

# PSALMS

## Book One

CHAPTERS 1 - 50

by

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# PREFACE

The Psalms have been called the hymnal of Israel and of the Church. In times of revival, the Holy Spirit has inspired God's people to set the Psalms to music, greatly aiding the devotional and spiritual lives of believers everywhere. Flowing through the Psalms is a strong spirit of prophecy which is creative. Thus they bring forth love, joy, hope and trust within the hearts of those who meditate upon them and sing them.

When I have faced seemingly impossible situations, I have found that a psalm set to music has often sprung up within my heart. One such time was on the occasion of the funeral of my own dear wife. The verses of Psalm 30:10-11 bubbled up from deep within my heart, and all mourning and sadness literally disappeared. I was filled with unspeakable joy and happiness.

The Psalms are basically devotional in character, dealing with the emotional life of the believer—his fears, sufferings, distresses, persecutions, joys and hopes. Their purpose is to develop a deep sense of trust and confidence in a loving Heavenly Father who hears and cares when we pray to Him in our

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afflictions. The Psalms portray a God who delivers His people from the storms of life by bringing them to their desired haven, and giving them an expected end.

The Psalms cause us to realize that the Lord uses these distresses to enlarge us, to teach us His ways, and to bring us into fellowship with our Heavenly Father and His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Psalms bring comfort, consolation, and courage to the weary pilgrim along life's journey from earth to heaven.

*Brian J. Bailey*

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# INTRODUCTION

The Lord Jesus divided the Old Testament into three sections: the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Lk.24:44). The Jews have divided the Psalms into five sections, corresponding to the five books of Moses.

1.) Psalm 1-41	Genesis
2.) Psalm 42-72	Exodus
3.) Psalm 73-89	Leviticus
4.) Psalm 90-106	Numbers
5.) Psalm 107-150	Deuteronomy

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The word *psalm* comes from the Greek word *Psalmoi* used by the translators of the Septuagint Old Testament. This Greek word corresponds to the Hebrew word *Mizmoi*—meaning an ode or song whose singing is accompanied by an instrument.

The Psalms fall into two principal categories:

- 1.) *Didactic* - meaning teaching
- 2.) *Lyrical* - meaning poetical

Hebrew poetry cultivated the recurrence of a thought, which is called parallelism. The Jews had a tendency to say everything twice. The second form of expression is a repetition, an amplification, or explanation of the first. Almost all the verses of the Psalms have a division in the middle. The second half of the verse repeats or amplifies the first half.

Many of the Psalms are Messianic, meaning that they prophesied or foreshadowed the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus. The Lord Himself testified in Luke 24:44, “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law

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of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the *psalms*, concerning me.” Everything that was prophesied of the Lord in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms had to be fulfilled.

The New Testament writers quoted from the Psalms more than any other Old Testament book, except the book of Isaiah.

The majority of the Psalms were written during three specific periods in the history of Israel:

- 1.) During the time of David
- 2.) During the reign of Hezekiah
- 3.) During and after the Babylonian captivity

\* One or two Psalms were written earlier and possibly a few later.

Each Psalm is best understood and interpreted by a careful examination and study of that particular Psalm. Occasionally, however, it is necessary to look at the historical circumstances through which the Psalms were birthed by the Holy Spirit in the life of the author who penned them.

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We trust that this little book will be a personal blessing to you. We have recommended to our students throughout the world that they read five psalms a day. This has proven to be of great benefit to their devotional life as well as their prophetic flow.



# SUMMARY OF PSALMS 1-50

Now we have provided for you a brief summary of each psalm. A key verse or key thought from the psalm is given to help summarize the overall tenor of the Psalms.

**PSALM 1** - The keys to fruitfulness and prosperity are considered, as well as the importance of who our companions are, and how we should meditate in the Word of God continually.

**PSALM 2** - The rebellion of the heathen against the Son and His ultimate vindication and rulership over the ends of the earth are portrayed in very descriptive terms.

**PSALM 3** - David, in distress, flees from his son Absalom, cries out to the Lord, is heard, and receives the assurance of salvation from the Lord.

**PSALM 4** - David speaks of an enlargement in his distress and an ensuing gladness of heart—laying down to sleep in peace. This psalm is linked to Psalm 3.

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**PSALM 5** - The destruction of the wicked who are unfaithful is contrasted with the assurance the Lord gave David that he would enter into the house of the Lord in mercy, and worship the Lord in holy reverence.

**PSALM 6** - While upon his bed of suffering, David prays for healing, and the Lord assures him that He has received his supplication.

**PSALM 7** - David calls upon the Lord to deliver him from his enemies, who shall fall into the pit they have dug.

**PSALM 8** - The Lord Jesus is pictured as the Son of Man. Parts of this psalm are quoted in Matthew 11:25 and Hebrews 2:6-10.

**PSALM 9** - The memorial of the wicked and all nations that forget God shall perish, but the Lord shall be a refuge for the oppressed and the poor.

**PSALM 10** - The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor, but the Lord is the helper of the fatherless.

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**PSALM 11** - David refuses to flee from the wicked, for his confidence is in the Lord. To flee would mean that the foundations would be destroyed. The Lord tries the righteous, but upon the wicked He rains snares, brimstone, and tempest.

**PSALM 12** - David cries for help because of double-hearted men who boast with their lips that they will prevail against him. By contrast, the words of the Lord are pure, tried in the furnace, and they stand the test of time.

**PSALM 13** - David cries to the Lord lest his enemies prevail against him. David's trust is in the Lord who will deal bountifully with him.

**PSALM 14** - The fool says that there is no God, and does abominable things. However, he will be in great terror when God visits His afflicted people, who shall rejoice greatly in Him.

**PSALM 15** - The eleven qualifications to abide in the tabernacle of the Lord in Mount Zion, His holy hill, are expounded upon.

