction. The Lord reigns for one thousand glorious years upon the earth, to prove what the creation was meant to be, before it is wound up and put away. 2 Peter 3:10-18.

On this last day of the terrible battles before the Lord's return delivers the people fighting in Jerusalem, they see His train arriving in the clouds, (Acts 1:6-11), and know He has come to deliver them. They praise Him as He establishes His rulership over the blasted and nearly destroyed city, purifies it, and sets up His throne amidst the ruins, and rebuilds them. They see His work in judging and restoring the earth, and they sing of His glory. They set their hearts to glorify the Lord every day of the new kingdom's rule, and they praise and worship the Lord their God, who has been the Saviour of the entire earth and all the saved ones within it.

All the surviving believers are able to rejoice in His deliverance, and this passage, with many others, records that there will be many delivered from many nations. Psalms 22:25-31. The expectation that there would be saved people from all the nations of the earth is right here in Psalm 22, the psalm about the inside of the Cross, and it is also in many other passages. Psalms 72:18-19, 117:1ff, Isaiah 19:23-25, 49:1-13, Daniel 4:1-3, 6:26-27, Micah 4:2, Zechariah 9:9-12, 14:16-21.

4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

6 Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

The pagan gods, where they have any power at all are demonic forces. They have power, as fallen angels, but their power is limited, and no Holy Spirit filled believer need be in terror of them. 1 John 4:4. Refer to the BTB studies on ANGELS, SATANIC ATTACK ON BELIEVERS, and RELIGION. If we fear the Lord we have no reason to fear the powers of the demons behind the pagan gods. It is when believers do not walk in a holy manner in the "fear of the Lord" that they enter dangerous territory. James 4:7-8, 1 Peter 5:6-9. If we deal with any sin in our life, and walk in obedience to the Lord's Word, then we are safe and secure in His hands, and the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit will always deliver us from all potential distress and disasters.

The demons have held the nations in their power since the beginning. When Satan offered the Lord Jesus all the kingdoms of the world of that day, the offer was a bone fide one; Satan actually controlled all the kingdoms. Matthew 4:8-11. The demonic forces of Satan have gained political power over the kingdoms of men, but it is the Lord who created the universe, and it is the Lord who has the power to defeat the enemy in His own time and in accordance with His own eternal plan. Refer back to the BTB studies, PLAN OF GOD, ETERNITY PAST, ETERNITY FUTURE.

7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

8 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.

9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

All people who know the Lord have a solemn obligation to praise the Lord with all their hearts and minds. All God's people have an obligation to praise the Lord for what they have received at His hands as a result of His creative and saving power. We should be lifting our voices in praise for His glory and His strength. Worship is in effect a joyful recognition of who God is and what He has done. Worship is open recognition and praise for the glory, majesty and power of God. Let us lift our voices now, as the saints of the Millennial Kingdom will lift their voices then.

The offering the people bring in that day is the Meal Offering. Leviticus Chapter 2. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on this chapter of Leviticus, and to the BTB study LEVITICAL OFFERINGS. The Meal Offering spoke of the perfection of the Person of the Lord Jesus. This is the offering brought by the nations in that day, for they do not bring a blood sacrifice, for that has been offered once and for all on the Cross for them. While some passages indicate a blood sacrifice is offered daily by the priests of the Millennial Kingdom's Temple, it looks back to the Cross and remembers it; it is a memorial offering, not a payment for sin.

The nations, when they come to worship at the Millennial Temple, bring a Meal Offering as a sign of their acceptance of the person of their Saviour-King. The Lord is worshipped in the "beauty of holiness", or better translated, in "the glorious sanctuary". The Millennial Temple will be greater in glory than that of Solomon or Herod, for it will be built by the Lord Himself and will last 1000 years. The Millennial Temple is described in Ezekiel Chapters 41-47. It is an amazing building that is a visual culmination of redemptive history, and within it are offered the sacrifices which remind mankind of the price of sin that has been paid, and the plan of God that has by then been fulfilled.

Ezekiel gets a glimpse of the new temple and the rebuilding of the land itself after the devastation of the last days of the Great Tribulation Period (especially Revelation 16-19). The inhabitants of the whole earth need to worship the Lord and fear the Lord, for He will rule from Jerusalem and He will be the One who breaks open the bricked up Golden/Eastern gate of the city of Jerusalem. Ezekiel 44:1-3.

10 Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.

Before the Lord's actual rule the challenge to the saved Church now, and the saved Jewish people of the Great Tribulation period, is that we might be the evangelists of the truth to all the heathen nations. To all who do not know the truth, our challenge is to deliver the truth and proclaim the future victory of the Lord. Refer to the BTB study HEATHENISM AND GOD CONSCIOUSNESS, EVANGELISM. Notice the tense of the verb in relation to the Lord's rulership; it is a present continuous tense. The Lord is not "going to reign", but He "is reigning and always will reign".

He reigns now, and one day He will take total power back and reign with justice and righteousness over the entire earth with no evil forces left alive to hinder and test His people. The days of testing and challenges from evil will be over in that day. The day when man was on a fallen earth is over, for it is restored to the "first Adam" and He redeems and remakes it in glory. Psalms 18:46-50, 46:4-11, 126:1-6, Malachi 1:11-14. The glory of the Lord's Millennial reign over the earth is sung aloud by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 1:1ff, and 61:1ff.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

The entire created universe will sing aloud and rejoice in the Lord's power and glory. The heavens, the earth, and the seas will rejoice. The book of Revelation records the incredible destruction of the earth and sea during the last three and a half years of the Great Tribulation. Satan will do his best to destroy the earth by all means, and the destruction will be incredible, with the seas themselves so polluted that there are few living things left alive in the seas. Revelation 6-18. The heavens are seen to lose one third of their stars in this time also.

It is a time of maximum destruction and evil, and yet the Lord is able to restore the earth to perfect environment and rule over it in glory for 1000 years. Refer to the BTB study of MILLENNIAL KINGDOM, and to the EBCWA Commentary on these chapters of Revelation. There are trees left alive and there are the seeds of the plants and the eggs of the fish to replenish the seas with edible food for mankind. The entire creation is restored to its pristine glory by the Lord; to the beauty in which it was created initially. It is in the Millennial Kingdom that men know what Adam and Eve could have enjoyed forever had sin not entered the world.

13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

All creation will “bow its knee” to the Lord. All the living things upon the earth will acknowledge in some way their origin in the mind of the Creator in that day. God is King in that day, and the Lordship of Jesus over all things will be acknowledged and exercised. The Lord is coming, and every time we raise our Communion Glass we ought to say with the Early Church, “Until He Comes”. 1 Corinthians 11:26, Revelation 22:20. We celebrate the Communion service as a memorial feast, and every time we do it we remember that the Cross and the Empty Tomb were not the end, but the beginning of the Lord’s victory, and that His full victory will be seen in His ruler ship over all the creation. Refer to the BTB studies on CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD, PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING,

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. The Lord will rule one day and He will rule as King of all kings and Lord of all lords. Let us see this truth and praise Him now for the victory He will surely get one day in the near future. The PLAN OF GOD will not fail, nor will the power of God be seen to be short of any provision for believers who are walking along God’s path for their lives.

2. This earth will be nearly destroyed in the Great Tribulation Period. All the work of the “Green Movement” today will be of no avail in those days, for the evil of satanically inspired pollution will kill the seas and rivers and lakes. It is important to remember that these judgements upon the earth are the result of satanic activity, and given that pollution and worldly destruction are “satanic fruits”, no believer ought to be involved in any activity that is destructive of the planet.

Remember it is Satan who wants to destroy the earth before the Lord has the opportunity to return to it, and anyone who works to destroy the planet is doing Satan’s work for him. No bible doctrine filled believer can be a part of any polluting activity! Pollution is based in greed, and greed is rooted and grounded in satanic self interest and wicked evil deception. While we cannot be a part of the so called “Green” movement, because of its New Age associations, we are to be implacable opponents of everyone who trashes the earth, the atmosphere, and the seas.

DOCTRINES

CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE

ANGELS

ANGELS – SATANIC ATTACK ON BELIEVERS

RELIGION

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

ETERNITY PAST

ETERNITY FUTURE

OFFERINGS – LEVITICAL OFFERINGS REPRESENT CHRIST

BLOOD SACRIFICE

HEATHENISM AND GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – EVANGELISM

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD

CHRIST – PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING

PSALMS 97**INTRODUCTION**

The Psalms from 95-100 have, as we have seen before, been called, "The Coronation Psalms", and that is very much what they may be used for; they may be the coronation Psalms sung when the Lord takes the throne in Jerusalem after His triumphant return to rule from the Hill of Zion.

If we picture the Lord entering Jerusalem through the by then opened East (Golden) Gate and setting up His throne upon the Holy ground where once Solomon's Temple stood; the very site of the threshing floor of Araunan/Onan that was dedicated to God by David on the ridge to the north of his fortress city. 2 Samuel 24:15-25, 1 Kings 5-6. The believing Jewish soldiers of the Great Tribulation, especially those called, Cohen, Levi, Levy, Singer, and other names associated with the old tribe of Levi, will learn these Psalms by heart, so that they will be able to sing them all on the Temple Mount that glorious day when Messiah will indeed sit and rule. They will learn also the Halleluiah Psalms (120-134) to sing as the Lord walks up towards the Great Golden Gate, from the Mount of Olives, and across the Kidron Valley.

All the places where He walked in His first ministry He will retrace His footsteps as the returning and triumphant King, and He will rule this time for 1000 years. These men will also learn to sing by heart the Psalms of Praise to the King as He sits upon His throne (Psalms 100 – 106). If we are right, and we are only speculating on these things remember, then the order of the singing of the psalms when the Lord returns is as follows.

Firstly, as the Lord comes back to the Mount of Olives Psalms 120 – 135 are sung, as He lands on the earth and then progresses across the Kidron Valley. Secondly as He takes His throne and sits upon it, Psalms 95-100 are sung. Thirdly, after He is crowned the King, and praised as such by all the world, psalms 101-106 are sung around the world, as world wide praises of the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

Whatever we memorise and sing, it would be wise to know these Psalms by heart, and for all who are saved through the Great Tribulation period, these are the psalms to learn, for you will be singing them as the Lord returns, joining with those in Jerusalem who have withstood the evil there, just as you have withstood and avoided the evil powers in your own area of the world.

PSALMS 97:1-12

1 The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his throne. 3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. 4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. 5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. 7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods. 8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgements, O LORD. 9 For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods. 10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. 11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. 12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

REFLECTION

**1 The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.
2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his throne.**

The Lord finally reigns over all the earth as its King and Lord. All the islands of the sea will rejoice in the Lord. One of the exciting things to me is that the many island nations appear to have escaped the worst evils of the satanic emperor's (ANTI-CHRIST) rule through the Great Tribulation Period, and to have survived the great tsunami that are a part of the judgements. It may be that the island nations become a centre for biblically based resistance to the Anti-Christ's power base. There is certainly a rebellion against his power in far flung areas and it would appear that the islands of the far flung seas are centres of active evangelism and form colonies of new believers in the Millennium.

We have no way of knowing from this side of the events, but the work we do as Church Age believers in our own day may lay the foundation for this great revival that will occur through these dark days in the worst time in human history. The island nations will rejoice when the King comes to Jerusalem because they have been waiting for Him and know their Bibles. The Lord's return is awesome indeed and all of the world sees Him returning and the islands of the sea rejoice.

It may be that TV technology means all areas of the world can see things occurring in real time, but whatever the means, all can see things happening and all the world of saved people hear and rejoice in the return of the Lord to Jerusalem. In the worst time in world history at the end of the Great Tribulation Period multitudes are saved still; hallelujah to the Lord!!!
Isaiah 11:11, 24:13-16, 41:1-5, 42:1-4, 10-12, 49:1-3, 51:4-8, 60:8-10, 66:18-21, Zephaniah 2:10-11.

3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.

The RETURN OF OUR LORD is a terrifying thing to those who have rejected Him and His authority over them. The terrible things that occur in the Great Tribulation are allowed by the Lord to sift mankind and test their resolve towards Him. Revelation 6-18. The sad truth through this terrible time is that the majority of people do not repent and believe, but instead harden themselves against the Lord. Revelation 2:21, 9:20-21, 16:9, 11. The Lord prefers to love and show mercy, and justice and judgement remains His "strange work", but when men and women have walked away from love there is nothing left but judgement.

You cannot walk away from more love than that showed by the Lord on the Cross and when the evil ones do this they are without hope in these terrible last days and die without any last chances to reject again. There is a day when mercy stops, and the Great Tribulation is such a time. People are either saved or they are lost at this time and the days rush towards the end with violence and terror. People tremble, but sadly many refuse to face the truth even then. It is the last proof that man doesn't need more miracles but more honesty inside their soul! Luke 16:29-31, 23:29-31, Revelation 6:15-16.

5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

There is earthquake and other tectonic activity in the last days of the Great Tribulation such that the world has not seen since the forming of the great continents. Revelation 6:12, 8:5, 11:13-19, 16:18. The hills and great mountain ranges will be changed in a moment, and appear to melt like wax under the pressures exerted upon them. Mountains will literally be levelled in that day and the entire shape and topography of the continents changed. The whole earth sees the Lord's return and glories in His return. There are associated signs in the heavens that indicate that even the heavens acknowledge their Creator. It would appear that the vapour canopy over the earth is restored, removing a third of more of the sea into the upper atmosphere, making the land area of the earth twice as large, or more.

In some way the entire earth sees the Lord's return and His glory, and the returning Israeli believers fly back by aircraft! All this is described in Isaiah 60-63. This means that enough believers are in key industries to keep Television coverage going and to fly the airplanes required to return all the Jews to Israel in the days after the last great battles. Satan has not even come close to wiping out the believers on the earth! Even in the technological nations that he should have been able to control by his 666 digital control systems, he has been unable to exercise mind control and multitudes are believers in Jesus and applaud and worship at His return. Isaiah 6:3, 45:6-13, 60:1-3.

7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.

8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgements, O LORD.

All who serve the pagan gods, or materialism (things instead of the Maker of all things) are ashamed and confounded in that terrible day. It is a glorious day for all who have recognised the truth about the Lord Jesus, but a day of terror to all who have not acknowledged the truth. All the angels will bow before the Lord, even the fallen angels as they are judged. None are able to stand before Him on His return, for He is the victor of time and space, and the angelic creatures which followed Satan are trapped here in this universe and will spend the rest of eternity in the Lake of Fire.

They were made by God for eternity with Him, but they followed after Satan, and he then went on and deceived mankind with the fallen angel's help. They all perish together (angelic/demonic rebels and human) in the Lake of Fire and this terrible place of eternal judgement would appear to be isolated in the space-time universe which is then wound up and folded away. 2 Peter 3:10-18, Revelation 20:10 – 22:1ff. The gods/demons are history and they go into eternal judgement having bowed their knee to the One they rebelled against in eternity past.

Once we are past this present space-time universe we will understand this fact fully, but the demons and the rebels amongst men who followed them will not go into the eternal state with us; in some way they are eternally trapped in the folded up and disposed of space-time universe that is abolished by the Lord. We cannot understand this yet, but we know there is no evil at all in the eternal state of the new heavens and the new earth that is made to replace this old tired one we presently inhabit.

9 For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.

10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

All the survivors of the city of Jerusalem and the believing captives from Israel's lands that have been seized by the enemy armies are all taken into the new kingdom with rejoicing. The people rejoice in the Lord's deliverance. What looked like rape, torture and murder, now is victory, rejoicing, worship and a new life in a new kingdom and phase of human history. All the gods of the past are gone in that day, and the Lord is seen to be King of all human kings of history and Lord of all the angelic lords of this space-time universe. Peter expresses the thought of verse ten really well in 2 Peter 3:10-12.

Given that we know all these things will occur, what impact ought it to have on our behaviour now? Do we hate evil as we ought to at this point now? We don't hate evil people necessarily, for we may be called to witness to them with the

Gospel message, but we are to hate the evil they stand for. We are delivered from evil people as we hate their evil. Let us love what is good, and that means we hate all that opposes goodness. A fruit of the Holy Spirit is a holy hatred of evil.

11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

God sheds light into our souls through our feeding upon His holy Word in the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Word through the Spirit brings light into our hearts and lives and shows us the path ahead. Refer to the BTB study on LIGHT, MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

One of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the life of a genuine believer is a love of the Word of God, and a desire for a holy life. There is a gladness in the heart of every believer who loves the Lord and His Word. Beware of people who claim to be believers but have no joy in their heart towards the Lord. A joyful spirit in adversity, and a spirit of thankfulness is a sign of a heart that has walked with the Lord. Even as we are dying of disease the Joy of the Lord is the strength of the real believer in the Lord Jesus! Nehemiah 8:8-10, Psalms 68:20, 116:15. We are ordered to rejoice in the Lord. John 10:10, Philippians 3:1, 4:4-13.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. The Lord will rule from Jerusalem. Do not lose faith in the end of history as the Lord proclaims it to be. Prophetic truth is clear on the matter of the end of this present age; it will end in the death of the vast majority of mankind, but those who spiritually endure to the end will be delivered by the coming King. Matthew 24:13. The Lord Jesus will certainly return, and He will return to rule as King over the entire earth. All who turn to Him through this period will be able to enter into eternity in blessedness; some will enter by martyrdom, but many by deliverance into the Millennial Kingdom. Either way there is blessing with Christ Jesus.

2. Let us see clearly that the work we are doing now lays the foundation for the salvation of multitudes after we have gone in the Great Tribulation Period. Many will be converted by the books and papers they find after we have gone. Let us teach and preach with a focused energy and dedication to truth that ensures that all who read our material, or hear our past witness hear the truth from us and are saved and are readied for the terrible things they will face, but also for the glory of the Lord's return.