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**PSALM 16** - Christ was preserved by God from experiencing the corruption of the grave and then lifted up to be seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Portions of this psalm were quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost to prove the deity of Jesus (Acts 2:25-28).

**PSALM 17** - David cries for his sentence to come forth from the presence of the Lord, and for the Lord to keep him as the apple of His eye. David expresses his satisfaction at awaking in God's likeness. He contrasts this with the men of this world whose lot and portion is in this life only, and who leave their substance to their children.

**PSALM 18** - David depicts the Lord as his fortress and high tower, his Savior and Deliverer. The Lord's gentleness made David great and He caused David to triumph over all his enemies.

**PSALM 19** - The heavens, the law, and the statutes of the Lord warn us and give us instruction. Great rewards await those who regard them.

**PSALM 20** - Those who trust in chariots are brought down, but those who remember the name of the Lord are risen and stand upright.

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**PSALM 21** - The first half of this psalm depicts Christ the King enjoying His heart's desire, even length of days forevermore. The second half reveals Christ's awesome judgments upon His enemies.

**PSALM 22** - The agony of Christ upon the cross and the triumph of Him as the Resurrected One are depicted.

**PSALM 23** - The Lord is seen as our Shepherd who comforts everyone who is in distress and in the valley of the shadow of death.

**PSALM 24** - Four conditions for ascending the hill of the Lord and standing in His holy place are given. This psalm should be read with Psalm 15.

**PSALM 25** - David prays that he might be shown the Lord's ways. The response is given that the Lord guides the meek in judgment and teaches the meek His ways.

**PSALM 26** - David cries from the depths of his soul for the Lord to judge him, prove him, try him, and not be condemned with other sinners.

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**PSALM 27** - David's singleness of heart is revealed. He longs only to dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold His beauty, and to inquire in His temple. Because his heart was totally focused on the Lord, he did not fear when opposing armies came against him.

**PSALM 28** - The silence of the Lord makes David feel like one who has gone down into the pit, but because his heart trusted in the Lord he can say he is helped.

**PSALM 29** - We are enjoined to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness because of His greatness which is manifested through the wonders that come forth through His voice.

**PSALM 30** - David joyfully declares that when he cried unto the Lord, He healed him and turned his mourning into dancing.

**PSALM 31** - David declares his trust in the Lord, which culminates with the ultimate commitment in the words of Christ upon the cross, "Into thy hand I commit My spirit."

**PSALM 32** - This is one of the great instructional psalms concerning repentance and forgiveness. The only way to receive pardon for our sins and freedom from guilt is to acknowledge and confess

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our sins to the Lord. When we do, the Lord completely wipes away our sin, and we experience the tremendous joy of a criminal who has been pardoned.

**PSALM 33** - The righteous are exhorted to rejoice in the Lord and to praise Him for all of His goodness. All those who fear the Lord and rejoice in His mercy will be delivered from famine and death.

**PSALM 34** - Wonderful victory is ours, for the Lord hears the cries of the righteous and delivers them from all their fears.

**PSALM 35** - David cries to the Lord to plead his cause. He mourned for his enemies when they were in distress, yet in his adversity they rejoiced. But David confidently says that those who favor his righteous cause will say, "Let the Lord be magnified which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

**PSALM 36** - The wicked do not fear the Lord, and as a result they shall fall and not rise again. The righteous, on the other hand, find that in the Lord's light they shall see light, and they shall drink from the fountain of life.

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**PSALM 37** - The primary theme of this psalm is the seeming prosperity of the wicked in contrast to the obvious affliction of the righteous. This is an issue that has plagued the righteous since the beginning of time and caused endless frustration. Biblical answers are given to this paradox. Also, several keys are given for obtaining our inheritance.

**PSALM 38** - Written after his sin with Bathsheba, David is suffering from a terrible disease that is eating away his flesh. Many were persecuting David during this time, but he did not seek to vindicate or defend himself.

**PSALM 39** - David was silent before the wicked and left his defense to the Lord, and cried out to the Lord to cause him to know his end.

**PSALM 40** - David patiently waits on the Lord until he brings him out of a horrible pit. The Lord completely restored David after his sin with Bathsheba because there was true repentance in his life. Then God lifted him to even greater heights in Him—giving him a revelation of the new covenant in verses 6-8.



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**PSALM 41** - Several blessings that come upon those who help the poor are given. David's enemies were hoping he would die, and even his close friend Ahithophel betrayed him. But the Lord defended David, and sovereignly placed him before His face forever.

**PSALM 42** - As David is fleeing from Saul, his heart is becoming more and more intensely hungry and thirsty for the presence of God. He is in distress and his soul is cast down, but he takes control over his emotions and tells his soul to hope in the Lord. The differences between being soulish and spiritual are considered.

**PSALM 43** - This psalm speaks of God's divine order. First the Lord judges us and puts things right in our lives, and afterwards He breaks the power of our enemies. He then brings us to Zion where we are united with the Lord who is our exceeding joy.

**PSALM 44** - Remembering God's past mercies to Israel and how He had given them their land, the psalmist now cries out because the Lord has cast them off. He pleads with the Lord to arise and redeem them.

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**PSALM 45** - The theme and subject of this psalm is the majesty of Christ and the beauty of His Bride the Church, who is all glorious within. Truth, meekness and righteousness are the keys to prosperity.

**PSALM 46** - God is our refuge in the time of trouble. The river of God will make the city of God glad, and the Lord will be exalted among the heathen in the Millennium when wars shall cease.

**PSALM 47** - This is a psalm of rejoicing and victory. God will choose our inheritance, and He will reign over the heathen as the King of Kings.

**PSALM 48** - This psalm describes Mount Zion, the mountain of God's holiness. In the description of this city, however, is also a description of its inhabitants—who are holy and blameless before the Lord.

**PSALM 49** - The psalmist speaks about wisdom. The fools call their lands after their own names, but they will not abide. The upright will have the ascendancy over them.