3. Do we hate evil as strongly as is appropriate for the people of God? We are called to stand for truth. Let us make sure we stand for truth and hate evil with a passion. All that opposes goodness is to be hated by God's people. Let us hate evil and work for goodness. Let us be very suspicious of the spiritual status of those who do not hate evil with a passion.

DOCTRINES

ANTICHRIST

PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS

CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD

LIGHT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO MAN

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

PSALM 98**INTRODUCTION**

This psalm celebrates the kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ over all the earth. It is one of the psalms sung as He takes His throne. It is a piece of scripture put to music in the 1960s as "Scripture in Song", and I remember singing this psalm in our church youth group in the early 1970s. We sung it with gusto and yet we were never taught its significance.

As we read this psalm, as with the last ones and the next two, let us picture the Lord Himself as He sets up His throne in the blasted city of Jerusalem, and as He supernaturally clears the site and establishes His throne for all the nations of the world to see by live telecast. The psalmist sings of the glory for the earth of now having a legitimate King to rule, who has the right to rule all mankind, for He made them all, but also has the righteous character to rule in righteousness, with no weakness spoiling His reign.

All of the so called "great" leaders of mankind have been flawed characters with many, often quite serious, flaws in their character. They do great things, but they also do great evil or foolishness. Even if they do great good their reign does not last the sands of time. Only the Lord's rule can restore the earth, rule the earth, and create 1000 years of perfect environment upon the earth. The song here is in three equal stanzas of three verses each.

PSALMS 98:1-9

1 O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. 2 The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. 3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. 5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. 6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King. 7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together 9 Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

REFLECTION

**1 O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.
2 The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.
3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

The ground of praise is the holy CHARACTER and PLAN OF GOD. The people of Israel have been singing to the Lord all sorts of traditional songs, but in this day they sing a "new song", for they see the Lord in a totally new way, for they see Him as the Messiah they missed at His First Advent, but who they have now embraced. They sing, because they realise just how terrible their rejection of their Messiah has been for Israel through the last 1900 years. They come to this place out of days of national mourning in the midst of the battles against the forces of evil in their land. Zechariah 12:10-14.

As they follow the Lord across the Kidron Valley and up the hill through the Eastern/Golden Gate and see Him take His throne upon the Temple Mount, they sing aloud these psalms, in relief that the days of evil are finally over and the days of Millennial blessing can begin. Ezekiel 39:7-29. All the earth appears to see these events by means of television-Internet live broadcasts. It is this repeated reference to all the earth seeing the events live that is so amazing, for it would not be until most recent days in our own age that this was possible. Truly God's Word is amazing!

There is a heart felt and warm recognition that it is the mighty power of the Lord alone that has got them the victory and they celebrate that fact aloud with this and the other psalms (90-100). The power of the returning Lord has created the victory, for none can stand against Him, and everyone who raised his sword against Israel is destroyed. All the peoples of the earth have seen the Lord's return, and all have acknowledged now His absolute righteousness in His judgement of the evil and wicked enemies of the truth. Before all the heathen peoples He has shown His judgement and everyone has acknowledged His right to judge them for their evils.

Today we have the argument raised against the very reality of the existence of God that says, "How can there be a loving God with so much evil in the world?" No voice will be raised to say such nonsense in that day, for the evil people who raise such thoughts in past days are themselves open in their acknowledgement of their just judgement and eternal condemnation.

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.**

The entire earth is called to worship simultaneously and praise the Lord. When the Lord returns He judges all the surviving peoples of the earth. Only believers are left alive upon the earth by the time the Lord touches down in Jerusalem. From all the passages relating to the last days of the Great Tribulation and the Lord's physical return several things emerge. He appears to do a full circle of the earth over possibly 12-24 hours before His final touch down on the Mount of Olives and during this time the entire earth's peoples are judged, with the believers only being left alive.

Live telecasts-podcasts of the great event of His advent are clearly broadcast world wide through this time simultaneously, so there is grace in judgement, for even up until the last minutes it would appear men and women can be saved before they are judged, if they acknowledge the Lord Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. Around the world, as the Lord comes there is rejoicing by the believers world wide.

A worship service that lasts possibly 24 hours is being held around the world as He comes back with His saints to judge and rule the earth. All around the world believers are told what to do in this psalm. They are to take up their musical instruments and sing the psalms that welcome the Lord.

Jew and Non Jew are all to sing psalms in that day and praise their returning King. With the stringed instruments they have and the brass instruments they have they are to sing aloud the praises of God in the Psalms of David and the others of the past. The Lord tells us through His psalmist here how He wants to be welcomed back and it is with full orchestra and songs of praise from the hymn book of the Israel and the Church; the book of Psalms. Let us get ready for that day and sing the Psalms more often with joy to the Lord. Each in our own languages, and each with our own arrangements to suit the nuances of our own languages, but we are all to sing the psalms. Psalms 47:1-9, 81:1-4.

Let us make a joyful noise before the Lord. I love this verse personally, for it speaks of a "joyful noise". I live with four females, all of whom are excellent singers, and very well trained singers. I cannot sing well if I get songs that are in too high a key, but I am given permission by the Lord here to, "make a joyful noise", and hallelujah, I can do that! Those who hit the wrong note occasionally on their guitar, piano, harp, or trumpet are also excused in that day. The Lord wants joy in our worship, not perfect notes and pitch. Its great when we are led by those who can sing, but it brings joy to the Lord when we raise our voices – whatever the pitch-perfect or otherwise nature of our singing.

Let's not get too carried away with our "performance" when we sing, but let's get carried away in our worship with love and joy and thankfulness to our Saviour-Lord and our God. This is a marathon worship service and those alive in that day are urged to sing, play and rejoice until the day sets with Jesus crowned as King over all the earth. Refer to the BTB studies on MUSIC, WORSHIP, DESTINY OF BELIEVERS, FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT, and THANKFULNESS.

**7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together
9 Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.**

The entire creation groans until the Lord's return, for Satan has done all he could to destroy the earth during the terrible days of the Great Tribulation Period, and the Lord has Himself poured out judgement upon it. The earth is blasted and desolate in places, but prosperity and fruitfulness will return to the entire planet, and it may even be that the vapour canopy that protected the early pre-flood earth will be restored so that there is an even temperature over the entire planet and fruitful prosperity can be everywhere enjoyed, from the equator to the Antarctic. Genesis 1:6-7, 2:5-6.

The entire earth rejoices; both the seas and the hills seem to move to celebrate the Lord's return. It may be that the last of the earthquakes that have occurred throughout the last years of the Great Tribulation occur around this time and the seas surge and lift and the hills move to celebrate the Lord's return. These would be awesome events, but without the fear that was associated with them before in the years when evil men ruled over the nations of the earth.

There is absolute righteousness, justice and fairness when the Lord returns, and all the great injustices of the past are wiped away. Most of the believers who have lived through these last terrible years of the tribulation period will have lost their houses, their lands and their goods as a result of their faith. Economic persecution towards all believers is the mildest of the persecutions that are launched against the believers of that time. The Lord's return means that all which have lost have what they lost restored with interest. The evil people who robbed them are now gone and so the believers inherit the earth and all that is in it.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us learn to praise the Lord here and now. Let us be ready to burst into song at a seconds notice. It is a strange thing for believers to be slow to worship their Lord and God, for this is what we are called to do. Let us sing now with abandoned love and joy towards our Lord, and let us not criticise any brother or sister for the fervency of their singing. Let us praise the Lord in a spirit of thankful love towards God and a spirit of acceptance towards our brothers and sisters in Christ.

2. We long for justice today and we see it only occasionally, but when the Lord returns there will be the rule of justice and righteousness upon the entire earth. God restores all things and the believers who have been meek under the blows of their oppressors inherit the earth, just as the Lord promised. Matthew 5:3-12.

DOCTRINES

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

GOD – FATHERHOOD OF GOD

JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE

MUSIC

CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – DESTINY OF BELIEVERS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

CHRISTIAN LIFE – THANKFULNESS

NOTES

PSALM 99**INTRODUCTION**

The character of the Lord Jesus is now praised, and He is compared to the manifestations of the days of the Exodus Generation. The signs of the Lord's presence were in those days mighty and terrible to the Israelites and the feeling associated with the Lord's reigning upon the earth will be the same as that day, but without the unbelief and rebellion on the part of the believers. The holiness of the Lord is exulted here and praised. Let us sing these psalms with real focused vigour, for we live and move and have our being in the holiness of the Lord.

It is the Lord's righteousness and justice and truth that guarantee our safety upon the earth, and it is this that we refer to as the holiness of the Lord. We are also called to be holy, and that refers to our fitness to worship and serve the Lord in purity. Look at each of the following passages and see that holiness is not a static thing, but an active and vibrant part of our worship and service to the Lord. 1 Corinthians 3:14-17, Ephesians 1:3-4, 5:25-29, 2 Timothy 1:9-14, 1 Peter 1:12-16, Jude 20.

PSALMS 99:1-9

1 The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved. 2 The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people. 3 Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy. 4 The king's strength also loveth judgement; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgement and righteousness in Jacob. 5 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy. 6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them. 7 He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them. 8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions. 9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

REFLECTION

**1 The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.
2 The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people.
3 Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.**

It is good at times to "tremble before the Lord". We are so used to singing in ecstasy with semi closed eyes that we have drifted away from the concept of the fear of the Lord and the trembling before a holy God that is the appropriate response to the Lord. Psalms 2:10-12. The enemies of the Lord are destroyed; the mighty arrogant armies of wicked men are wiped out in a moment by the presence of the Lord and lie dead upon the ground.

The terror of the suddenness of the destruction of the enemy will cause all the Lord's people to rejoice in their deliverance, but also tremble at the majesty and justice of God. The great Psalm of the Ascension and return of the Lord is Psalm 21, and it records the mighty and sudden violence that the Lord unleashes upon the wicked men who besiege Jerusalem in that evil day, and who perish in a moment when the Lord judges them. Psalms 21:6-13.

The Lord is the God who is love, and loves us, and has demonstrated His love by dying for the sins of the world, and through His daily care for us. 2 Peter 3:9, 1 John 2:1-2. The Lord's love has been shown and His grace has been offered right up until the moment of His judgement falling upon those who have persisted in their rebellion against His Word of Truth. Grace has a limit and that limit is reached on that day when He returns, and then judgement falls fully and finally upon all who have persisted in their rebellion until that point. There is a time when it is too late for the unbeliever. Refer to the BTB study GOSPEL OF SALVATION, GOD CARES FOR US.

**4 The king's strength also loveth judgement; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgement and righteousness in Jacob.
5 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.**

The Lord is the King of Israel and the entire world, and the entire world is under the righteous rulership of the Lord. The Lord loves justice and executes righteous judgement upon the wicked. They are eliminated from the earth. For some people this is hard to accept, but that is just because they have not thought this through. Consider the facts here. The Great Tribulation has been raging for 3 ½ years and all hell has literally broken out upon the earth. Believers in the Lord have been persecuted and many killed, and yet these unbelievers have refused to accept the Lord Jesus as their saviour. They have seen the worst that man and Satan can do and yet they cling to their demonic or humanistic religions. For such people the time runs out and they are judged and eliminated from the earth.

We all make choices and the Lord is far more just and fair than man is in this matter of the consequences of our choices. He is truly holy and all will acknowledge that in this wonderful and awesome day, people will exult the name of the Lord. They will lift up His name and will call Him the "most High". We must challenge ourselves in this matter, for we often

speaking far too casually of the Lord Jesus. He is the Lord and He is God; let us call Him by His name. He is no longer the meek and quiet Jesus of His First Advent; He is the ruling Saviour-God and we need to be very respectful of Him. We must get used to referring to the Lord as "The Lord Jesus Christ", not just by His human name of Jesus (Yeshua/Joshua in Aramaic and Hebrew).

6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

7 He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them.

The three men mentioned here are the great names of the early period of Israel's history. This may date this psalm as an early one, close to the days of Samuel. It may be a psalm of David or Nathan for this very reason. If it was a later psalm I would expect the names mentioned to be Moses and Aaron, as the starting priests of Israel's Exodus, but then I would have expected Ezekiel and Ezra as the last of the House of Levi who stood in Moses and Aaron's place and led the people back to godly worship. The psalmist thinks of those who stood for God in the midst of almost total apostasy and rebellion and he thinks of these three great men. All these men were of the house of Levi, and they stood as priests of the Lord for their people. They were the Lord's advocates and intermediaries. Refer to the BTB study PRIESTS, LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD.

The Exodus Generation were disobedient and the two godly leaders held their ground. They were men like us, and they failed at times, but they maintained their witness to the truth and both stood firm until the last year of the Exodus. Samuel faced a great deal of pressures and kept his focus upon the Lord, even when the people desired a king, and then the king went mad and pressured and persecuted the old prophet. These were great men and examples to us of godliness, holiness and obedience to the Lord. Refer to the BTB studies on OBEDIENCE.

8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.

9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

These people in the past prayed to the Lord and the Lord answered all their prayer requests, and the Lord has continued through history as the God who hears our prayers. Psalms 89:30-37, Jeremiah 46:28, Zephaniah 3:1-8. The Lord is working His plan out and it will be victorious, and the surviving people of the earth will all be believers, and will all praise the Lord that day. Let us begin the hymn of praise now and keep it going until the end of our time upon the earth.

The Lord supported, protected and led His people, but He did judge them when they erred and went after their own wicked imagination instead of His holy will. We are made perfectly able to obey, celebrate, and worship the Lord, but we can all too often wander off the path He has called us to walk through this present world. Ecclesiastes 7:29, Matthew 7:13ff. We re-centre ourselves through confession and worship, and by so doing we get back on track in our thinking and then are able to make the right decisions regarding the direction for our life from that point forward.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us feel the awesomeness of the Lord a little more than we do. Let us remember the care, love, mercy, and grace of the Lord, but let us also remember His righteousness and justice, and the correct but terrible judgement that will come upon those who have persisted in their hatred of Him and His Plan. Let us praise the Lord with the fear of the Lord in our hearts at times, and remember His judgements for they guarantee the perfection of heaven. Let us call the Lord by His full and regal name now and thereby express our faith in His coming Kingship. He is no longer the "gentle Jesus"; He is to be called the Lord, and God of all. Thomas faced that fact and so must we! John 20:26-31, 21:25.

2. Let us obey the Lord and submit ourselves to the daily discipline of studying His Word and applying it into the fabric of our daily life. As the old song says it, "There is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey!"

DOCTRINES

GOSPEL OF SALVATION

GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU

PRIESTS

PRIESTS – LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD

CHRISTIAN LIFE – OBEDIENCE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUBMISSION

PSALM 100**INTRODUCTION**

Never be worried about repetition in the praise and worship of the Lord. You cannot say the right things too many times, nor sing about them too loudly. It is liberating to read these psalms and sing them aloud in order. All too often we study things in isolation and read them singly. These psalms are designed to be read/sung together in a sequence. Read all these psalms in a sitting and rejoice with the overall impression you are left with.

By reading them all together you are left with a sense of rejoicing and praise that is overwhelming and this is the purpose of the arrangement. Keep remembering that all these psalms are written to celebrate the Lord's entry into the Temple Mount and His sitting upon the throne set up there for Him. He takes His throne to the sound of these psalms being sung at full volume by all the people present. No matter how long the people of that day live, even to 1000 years, they will never have a day like this again in glorying in the Lord's presence as their Redeemer and now their King.

PSALMS 100:1-5

1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. 5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endures to all generations.

REFLECTION

1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

This psalm ends this section of thanksgiving and celebration psalms and opens the door to the next section, from psalms 101-106, which are praise to the King after His coronation. This psalm sums up all the psalms beforehand and acts as the final chorus of praise before the coronation and the next sequence of psalms are sung aloud to celebrate the Lord's Kingship over Jerusalem and the world. The psalm invites all the peoples of the earth to join with the people in Jerusalem as they welcome the King to take His throne. Anyone who can restrain their voice from bursting into song doesn't understand what has just happened!

All people should be singing aloud and those who are not at this point singing are urged to begin and shout praises to the King. They are to serve their King, and in the days and years to come there will be services to be rendered, but on this first day there is praise to be offered, and it ought to be offered up loudly and with joy. No-one is to come before the Lord's presence without a song on their lips. Does this challenge you believer? We ought not to come into our church services in sullen mood, but with a song on our lips, a song of praise to the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords. Psalms 32:11, 47:1, 5, 66:1-4, 95:1-2, 98:4, Isaiah 24:15-23.

3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

A correct viewpoint of God protects us from worry and foolishness. It is foolish to worry about a problem that is the Creator of the Universes problem, and that is our situation as children of the Most High God. We did not make ourselves, nor did we save ourselves, and so it is logical that we cannot keep ourselves safe in this world that He has made. The next logical conclusion is to trust our lives to the One who made us, saved us and has a plan for us!

We are His children and we are within His wonderful care. This is called in the New Testament "the logic of grace". Ephesians 2:8-10, 1 Peter 2:9-10, 4:10-11. We are the children of the Lord through our faith in Christ; we are creatures, but we are far more than that, we are sons and daughters of God. Can we be more loved than we are in Christ Jesus? Acts 2:28, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Peter 1:18-19. Refer to the BTB studies, CHRIST – SHEPHERD, GOD – COMFORT FOR BELIEVERS, CARES FOR YOU, FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

The spirit of THANKFULNESS is appropriate for all believers and expected by the Lord. We ought to enter our worship services with praise in our hearts and a song on our lips. There is no other way to enter the courts of the Lord other than in song and prayerful thanks. We have everything in Christ Jesus. We are BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES through our position in Christ. To enter His presence with anything other than a prayerful spirit of rejoicing is wrong. Let us bless the name of the Lord and keep on blessing His holy name until we see Him face to face. Psalms 103:1-2, 20-22, 116:17-19.

5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endures to all generations.