**PSALM 50** - This psalm portrays the sacrifices that are pleasing to the Lord and the way to glorify Him.

# CONDENSED OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL

Because some Psalms were written at different epochs in the history of the children of Israel, the following outline is provided to aid you as a quick and ready reference to events mentioned in individual Psalms.

- The Descent into Egypt under Joseph
- The Period of 400 years in Egyptian Exile
- The Exodus under Moses
- The Wilderness Journey
- The Entry into the Land of Promise under Joshua
- The Period of the Judges until Samuel
- The United Kingdom Under Saul
- David persecuted by Saul
- David Ascends the Throne at the Death of Saul
- The Reign of Solomon
- The Divided Kingdom comprising the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah
- The Assyrian Invasion
- The Babylonian Captivity
- The Restoration Era
- The Birth, Ministry and Death of Christ
- The Church Age
- The Millennial Reign of Christ for 1000 years
- The New Heavens and the New Earth

# BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE LIFE OF DAVID

About seventy-three Psalms are directly attributed to David. Because they were written at crucial times during his life, an understanding of David's life helps us to appreciate more fully the spiritual implications of those psalms.

## **A. EARLY LIFE OF DAVID**

1. Birth at Bethlehem - 1 Samuel 17:12
2. Son of Jesse - Ruth 4:17, 22
3. Genealogy - 1 Chronicles 2:3-15
4. Member of the tribe of Judah - 1 Chronicles 28:4
5. Youngest son of Jesse - 1 Samuel 16:10-13
6. Handsome lad - 1 Samuel 17:42
7. Shepherd - 1 Samuel 16:11
8. His strength - 1 Samuel 17:34-36
9. God's chosen - 1 Samuel 16:1, 13

## **B. HIS LIFE UNDER KING SAUL**

1. Royal harpist - 1 Samuel 16:14-23
2. Armorbearer - 1 Samuel 16:21
3. Giant killer - 1 Samuel 17:4-49
4. Conqueror of Philistines - 1 Samuel 17:32-54
5. Jonathan's friend - 1 Samuel 18:1-4
6. Wise behavior - 1 Samuel 18:5-30
7. Psalm writer - Psalm 59 (Title)

### **C. THE FUGITIVE HERO**

1. Flees from Saul – 1 Samuel 19:1-18
2. Takes refuge with Samuel - 1 Samuel 19:20-24
3. Makes covenant with Jonathan - 1 Samuel 20:1-42
4. Eats shewbread - Matthew 12:3-4
5. Feigns insanity in Gath - 1 Samuel 21:10-15
6. Dwells in cave - 1 Samuel 22:1-8
7. Saves Keilah - 1 Samuel 23:1-13
8. Experiences God's deliverance - 1 Samuel 23:14-15
9. His second covenant with Jonathan - 1 Samuel 23:16-18
10. Is betrayed but saved – 1 Samuel 23:19-29
11. Writes a Psalm – Psalm 54 (Title)
12. Spares Saul's life – 1 Samuel 24:1-22
13. Is scorned by Nabal – 1 Samuel 25:1-38
14. Marries Nabal's widow – 1 Samuel 25:39-42
15. Again spares Saul's life – 1 Samuel 26:1-25
16. Dwells in Ziklag – 1 Samuel 27:5-7
17. Rejected by Philistines – 1 Samuel 29:1-11
18. Smites the Amalekites – 1 Samuel 30:1-31
19. Kills Saul's murderer – 2 Samuel 1:1-16
20. Laments Saul's death – 2 Samuel 1:17-27

### **D. KING OVER JUDAH**

1. Anointing at Hebron – 2 Samuel 2:1-4, 11
2. List of supporters – 1 Chronicles 12:23-40
3. Long war with Saul's house – 2 Samuel 3:1
4. Abner's covenant with David – 2 Samuel 3:6-21
5. Mourning of Abner's death – 2 Samuel 3:28-29
6. Punishment of Ishbosheth's murderers - 2 Samuel 4:1-12

**E. KING OVER ALL ISRAEL**

1. Is recognized as king – 2 Samuel 5:1-5
2. Takes Zion from the Jebusites – 2 Samuel 5:6-10
3. Builds a house – 2 Samuel 5:11
4. Strengthens the kingdom – 2 Samuel 5:11-16
5. Strikes down the Philistines – 2 Samuel 5:17-25
6. Escorts the ark to Jerusalem – 2 Samuel 6:1-16
7. Organizes worship – 1 Chronicles 15:1-29
8. Organizes musicians – 1 Chronicles 25:1-31
9. Blesses the people – 2 Samuel 6:17-19
10. Is upbraided by Michal – 2 Samuel 6:20-23
11. Receives an eternal covenant – 2 Samuel 7:1-29
12. Subdues many nations – 2 Samuel 8:1-18; 10:1-19
13. Commits adultery – 2 Samuel 11:1-27
14. Is rebuked by Nathan – 2 Samuel 12:1-14
15. Repents – Psalm 32:1-11; Psalm 51:1-19
16. Experiences subsequent afflictions - 2 Samuel 12:15-23
17. Has family strife – 2 Samuel 13:1-39
18. Is betrayed by Absalom – 2 Samuel 15:1-31
19. Flees from Jerusalem – 2 Samuel 15:13-37
20. Mourns Absalom's death – 2 Samuel 19:1-10
21. Returns to Jerusalem – 2 Samuel 19:15-43
22. Learns of Sheba's conspiracy - 2 Samuel 20:1-26
23. Atones for Saul's crime - 2 Samuel 21:1-14
24. Has further conflicts - 2 Samuel 21:15-22
25. Sings song of deliverance - 2 Samuel 22:1-51
26. Says his last words - 2 Samuel 23:1-7
27. His mighty men listed - 2 Samuel 23:8-39
28. Sins by numbering the people - 2 Samuel 24:1-17
29. Buys Araunah's threshing floor - 2 Samuel 24:18-25
30. Secures Solomon's succession - 1 Kings 1:5-53
31. Gives a dying charge to Solomon - 1 Kings 2:1-11
32. Reigns forty years - 1 Kings 2:11

## **F. SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF DAVID'S LIFE**

1. Prophet – Acts 2:29-30
2. Musician – 2 Samuel 23:1
3. Inspired man – Matthew 22:43
4. Type of Christ – Jeremiah 23:5-6
5. Name of David designates Christ – Ezekiel 34:23-24
6. Christ, the son of David – Matthew 1:1
7. “Kingdom of David” – Mark 11:10
8. “Throne of David” – Luke 1:32
9. “Tabernacle of David” – Acts 15:16
10. “Key of David” – Isaiah 22:22
11. Faith – Hebrews 11:32-33
12. Covenant of David – 2 Samuel 7:4-17 (or the sure mercies of David - Isa. 55:3)

# *PSALM 1*

The theme of this great teaching Psalm is the way to fruitfulness and prosperity. It is written in the style of the book of Proverbs, placing before us the paths of the righteous and of the wicked. King Solomon wrote Psalm 1 while he was on a trip north to Lebanon. He saw a tree planted by a river bringing forth fruit, and broke forth into prophetic utterance. The Psalm which resulted could be termed the Psalm of introduction to the Book of Psalms, as it defines in just six short verses the key to triumphant living in Christ.



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**1:1** - *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”* “Blessed” signifies being filled with the contentment and satisfaction of God Himself through partaking of His joyful serenity. “Is the man” refers to a *particular* man, one in ten thousand (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15), who fulfills two basic requirements, which are the keys to fruitfulness:

- 1.) He completely separates from all sinful counsel and from fellowship with the wicked.
- 2.) He meditates day and night with great delight in the Word of God.

If we examine this psalm in detail we see that there are three sets of *three*'s:

### ***Three Degrees of Position for the Ungodly***

**1.) Walk (in the counsel)** - means to receive guidance and direction in spiritual matters from those who are not godly or who use methods that are worldly.

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**2.) Stand (in the way)** - means to take one's stand and openly advocate a sinner's principles. It means that this person will be in the path (the broad way leading to destruction) and will fellowship with those who openly practice habitual sin, such as homosexuals and adulterers.

**3.) Sit (in the seat)** - means to take a permanent position of wickedness and scorn. This is the ultimate decline. It is a constant abode because sitting implies immobility or an unchanging mood.

### ***Three Degrees of Fellowship with the Ungodly***

**1.) Counsel** - means to permit our lives to be guided by others, through the wisdom of this world rather than by God and His ministers.

**2.) Way** - means to be on the same path as those who grievously and habitually sin. The Lord Himself expressed this thought in Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

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**3.) Seat** - means that one holds the same views as the scorners. This seat also speaks of the authority of the Wicked One (see Rev. 2:13 - Satan's seat in Pergamos).

### ***Three Degrees of Evil***

**1.) Ungodly** - means passionate or restless, striving for that which is not theirs. It is the thought of being covetous. The prophet Isaiah declares, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Isa. 57:20).

**2.) Sinner** - means an active, habitual practitioner of iniquity. Genesis 13:13 says that the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly. Also, we read in Romans 1:28 that when men and women do not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gives them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. (Please see Romans 1:28-32.)

**3.) Scornful** - refers to those who ridicule and scoff at spiritual things, and even at God Himself. Proverbs 19:28-29 warns that "an ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity. Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools."

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It is an awesome fact that the companions we choose to walk with will determine our earthly and eternal destiny. First Corinthians 15:33 says in the NIV, “Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character.” A man is known by his friends. As the little proverb says, “Birds of a feather flock together.” However, those who walk with the wise will become wise. Proverbs 13:20 makes this truth very clear: “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”

**1:2** - *“But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.”* There are two aspects of fruitfulness, epitomized by the Levitical Law which divides animals into two classes of clean and unclean. The difference is stated in Leviticus 11:1-8. There are two characteristics that constitute a clean animal according to the law: they must chew the cud and have a divided (or separated) hoof. There are certain animals that chew the cud but do not have a separated hoof. This makes them unclean. And there are other animals that have a separated hoof but do not chew the cud. They also are unclean by God’s standards.

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This has a great spiritual significance for us as Christians. Spiritually, we must *chew the cud*, which means to meditate over and over again on the law of the Lord and His Word. Also, we must have a divided walk, being separate from sinners. Unless we do these two things, we will not be accepted by the Lord, and we will not be fruitful to any large extent. Therefore, all those who want a fruitful and prosperous life are required to have a separated life, delighting and continually meditating in the Word of the Lord (see Josh.1:8, Deut.17:18-19).

*Delight* signifies putting the Word of God first in our life above all other pleasures, even the necessities of life. Job said, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). Delighting in the law of the Lord is having a deep inward warmth and glow that comes from studying and highly esteeming God's Word. As we do this and as we fast from literature that is unprofitable and unnecessary, an insatiable thirst and hunger is developed in our hearts for the living Word.

Personally, I have found it such a blessing to no longer own a television, and I would commend such a step to Christians everywhere. However, I do realize that some shut-ins do find watching Christian

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programming a blessing. Yet even this can be overdone to the detriment of our personal devotional life with the Lord.

*Meditation* can be illustrated by the rumination of a cow, which rests and regurgitates after it has eaten copiously for several hours. She brings the food up again and chews it about fifty-five times. Incidentally, it is estimated that when you have used a new word thirty-five times it becomes part of your vocabulary. Thus meditating is to recall to our minds a passage that we have read or a word that the Lord has given to us during the day or the night hours.

In Psalm 119:148 the Psalmist says, “Mine eyes [anticipate] the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.” When we constantly meditate in God’s Word, it will keep us from evil throughout the whole day—when we arise in the morning, as we go about our day, and when we go to sleep (Prov. 6:20-23). Memorizing the Scriptures places those verses in our hearts and minds. From such a storehouse the Holy Spirit can readily bring them to our remembrance in time of need.