When we face the SUFFERING that can come in this life we need to cling to the truth of the integrity of God's Word and God's Character. God's nature is good, and so if anything bad happens, then there is a good purpose that will be worked out in time and eternity. All events will be seen as good when the full truth is told and we see this brief moment of history in its eternal context. God's mercy is everlasting; it is never exhausted. His truth underpins all aspects of His plan and all the things that occur in this world are in His hands and will be seen in their correct context when we have all the facts in eternity.

In this world we face "hard things", and we face some questions that will never be answered in time. I have seen good friends die; men who were powerful believers who the Lord could have used far more than they had been to that point. I am left with a question in my heart over their death and the on-going pagan or useless lives of others.

We faced the tragedies in Samoa (2009) as I initially wrote these words after the earthquake and Tsunami there last weekend. Many children and young people have died including friends of our own family. There are no easy answers to these events, and no neat and trite theological system of men has any answers that will satisfy the grieving friends and relatives. This verse before us however will rest the heart of those who know God in truth, for we can rest in God's heart, even though we do not see the reasons or the events we confront over these last days.

We weep with the relatives and friends who have lost loved ones, but we rest secure in the Lord's love and grace and mercy and know that in heaven there will be no tears over these events, even though we have them now. We rest in the PROMISES of God towards us and wait for the full revelation of the truth behind all these events when we get to heaven.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us not come before the Lord silently, but enter His courts with praise and worship aloud to honour our King and Lord. No believer ought to be entering into a worship service with silence and sullenness but with praise and a song on their lips, and the joy of the Holy Spirit in their heart. There is no reason for sullenness, and every reason for praise to the King. No matter how depressed we feel about what has occurred this day, we have cause to praise the Lord for all He has done, is doing, and will do with us until He brings us home to heaven, or into His Millennial Kingdom. Let us praise the Lord.

2. Let us rest in the Lord's hands. We were loved while we were yet sinners, and so now as the Lord's children through faith we cannot be loved less! Let us rest in the grace, mercy and love of God for us, secure that His plan is a perfect plan for our life. Let us praise His holy name for the Plan and power of God, for we are safe while we walk with Him.

DOCTRINES

CHRIST – THE SHEPHERD

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD – COMFORT FOR BELIEVERS

GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU

GOD – FATHERHOOD OF GOD

CHRISTIAN LIFE – THANKFULNESS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUFFERING

PROMISES

PSALM 101**INTRODUCTION**

This is headed as a "Psalm of David" and there is no reason to doubt this description. Those who recorded this were in a far better place than ourselves to know the truth of this. It is thought to date from the time when the Ark was to be brought into Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 6:1-15. David speaks of his desire towards the Lord, (verses 1-2), and his determination to walk worthy of the Lord in light of his desire, (Verses 3-4).

The King's determination must then be matched by the citizens of the kingdom, and the last half of the psalm identifies that the citizens must be holy and worthy of their king, (Verses 5-6), and then the city itself must be holy and clean for their King and Lord, (verses 7-8). This is the first Psalm in the second section of the Number's Book of the Psalms; the first of the psalms that sing praises to the now crowned and enthroned King of kings. These praise psalms go from 101 through to 106, the end of this book of the Psalms.

PSALMS 101:1-8

1 I will sing of mercy and judgement: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing. 2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. 3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. 4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person. 5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. 6 Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. 7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. 8 I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

REFLECTION

1 I will sing of mercy and judgement: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

God's mercy and God's judgement is David's theme in the psalm. He sees that all are the recipients of God's mercy, for all deserve to be judged by the Lord, but few actually are judged and condemned. God is merciful, which is why we still live and serve Him today, rather than being judged and condemned ourselves. The reality of the character of God requires a response from us in holiness of life also. Micah 6:6-8, Romans 8:1-2, 12:1-2, 9-21. When we serve a holy God we are called to be holy ourselves, not be living in a manner that is unworthy of the great gift we have received.

Perfection in verse two is not what we can mean by "perfectionistic behaviours", but is rather "completion" in actions and thinking. It means here to complete any task properly, so that there are no things left undone and the entire project unravels as a result. Today we refer to this as "follow through"; it means we do not stop half way in a task but complete it and finish it fully. It is the finishing of tasks that the Lord praises, not starting them. Discipleship means following the master through all the challenges and finishing the course of life with the Lord. Luke 14:25-31, Galatians 5:7, 2 Timothy 4:6-8. The Lord walks within His house in complete obedience to the Father's Plan, and so are we called to walk through this life also. John 17:4-5, 21-26.

3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.

The Lord is holy, and that means the Lord is determined to serve the will of the Father and complete the Plan of God without distraction, disobedience, or distortion. The Lord Jesus "hates" (note the term here) all who turn aside from the will of the Lord for their life and walk off after nonsense and evil. We are called to walk the "narrow way" as the Lord did, and the Lord has no time for those who will not do that. Matthew 7:13-14, Luke 13:23-30.

The Lord will have no part in the life or work of a wicked person. If a man or woman selects evil as their path then the Lord will not pay attention to them in any way other than to discipline them. Psalms 66:18, Isaiah 1:10-20, 59:1-2, Joel 2:12-13, Habakkuk 1:13, Acts 8:22. If we will not confront sin then the Lord will not hear us nor assist us in any way. If we are in any way slack regarding sinful activities we will not have our prayers heard, for the Lord will have nothing to do with those who enjoy, think often upon, and fail to deal with sins. 1 John 1:5-10. Refer to the BTB study CONFESSON AND FORGIVENESS.

5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

6 Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

The Lord hates the “Mental Attitude Sins” that defile the heart of men. They are ABOMINATION SINS TO THE LORD. Proverbs 6:16-19. They were changed into the “Seven Deadly Sins” by the early Medieval Church, but God’s list is more powerful and real than that of the early Medieval Church. All sin that defiles individuals and communities begins with the three categories of sin listed in verse five here before us.

Verbally abusing others in secret, when they cannot answer and defend themselves illustrates a powerful evil in the heart of the soul of the gossiping and maligning person. Proverbs 10:18. Such people are called “fools”; people without Bible doctrine. Arrogance and pride are next mentioned, and they lead to all manner of terrible evils and sins. The great Wall Street collapse of 2007-2012 was caused by no other thing than pride and arrogance, for these two deep evils lead to the lust and greed that created an international financial catastrophe and destroyed the lives of millions.

God hates the self centred evils that focus upon greed and lust and destroy the marriages, families, finances, lives, and reputations of others. Satan’s hatred of mankind is deep and consistent; he seeks all possible means of destroying mankind and punishing mankind for any stupidity they express. He is a cruel master, for he hates his servants and destroys them in the end.

Satan has no loyalty to his people for his aim is to “get even with” God and man is just the tool he is trying to use. His aim is the destruction of Israel specifically, and mankind generally, and even the very earth itself, all before the Lord has a chance to fulfil His promise to return. Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:6-11, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Refer to the BTB study on SATAN – HIS DESTINY, HIS STRATEGY, and HIS WORK.

God is opposed to all who join Satan in his active rebellion against the standards of God. God will not tolerate the pride and arrogance of Satan or man. If we act as if we are anything other than creatures before our Creator we are fools, and the Lord will not tolerate our stupid arrogance; we will be judged for it severely if we persist in this sinful state. Revelation 20:10-15.

In contrast to the judgement of arrogance, there is blessing and protection over the lives of the obedient and humble. All who give themselves to the Lord wholeheartedly are under His protection. The Lord watches over the faithful ones, and He will continue to watch over the faithful ones until the end when the Lord’s return ends this age of history. God’s purpose in watching over us is that we might live forever with Him. We have ETERNAL LIFE in Christ Jesus and the Lord guarantees that for us.

We have ETERNAL SECURITY in and through our relationship with Him. Our service to the Lord is to be offered in OBEDIENCE and SUBMISSION to His will, WALKING in godly service in the FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Those who live this way are walking a “perfect way” before the Lord. The spiritually and morally perfect, or complete, way to live is the Holy Spirit filled life. We can serve the Lord no other way than in Holy Spirit filled power. We are to walk in the Holy Spirit’s power through this life, for only God’s power can be used to walk God’s way, and serve the Lord in an acceptable manner. Psalms 119:1-3, Philippians 3:12-21.

**7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.
8 I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.**

Those who persist in sinful activities are not genuine in their faith. The Lord is clear as to this matter in both the Old and New Testament. By the fruits of their life is a person known. Matthew 7:13-15, James 1:22-25, 2:14-26. If people continue in works of evil and sin, then they have not truly met the Lord as their Saviour, for to meet the Lord is to be transformed in life and lips. Those who are not transformed have not known Him! 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-26, Ephesians 5:1-7.

All of us sin at times, and the genuine believer is grieved by their sins and confesses them. 1 John 1:5-10. The persistent pattern of lying and cheating and committing immoral acts indicates that that person does not know God or the power of the Holy Spirit. To sin repeatedly and consistently indicates that the individual involved does not know God and that he/she is “none of His”. Romans 8:9-11. The Holy Spirit will produce holiness! Those who persist in wickedness are not God’s people and they will be cut off from His creation through judgement, and will not inherit eternal life.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Do we “behave ourselves wisely”? This is a direct challenge to our application of biblical wisdom into daily life. To “behave wisely” is to make decisions on the basis of biblical wisdom and applied principles of truth from the doctrines of God’s Word. It means seeing through the facts of a situation to the doctrinal principles that are important to apply and then apply them into the situation in a God honouring manner, so that we are kept morally safe and the Lord’s good name is magnified. Let us be appliers of the Word of God, not just careless hearers of the Word. James 1:19-27.
2. There is only one way to live a God honouring and God serving life, and that is by means of God’s power. It is only through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit that we can live and serve the Lord in holiness and focused spiritual energy. Only by means of God’s power can we serve God’s way, and He has provided His power through the MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Let us walk in the Spirit and so serve the Lord as we are called to.
3. Do not be deceived believer. Those who persist in sinful lives are not Christians, for to be able to persist in sin and evil without any concerns is to demonstrate that you do not have the indwelling Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicts

of sin, of righteousness and of judgement (John 16:8-11), and if a person has no such conviction in their life they have not got the presence of the Holy Spirit. Anyone without the Holy Spirit indwelling them is not a child of God.

Let us be discerning in these matters so that we are not fooled by the servants of Satan who infiltrate the churches. We must be "fruit inspectors" of the lives of those who claim to be believers and yet whose lives give evidence to the contrary. If the fruit of holiness is not present, then that person is not a believer. Let us beware of all who claim to love the Lord but who lack the fruit of the Holy Spirit, for upon the basis of the words of Jesus, they lie to us! Let us beware of such liars and guard our churches from their evil influences.

DOCTRINES

CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

SIN – ABOMINATION SINS TO THE LORD

ANGELS – SATAN'S DESTINY

ANGELS – SATAN'S STRATEGY

ANGELS – SATAN'S WORK

CHRISTIAN LIFE – ETERNAL LIFE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – ETERNAL SECURITY

CHRISTIAN LIFE – OBEDIENCE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUBMISSION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING

HOLY SPIRIT – FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO MAN

PSALM 102**INTRODUCTION**

This psalm has been assigned to the group of seven “Penitential Psalms”. (Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 130, 143). It is a prayer from a person suffering under the burden of past sin and persecution. How does such a psalm fit into this second group of the “Numbers Section” of the book of Psalms? As we go through it we will see that it is a perfect psalm to sum up the Saviour-Deliverer role of the Lord in His return to the earth to recover His people. This is the Psalm that recalls all the suffering of the Israelites in their dispersal and recalls the Lord’s care over them even though under divine discipline. It is a Psalm that reminds them of the Lord’s care, and that the Lord did hear their cry and answered it in the right time for the deliverance of the saved remnant of His people and their entry into the Millennial Kingdom.

Its structure has been explained well by Dr W G Scroggie as follows:

1. Personal section - A prayer about man’s frailty
 Verses 1 – 2 His cry to the Lord
 Verses 3 – 11 His condition as a sinner in need of deliverance.
2. National section - His consolation as a member of God’s people in their distress
 Verses 12 – 17 The near prospect of deliverance.
 Verses 18 – 22 The far prospects of the kingdom’s establishment and their glorying.
3. Personal section - His Eternal confidence in the Plan of God for Eternity
 Verses 23 – 24a His lingering fears.
 Verses 24b – 28 His steady faith in God and His Plan.

PSALMS 102:1-28

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee. **2** Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily. **3** For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. **4** My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. **5** By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin. **6** I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. **7** I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top. **8** Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. **9** For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping. **10** Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down. **11** My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. **12** But thou, O LORD, shall endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations. **13** Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. **14** For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. **15** So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. **16** When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. **17** He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. **18** This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD. **19** For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth; **20** To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; **21** To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; **22** When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD. **23** He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. **24** I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations. **25** Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. **26** They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: **27** But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. **28** The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

REFLECTION

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.
2 Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily.

The context of this psalm needs to be remembered. It is sung to the Lord upon His throne in Jerusalem after His great victory over the forces of evil. It is a reflective psalm that sings of the cry of the history of Israel. The anguish here is not a new thing, and sums up the emotion of many of the psalms. Psalms 18:6, 27:9, 31:2, 39:12, 56:9, 59:16, 69:17, 143:7.

All of us who have walked a few years through the pressures associated with the service of the Lord have felt the emotions expressed here and uttered these prayers ourselves to the Lord from our place of distress. We have cried for the Lord to hear us, and felt that we were speaking to the ceiling at times. We have asked for the Lord to reply to our prayer quickly because we do not believe we can last another day.

All of us have uttered these things under pressure and all of us have recognised that we have indeed lived until the next day, and the Lord has heard us, but we have to wait for His answer to be seen in time. We have learned patience and learned that our timing is not the Lord's timing, and seen that the Lord is the Lord of time and space, as well as inhabiting eternity. Isaiah 55:8-9, 57:15, Acts 1:6-8.

3 For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.

4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

The great despair of the people of Israel under divine discipline through the centuries has been extreme at many times. Their years and their goods have literally "gone up in smoke" in the pogroms against them and many believers in Jesus through the same centuries have shared their fate. Both Jews and Christians were murdered by the evil crusaders at various times and had their goods pillaged and their families torn asunder. Great evils have been unleashed against God's people in the Church and in Israel and sadly many were perpetrated by those claiming to be "Christian".

Satanic hatred has been strong but by the day this psalm is sung directly to the Lord these days are gone. The psalmist recalls the great suffering of the people of God and their psychological and physical despair at times. He recalls the terrible price that the believer has paid for their faith at times, and the even more terrible price that Israel has paid for their lack of faith through the centuries. Zechariah 12:10-14.

The level of depression and anxiety expressed in these verses is something that many of us have experienced at times in our walk with the Lord. These emotions and experiences are not evidence of being out of spiritual fellowship, although they can be at some times, but are more normally indications of the great pressures associated with great areas and times of service.

SUFFERING for the believer may be due to divine discipline, but it is more often associated with service and the pressures associated with the ANGELIC CONFLICT. Many have experienced great extremes of emotion and physical and psychological pressures in their service for the Lord. Paul details this level of pressure himself as he tells of his early ministry, and at this time he is yet to experience his greatest time of pressure! 1 Corinthians 11:23 -33, 12:7-10, Acts 27:21 – 28:6.

5 By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.

6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

The physical effect of worry and stress is often weight loss through lack of appetite. The physical appearance of the sufferer changes and they literally shrink before our eyes. Their fat is absorbed and then their muscle and all that is left is a skeleton with large lifeless eyes staring into space. None can forget the photos of the Nazi Concentration camp victims whose bodies were destroyed by the evils of those places.

All these great sins against Israel and the Church are recalled in this day and mourned over, and the judgement of the enemies of God recalls all the enemies from the beginning of history and this psalm remembers them all and honours the memory of those who died so terribly at the hands of evil men and women. The psalmist recalls the plight of those who had to flee into the wilderness places with stolen food and like the cormorant eat away from the sight of others, and like the owl, hide by day and scavenge by night. The people of God have been hunted like animals at times, and they have needed the protection of the Lord in all things. Hebrews 11:32-40.

7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.

8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.

Like the sparrow that hides just beyond the reach of the hunter and is ready to quickly fly away whenever danger threatens, so the people of God who have survived at times, have done so through their hyper-vigilance to danger. They have had to be like the sparrows and be ready to fly away at a seconds notice. The enemies of the truth have unbridled hatred towards God's people and rebuke and reproach God's people constantly. They hate and abuse God's people, and are "sworn enemies"; determined to do anything they can to hurt believers and hinder their work for the Lord.

We must understand the extent of the hatred of those who serve Satan, for their determined hatred of the Lord and His people is why their judgement is as severe as it is. Refer to the BTB study JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT, HELL AND HADES. God is absolutely just and fair in the eternal condemnation of the lost, for they have not just refused the free offer of God's grace, they have trampled the BLOOD OF CHRIST shed for them and they have hated the believers who offered them God's mercy, grace, hope, and love.

9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.

10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

There is recognition on the part of the psalmist that the suffering of the people of God is in the hands of God. It is the Lord who lifts us up and the Lord who casts us down. If we have sinned against the Lord we are "cast down" by the Lord, and for Israel this process of DIVINE DISCIPLINE was very carefully spelled out in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27-30. The New Testament makes it clear that the sinful believer is disciplined also, if they persist in sin without confession. Hebrews 12:5-11.

While in the midst of discipline however the believer may still claim Romans 8:28, and through REPENTANCE and CONFESSION OF SIN, actually obtain that promise and be blessed. God specialises in turning the curse of sin into the blessing of grace, but only as we deal with our sin, forsake it, and walk in holiness of life.

11 My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.

12 But thou, O LORD, shall endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

All mankind are born to die. We are born into a race with the curse of sin over us as a result of the FALL OF MAN and we are born in sin, and that means we are doomed to grow old and die. Psalms 39:5-6, 109:23-24, 144:3-4. We presently strut upon the stage of life when young, feeling invincible, but as the years advance we "groan in this body". 2 Corinthians 5:2-4. Old age is ugly, painful and debilitating for most of us. The psalmist remembers the curse of sin and death at this time in the psalm. He is writing for the day when the singers stand before the throne of the Lord. As they sing these words before the throne of the Lord, they are remembering the pain of the past, for all of this is about to be gone forever.