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

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diligently adheres to verses 1-2 will become like a tree planted by the rivers of water bringing forth his fruit in due season, and everything he does shall prosper. This is true of both spiritual and natural prosperity. It is the place to which the Lord desires to bring all of His children. He desires that we all bring forth fruit, more fruit, and much fruit, and that our fruit abides and stands the test of time (Jn.15:2,5,16).

*“His leaf shall not wither”* signifies that the believer who obeys the preceding verses will never dry up spiritually as do many Christians because they do not follow these prescribed maxims (see Jer. 17:7-8).

**1:4** - *“The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”* There will be a separation between the godly and the ungodly. Whatever is not born of God will be blown away like the chaff. John the Baptist made it very clear that the ministry of Jesus was that of a refiner, saying, *“Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire”* (Mt. 3:12).

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A separation will come, as stated by Christ in Matthew 13:30: “Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.”

**1:5** - *“Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.”* Like Judas and those who sought to take Jesus (Jn.18:6), the ungodly shall fall backward and not be able to stand when the Lord rises up to judge His people. The sinners, not only in the world, but also in the Church will be terrified in that hour.

Isaiah 33:14-15 says: “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.”

**1:6** - *“For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”* The reason it says the Lord knows the way of the righteous is that He has preplanned their life (see Job



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23:10). To the wicked, the Lord declares in Matthew 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

The ultimate fate of the wicked is that they will perish eternally. But the righteous are like the fruitful tree described in this psalm, bringing forth *in its season*—fruit that abides eternally. Herein do we glorify God, by bringing forth much fruit. Praise the Lord!

# *PSALM 2*

This Psalm has several applications. Notably, it refers to the second coming of Christ and the last battle between the kings of the earth rising in rebellion against God and His anointed, the Lord Jesus Christ (see Rev. 16:14; 19:11-21). It also applies *historically* to the battles fought against David at the time when he sought to build the Lord a house upon Mount Zion (see 2 Sam. 7 - 8).

Spiritually, it has an application to individual believers who are facing pressures from the enemy in their God-appointed positions. May we draw hope and comfort from this Psalm in times when our

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enemies rise up, seeking to overthrow us from our God-appointed positions. With these three applications of this Psalm in mind, let us now examine it prayerfully.

**2:1** - *“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?”* From this verse it is obvious that we are looking at nations which are motivated by deceiving spirits.

**2:2** - *“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying ...”* It is the rulers of the earth that have conspired together and that will conspire against the Lord and His anointed. The Lord’s anointed can refer to David, to Christ, and also to His precious saints when their enemies rise up against them.

**2:3-4** - *“Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.”* The heathen declare that they will break out of the limitations that God in His wisdom has placed upon them. However, God will laugh at their futile attempts to fight against His purposes and against Christ at His second coming.

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**2:5** - *“Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.”* God will manifest His divine anger toward them, probably in the form of the signs, wonders, and plagues mentioned in the book of Revelation, and they will be terrified.

**2:6** - *“Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.”* The Father declares that He has set His Son, King Jesus, upon His holy hill of Zion. The Lord Jesus Christ already rules from heavenly Mount Zion (cf. Rev. 14:1), and He will yet rule upon Zion’s hill in the millennium. Historically, however, God established King David upon earthly Mount Zion.

As we mentioned in the introduction to this Psalm, these verses can have at least three applications. Applying this verse from another point of view, we could scripturally say that the Lord desires to forge us into kings and priests, and also desires to set us on spiritual Mount Zion, the dwelling place of God’s literal presence and manifest glory.

**2:7** - *“I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”* This verse applies exclusively to the Lord Jesus Christ (see Acts 13:33, Heb. 1:5). He is the only begotten Son of the Father (Jn. 1:14, 3:16). However, the Holy Spirit could quicken this verse to

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us as a rhema word from the Lord to give us the assurance that not only have we been adopted into the family of God as children, but we have been placed as mature sons of God into His kingdom, and made joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:14-17).

**2:8** - *“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”* This promise was given to Christ, for He is heir to all of the nations of the world (Rev.11:15). We can also receive the nations as our inheritance. Therefore, we should earnestly seek to have fruit from many nations to present to the Lord at His coming, just as the Israelites of old had to appear three times a year before the Lord with the fruits of their harvest (Deut.16:16). Certainly we do not want to appear empty-handed before the Lord on the day of reckoning.

In some cases fruitfulness is fulfilled by actually ministering in foreign countries. In other cases it is through prayer for those countries, through giving financially to missionary endeavors, or sometimes by supporting your pastor as he travels on behalf of your church to other places. Remember the law of spoils which David practiced (see Num. 31:27; Psa. 68:12). David said in First Samuel 30:24, “As

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his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.” David established this as a law in Israel (1 Sam. 30:25). So, dear ones, those of you who do not travel will receive a reward for your labors just as those who actually are privileged to journey to other lands, if you are faithful wherever God has placed you.

To illustrate this truth, I would like to recount an experience of a dear saint of God who attended a church that I pastored in the Western United States. One day while she was in prayer she had a vision of a large plane flying by as she looked through the window of her room. In this plane there were people of many nationalities all waving to her as they passed her window. In amazement she asked the Lord the meaning of this vision. His kind reply was, “These are the souls who have been brought into the kingdom through your faithful prayers and sacrificial giving to missionaries.” If we have been faithful in our support of our missionaries, we may be surprised before the throne of God to discover how many are in heaven because of our intercession and giving.

**2:9** - *“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”*  
In verse nine a promise is given to rule and reign with Christ in the Millennium. This promise is not

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given to everyone; it is only given to the overcomers. This is evident from Revelation 2:26-27: “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron.” The saints of God (who have overcome the world, their carnal nature, and the devil) will rule the nations with a rod of iron. The laws of God will be enforced; and judgment and righteousness will prevail in Christ’s Kingdom.

**2:10-12** - *“Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.”* All the kings of this world and those in positions of authority are exhorted to make peace with the Lord. To kiss Him means to submit to Him and be reconciled to Him.

Then in conclusion, as in Psalm 34:8, there is the promise of blessedness to those who put their trust completely in the Lord. They will enjoy the blessing of being supremely content and peaceful, as they receive the rewards of the faithful. They will receive the heathen for their inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for their possession.

# *PSALM 3*

The background to the next two Psalms is the time of David's flight from his rebellious son Absalom (cf. 2 Sam.17:22), as the psalm title clearly states. From the context of the psalms, it is assumed that Psalm 4 was written the night before Psalm 3. (See comments on Psalm 3:5 and 4:8.)

*A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son*

**3:1** - *"Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me."* David was heavily outnumbered in the battle between his forces and Absalom's army, since nearly all Israel had banded together in recognition of Absalom as king in the place of his father David. Absalom had subtly won their hearts through flattery (2 Sam.15:1-6).



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**3:2** - *“Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.”* Because of his sin with Bathsheba, David’s enemies were looking upon his dethronement as one of the Lord’s judgments upon him. They declared that God would not help David.

**3:3-4** - *“But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.”* However, David’s confidence in the Lord was unbounded, and he trusted that the Lord would eventually lift his head up above his enemies. In this place of betrayal by his own son and fellow countrymen, David turned to the Lord for his protection and encouragement. David cried unto the Lord, who most graciously took the side of His penitent servant and heard him from His holy hill of Zion.

**3:5** - *“I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.”* In this verse we see the reason why we believe Psalm 4 was written the night before Psalm 3. Speaking of the previous night, David says, “I laid me down and slept,” whereas in Psalm 4:8 he states that “he will lie down in peace.” The Lord is the One who sustained David. The Lord uses circumstances like these to cause us to turn to

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Him with all of our hearts. This was the product of trials in David's life. David drew strength and assurance from remembering past circumstances when the Lord rescued him out of all his troubles.

**3:6** - *"I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about."* Here is a wonderful note of victory on the part of David. He triumphed gloriously over fear. Although tens of thousands had set themselves in array against him, David declared that he would not fear. This glorious victory can be ours as we see the Lord working through all circumstances for our ultimate good (Psa. 16:8; Rom. 8:28). We must hope and trust in the fact that the Lord is far greater than all of our enemies.

**3:7** - *"Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly."* Now David pleads for the Lord's immediate help, remembering former times when God smote all of his enemies upon the cheek bone, breaking their teeth. This phrase is analogous to rendering a wild animal ineffective. Thus the Lord made his enemies' power null and void.

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**3:8** - *“Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.”* David now reminds himself that deliverance belongs to God, not to those with the most military might, and He favors those who trust in Him.

# *PSALM 4*

As we have already mentioned in the preface to Psalm 3, this Psalm was written when David was fleeing from his beloved son Absalom. David crossed the Jordan after being warned by Hushai, his counselor and friend, not to stay in the wilderness of Judea. Hushai remained with Absalom to confound and confuse the counsel of Ahithophel, who had sided with Absalom (2 Sam. 17:16).

*To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David*

**4:1** - *“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.”* David calls on the Lord in his distress, and it was at this time of anguish that God enlarged him. This speaks of a spiritual enlarging by which we

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receive a deeper appreciation of the ways of God when we pass through the valley of suffering and are troubled by our enemies.

We note here that David calls the Lord the God of *his* righteousness. The one who had sinned so grievously not only found forgiveness after his sin with Bathsheba (Psa. 32:1-2), but he also was made righteous. The righteousness of God was *imparted* to him. This produces such hope for us as we press on to know the mercy of God's great restoration. There is no limit to God's restoring power. He lifts up the beggars and causes them to sit with princes. Therefore, be encouraged, beloved.

**4:2** - "*O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing [or deceitfulness]? Selah.*" Addressing those who were his enemies, David asks them how long they will continue in their foolish ways. They were opposing the Lord's anointed, and turning his majesty and honor into something to be scorned. Also, note that these men were great in the sight of the congregation. It is a terrible thing when our enemies are highly respected, for they have credence in the eyes of others who do not know the whole situation.

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Such was the case with this uprising against David. Many notable people followed Absalom because they were superficial in their relationship with God and were therefore void of true wisdom. Because they lacked spiritual discernment, they sided with the wrong camp, and many of them died in consequence of their error. Here we can see the importance of having discernment and siding with the godly.

**4:3** - *“But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.”* They did not understand that in spite of all his failures, David was a man who sought to please God and was set apart by God for His good pleasure.

**4:4** - *“Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.”* Again, pleading with those nobles who had risen up against him, David tells them to stand in awe of what God is doing because it is God who has raised up Absalom against David for His purposes. Therefore, he urges them not to run with the wicked, for God will shortly destroy them. Think it out prayerfully upon your bed at night, tremble, and sin not.

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**4:5** - *“Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.”* David now instructs those who have hearkened to his impassioned plea to offer the sacrifices of righteousness, which flow from a broken and a contrite heart (Psa. 51:17-19). When the heart is in right relationship with God, He will show whose side He is on and whom He favors.

**4:6** - *“There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.”* Even among David’s own followers there were those who were questioning whether God would bless them. They were beginning to doubt David because of all the adversities he was passing through. What turmoil David had all around him!

Yet in the midst of all this, the greatness of David shone even brighter. He was wholeheartedly confiding in the Lord, and his relationship with the Lord attained new heights in this trial. When there was no one to encourage him, he turned to the Lord and found his comfort in Him (cf. 1 Sam. 30:6).

**4:7** - *“Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.”* It was the experience of true forgiveness for his sins that sustained David through all these adversities and conflicts. Many who commit adultery never come into this place with God. The

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reason is that they are not willing to confess their sin or accept the Lord's punishment (see Lev. 26:40-42).