In the Millennial Kingdom men live as Adam could have lived, and all entering this kingdom will never die. They live and reign with the Lord for the full 1000 years and then enter eternity with their Lord. Revelation 20:5ff. The days of aging and sickness and death are over when the Lord reigns in Jerusalem. All this changed forever on that day and this psalm forms a hymn of reflection as to how things were, and contrasts this with how things will be under the rule of the King of kings. We forget that this world was made to last, and that men were created to live forever; sin alone changed that.

13 Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

What a great day it will be when this is sung before the actual throne of the Lord, for the "day" is truly come when the Lord is sitting on His throne. The Lord has "arisen" in power as the King over Jerusalem and has destroyed all the armies besieging the city and murdering its people. He has had full and final mercy upon the city and its people and their time of favour has begun. The "set time" is come. Remember there is a plan by God for mankind and for Jerusalem as the capital of the world, and that time has come at this point.

The PLAN OF GOD is certain and all the saved can now see and celebrate that. Even today the stones of that city are precious and her dust is bottled for people to take away to their homes on the far side of the world. There is no city on earth that is like Jerusalem for generating passion, and in that day its stones will really be precious, for all the roads and pathways will lead to the throne of God. Psalms 79:8-10, 137:4-6. Daniel's prayer for Jerusalem is well and truly answered in that wonderful day. Daniel 9:15-19.

15 So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

16 When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

All the foreign nations will have fear of the name of the Lord in that day. The "heathen" as such are all destroyed by this time, but those who had been heathen and have been saved through the Great Tribulation period now recognise the truth about the Lord and worship God as they ought to. All the leaders of all the peoples who have survived the terrible days of evil in the Great Tribulation are now worshipping the Lord and glorying in the Lord who has been their deliverer as well as Israel's deliverer. Evil is cast out and all can rejoice in a new beginning for mankind. Revelation 19:1 – 20:5.

The Lord himself builds up the city of Zion again and rebuilds that mountain as it will be through the Millennial Kingdom. The surviving people of the city are involved in the clean up after the battles and it takes over seven years to complete that, but the Lord supernaturally rebuilds the Temple area His way.

17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

18 This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

From that point onwards, until the end of human history upon the earth one thousand years later, all who are needy have their advocate in the Lord Jesus Christ, and He fully and thoroughly is their advocate, and none face injustice ever again. God has never despised the prayers of the weak, the poor, or the downtrodden, but in that day they will have an open door to secure immediate justice from the Lord Himself. From the next generation of people, for the entire thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom, there is an entire population that knows what the earth was meant to be, and are able to worship the Lord in purity, truth, and with open and unmitigated joy. Refer to the BTB study again on the MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

The Lord has been watching the entire drama of redemptive history being worked out. The Lord has been an active observer, has answered prayer, and delivered His people all through man's history, and its culmination is reached in this day. We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses even now, with our behaviours observed and our actions applauded or sighed over. Hebrews 12:1ff. We need to remember this truth as we walk carelessly through this world.

The Lord has called us to serve Him in truth, with power and focus, and we are urged to do this in light of the fact that the Lord sees every action and the saints of the past, and the angels appear to also be able to watch key events in our life. Now don't let a pagan be ridiculous about this fact, for this doesn't mean we are observed going to the toilet! What is being observed is active work for the Lord in His power.

I suspect that whenever believers walk in Holy Spirit power their actions are played live in heaven for all to see, and that every time we are filled with the Holy Spirit the crowds in heaven who have an interest in us cheer. Only in heaven will we finally know how this works, but I imagine my saved ancestors looking on and the angels looking on and cheering every great work God does through me, and that brings great joy to me. I suspect that the reality is even greater than I imagine it. Read the Hebrews passage and be encouraged and challenged!

God hears our groanings also and He releases us from the "bonds of death" that otherwise hold us in chains to our mortality and our sicknesses and depressions. The Lord wants us free. John 10:10. Let us walk in freedom and serve the Lord with Holy Spirit power and laugh at death's scary face, for we have the assurance of Dying Grace now, and the abolition of death's power in the Millennial Kingdom.

**21 To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;
22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.**

These verses make it very clear that the "kingdoms" (plural) are in view here. The Lord is King over all the earth at this point, and the psalmist prophetically sees this from his vantage point over five hundred years before the First Advent of the Lord. The Lord has lifted up all the saved people of the earth and brought them into His kingdom. Psalms 9:13-14. The psalmist sees that all the nations will gather together to praise the Lord in that future day, and all will honour the name of Jesus as their King and Lord. Zechariah sees this also, and in Zechariah 14:16-21, he records that all the people will come up annually to Jerusalem and celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles together. Also refer to the words of Isaiah in Isaiah 66:20-24.

Today we have people trying to achieve world unity and internationalism, but this is a satanic operation, attempting to do what only God can do before the Lord does it. When unity is achieved by the Lord it is achieved because of His judgement of the evil men and women who sabotage all unity today. There can be no unity and peace between nations until the Lord eliminates evil and rules in righteousness. Man alone is not capable of this, and he certainly isn't capable of it with satanic and demonic assistance! Refer to the BTB studies on ANTI-CHRIST (WORLD RULER), RETURN OF OUR LORD, NIMROD – INTERNATIONALISM, PEACE, and WAR.

**23 He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.
24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.**

It is the Lord who sets our limit for life upon the earth, and the Lord who shortens our days here if we are disobedient. (The so called, "Sin Unto Death" is the result of disobedience to such a level that the believer is taken home to heaven early. Refer to the BTB study on this.) If as we advance prayerfully through life, we are empowered for service and strengthened on our path, then we can be sure that we are on the Lord's path. If however our strength fades as we advance, then we can be sure that something is wrong with the path, or our walking of it. God provides the power and energy to walk the path He has called us to walk. If power is lacking, prayer needs to be applied until the answer is found as to why there is a problem. Our life is in the Lord's hands. Psalms 68:20.

**25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.
26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:**

The Lord is the only secure source of power to live dynamically and with purpose through the generations of mankind. The Lord is the Creator and sustainer of the universe, and as such is the only source of power to live properly within it. Psalms 9:7-10, 90:1-2, Habakkuk 1:12. When we consider the fact of creation, and the future reality of the unravelling of this universe we can rest secure in the power and plan of the Lord. The Lord has set up this universe and had it running for millions of years, and it is pre-programmed to implode and be folded up and put away at exactly the right time at the end of the Millennial Kingdom. 2 Peter 3:7-18, Revelation 20:5ff.

The planets and star systems are just "garments" of adornment for this present universe and they will be folded up and put away. Isaiah 34:4, 51:6, 65:17-23, Luke 21:33. This world will be dissolved and a new one created, but the Word of God shall never pass away. We are secure because our faith is not built upon the solid rock of this earth, for it is but a crust over a seething mass of magma! Our faith is secure because it rests upon the absolute stability of the character and plan of the God who made the entire universe and has a better one ready to replace this tired old one. Can we ever be short of power to achieve what God wants achieved?

**27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.
28 The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.**

We are creatures of space and time, but the Lord is the Creator of both categories of being, and is Himself beyond them as the infinite and eternal Creator. We cannot get a firm idea of these things, for we are limited to space and time in our thinking, but we can understand enough to get onto our knees and praise the Creator for who He is.

The stability of the CHARACTER OF GOD is absolute and we can rest secure that God does not change, and that means that His PROMISES are absolutely secure. What God has promised will occur, and what God has ordained in His plan will be completed. There is no doubt at all that Jesus will reign and EVIL will be defeated. All of us who are His children are securely destined for heaven and eternity with the Lord. We are secure, not because of anything in us, but because we have a POSITION IN CHRIST, and that position depends upon Him, not us. We are in Christ, established forever! Hallelujah! We stand before the Lord forever.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. At times we will be so stressed in the Lord's work that we will not feel like eating. We may experience such suffering that we long for death to be with the Lord. We may suffer great things for Christ in this life, and yet He hears our prayers and cares for us through the midst of it all. Let us affirm our faith and trust in the Lord even though the Lord will leave us at times in the midst of suffering. Let us see the times of suffering as training times where His love is shown in His keeping power that upholds us. Let us turn our sorrow into praise and glory in the One who carries us through. Deuteronomy 33:27, Isaiah 61:3.

2. We are to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and as we do we celebrate the power of God over all our enemies. Let us praise the Lord every time we walk in the Spirit, for we are walking on the stage of eternity and are being cheered on by a vast throng of angels and men and women who have passed into heaven. Let us remember the great "crowd of witnesses" that surround us and be worthy of their cheers by walking in the Holy Spirit's power and in the light of the Word of God. Let us make sure our actions are worthy of a song of praise.

3. We can save ourselves a lot of effort on "causes" to be involved in during our time upon the earth. While we are to be good stewards of our planet, and no believer is ever to be a polluter and abuser of the planet, we do not worry ourselves over "saving the planet", for we know that Satan will trash this world in the Great Tribulation period, and only the Lord will restore it.

We also know that "world peace" is presently an illusion, for the Lord's words are clear, while He is absent, we will have wars and rumours of wars. Matthew 24:4-8. We do not trouble ourselves trying to "work for peace and world unity", for we know such things are delusions. Once again, we do not encourage wars, but we do what is right and proper in each and every crisis, seeking the Lord's will for our life in each situation, and we look only to Him and His Will for us.

4. Let us get a true vision of the creative power of almighty God, for the Lord is the Creator of the present universe and already has its replacement ready. How secure are we, when we rest in the arms of the One who has this level of detail under control? We rest secure upon the creative power of the Creator of the universe and the One who has a new and eternal one ready. Our minds cannot even conceive of the things the Lord has for us in the future, but let us stabilise our minds upon the truths we can know now. 1 Corinthians 2:9. We stand before the Lord forever because of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us praise His Holy Name for His great gifts to us.

DOCTRINES

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUFFERING

ANGELS – ANGELIC CONFLICT

JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE

BLOOD SACRIFICE

HELL AND HADES

ISRAEL – NATIONAL DIVINE DISCIPLINE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – REPENTANCE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

SIN – FALL OF MAN

GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

ANTICHRIST

CHRIST – WORK ON THE CROSS

SALVATION – REDEMPTION

CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD

NIMROD – INTERNATIONALISM

PEACE

WAR

DYING GRACE

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

PROMISES

EVIL

CHRISTIAN LIFE – POSITION IN CHRIST

PSALM 103**INTRODUCTION**

This is another Psalm accredited to David, and a psalm written to praise the Lord in his own life time, but also prophetically to be sung when the Lord sits upon David's throne. Anyone doubting the greatness of David need only look at the number of his psalms that will be sung forever and you have any doubts silenced. Many look at his great sin, and judge him on the basis of his evil with Bathsheba, but that fails to see David as God sees him. It is important to see that his sin did not stop him being blessed because through CONFESSION of sin he received full forgiveness.

David is the greatest encouragement to all sinners, for in him we see the greatness of God's grace and forgiveness towards ourselves. Isaiah 28:21, Ezekiel 33:11, 2 Peter 3:9. We are just like David; sinners saved by God's great grace. Let us see others and ourselves as God sees us, not as the world sees us. The world sees past sins and evil, but God sees all things washed away in the precious blood of Christ, and nothing is left except total acceptance and blessing. Psalms 103:12, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Hebrews 10:22, Revelation 1:5. This is a Psalm about the greatness of God's GRACE and the wonder of His complete and full forgiveness and acceptance of us through the blood of Christ shed for us.

PSALMS 103:1-22

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; 4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; 5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. 6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgement for all that are oppressed. 7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. 9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. 10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. 13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. 14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. 15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. 17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; 18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. 19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. 20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. 21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. 22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

REFLECTION

**1 Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:**

These first verses are vintage David. Some argue that this psalm was written during the exile in Babylon, but I cannot see that. If I am wrong I will be corrected in heaven and will gladly accept such correction there. Look at and feel the words and the emotion behind them. Bless the Lord indeed! It is blessing the Lord's holy name that is our duty and our privilege in this life and the next, and He is worthy to be praised and blessed aloud.

Let us lift up our voice with David and the singers of the two great ancient Temples (and the future one), and let us praise the name of the Lord who made the heavens and the earth, and has won our salvation and will deliver this planet and its saved people from destruction. Let us not forget the many benefits that the Lord gives us. Deuteronomy 8:2-18, Isaiah 63:7-9, Luke 17:15-19, Ephesians 2:8-15.

**3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;
4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;**

Forgiveness is an amazing thing and one which we need to fully grasp or Satan will undermine our walk through this world. Many believers do not fully grasp the fullness of the Lord's acceptance of them, and His forgiveness of them. We are forgiven fully and completely in Christ Jesus, and the Lord remembers our sins no more. Sin and sickness are taken by the Lord and dealt with. We pass all things over to the Lord that were associated with the fall of Man. Both sin and sickness are results of the fall of Man, and both are to be passed over to the Lord.

The Lord is our healer and our saviour. When we are sick we are to pray, just as when we sin we are to pray. We are forgiven, and we will be lifted up from sickness. The only sickness we will not be lifted up from is the one that is His way of bringing us into His presence in glory. Notice the powerful affirmations of the completed work of Christ for us here.

We are forgiven, we are healed, we are redeemed from the power of sin, we are crowned with loving kindness, and with God's tender mercies. We are made members of the ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD.

There is an error here in our modern theologies that we need to correct. There is healing in the Character and Plan of God for us. We will be healed of all diseases until the day the Lord wants us to come home to be with Him forever. We have absolute security in the Lord's Plan for our life and are to take all our cares to Him; cares about money and about health. We can confidently claim the healing of the Lord in the Plan of God, for the Lord will keep us, deliver us, and heal us, restoring us to His path for our life, until that path is completed.

THERE IS NO HEALING IN THE ATONEMENT; there is healing in the provision of the Lord for us through His eternal plan for each of us! At times we will get sick, and at times we will suffer greatly in those sicknesses. Each and every sickness is to be taken to the Lord in prayer and it will be healed in the Lord's perfect timing in accordance with His perfect plan for our life.

The challenge for each and every believer is to orient themselves to the Plan of God for their life and pray confidently in accordance with the Plan. There is absolute assurance for healing until the day when we are meant to die in accordance with God's perfect timing. Psalms 68:20, 116:15. This is the concept of DYING GRACE. We are told directly to deal with sickness as an opportunity for prayer and faith. We are told to call the elders if we get sick and get them to pray for us. James 5:15.

Sickness is not a judgement for our sin, it is a sign that we live in a fallen world, and it is an opportunity for faith and spiritual growth through believing prayer. There is one sickness that will carry us into the presence of the Lord, and we are to always pray about this matter before we claim healing for the sickness we are praying for. If a person's time is up, and they are to go and be with the Lord, then we are to hear the Holy Spirit on that matter, and pray for their glorious entry into heaven, not for their recovery, for the Lord's Plan is what we are following, not our own desires!

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgement for all that are oppressed.

The Lord provides for us with good things. We have enough to eat in the Lord's service, and while we walk His path for our life we have all we need. Our energy is renewed daily, and we will find that we are enabled to do all things until the day we go to be with the Lord. What has amazed me through the years as I have worked with many of the Lord's choicest servants is how young they appear to be, even though they may be of advanced years. Their holy and dedicated life is renewing every day; it is as if the filling of the Holy Spirit both energizes and renews us daily.

Many men through the centuries have searched for the "fountain of youth" and yet it has been available for mankind all along, for it is the filling of the Holy Spirit. Refer back to the BTB studies on the HOLY SPIRIT. All who are oppressed and under PERSECUTION are supported and encouraged by the Lord. All who labour and are heavy laden can find their rest in the Lord's presence. Matthew 11:28-30.

7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

When we want any good example of the grace and mercy of God we just need to think of the Exodus Generation, for they were the most blessed group, but with their blessing, they were the most disobedient group also. They missed what God had for them and their children entered the land rather than them. Hebrews 3:7 4:12.

We know the Lord is "slow to anger" when we look at the repeated disobedience of the Exodus generation and we see how many times they violated the will of God and yet they were forgiven and allowed to keep moving forward towards the land. Finally they go too far and they are judged and condemned to die in the wilderness wandering, but they still live to train the next generation to be better than they were. Their bodies fall in the wilderness but they see their children grow strong in faith and they know that they will enter the land and be blessed there. Numbers 14:18-43.

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

There is a limit to the patience of the Lord with us, for beyond a certain point we are of no earthly use. At that point we can expect to face the SIN UNTO DEATH, but we have to work very hard to push God that far. Isaiah 28:7-26. Judgement is God's "strange work", but if we force Him to take it He will act. How do we make God angry? When we sin or work any evil work, then we will make God angry. God hates sin, and He hates it when His children follow His enemy Satan and do things that are a disgrace to the name of the Lord our Saviour. Even then we have received grace, never justice for our sins and evil actions.

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

There is no shortage of mercy with God. He is never short in His dealings with us as His people. We are met with mercy and we are blessed with mercy. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is His mercy above us, and yet it

reaches us and blesses us beyond all human measure. We are always under the care of God and His care for us knows no human bounds.

We are forgiven and our sins are removed from us as far as it is conceivable for them to be removed. When people do not feel that the Lord can forgive them it is these verses that you take them to, and you let them see and feel the love of the Lord for them. We are loved, forgiven and blessed beyond all measure. Refer to the BTB studies on BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES, BLESSING OF THE BELIEVER, GIFTS RECEIVED AT SALVATION. Isaiah 1:16-20, 43:25, 45:6-7, 22-25.

13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

The FATHERHOOD OF GOD towards individual members of mankind depends on a relationship existing between that person and the Lord God, and it must be a relationship that is greater than that of Creator. God is not our father because of the creation, for He made Satan and the fallen angels also, and they are not His "children" in any caring relationship sense. They are referred to as the "sons of God", 1 Kings 22:19-21, Job 1:6ff, but that indicates their origin, not their destiny.