However, those who experience true repentance (which is a gift of God) will also know the renewal of the joy of God's salvation as David did (Psa. 51:8,12). The joy David experienced after his restoration was far greater than the joy of the farmer when he reaps a good harvest. It was this restored joy and newly found gladness from the Lord that sustained David during the time of his flight from Absalom.

**4:8** - *"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."* Because of this joy, David said as he fled across Jordan that he would experience the blessed sleep of the Lord, for as Psalm 127:2 says, the Lord "grants sleep to those He loves" (NIV).



# *PSALM 5*

The key word in this psalm is in the inscription “*Nehiloth*,” which means *inheritance*, as the Septuagint translates it. However, others translate this word as *an instrument of music*, such as a flute or a reed. This psalm illustrates the victory we have in Jesus over the wicked. This victory is the inheritance of all the Lord’s servants (see Isa. 54:17). Psalm five was written when the revolt of Absalom was in its simmering stage. David knew something was about to happen, and he appealed to the Lord to fight for him against the wicked.

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### ***To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David***

**5:1** - *“Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation.”* David appeals initially on the grounds that the Lord knows his thoughts. This is one of the hallmarks of the godly—they are constantly meditating upon their blessed Lord.

**5:2** - *“Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.”* David pleads with the Lord to hear his voice. Being heard by God is an absolute privilege because He does not hear all who cry unto Him (Psa. 66:18).

**5:3** - *“My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.”* Here David makes the point that he will lift up his voice to the Lord in the morning. For this reason, this psalm is known as a morning psalm or prayer for daily guidance. We should “look up” to God above the troubles of the day as David did.

**5:4** - *“For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.”* Then David invokes the character of God, who hates all evil. His nature is intrinsically holy (cf. Hab. 1:13).

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**5:5** - *“The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.”* There is no premium placed upon ignorance in God’s kingdom. We are exhorted to study and increase our knowledge of God’s ways (Prov.1:22; 2 Tim. 2:15).

**5:6** - *“Thou shalt destroy them that speak [lies]: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.”* Likewise, God is a God of truth (Jn. 14:6). Therefore, in keeping with His character, He must hate all lying. He also abhors those who shed blood and practice deceit (cf. Prov. 6:16-19).

**5:7** - *“But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”* David declares that through the abundance of God’s mercy, he will be permitted to come into the house of the Lord. Having humbled himself and having received God’s grace (cf. Jas. 4:6), David worshipped the Lord in reverential fear. Because of God’s acceptance of us, we are able to look up again and love Him (Psa. 130:4).

**5:8** - *“Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.”* He then continues by asking the Lord to lead him in a straight or a plain path because of the motives of his enemies. Anyone who has been harassed by those who seek their destruction knows

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that there is much spiritual opposition and confusion during that time. Spiritually, things become very dark.

**5:9** - *“For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.”* Our enemies are usually very complimentary and flattering to our faces. Because of this, sometimes we are not sure whether they are for us or against us. However, the Lord is faithful to reveal their true feelings toward us.

When I was going through such a trial, my teeth would break every time I was in the presence of a certain man. It occurred when I was eating with him. I would be chewing quite soft food and I found that several times throughout a series of meals I had with him that parts of different teeth would break quite unexpectedly. When I was eating with others during that time no such breakage happened. By this very unusual experience, the Lord warned me from Proverbs 25:19 that this man was unfaithful and that he would not remain loyal to me.

**5:10** - *“Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.”* The rebellion was not just against David,

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but against the Lord Himself. Korah's rebellion against Moses was only a product of his rebellion against the Lord. Those who rebel against God's appointed leaders have already rebelled against the Lord in their own hearts. There is really only one remedy for this, and that is for the Lord to remove them from the congregation (the church or fellowship).

**5:11** - *“But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.”* Then returning to those who are righteous, David declares that they will be filled with the joy of the Lord. Oh, what a blessing it is to be filled and strengthened with the holy joy of Jesus!

**5:12** - *“For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.”* The righteous will enjoy the favor of the Lord, while the ungodly will behold in anguish the blessing in which they cannot participate.

# *PSALM 6*

Psalm 6 was written soon after David's sin with Bathsheba. It reveals how the Lord afflicted David in his body. It was through this sickness that David was forced into earnestly seeking the face of the Lord for forgiveness. This Psalm should be read in conjunction with Psalm 32, which was probably written just prior to Psalm 6. According to Saint Augustine, it is one of the seven penitential psalms, along with Psalm 32, 37, 51, 102, 130, and 143. The idea of selecting seven was taken from the thought of Naaman the leper descending seven times into the Jordan River in order to be purified (2 Kgs. 5:10).

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### ***To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David***

#### **Part 1 - David's Plea in Great Distress**

**6:1** - *“O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.”* Here David cries out in great pain that the Lord will cease to rebuke him. Certainly David is justifiably optimistic because the Lord says in Isaiah 57:16, “I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.”

**6:2-3** - *“Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long?”* David was reduced by sickness to a pitiful state of weakness, so that even his bones were shaking. Also, his whole emotional system was in turmoil, and he cried out, *“O Lord, how long?”* One of the features of a trial is that we do not know how long it will last. We are continually stretched to call upon the Lord for an ever-increasing abundance of grace to go through it triumphantly.

**6:4** - *“Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.”* So often in trials, such as the one David was passing through because of his sin, the presence of the Lord departs and we

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seemingly cannot find the One whom our soul loves. This is why David pleads in desperation with the Lord to return. In these dark times we become more and more aware that the Lord alone can bring deliverance and salvation.

**6:5** - *“For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?”* When David was very near to death, he realized that for the Old Testament saint it was only in the land of the living that he could praise the Lord. Before the Lord’s death on the cross, when a righteous person died, his spirit went into the lower parts of the earth into a resting place. Since the resurrection of Christ, a saint of God goes immediately into heaven when he dies.