For those who "fear the Lord" there is much more than just relationship of origin; there is relationship of care and love. The fear of the Lord refers to the attitude of respect, awe, admiration, gratefulness, and obedient service. We are "pitied" by the Lord as a father pities His children. Now pause and understand the choice of words here and what they mean, for there is glory and joy in these verses like few others.

God is "sad" for us due to our limited understanding of the realities of the universe and what is beyond it, and He is sad for our moral limitations and temptations which trip us up so often. God does not despise our weaknesses; He understands them. God understands our weaknesses in the basic structure of our thinking, and in our moral thinking and behaviour. Any view of a harsh and unforgiving God must be banished from our theology, for slavish fear achieves little of lasting value, but the debt of gratitude to the Gracious and Loving God changes nations.

One of the sermons that was credited with starting the "Great Revival" in 18th Century America, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God", erred badly in this regard, and was far from the truth in its depiction of God's attitude towards mankind. That revival did not bear lasting fruit in all places, and this basic error in that sermon may have accounted for the very temporary nature of that revival in some places. Psalms 78:32-56, Matthew 13:1-23. Refer to the EBCWA CD or web site and study the Church History notes from that period where further comments are made on this, and especially book 270 – "Fruit of the Great Awakening".

We must get our attitude towards God right, and understand His attitude towards us as sinners. God understands our problems! He still demands holiness from us, but He understands why we have difficulties at times and He is not like the pagan gods, Zeus, or Thor the thunderer! Isaiah 28:21. The pagan gods were depicted as angry at man and malicious at times towards man; always ready to throw a thunder bolt at some random person who had offended them. God is not "offended" at our limitations at times, for He made us and knows our limits better than we do.

As noted above, He still expects holiness of life, but He provides the Holy Spirit for us in order that we might meet His standards in His power, for He knows that we have no power ourselves to meet those divine standards. God is merciful to those who accept their limitations and their sinfulness and come to Him for help. God is not capricious, hate filled, or angry at mankind. God has provided the way of salvation for mankind. Matthew 11:28-30, 16:24-26, John 6:36-40, Philippians 2:5-8, 2 Peter 3:9.

God made us and knows that we are from the dust of the earth, and at this point we are limited in all our faculties. God does not deal with us, or place expectations upon us that are appropriate to the angels, for we are men and women and cannot see, understand or achieve things in our own strength. We are provided with the indwelling Holy Spirit for this wonderful reason. God's pity for our created state, lower than the angels, has been expressed in God's provision of the Holy Spirit for us, to lift us up beyond the angels!

God does not just express an emotion towards His creatures; He expresses His feelings in actions that meet the needs of His creatures. God's pity for man's limited and sinful condition has been met by His PLAN for man's SALVATION, and by His plan through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, for a RESSURECTION body for man that has none of the limitations that this present body has. There is judgment, but for those who reject His Great Grace alone. Revelation 20.

15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

We are here upon this earth for such a short time. We are like the grass and the flowers of the fields; we grow and prosper, and in the short years of our youth we have beauty and wonder, and then we age, and wrinkle, dry out and die. Psalms 90:2-6, Isaiah 40:6-8. We may be famous in our day, and even "legends in our own lunch time", but that is all we are; temporary residents of a temporary planet in a space-time universe that will be folded up and put away one day. 2 Peter 3:10-15. God has much better things than have been seen here on earth. Revelation 21-22.

The early church grasped this truth firmly, and in the early persecution kept it in the forefront of their minds as a protection against any arrogance or false priorities. James and Peter referred to this very point of doctrine and its references to the temporary nature of man. James 1:10-11, 1 Peter 1:23-25.

The early apostles strongly contrasted the present, temporary state of mankind, and reflected upon the permanence of the Word of God and the destiny of believers within God's Plan. Jesus also refers to this in the Sermon on the Mount, where He referred to the beauty of the grass flowers and the lushness of the Spring grasses, and reminded His hearers that even the most wealthy people do not look any better than the beauty of the creation of God, and that for all their wealth, their reasoning mind, and their physical and political power, they last no longer than the grasses either. Matthew 6:25-34.

Jesus calls His hearers to reflect upon the temporary nature of all the beautiful created things in this universe and reflect that if God put that much effort into caring for things that do not last more than a few days, then He will not put less effort into us, who in Christ will last forever!

17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

Things do not last; they rust, they rot and the thieves steal them! Matthew 6:19-21. Let us not invest our heart's energy into things that can be taken from us, but store up our treasure in heaven where it is unassailable and ready to bring glory to the Lord forever. 1 Corinthians 3:10-17, James 5:1-3. Wealth that we store up and do not use for the service and glory of God is wealth that is testimony against us on the last day when we receive our eternal rewards. We are judged by God and lose eternal rewards if we have clung to things that ought to have been used for the glory of God and given away! Let us see "things" for what they are; simply items to be used for the glory of God upon our brief march through time and space. Refer to the BTB study STEWARDSHIP.

God's mercy is without limitation except our ability to receive it. The only limitation upon our ability to receive what God has is our limitation of faith and obedience. If we do not "trust and obey" then we cannot be "happy in Jesus" as the old song says! God's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. God's righteousness is towards all who have respect for the Lord and are obedient to His Holy Word. There is blessing for all who obey, and there is also "blessing by association" to the next generation and even those around the obedient believer.

Blessing by association does not mean that the people are saved, but that they are blessed by their association with the believer. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is meant to bless others and it does. There is blessing to all who remember the Word of God and obey it. We are challenged here to build upon simple blessing by association with mature and advancing believers and make our own blessing through our spiritually powerful and obedient life style. John 15:7-17, James 1:22-25, 3:14-26.

19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Already the throne of the Lord Jesus is prepared for Jerusalem, and the Millennial Kingdom, but the glory is even greater than that; the Lord has His throne for eternity already prepared, as He has the eternal state already prepared. The Lord will rule over all nations in the Millennial Kingdom. The angels bless the Lord, for they see the beginning and the end, and they see the mighty power of God, even though they themselves are mighty in power in relationship to us. The elect angels are absolutely obedient to the Lord, and they set the example for us to follow, for we also are commanded to hearken to the voice of His word. John 15:10, 14.

21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

The psalmist cries aloud the command to bless the Lord and worship His holy name. The Lord is to be praised and praised with a mighty voice, and we are slack in our worship at times. We need to get a vision of the glory of God more often, and praise the Lord with more vigour than we do. The purpose of our study of the Psalms is to get these visions of the glory and majesty of the ruling God and lift our worship to the level it ought to be. Let us bless the Lord. Let us ensure that everything within us blesses His holy name. This is the best sacrifice we can offer the Lord at this time and forever; the sacrifice of praise, service to the Lord and others, and holiness of life in the Holy Spirit's purifying power. Romans 12:1, Ephesians 5:1-7, Philippians 2:17-18, 4:17-18.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us be prayerful and thoughtful in the matter of prayers for the sick. There is one sickness which is "unto death" and that believer's entry into heaven, and if this sickness is their last one, then we need to be prayerful in that direction. Having been assured that this is not the case, we are to pray with fervent focused Holy Spirit filled power and claim the healing that there always is in Christ Jesus to keep advancing in the Plan of God for the life. There is no healing in the atonement as such, but that is because the power available to us doesn't need to be locked there, for

God's power for our healing is far greater; it is based in the very Character and Plan of Almighty God for our lives upon this earth.

2. God's pity towards us has already been answered by God's provision for us as His saved children. We have at least 34 things received at salvation that provide all spiritual power and provisions for us, and eliminate all the limitations that this present earthly body holds. The Lord has also provided a resurrection body, like that of the Lord's amazing body, so that we will be ready for the eternal state that mankind in Christ Jesus has been re-made for. Let us praise the Lord for His amazing provisions, for He cares for us now, but His care is beyond all we could ever hope or think of.

3. Let us remember what we could call the "logic of temporary beauty" as the Lord encouraged His hearers to in the "Sermon on the Mount". We are of more significance than the flowers of the grasses and the fields. We are of more significance than the birds of the trees. They live and glorify God by their beauty and do not consider their tomorrows for they live for each day to glorify God.

Let us do the same and leave tomorrow to the grace, love and mercy of the Lord. Let us not labour for things that do not matter eternally. Let us not gather things about us for the fires that will burn them up eventually. Let us use all things we have to bring glory to the Lord and serve Him now and forever. Let us get our eyes on the praises of God and off the things that surround us in this world.

4. Let us always remember that the Lord has not called us to be hearers of the Word, but "doers" of the Word. We are called to turn blessing by association with mature believers into powerful spiritual blessings through our obedience to the Word of God. Let us hear the Word, believe the Word, and apply the Word into the fabric of our daily lives.

DOCTRINES

CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

GRACE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD

HEALING – THERE IS NO HEALING IN THE ATONEMENT

DYING GRACE

HOLY SPIRIT – FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO MAN

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

PERSECUTION

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

CHRISTIAN LIFE – BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST

CHRISTIAN LIFE – BLESSING OF THE BELIEVER

CHRISTIAN LIFE – GIFTS GIVEN AT SALVATION

GOD – FATHERHOOD OF GOD

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

SALVATION

SALVATION – REDEMPTION

RESURRECTION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – STEWARDSHIP

CHRISTIAN LIFE – OBEDIENCE

GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUFFERING

PSALM 104

INTRODUCTION

The whole earth praises God in this psalm. It has been called "An Ode to Creation". It loosely follows the Genesis Creation Story. It is a systematic song of praise from the entire created universe to the King upon the throne; the King who made it all.

Genesis 1:3-8	=	Psalms 104:1-4	Day 1 and day 2 of creation
Genesis 1:9-10	=	verses 5 – 9	Day 3 – first half of that day
Genesis 1:11-13	=	verses 10 – 13	Day 3 second half of that day
Genesis 1:14- 19	=	verses 14 – 31	Days 4 – 6.

The poem is divided into seven stanzas.

1. Verses 1 – 4. God's active power is seen in the entire creation.
2. Verses 5 – 9. God separates the earth from the waters – God has control over all things.
3. Verses 10 – 18. God provides for men, the animals, and the birds.
4. Verses 19 – 23. God has provided the sun and moon for the telling of time, that men might know their time is limited upon this created world.
5. Verses 24 – 26. God has provided great richness for man in the earth and sea.
6. Verses 27 – 30. God holds all things together and all things depend upon Him.
7. Verses 31 – 35. Praise and worship is the correct response to the Creator for the entire creation.

PSALMS 104:1-35

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. **2** Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: **3** Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: **4** Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: **5** Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. **6** Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. **7** At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. **8** They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. **9** Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth. **10** He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. **11** They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. **12** By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. **13** He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. **14** He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; **15** And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart. **16** The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted; **17** Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. **18** The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies. **19** He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down. **20** Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. **21** The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. **22** The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. **23** Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening. **24** O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. **25** So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. **26** There go the ships: there is that Leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. **27** These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. **28** That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. **29** Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. **30** Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth. **31** The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works. **32** He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke. **33** I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. **34** My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD. **35** Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

REFLECTION

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.
2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:
3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:
4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

It is always good to remember who God is and what He has done, for then you have the right attitude towards yourself and towards the creation itself. The psalmist blesses the name and character of almighty God for who He is and what He has done in the creation. The Lord is King and Creator and has clothed Himself in glory through His work. In the creation we see the glorious beauty of the CHARACTER OF GOD.

Go on line today and check out the web entry for the “Hubble telescope”, and look at the images that the Hubble Telescope has returned to earth so far. These images are amazing beyond anything we could have even dreamed of. The heavens are compared to the clothing the Lord has put on that we might see part of His glory. The light of some of the star systems that we now see has been travelling to earth for over 100 million years! Most of these star systems do not now even exist; it is only their light that we presently see!

The earth is where we live, on the “third rock from our sun” in a corner of the Milky Way galaxy, which is one amongst millions; all of which have been created by God for His glory and our wonder. Look up believer and wonder at the majesty and glory of the Creator God and praise His Holy Name with the psalmist right now. Psalms 4:4, 8:3, 19:1, 29:1-4, 93:1, 97:6, 102:25, 103:19, Jeremiah 32:17-19, 2 Peter 3:5-13. The heavens are designed to give light to man in both senses; they give light by day and night, but also they “light our path” to the Creator God.

The heavens show us that there is a Creator and that He delights in order and in beauty. There are things in the galaxies that are beautiful beyond all words and they exist for the glory of God alone. There are no extra-terrestrials waiting to communicate with us from far off galaxies; there are only the angelic forces which pretend to be anything they can be, in order to deceive mankind. The galaxies are the “garments of God”. Garments in the ancient world were not just covering, but were indications of the status of a person. The glory and majesty of any person in the ancient world was shown by the nature of their garments. The heavens proclaim the majesty of God!

The creative power of God is glimpsed in the structure of the world the Lord made for us. The most mysterious power in the creation to the Israelites was the sea, and yet the Lord “laid the beams for His house” in the depths of the seas. This is a very poetic way of saying, the very structure of the earth is rooted and grounded in the heart of the seas, and it is as mysterious as it is strong. Today we understand that the “beams” of the tectonic plates of the earth are mostly to be found under the seas. Perhaps it is this that the psalmist poetically and prophetically refers to, or just to the mystery and awesome power of the seas.

The poetic picture of the clouds as the chariot of God reminds us that this is indeed a poem, not a newspaper article. The psalmist is not picturing God in the clouds, but poetically reminding us that the changing beauty and awe of the natural world speaks of its Creator who actively rules over it all. All the atmospheric forces are under God’s control and at His direction; the tectonic plates that form the earth, the clouds that travel over it, and the winds that blow upon it. Not just the physical, but also the spiritual forces are under the Lord’s power and control. The angels are the ministers/servants of the Lord. Refer to the BTB study ANGELS.

- 5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.**
- 6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.**
- 7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.**
- 8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.**
- 9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.**

God laid the foundations of the earth and they will not be removed until the end of time. Remember the term “forever”, or “until the ages end”, reminds us that this earth is a “Space-Time” creation with an allotted span to run and then to be wound up and put away. 2 Peter 3:5-13. During the final years of the Great Tribulation period there will be world wide earthquakes such that the world has not seen since it was formed. Matthew 24:7, Revelation 6:12, 8:5, 11:13-19, 16:18.

Many will fear at this time that the entire earth is being destroyed, but the Word of God here and in other places tell us that these are but the “birth pangs” of a new world order that the Lord will bring in through His SECOND ADVENT. Believers in these last terrible days before the Lord returns will have peace of mind, but the unbelievers will be in blind panic. Luke 23:30, Revelation 6:16.

The Lord set up the universe and then covered over the hidden structural joints with the mountains and the seas. All the great meeting points of the tectonic plates were hidden from mankind until just a hundred years ago when they started to be seen and understood as the jigsaw like structure that held the crust of earth together. Most of the great fault lines are a mile or more under the seas, but some may be seen in the great gashes in the earth in the Great Rift Valley, the San Andreas fault, or in the great mountain ranges that mark the meeting point of the land masses.

Many of the great mountain ranges will be lowered in those last terrible days of the Great Tribulation period and the entire continental structure will be changed, and the very appearance and size of the land masses will be altered. God has set the present boundaries of the seas and the various boundaries of the lands, but all these things are in the Lord’s hands, and all will be changed when the Millennial Kingdom begins.

It is a reminder to us that the Creator has not finished His work upon the earth until the Lord Jesus reigns, and it is only then that we will see the world as it can be under God’s perfect rule. There will still be seas in the Millennial Kingdom, as fish are mentioned in a number of passages, but the seas then may cover far smaller areas than today’s oceans.

It appears that the vapour canopy that once covered the pre-flood earth will be restored to totally protect the Millennial Kingdom earth from cosmic radiation. The earth will then be able to return to its pre-flood luxuriant state, and that means that a vast amount of the water in the seas is supernaturally returned to the Ozone layer. This will uncover vast amounts of continental shelf areas of the present oceans and return them back to pastoral lands.

The lowering of many of the mighty mountain ranges will also mean that the land created will be more productive and so the entire uncovered earth may be able to become pastoral lands, even Antarctica, for the first time in tens of thousands of years will bloom again as it once did. Refer to the BTB study on the MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

10 He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.

12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

God's plan for this earth was perfect; there were just enough rivers and water provision for all the animals and birds to live and prosper in the pre-flood world. The changing climate after the flood, mainly due to climate changes brought on by that world wide catastrophe created deforestation, vast mountain ranges and their resultant weather patterns, and has altered that natural balance. Even though the climate changed at that point there was still great prosperity and lushness for many centuries afterwards, but man's deforestation, and the changes in climate with storm systems affected things.

We must remember that the Sahara Desert was pastoral land 10,000 years ago, and the Arabian Peninsula was fertile pastoral land until 5000 years ago. These areas were made fragile after the flood, but man's activities had the final effect that started a cycle of desert formation really going.

Deserts are made equally by man's stupidity and evil and climate changes brought about by God through man's original fall. North Africa was rich and fertile but warfare and man's evils destroyed the populations and the expertise to keep it so and it is now desert. Deforestation removed the cycle that keeps lands watered and the streams and rivers flowing down the valleys that the washing of the rains made. The trees and the waters are all inter-related in a total system that God made.

Man has broken the balance that God made, and man's evil has speeded up the process begun by the Great Flood, but the God-Man Jesus will restore that wonderful divine balance when He returns. Man's pathetic efforts to stop climate change now (2015) are doomed to failure, and will only open the door for more centralized control, and that is exactly what the Anti-Christ wants. One of the great things about the Millennial Kingdom is that all who live upon the earth then will see the world as it was before Satan's evil and man's sin destroyed it. It will be a wonderful time.

13 He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;

The cycles of nature are the cycles of God. The rains and the fertility of the soils are the bounty of God and the personal actions of the Creator are to be praised more and more by believers. The Lord has created everything we need for our animals and for our own health. The herbs are there for the "service" of our health. God has provided food and medicine in the plants that surround us. Man was provided for through the Lord's provisions of herbs and animals to eat them.

We need to recognise the bounty that the Lord has given us and praise the Lord for all the things the earth has provided. Many believers forget to thank the Lord for all the herbs and medicines that the earth has provided, and we ought not to forget such things, but praise God whenever we take a tablet for any illness, for it is made of the substances the Lord placed in the earth for us.

15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

16 The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

The psalmist also reminds us that the pleasant things we enjoy all have their origins in the Lord's provision. Now be careful believer when you go through verse fifteen, for the psalmist isn't encouraging people to be drunken, but don't go onto a booze sermon at this point either. The Bible does not condemn wine as a drink, but universally condemns drunkenness. Refer to the BTB study DRINKING ALCOHOL. For most alcoholic drinks ought to be avoided, but wine for the Jewish people was, and is, a source of joy with their food, and this joy is what is in view here.

Olive oil was used to tone the skin as well as flavour, cook and dip the bread into. It is a very healthy food source of helpful nutrients and with wholemeal bread is a complete meal in itself. The psalmist sings of the mighty trees and the wonderfully lush provisions of the Lord for all His people, for food, drink and the finest timber for their homes.

17 Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house.

18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies.

Many of the wonders of nature can either be eaten, used for medicine, or used for shelter, but they also can be observed, admired, and we can praise God for them all. The psalmist picks a couple of significant images of beauty and wonder to praise God for here. He doesn't pick magnificent snow covered mountains but the living things that abound in the forests. It is the abundant life of the forests that draws the psalmist not the isolated and lonely grandeur of the mountains. It is interesting that in our over crowded world we think of escape to the desolate hills, but in this day they thought of the wonders of the animal and bird kingdoms to glory in rather than the dark foreboding coldness of the mountains.

He thinks here of the birds making their nests in the highest of the trees, and the mountain goats finding shelter in the high mountains with the rock hyraxes as their companions. The psalmist picks animals and birds not used for food, but living creatures which made men think of the wonders of God's provisions, so that even the goats and hyraxes were provided for with their niche in God's plan for all of nature.

- 19 He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.
 20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.
 21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.
 22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.
 23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.**

The universe has its own built in clock and time keeping for times and seasons. The sun and moon set our time frames here and they have been created to achieve this. We are reminded each and every day that the Lord has established the "times and seasons" for this world and there will come a "last day" of this present age, and there will be a final "last day" for this entire creation. Mathew 16:3, Luke 21:24, Acts 1:7, 2 Peter 3:5-15.

There is a place for the darkness and the light, and all the various animals and birds have their niche to live and hunt in day or night. Each of the animals "seeks its meat from God" for the Lord has made them and they are provided for by the Lord; each animal with its niche within nature, and each provided for by the Lord within His balanced universe. Man disturbs the balance, but the Lord Jesus will restore the balance when He returns and it will not be broken again until the world ends and is replaced by a better one.

- 24 O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.
 25 So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.
 26 There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.**

How great is our God? The answer is clear from this psalm; our God is far greater than we acknowledge, and we are challenged to praise Him more than we do. His works are amazing and we do not praise the Lord enough to remind ourselves of His amazing grace, let alone His amazing universe. The earth is full of signs of the richness of the Lord's creative power.

The creatures of the land are amazing, but the vast number of amazing creatures in the sea is even more amazing. Some of the creatures of the sea are huge and bring man to his knees in awe. Leviathan was a great sea creature; possibly the Whale Shark or some other Whale like creature that made the ancients wonder and fear the sea above all else in the creation. They knew that deep within the sea were huge and dangerous creatures.

As a young man I worked on a harbour here in New Zealand where the ancient Maori peoples of our land had hunted the great sharks to salt and dry for food. We caught many of these creatures, and when you see a twenty foot shark tear apart a very large fish that you have on your fishing line you feel deep fear. I remember pulling in a large eating fish on my fishing line, and then I suddenly felt the line go slack, and discovered in seconds just this large fish head attached to my hook with the body eaten off by one giant snap of an unseen set of even larger jaws. There is fear and wonder in the seas, even now.

- 27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.
 28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.
 29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.
 30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.**

All nature waits for the Lord's provision for their life. All nature recognises God, except mankind. We will often receive food and blessing and not give thanks to the One who has provided for us. The psalmist speaks to God, "You open your hand", he says, and nature is fed and watered. The Lord provides all that nature needs. As the animal works, and as man works the Lord provides for them. Refer to the BTB study WORK and WELFARE. We are all meant to work hard, and as we work to pray for the Lord's provision, and then give thanks when it is provided for us. The Lord expects all people to work hard, but as we work we will be provided for.

We are to bless the Lord and praise Him for His provisions, for they will always be there for us as we devote our days to the Lord. There is a cycle in this universe. We are born, we live, we eat, we sicken and we die and return to the dust from which we came. As each generation dies another rises up to replace them, and the Lord renews the face of the earth, and one day, when Jesus reigns the entire surface of the earth will be renewed and restored.

- 31 The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.
 32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.**

The earth will not last forever, but the glory of the Lord will be praised by all believers forever and ever! We are meant to rejoice in the Lord, for the Lord rejoices in His work also. The Lord is active upon the earth, and He looks deeply into the earth and its wonders and makes them more wonderful. God can create earthquakes at any time and volcanoes are His work. The plates that make up the earth are fragile and sit upon hot lava. We forget that we sit upon a molten core on this earth, and the top few miles of the earth alone isn't superheated lava. We are all too confident, and we have no

reason to be as we sit upon this earth. We sit upon a created world and it still has the furnaces that made it working underneath our very feet. The many major earthquakes in New Zealand over recent months (September 2010 – July 2012) have made many think again about their values, but yet others still remain careless.

**33 I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.
34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.**

Even though we walk upon the fragile crust of the earth we are to walk in song and praise. I enjoy going to an area to the south of my city Auckland, around Rotorua and Lake Taupo, where there is a vast amount of volcanic activity. I enjoy feeling the earth shudder beneath me as I stand beside a geyser or volcanic vent. It is an area that reminds me of the creative power of God.

My own city Auckland is built upon 50 volcanoes, the last of which exploded and formed an island just off the present port in 1370 AD. The next undersea volcano "hot spot" is overdue to erupt, and may do so at any time. A mild earthquake at 2.7 occurred in the area where the volcano is expected just a fortnight ago in early July of 2011. What is my response to be to all this? It is to be to sing praise to the Lord and keep my focus upon what the Lord wants me to do in this city, and just do it prayerfully. When it is time to move I will be able to move, but not before.

We are called to live where the Lord calls us to live and do what the Lord wishes us to do and not concern ourselves about what some call "natural disasters". While we have our being we are to praise the Lord, for all our thoughts about and of Him will be sweet, and all He does can be praised. If we are glad in the Lord's presence we are safe and have a focus for our lives. It is a choice to worship the Lord in the midst of danger, but it is a choice we are urged to make every day we face dangers. Psalms 32:8-11, Habakkuk 3:17-19, Philippians 4:4.

35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

The day when this verse is fulfilled will have come when the Lord sits upon His throne in Jerusalem, for He deals with all the unbelievers on the day of His return. The Millennial Kingdom is wonderful and the earth restored because the demonic forces that destroyed the earth are eliminated, and the men who followed them are also eliminated from the planet. When all the people you have upon the earth are servants of the Lord, what you have is the certainty that the earth can be cared for properly, and it will be for the last 1000 years of man's history upon this earth. You can see why the psalmist praises the Lord, for when all evil is gone, then truly this earth is as it was made to be.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us lift up our eyes to the heavens and praise the Lord for His majesty, His creative power, and His goodness towards us. Unbelievers in the end of the Great Tribulation will cry out for the hills to fall upon them to cover them from the wrath of God, but we, as believers, fall before the Lord of creation and worship. God calls us to worship and praise Him as the Creator-Saviour God; the only alternative to holy fear-awe towards the Lord's majesty is the paralysed snivelling fear of the unbeliever when they fully face the awesome judging power of the One they have insulted. Let us worship in the "fear of the Lord", and so avoid the fear of the unbelievers who have no hope only because they have walked away from hope.

2. Let us praise the Lord as we head into daily dangers. We all walk upon this fragile crust of earth, and even though some of us live amongst volcanoes and geysers, all of us live upon a fragile crust that is only a few miles thick before the lava flows. Let us picture the lava under our feet and praise the Lord's holy name, for we are in His hands, not the hands of an uncaring natural force!

DOCTRINES

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

ANGELS

CHRIST – FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

DRINKING ALCOHOL

WORK

WELFARE

PSALM 105

INTRODUCTION

This psalm and the next are a pair, and both reflect upon the history of Israel and God's dealing with them. This psalm before us covers the story of Israel from God's covenant with Abram through until the settlement of the land of Canaan; a period of about 600 years. It is a love story of God's grace towards His people and His bringing them through to the land He had promised them against the odds.

Verses 1 – 6 Exhortation to praise the Lord for all He has done.
 Verses 7 – 11 God's Covenant with Abram.
 Verses 12 – 15 The Grace of God over the early Fathers of the nation.
 Verses 16 – 22 The story of Joseph.

Verses 23 – 25 The oppression of the people in Egypt.
 Verses 26 – 38 The Exodus.
 Verses 39 – 41 God's provision during the wilderness wanderings.
 Verses 42 – 45 The miraculous provisions for the settlement of Canaan.

Modern Bible critics refer to the early history of Israel as "myth" and yet it is so central that these psalms are anchored in these events as history and when the Lord sits upon His throne, it is this aspect of Israel's early history that will be sung in thanks to Him. The early history of this family of Abraham makes them a nation. It is central to their story, and it is the ground of their relationship with the Lord Jesus to whom they give thanks on this last day.

PSALMS 105:1- 45

1 O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. 2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works. 3 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. 4 Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore. 5 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgements of his mouth; 6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen. 7 He is the LORD our God: his judgements are in all the earth. 8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. 9 Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; 10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: 11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance: 12 When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it. 13 When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; 14 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes; 15 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. 16 Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread. 17 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: 18 Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: 19 Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him. 20 The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. 21 He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: 22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom. 23 Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourn'd in the land of Ham. 24 And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies. 25 He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants. 26 He sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he had chosen. 27 They shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. 28 He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word. 29 He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. 30 Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings. 31 He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts. 32 He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land. 33 He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts. 34 He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number, 35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground. 36 He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength. 37 He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes. 38 Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them. 39 He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night. 40 The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven. 41 He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river. 42 For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant. 43 And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness: 44 And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people; 45 That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.

REFLECTION

**1 O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.
 2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.**

These psalms are sung before the throne of the Lord and so the enthusiasm with which the singers urge all their countrymen to join them is understandable. The Lord is listening as the people finally sing these psalms on that

wonderful day. When victory is won, and it is the end of the race, it is a good thing to reflect back to the start of the story and remember how everything began. The value of this in the story of Israel is to recall the amazing grace of God throughout their history.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and to tell the people of His past deeds, and sing about His wonderful works on their behalf. Psalms 136:1-3, 1 Chronicles 16:7-36. It is a good thing to talk often of the wonderful works of the Lord, for by speaking often of the Lord's work we are encouraged and strengthened in all we do in His holy name. Malachi 3:16-17.

3 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

4 Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.

To glory in the name of a person is to rejoice over their character and the love you have for them. It is this love relationship that the psalmist speaks of here, for it is love that the Lord wants from us as His children. God does not want just respectful and polite worship; He wants abandoned, loving and passionate worship from us. If we are serious about our relationship with the Lord then we will seek His face and desire His truth. To love the Lord is to "speak often of Him", as we saw in the Malachi passage above.

If a person knows the Lord, then that person will desire to have the strength and power of the Lord in their life. They will desire His truth and power to energise them with all their heart and mind. They will seek the face/fellowship of the Lord above all else in this earth. There is nothing else that matters to a lover of the Lord than being in living and satisfying fellowship with Him.

5 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgements of his mouth;

6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.

Who we are as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, are children of the living God. We have security because of who the Lord is and how our relationship with Him was formed; we have entered the ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD by adoption, through the REDEMPTION of God. Refer again to the BTB studies of these doctrines, especially GIFTS GIVEN AT SALVATION. The marvellous works that the Lord has done for us is because of His Character, not our deserving natures. We are recipients of GRACE.

We are BORN AGAIN into His family and as His children the Lord loves us with a love that is beyond all human standards, and we stand with the great men and women of faith in the past. We have joined an extended family that is blessed beyond words. We are children of Abraham and of Jacob. Abraham is such a hero of faith, but Jacob is such a doggy character at times, and this gives us even more hope and encouragement. Both men failed at times, and their successes and failures are written up for our encouragement. We walk by faith, in the grace, love and mercy of God, just as these men did. We walk by God's power, not our own! 1 Peter 2:9-10.

We stand upon a foundation of the CHARACTER AND PLAN OF GOD, and within a family that sets us high standards to follow, but demonstrates at every turn of their lives just how gracious God was and is towards His children. We can live up to the standard of our father Abraham by remembering how he lived and walked. He walked by faith and depended upon the grace, mercy, and power of God. Genesis 15:1-6, Habakkuk 2:1-4. The words given to Abraham and repeated to Habakkuk many centuries later ring through history and remind us that there is no other way to walk before the Lord than by faith in the Lord and in dependence upon His power and in obedience to the LIGHT He gives.

The double work of God upon His children is referred to in verse five; He speaks words of truth and judgement into our hearts, and He does wonders in our life and brings us through in situations beyond our human power. The New Testament writers grasped these truths and embraced the story of grace told here with praise and worship, for they saw that if the Lord can bless Abraham and Jacob, then there is hope for us all. "The Just (Romans 1:17), shall live (Galatians 3:11), by faith" (Hebrews 10:38).

7 He is the LORD our God: his judgements are in all the earth.

8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

We do not follow myths and legends, but the truths of God recorded by godly men, and from their lives we can see what God does with people who devote themselves to Him. 2 Peter 1:16. We follow the Lord God over the heavens and the earth; the Creator of the entire universe. We can forget these truths when we get distracted by our fears and concerns, but God never forgets His PROMISES to us. God remembers His covenants and His promises to us, and they are always kept. Even when we deny Him and His Power at times, He does not deny us access to His power, for He cannot deny Himself. 2 Timothy 2:13.

God remembers His Word and always fulfils it fully, for His promises do not depend upon our frail characters but upon the solid rock of His character and plan. Man may be upon the earth a thousand generations, but the Lord's Word will not be altered or forgotten by the Lord; it will always be able to be claimed, applied into life, and the power of God will always be released into such a life as applies the Word. We are called to SUBMISSION to the will of God and OBEDIENCE to the Word of God.

9 Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant:

It is worth pausing at this point and studying the doctrinal studies on these three important people, for each in their own way is a study of grace and mercy in action. Refer to the BTB studies, ABRAHAM – FAITH, ISAAC – TYPE OF CHRIST, JACOB – THE PATRIARCH. God made His covenant with Abraham and that covenant stands until the end of time.

Remember that these Psalms will be sung before the throne of the Lord Jesus as He sits upon the Temple Mount on the day He will enter His kingdom as its King. It is appropriate for the Jewish people to proclaim God's Grace through the years at this time when Jesus takes His throne, for the covenants are all fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom, and it begins by a solemn recalling of all the promises that are fulfilled here.

This is the way the Middle Eastern peoples did things; they recalled the past promises that were fulfilled before they relaxed and enjoyed the fulfilment. They were consciously and publicly thankful for the grace, mercy and dependability of God, and they will be on that wonderful day when this psalm is sung directly to the Lord. The Jewish people will look back on that glorious day over 4000 years to the birth of Abraham and the start of the promises that find their fulfilment in the Millennial reign of Christ. Refer back to the BTB study MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

**11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:
12 When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.**

When Abram arrived in Canaan he had a large household of servants and he had vast numbers of sheep, goats, and other livestock, but against the people of the land they were "few" indeed. It was a violent time, with the cities heavily defended by very high walls and with armies going to and fro in the land at times. Genesis 14:1ff.

Abram practised faith and lived in a tent at the time when others sought protection behind high walls. Genesis 13:12-13, 14:11-12. The high walls of Sodom didn't save Lot, but faith positioned Abram to be able to avoid capture by the enemy forces that invaded the land. They were strangers in the land and Abram, Isaac and Jacob had to negotiate pastoral rights everywhere they went, and finally even negotiate to buy land to bury their dead. Genesis 23.

**13 When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people;
14 He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes;**

Abram wandered from place to place, crossing city-state boundaries and pasturing his flocks and herds in places where he remained a stranger all his life. Having grown up in the most cultured city of the ancient world of his day, Ur of the Chaldees, he lived the rest of his life in a tent. He went from place to place at a time when such nomadic life styles made the people who lived them the objects of the suspicion of all. Nomadic peoples were and are still often hated by all settled people as potential cattle thieves and rustlers.

God's protection was over Abram all through his life. The Lord personally intervened on his behalf with Pharaoh of Egypt, Genesis 12:10-20, and with Abimelech king of Gerar, Genesis 20:1-18. God's Plan for our life is indeed the best plan, and while he walks with God, even though he fails at times, the Lord is with him to protect his going out and his coming in. Hebrews 11:8-19.

**15 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.
16 Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.**

God's message to anyone who tries to harm us or our reputation when we are faithfully serving Him is the same as it was regarding Abram; "Touch not my anointed!" God will not have any evil power attack His people and escape without divine opposition to them. I have suffered several severe attacks by evil people during my years of ministry, and on each occasion I have been able to relax and leave the evil people to the judgement of the Lord. Each one was a religious person, and they were "wicked" in their words and deeds, but I passed them over to the Lord. The Lord does such a better job than we can ever do.

No believer needs to ever trouble themselves or be distracted by defending themselves, for the Lord will deal with enemy attack. Our job is just to keep moving forward in His service fully equipped in the armour of the Holy Spirit. Refer to BTB study CHRISTIAN SOLDIER. Our task is to be dressed spiritually appropriately as soldiers of the Lord and advance courageously and do the work the Lord has called us to do. We leave our security in the Lord's hands and we focus on the battles He has called us to fight, leaving our safety in the Lord's hands. When discipline is needed the Lord will bring it about, and if there is famine required in order to remind the people of the truth of their total dependency on the Lord, then the Lord will bring famine.

**17 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant:
18 Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron:**

The sons of Jacob were evil in their attitudes towards Joseph, but the Lord used their very malice to bring them to their senses and through many years of famine He brought them all to the place of humility, and they found their deliverance at the feet of the younger brother they had despised. Genesis 41ff. What the brothers had meant for evil in selling their brother Joseph into slavery the Lord turned to good for their own deliverance and Joseph's blessing. God delights in turning cursing into blessing in the Lord's plan. Romans 8:28-39.

Joseph suffered great privation as a slave, and many who quickly read the Genesis account skip over the years in jail where he suffered greatly. This man was held in a prison where men were sent to die and he applied the same level of faith that Abraham had to apply into each and every day. Joseph believed that the Lord was not finished with him, and clung to the revelation of his being a ruler one day; he was lifted up and delivered to a great position in Egypt under the Hyksos rulers.

19 Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

20 The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

He was sorely tested and tried in his faith, and so will all who are called to do great things. The Lord can only use tried and tested men and women in great tasks, and the testing of Joseph was indeed a serious testing. Joseph had to wait in prison for many years before the “time” came for him to rise up and take charge over Egypt. He had to learn things in prison that would prepare him to rule over the entire land of Egypt, and he learned every lesson. He came from jail one day and was Prime Minister of Egypt the next day and he did the job well and delivered Egypt.

He had been arrogant, but God’s training academy in the jail was such that he had every piece of arrogance removed from him by the time he became the second ruler of the land. Genesis 39-49. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on this section of Genesis and see the full story of this great and godly man Joseph.

21 He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance:

22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

When you have been a “jail bird” for over ten years you have learned a great deal, but others will simply see you as a “jail bird”. Joseph gained respect by his performance as Prime Minister of the land and his famine preparation and then relief program made him the most respected man in Egypt. His plan to nationalise the land prepared Egypt for a prosperity that lasted for the next hundred and fifty years. This was a man who could be trusted with money, because he had learned in prison that all that mattered was the will of the Lord and so power and wealth didn’t deceive him.

Wealth deceives many into thinking that money and power matters, when what matters is the will of the Lord. Joseph could be surrounded by great wealth and not be distracted by the things that he could get by means of his wealth and power. He was focused upon the will of the Lord and that kept him safe from temptations. Proverbs 1:7, 2:1-15, 3:1-8. By being focused upon God Joseph was able to become the mentor of princes and leaders of Hyksos Egypt.

23 Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

24 And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.

After the famine had really taken its toll upon the family of Jacob the entire family came into Egypt at Joseph’s request. They were blessed there and Jacob lived his last years in comfort in the delta region that Joseph provided for his family. Genesis 45:25 – 47:13, 49:33. The end of Jacob was a peaceful end at a great age. He was taken with full honours to be buried in the cave with his father and grand-father in Hebron. Genesis 50:1-21.

Joseph however continued his prophetic ministry even after his death, for he instructed that his body, although mummified in the tradition of the native Egyptians was not to be buried, but to be taken back to Canaan and buried there when they returned as a people many years later. Joseph’s faith would carry the people for the next hundred or more years and they would be centred around his coffin as their article of faith. The Israelite’s faith survived in Egypt with the tablets upon which were written their histories, which Moses would later write into the book of Genesis, but their main item for the building of faith was the body of Joseph which was their reminder that they were to leave one day and return to the land promised to Abraham.

25 He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.

26 He sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he had chosen.

The Hyksos invaders took over Egypt in 1786 BC. Joseph arrived around 1750 BC and takes charge around 1730. The Hyksos rulers who had favoured Joseph were thrown out by a native Egyptian uprising in 1567 BC, and the persecution of the Israelites starts soon after. I believe the Israelites will leave Egypt around 1445 BC under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. They experience nearly 100 years of persecution after their Hyksos allies are cast out or killed.

The malice of the native Egyptians against the Israelites was severe; it was the first systematic plan for the genocide of the Israelites. The Pharaoh intended there to be no more Israelites after the next generation. He orders the death of every young male baby. Exodus 1:1-22. Pharaoh’s intention is that the last generation of Israelites will be slave girls to serve their masters and the older men are all to be worked to death in the brick yards. It was exactly the same strategy used by the Nazi’s in 1942-1945 and applied with equal brutality. Refer to the BTB study ANTI-SEMITISM.

27 They shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

28 He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.

29 He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.

30 Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.

31 He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts.

**32 He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land.
 33 He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.
 34 He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number,
 35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.
 36 He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength.**

The plagues upon Egypt were all judgements against their pagan gods. In the psalmist's day there was still strong paganism around the Israelites and the specific naming of the plagues here reminds the people that the Lord's judgement upon the pagan gods was thorough and final. The SIGNS and wonders done in the land were severe upon the demons behind the gods.

Every plague targeted one or more demon of the pagan theology. They were all shown up for what they were; inferior powers that created hurt and chaos, not good and holiness. Sadly the Egyptian people chose to remain with their paganism rather than worship the one true God like the Israelites. A few joined the Israelites and left the country with them however, but they were later trouble makers and are referred to as the "mixed multitude". Exodus 12:38.

**37 He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.
 38 Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.**

The amazing thing about the Exodus is that the Egyptians were so pleased to get rid of them after the great plagues that they paid them to go. The Egyptians gave the Israelites all the gold, silver, and jewellery they had to get them to move faster out of the country. Exodus 12:35-36. The Egyptians were in great fear of Israel in that day because of the plagues that had come upon them, and they were in even more fear later when their best army was lost in the Sea of Reeds. Exodus 14. To attack Israel is a seriously dumb thing to do throughout all of history. No nation that has been Anti-Semitic has survived for long. God is against those who are against Israel. Deuteronomy 32:10, Zechariah 2:8.

**39 He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.
 40 The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.**

The Shekinah Glory was their protection day and night; in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Exodus 13:21, Nehemiah 9:19. They were guided by the visible presence of the Lord and yet they still rebelled against the Lord's will for them at times. They were able to see the Lord's guiding hand in the Shekinah Glory and yet they asked for more.

They asked for the quail to satisfy their lust for meat after just a few days march. The Lord honoured them that time and they were not judged for their request, but when they later asked for quail again those who lusted were judged immediately and the others were condemned to die in the wilderness. Exodus 16:13, Numbers 11:31-32. The Lord provided the most perfect food ever known to man, the MANNA. Exodus 16:15-35. While they ate this food they suffered no health problems on their march due to malnutrition of any sort. Deuteronomy 8:3-16. The Manna lasted each day until they had entered the land. Joshua 5:12.

**41 He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.
 42 For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.**

God opened the very rocks for water to gush out on two occasions. Like the quail, both were related to the people's moaning, but they illustrated the Lord's grace and mercy, for He forgave their words and wicked hearts and met their human needs bountifully. Exodus 17:1-7, Numbers 20:11-13. In the first occasion Moses was told to strike the rock and he did so in faith, but in the second situation he was told to speak to the rock only, but he struck it, and yet God still blessed Moses and the people, and provided the water. These incidents speak again of the grace, mercy and love of God towards His people.

The Lord is good towards us as believers, and even when we do dumb and disobedient things the Lord does not deal with us according to our desserts, but according to His Amazing Grace. Genesis 33:11, Psalms 103:10, Joel 2:26. The people were blessed through their association with Moses, but the blessing stemmed back to Abraham. They stood in the family of faith and they reaped blessing that others had sowed in faith generations before. We still do today! We are blessed in the family of faith and reap what the Lord sowed for us, not what we deserve. Romans 4:9-16, 1 Corinthians 10:1-3, Galatians 3:9-18.

**43 And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness:
 44 And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;
 45 That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.**

It is significant that the psalmist sings of events that involved great rebellion on the part of the Israelites and led to their being condemned to wander about in the desert for forty years, and yet he doesn't mention these sins and their obvious historical consequences. The reason is clear to see when we remember when these psalms will be sung aloud and to whom. These psalms are to be all sung aloud to the Lord to celebrate His coronation as the King over all the earth. Israel has then entered into its inheritance, and all the covenants with the people of God are now fulfilled in the rulership of Christ upon the earth.

The past failures of the people are wiped away into history. The Lord doesn't see the past sins of His people any more for they are all covered by His blood, and are gone. Psalms 103:12, 107:3. This is exactly how the Lord sees our confessed sins even now! All sins that are confessed are gone forever as far as God is concerned and we need to understand and apply this information more thoroughly! The past sins that we have confessed, and yet we still feel guilt over need to be cast away and the memory of them extinguished. We are forgiven and we are called to advance in praise and worship, not guilt and regrets.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us embrace the truths and judgements of God, and walk in His power. It is as we allow the truths of the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us that we are enabled to walk the path we are called to walk. Let us feed daily upon the Holy Word. As James says, (James 1:21), "With meekness, let us receive the implanted word which is able to save our souls". Let us seek to walk in the light of the Word and the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit, for only then can we serve the Lord as and where He intends. Let us take courage from the lives of Abraham and Jacob.

2. We may claim the same protection as Abram was able to claim over his life. If we walk in the plan of God for our lives we walk in the path and power of God and His mighty arm is around us, under us, and before us to deal with enemies who would do us harm. We cannot be more protected than when we walk in the Lord's path for us. Let us rejoice in the faith and confidence of Abram and make his confidence our own. Let us advance in service and rejoice in our full forgiveness.

3. Let us seek the will of the Lord in all things and so we will be kept from temptations to evil or sinfulness. Like Joseph if we focus upon what the Lord wants us to do we will not have the time for the nonsense of Satan. God's will purifies the heart and mind; for if all we seek is the goodness of the Lord and the blessing of the Lord, then nothing will distract us into nonsense or evil. Nothing else of real value can be added to the blessing of the Lord! Proverbs 10:22.

4. God's provision is always better than our moaning. We must beware of requesting things that the Lord has not provided, for what the Lord gives is always best, and any dainty meats we seek for are dangerous things! We are to be content with the Lord's provisions, for then we are safe in His arms. Philippians 4:11-13. God does not deal with us in accordance with our desserts, but in accordance with His gracious character. Let us praise the Lord that He doesn't remember our confessed sins, but our relationship with Christ and blesses us within the family.

DOCTRINES

CHRISTIAN LIFE – ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD

SALVATION – REDEMPTION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – GIFTS GIVEN AT SALVATION

GRACE

SALVATION – REGENERATION: BORN AGAIN

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

LIGHT

CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING AND LIVING IN THE LIGHT

PROMISES

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUBMISSION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – OBEDIENCE

ABRAHAM – FAITH

CHRIST – TYPES – ISAAC AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

JACOB – THE PATRIARCH

COVENANTS – ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

COVENANTS – PALESTINIAN COVENANT

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SOLDIER: CHRISTIAN SOLDIER IN EPHESIANS 6

ANTI-SEMITISM

SIGNS

MANNA

PSALM 106**INTRODUCTION**

CONFESSION is good for the soul, and this psalm, with the previous one, reflects upon the need that Israel has for thorough CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS. The history of Israel's relationship with God is an encouragement to all sinners who stumble along their own faith road. Israel's lack of faith and rebelliousness towards the will and PLAN OF GOD for them is an amazing story. Moses warns the people carefully regarding their tendency to rebel and disobey the Lord, Deuteronomy 1:1 – 4:40, and especially the warning about God's DIVINE DISCIPLINE upon them if they persisted in negative volition towards Him. Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 27-33.

These are serious and long passages that underline the importance of OBEDIENCE AND SUBMISSION to the will of the Lord. Moses made it clear to the people that if they trusted and obeyed the Lord, then there would be blessings in time and ETERNAL REWARDS forever, but if they failed to trust and obey, then they would have great punishments dropped upon them.

Stephen, the first martyr of the Early Church would tell the Sanhedrin their history and remind them that they had failed their God again and again, and they would fail the Lord again by murdering Him! Acts 7:1-60. Daniel, back in the days of the Babylonian Captivity in the 570s BC had confessed the nation's sins before the Lord and prayed for the Lord's blessing again as the people repented under the preaching of Ezekiel. Daniel 9:1-23. The Lord's answer to his prayer is important as our starting point for the study of this psalm. The Lord, through the archangel Gabriel, told Daniel of the time frame for the rest of Israel's history until the Lord Jesus would sit upon His throne in Jerusalem. Daniel 9:24-29.

The clock would start ticking in 446 BC when Nehemiah would receive permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. It would tick on until "Messiah is cut off". This occurs when the Lord is crucified in Jerusalem in the mid 30s of the first century of our era. The events of the last week (7 years) of Israel's history are told in other prophetic words he receives and in the prophecies of other prophets. Daniel 11:36-45, 12:1-13, Zechariah 12:1-14. Pause now and study these passages in the EBCWA Commentaries on them from the CD or website.

The psalms we have been studying in this Numbers Section, Book four, of the Psalms, will all be sung to the Lord as He is seated upon His throne, and so this last in the Numbers Section is a summary of the grace, mercy, and forgiveness of the Lord towards Israel through the years. They have been sorely punished for their sins, and especially for their sins against the Messiah and His followers, but they are forgiven and restored to the place of blessing in that day. God's faithfulness has been seen in Psalm 105, and man's unfaithfulness is reflected upon in Psalm 106, but over both is God's faithfulness and forgiveness of His people.

This Psalm is the psalm that Zechariah indicates will be sung and wept over when the people confess their sins in the midst of the GREAT TRIBULATION period, when they finally and fully see their great national sin in rejecting their Messiah the first time He came. This Psalm sums up the confession of a nation and is accepted by the Lord as a sacrifice of confession, and the remnant of the nation enters the Millennial Kingdom to be part of the Plan of God again for the rest of time.

PSALMS 106:1- 48

1 Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. 2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? who can shew forth all his praise? 3 Blessed are they that keep judgement, and he that doeth righteousness at all times. 4 Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; 5 That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance. 6 We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. 7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea. 8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known. 9 He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness. 10 And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. 11 And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left. 12 Then believed they his words; they sang his praise. 13 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: 14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. 15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul. 16 They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD. 17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan and covered the company of Abiram. 18 And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked. 19 They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. 20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. 21 They forgot God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; 22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea. 23 Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them. 24 Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word: 25 But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD. 26 Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness: 27 To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the

lands. 28 They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. 29 Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them. 30 Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgement: and so the plague was stayed. 31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore. 32 They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: 33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips. 34 They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: 35 But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. 36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. 37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, 38 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. 39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions. 40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. 41 And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. 42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand. 43 Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. 44 Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry: 45 And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies. 46 He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives. 47 Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise. 48 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

REFLECTION

1 Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? Who can shew forth all his praise?

Israel lives as a nation because of the mercy of God toward them. That is the only way they live and have survived the ages. Other, far more powerful people's have disappeared from history. The Hittites, the Assyrians, the Philistines, The Phoenicians, the ancient Babylonians, the Chaldeans of Ur; all have gone, their genes spread amongst their conquerors. Of the ancient peoples, the Israelites alone have survived as a distinct people, still carrying the genes of their ancestors. This is incredible.

In the early nineteenth century when German critics were attacking the historical reliability of the scriptures one great German was challenged about the existence of miracles. He simply pointed to a passing Jew and said; "there is the evidence of miracles". Even the satanically inspired holocaust was not enough to dent the plan of God regarding His people. They have suffered more than any other people, and yet they have survived and they prosper in the land God promised them again. The valley of dry bones lives and prospers, although they are yet to find spiritual life. Ezekiel 37:1ff. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on this passage.

3 Blessed are they that keep judgement, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.

4 Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;

The psalmist begins by praising God, and also remembering that the Lord had always made it clear that those who kept His Word would be kept by God. Those that lived righteously and kept divine judgements would be blessed. The Lord's mighty acts kept Israel safe in times of their obedience, and they prospered way above their actual numbers, and the Lord's mighty acts kept them alive as a people when others were going off the pages of history even though they had been great.

The people of the Lord have been kept alive and they are now standing before the very throne of Jesus when they sing this psalm at that final appropriate time. They ask then for the favour of the Lord to be fully received by the remnant of the people as they enter the Millennial Kingdom. They ask for the Lord's visitation upon the land and its deliverance from the ravages of the Great Tribulation period. They have been delivered and they depend totally upon the Lord's power to complete their deliverance from the great evils that have oppressed them until that day. We can ask these same things of the Lord today, and each day we ought to do this. Every day is a day to remember that we stand and move in the Lord's grace and favour alone. Philippians 4:4-14.

5 That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.

6 We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.

The real nature of the confession of the psalm starts to emerge in these verses. The psalmist reflects upon history and the gracious mercy of God to Israel and also upon their incredible sinfulness as a people.

He also reflects upon the sinfulness of the last generation before the Lord's Second Advent, one third of which only have survived the last great siege of Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:10 – 13:9. The psalmist's prayer is that he might see the glory of the people when they enter the Lord's kingdom. Israel is God's nation and yet they have not been as they were called to be, except very briefly in the days of David and Solomon, and in those days, the terrible sins of the kings and the people affected the witness of the nation to the unbelievers around them. They have never been truly what they were called to be. Nehemiah 9:31-38, Psalms 78:6-8, Daniel 9:4-8, Acts 7:51-53.

**7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea.
8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.**

This is a thorough and honest confession of the sins of the fathers and for Israel this is important to be made. Zechariah tells us just how heart felt the families of Jerusalem will be as they sing and pray the penitential psalms in the terrible days before the Lord returns. Zechariah 12:10-14. When this psalm is finally sung before the Lord on His throne it will be with sadness in their reflection upon their nation's history of rebellion against the truths that God gave them. The tears will be bitter and yet also sweet, for they will weep for the lost millions who died in rejection of the truth, but they will rejoice in their own and others deliverance in and through the truth.

The first rebellion occurred at the Sea of Reeds (The Yam Suf) and it occurs after seeing the glory of the Lord for months in His judgement of the Egyptians. Exodus 14:10-14. Moses gave the message and command of faith to them, and they did what they were told and marched into the dry sea bed. The Lord saved them in spite of their complaint and insult to Moses (and as Moses was the Lord's servant, their insult to God).

**9 He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.
10 And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.**

God acted dramatically and the people advanced over the dried up sea bed, and the entire people and their animals crossed over the sea to the other side. Read the EBCWA Commentary on Exodus 14 and 15 and see, and rejoice in, the wonders of that amazing day for Israel. Exodus 14:15-25. The pharaoh of Egypt of that day hated the Israelites for all the things that had happened to the land of Egypt. It was a blasted and judged land that the Exodus left behind.

If I am correct and the Exodus was around 1445 BC it may explain the events of the next 100 years in Egyptian history, for the pharaoh Akhenaton even changes their religion to mono-theism for a time and establishes a new capital in Amarna. This becomes understandable when we think about the impact of the plagues of the Exodus, for the old capital would have felt defiled, and the land would have taken a generation to recover from the plagues. I can see why Akhenaton changed the religion of Egypt, but he was not the "first monotheist" as the pagan historians argue; Abraham beats him by over 600 years, and his ancestors always believed in the one true God right back to Adam.

**11 And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.
12 Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.**

The Israelites crossed the Yam Suf as a group over a few hours and the Shekinah Glory that had blocked the Egyptian forces path was then lifted and Pharaoh made the fatal decision to follow them across the now softened and animal excrement covered sea bed. After 30,000 plus people and probably 100,000 animals have crossed an area, given animal's propensity to drop dung as they walk, I would not have wanted to walk over that sea bed, and the narrow wheels of an Egyptian chariot would quickly bog down there. It was as Sun Tzu would call it, "dying ground" for the Egyptians.

All were killed and when the water swept back in on top of them like a tsunami their bodies were washed up on the sea shore on the Israelites side of the sea. This in one stroke provided the Israelites with all the military equipment they needed for an army of up to 10,000 men. God defeated their enemies and also provided them the military equipment they would need to use within a few weeks. Exodus 17:8-16. The deliverance and provision of the Lord was so dramatic that the people rejoiced aloud and sang and danced before the Lord in sheer joy and relief. Exodus 15:1-26.

**13 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel:
14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.**

Having just received such amazing deliverance, it was only a week later that they complained and moaned again to Moses and God. Exodus 16:2-3. They lusted there in the Wilderness of Sin for meat and bread, and the Lord graciously gave them quail to eat, by supernaturally bringing them on the winds from their natural habitat. Exodus 16:11-14.

The Lord also gave the people manna to eat supernaturally provided for them to gather every morning. The manna speaks of God's provision, and the need for faith to be expressed in action. God provided the manna but it was several hundred meters from the camp boundary and the people had to rise at dawn and collect it before the sun rose upon it. God provided but not for the lazy or disobedient; if you didn't rise early and go out and gather it, and then store it properly, you didn't eat that day! 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, 2 Thessalonians 3:7-10, James 2:22-25, 3:14-26. Refer back to the study of MANNA, and WELFARE.

**15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.
16 They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD.**

The people asked for meat rather than seek the Lord's will for their lives. They sought the pleasures of Egyptian food and condiments rather than the army food that the Lord had called them to eat through their march to Canaan. The Lord will always provide for us, but the test for us is often based in His provision; to see whether we will seek the best, or be satisfied with compromises in our pathway through life. In the BTB study on PRAYER the challenge is made, to seek the

will of the Lord in such a way that both the desire of the heart and the words of the petition we utter are both in accordance with the will of the Lord for us.

The people not only disobeyed the Lord and Moses and Aaron, they envied their position before the Lord. Numbers 16:1ff. It is a pathetic commentary on human nature that this sort of rebellion is very common in the church right through until the present day; pride centred people always will lift themselves up and try to replace a godly pastor. They need to read Numbers 16 and be very scared about such stupidity, for the Lord judges those who oppose His men and women.

**17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan and covered the company of Abiram.
18 And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.**

The end of the rebels Dathan and Abiram and their adult family members who stood with them was dramatic indeed. The descendents of the survivors of the Sons of Korah became worship leaders in the Temple and the authors of psalms, so the story of judgement does not end totally badly, for some of the children are clearly saved and live. Exodus 16:27-35, Numbers 26:8-11. The fire of the Lord is a judgement here, and the writer of Hebrews reminds us that "Our God is a consuming fire". Hebrews 10:31, 12:29. Refer again to the BTB study on SIN UNTO DEATH.

**19 They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.
20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.**

As we look through Israel's history we are reminded of just how many times they rebelled and how short their attention span was, and how weak their faith in God and Moses was. It is foolish to lack trust in the God who sent Jesus to the Cross for us, but it is really stupid to turn from the living God to idolatry and start to worship things, especially things that eat grass! Exodus 32:4-8, 30-35, Deuteronomy 9:12-21. The psalmist is being very humorous here with the reference to the ox eating grass, although the idolatry wasn't humorous, it was evil and had serious consequences. Refer to the BTB study IDOLATRY, RELIGION.

Moses was away for over forty days but they had the promises of God to cling to that he would be fine on top of the fire wreathed mountain. They didn't believe that God would keep Moses alive, and yet God had called Moses up the mountain! There lack of logic was way worse than their lack of faith, but it underlines the relationship between the two in this incident.

Faith and logic will always be at one; God will not ever operate in a way that violates good logic. God's character is consistent and that means His love and protection is consistent over us. God was not going to ask Moses up the mountain to kill him there! God is not going to buy us with the blood of Christ and then betray our trust in Him! God gives us more grace, not less grace as we walk with Him. James 4:6, 1 Peter 1:7, 18-19, 2:4-7.

**21 They forgot God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;
22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea.**

When we walk away from close fellowship with the Lord, we enter a space and time when we will grow cold in our worship and our walk. Over time our memory of the life we had with the Lord will fade and we are more likely to forget the character and actions of the Lord, and so lose our grip on the reality of what the Lord can do for us now. The Exodus Generation forgot the Lord's actions in Egypt and all they saw were the problems and challenges around them. They failed to apply history to their present situation and so they became themselves the dust of history.

If we do not remember what the Lord has done for us in the past, we will not be able to apply the power of the Lord into the present, and so we will fall short of what we could do for the Lord in our life. All God did in past generations He is still able to do today, for the Lord never changes, and so any situation we face today can be transformed by His power and plan. In all things we can trust Him, for He has mastery over all things. 1 Peter 5:5-9.

**23 Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.
24 Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word:**

The job of the pastor is to "stand in the breach" and protect his people from the enemy and from the wrath of the Lord, if they have been disobedient. Again and again Moses stands before the Lord and pleads for Him to save the people even though they have betrayed him and the Lord. Moses is an amazing example of a faithful and loving pastor. Numbers 12:10-13, 14:10-19. Moses did what was required of him as their leader, and yet they feared to enter the land when the time came to express their faith and advance into it. Numbers 13:26 – 14:10.

Caleb and Joshua stand for the truth and urge that the people advance in faith, but the people moaned and complained and so they didn't enter the land at all, but their children would enter it. Numbers 14:26-39.

**25 But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.
26 Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:**

Even when confronted with the natural consequences of their sinful disobedience and lack of faith, the people were not over in their rebellion even then. They persisted in complaining and they tried to enter the land against the Lord's

specific command. Numbers 14:40-45. Even that was not the end of their rebellion, for the great religious rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram occurred within a very short time of their being turned back from the land. Numbers 16:1ff.

The result of all these things was the Lord's directive to them, that they were to wander about in the Arabian Peninsula for the next forty years until every member of that sinful generation died and their children would enter the land. Numbers 14:26-35. Every member of that generation except for Moses, Joshua, and Caleb, died in the wilderness and was buried by the side of the tracks. Numbers 26:61-63. There were no grave markers, nor places for the relatives to go to mourn for that generation; they are all buried in the Arabian lands that they travelled through.

**27 To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.
28 They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.**

The people as a whole were obedient after forty years of training in the wilderness, but even after such a time some still felt a hankering for paganism and the sexual pleasures of the evil religions that surrounded them. The last great challenge before the Israelites entered the land occurred on the plains of Moab as they were camped by the River Jordan. The false prophet Balaam gave the pagan kings who opposed the Israelites the way to defeat them. He had tried to curse Israel but couldn't, but he did advise the pagans on the best way to seduce the Israelites from the place of God's favour and that was by sexual immorality.

Sexual immorality will always bring judgement upon people and the fake prophet knew that God would judge Israel if the Moabites and Ammonites sent their women in to seduce the men. By sexual unions they could then lead the men into the religious practises of their lovers and the entire nation's morality and religious life would be destroyed. Sexual immorality nearly always leads to religious compromise. It was a satanic master stroke and it is still his main tool! Sexual seduction of key believers by servants of satanic belief systems is a powerful tool for the enemy to use. Numbers 25:1ff, 2 Corinthians 2:11.

**29 Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.
30 Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgement: and so the plague was stayed.**

The activities that occurred on that plain were significant assaults upon the Character and Plan of God for Israel. They were meant to be a holy people, dedicated to the Lord alone. They were not meant to sexually join themselves to pagan people and pagan religions. There were to be no "love/lust matches" with pagans. The people not only were having sex with their pagans, they were travelling up to their cities and worshipping their gods in their temples and eating the "sacred meals" there in honour to the pagan gods and goddesses. The Israelites were in effect joining themselves to the demons behind these gods and goddesses.

It was a great evil and Phinehas picked up a javelin and skewered two of the leading adulterers to the floor of the man's tent. Twenty four "elephs" (groups of people, not strictly "thousands") were affected by this paganism, but Phinehas' strong action took the pressure off the people and the judgement of the Lord ended as they all pulled back from the evil as they saw it for what it was. Numbers 25:3-9.

**31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.
32 They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:**

Phinehas becomes the High Priest over time as a result of his actions, because his boldness in standing for truth and morality when all were wavering was the leadership quality the Lord needed. He also is made a leader in war for the people. Numbers 31:6. He is also the leader of a delegation later to avert a war between the tribes. Joshua 22:13, 32.

We are so used to being told we must be tolerant that we have forgotten that God calls us to be different, not homogenous with evil! We are called to SEPARATION not identity with evil. The event referred to in verse thirty two is an earlier one, but a significant one. Numbers 20:1-13. It is the incident where Moses loses the plot and the one that the writer of the letter to the Hebrews mentions as the key indication of the rebellion of the people towards God. Hebrews 3:7-4:12.

**33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.
34 They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them:**

The psalmist is rightly kindly towards Moses. He lost the plot with the people under the greatest provocation, and he paid the terrible price of not being able to enter the land and be buried within its borders. Numbers 20:9-12, 27-29, Deuteronomy 34:1-7. Moses spoke "unadvisedly" with his lips, but his heart was with the Lord and he quickly repented of his hasty words, but too late to stop the judgement over him.

God was gracious even in judgement, and Moses saw the Promised Land and was in peace of heart as he died. He is praised by Joshua, who ends the book of Deuteronomy and reminds us of his greatness. Moses sets a great example of a godly leader, who loved his people even though being frustrated by them at times. We will often be "provoked" in ministry and we may be provoked and frustrated beyond all human control, but we are to walk in the Spirit and deal with the things that come as a result of our obedient walk with God from those who refuse to be obedient. Let us learn the humble servant leadership of Moses and walk as the Lord orders us to walk. Matthew 20:25-28, Luke 22:24-27, John 13:1-17, 1 Peter 5:1-7.

**35 But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.
36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.**

Believers are not to “mingle themselves amongst the heathen”; we are to witness to them in purity and truth. Sharing the unbeliever’s faith practises does not open up evangelism opportunities it simply taints or eliminates your witness to them. The Israelites did not lead the Moabites into truth; the Moabites led the foolish Israelites into sexual sin and religious evil. The worst thing for any believer to do is enter into false worship rather than the truth they know. It is APOSTASY and as such a grave sin that will often lead to the SIN UNTO DEATH. The sin with the Moabites was repeated again and again in Israel’s history and the people compromised their faith with idols and faced repeated episodes of DIVINE DISCIPLINE.

**37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,
38 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.**

The terrible pagan religions of the Canaanites were involved in all sorts of evils, including child sacrifice. Many of the ancient religions practised the murder of children to their gods/demons. The nature of the sacrificial system betrayed the demonic-satanic origins of their religions. The Baal and Molech worship of the Canaanites involved the murder of children, even as young as a few months old for their sexual excitement and to placate the evil demon with the blood of an innocent sacrifice.

It was a travesty and perversion of the true BLOOD SACRIFICE that God instituted after the FALL OF MAN in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:21, 4:3ff. To be involved in the paganism of the Canaanites in any way was to be polluted and defiled in God’s eyes, and it meant for believers that they were under God’s severe judgement.

**39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.
40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.**

The deep sadness of the prophets of God through the ages of Israel’s history was centred round this great sin of idolatry and its associated immorality. From the earliest prophets under the judges, through the days of David and Solomon, through until the days of Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and finally Ezekiel, the sadness expressed is in the people’s determined decisions to leave the truth and follow after evil.

**41 And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.**

The Israelite people suffered the Fifth Cycle of Divine Discipline twice in their history before the return of the Exiles in 535 BC. The Northern Kingdom, (that was most seriously afflicted by their own idolatry), went into captivity in 720 BC, and the descendants of their survivors only came back in association with the later captives from the final fall of the Southern Kingdom in 586 BC. The land that had been David and Solomon’s great kingdom was trampled over by the gentiles as a result of the evil of the Israelites who had turned away from God’s paths and followed after nonsense. Luke 21:24.

This Psalm is sung finally to the Lord in person at the end of the Great Tribulation period and so the reference here is to the next fifth cycle of national discipline that begins in 70 AD and runs until the return of the Lord. Leviticus 26:27-45, Deuteronomy 28:49-68. The events of 70 AD are prophetically precisely foretold in the last verses of Deuteronomy 28. The Temple Mount is still trodden down by Gentiles to this very day. Only the Lord will finally change that.

**43 Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.
44 Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:**

Again and again the Lord delivered them; from the Canaanites, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Arab raiders, the Syrians, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, and even initially from the Babylonians, but the people persisted in their rebellion and so they went into captivity, in 720 BC, in 605, 597, and 586 BC, and then finally in 70 AD. The reason for the terrible punishments meted out upon Israel through the years is their repeated and persistent iniquity. They replaced the truth with tradition, and living faith with legalism. They have been terribly punished through the years, but the Lord has heard their cry to Him and their prayers are answered. The deliverance arrived in the Person of the Lord, but the people must acknowledge the truth first. Zechariah 12:10-14.

**45 And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.
46 He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.**

God has not changed His mind about Israel. Romans 11:1ff. Israel will be delivered by the Lord personally, but only when they ask Him to come and save them. The Biblical prophecies are specific on this matter. Israel will be in its darkest hour before the survivors of the Jewish people bow before the Lord, who their ancestors pierced and in their bitter repentance for their great evils, they will find deliverance from the evil that afflicts them from the ANTI-CHRIST. Even those who have afflicted Israel in the past will have mercy in that day, and the surviving believers amongst them will themselves repent of their past evil towards Israel.

47 Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise.

48 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

The final prayer is to be answered in the days following the Lord's return, with the scattered remnant of Israel from all corners of the world being returned to the land of their ancestors. Isaiah 60-64, Zechariah 13-14. Look especially at the final prayer for deliverance that will be offered up in those last terrible days. Isaiah 64:1-4. There is triumph in the end as all the surviving Jewish people return to the land in belief and salvation. The Lord is triumphant in the end of history, and the Anti-Christ and his supporters are thoroughly defeated, just as all his predecessors have been. Revelation 19-20. The psalm ends in praise again, for it is the end of this section and the right response of the people gathered before the Lord's throne upon the temple Mount is to praise the name of the Lord aloud.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Confession of sin restores our eternal destiny and our temporal ministry. Let us urge the people of the Lord to deal with their sins and so restore their usefulness and power; that they might serve the Lord in focused power and purpose. Let us begin each day with a prayer for the Lord's grace and mercy to be with us through this day. We move safely through this present world only as we walk with Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit through the light of God's Word. Let us praise Him for His clear path, and let us walk in it!

2. God gives us more grace as we advance down the path of life with Him, and we need to celebrate the grace, love and mercy of God far more than we do. Let us remember the Lord's grace, and that it is renewed every morning to us. Let us not forget what the Lord has done, and then we can be sure that He will do greater things into the future with us and for us.

3. Let us be intelligent in our living and alert to satanic devices, the main one being seduction by evil members of satanic religions. Let us "flee immorality", not sit around and play with danger! The destruction wrought by sexual immorality is serious indeed. 1 Corinthians 6:18, 2 Timothy 2:22, James 4:7.

4. The Lord is going to win. Israel is going to survive. Israel is going to find their Messiah in the end, and the survivors of their nation will enter the Millennial Kingdom of the Lord who their ancestors pierced. Be confident about the future of Israel, and be a supporter of Israel now, for the Lord will yet do amazing things for Israel.

DOCTRINES

CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

ISRAEL – NATIONAL DIVINE DISCIPLINE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – OBEDIENCE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUBMISSION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS

TRIBULATION IN MATTHEW 24

TRIBULATION – SIGNS

MANNA

WELFARE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – PRAYER

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

IDOLATRY

RELIGION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SEPARATION

SIN – FALL OF MAN

ANTICHRIST