**6:6-7** - *“I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears. Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.”* Overcome with weariness, he falls asleep on a pillow wet with tears of remorse and repentance for his sin. David’s eyes aged through his continual weeping and because of the torments of his enemies.



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**Part 2 - An Exclamation of Triumph Because He Knows That the Lord Has Heard Him**

**6:8-9** - *“Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.”* How important and so very wonderful it is to have the assurance that the Lord has heard our cry and that He will deliver us. We must press on to enter into this place of rest in the Lord. David had entered into a place of rest where he knew that the Lord would answer his prayers.

**6:10** - *“Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.”* Therefore, he can triumphantly declare that his enemies will be vexed and be suddenly ashamed because of the Lord’s deliverance for His anointed.

Let it be so for us, beloved, as we follow the simple steps laid out in this Psalm for all those who have transgressed the Lord’s commandments. Let us acknowledge our transgressions and then earnestly seek Him until we are assured of His forgiveness. Then we can face our accusers with confidence, knowing that the Lord is on our side and He will fight for us. Praise the Lord!

# *PSALM 7*

This Psalm was written during the time when David was fleeing from Saul. Cush, or Kish, was a Benjamite who was of the same tribe as Saul and presumably had access to Saul in the Royal Palace. He spoke words against David that Saul in his jealousy easily accepted without verification. However, instead of becoming bitter and absorbed with what his enemies were saying about him, David meditated in God's Word (cf. Psa. 119:23). He did not look at situations with the natural eye. Let us do likewise, for this is the pathway to rest and strength. The Psalm title, *Shiggaion*, simply means "a rambling or disconnected poem."

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### ***Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite***

**7:1** - *“O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:”* The key to victory when we are being attacked and persecuted is to put our trust in God. We should turn to the Lord and believe in faith that He will save us.

**7:2** - *“Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.”* Cush obviously was a man of influence and power, for David feared that he would tear his soul like a lion. In this title, Cush the Benjamite is construed by some to mean Saul himself. If we accept this interpretation, it is easy to see why David was so concerned, because Saul would have had the whole army of Israel at his disposal.

**7:3-5** - *“O Lord my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands. If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:) Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.”* Then David professes his innocence before God in this matter. David

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in no way did any evil to Saul, but was willing to suffer at the hands of his enemy if he had been at fault.

I cannot help but reflect upon these verses for many years later we find David fleeing from Absalom because of his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah the Hittite. This is exactly what happened to him in those years of the Lord's judgments upon him. However, in this present situation with respect to Saul, David was completely innocent of all wrongdoing.

**7:6** - *“Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded.”* While he is fleeing from Saul, David cries out for God's righteous judgment to come upon his enemies, the judgment that the Lord has already shown him will be their portion. I have experienced this situation in my own life when the Lord has indicated that He would bring down judgment upon the heads of those who have persecuted me. However, as with David, we often have to wait a long time for this to take place. Yet this patient waiting develops the peaceable fruit of righteousness in our lives.

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**7:7** - *“So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.”* When the Lord does eventually bring forth His judgments upon our enemies, our congregations and our friends who have stood with us will embrace the Lord in a new and fresh way.

**7:8** - *“The Lord shall judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.”* The Lord is just and will judge His people. David cries out to the Lord to examine him too. It is far better to ask the Lord to look into our hearts now than to wait until we appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Communion service is an excellent opportunity to meet the Lord in this way (1 Cor. 11:28, 31-32).

**7:9** - *“Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.”* As we are all so prone to do, David prays for the wickedness of the wicked to come immediately to an end. May we assure you that there will be an end of all iniquity after the enemy of our souls has accomplished in the trial everything that the Lord has purposed for our lives. God will avenge all unrighteousness, after our righteousness is fulfilled, or after everything is put right in our own lives (see 2 Cor.10:6).

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**7:10** - *“My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.”* The warrior king David declares that his defender is the Lord. May we learn this lesson as well, and take our hands off situations and allow the Lord to fight for us.

**7:11** - *“God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.”* This thought of God judging the righteous refers to the Lord’s discipline and correction of the righteous to make their character straight like His. Then He vents His anger in due time upon the workers of iniquity. I realize that this verse is open to several interpretations because it is translated differently in Coverdale’s, King Edward VI’s, and in the Septuagint. Dr. Adam Clarke feels that the Chaldean translation corrupted the text.

However, I feel that the interpretation I have given is more conformable to the nature of God, and it is validated by the Scriptures as a whole. (Please note that the phrase *“with the wicked”* is in italics in the King James Bible, signifying that it is not in the original text.)

**7:12-13** - *“If he turn not, he will [sharpen] his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.”* If

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the wicked do not repent, the Lord will prepare His weapons against them, which are weapons of death that will send them down to the pit of eternal damnation.

**7:14-16** - *“Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hast conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own [head].”* Evil men work at producing iniquity and false accusations against the righteous. They make a pit for the righteous, but the righteous Judge causes them to fall into their very own pit. That which they have done will come down upon their own head. This is a principle that flows throughout Scripture—we will reap what we sow (cf. Judg.1:6-7).

**7:17** - *“I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high.”* How different is the lot of the righteous! While the wicked fall into the pit, the righteous are triumphantly praising the Lord who has so justly defended them and rescued them from all the snares of the wicked. Oh, let us take courage from these verses and wait patiently upon the Lord until He grants us His great salvation. Amen and amen!

# *PSALM 8*

The title of this Psalm has again caused much speculation. However, it can easily be interpreted as a song sung over the demise or slaying of Goliath of Gath. “*Gittith*” has the connotation of being one from Gath, but also a joyful hymn sung by the treaders of grapes in the winepress. As such, it was sung after the victory of David over Goliath. Therefore, this is probably the earliest of David’s Psalms.

It is a Messianic ode of adoration unto Christ, being interpreted as such by Christ Himself in Matthew 21:16 and by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 2:6-7. However, I feel that it also applies to man in general, and therefore it can be a blessing for our lives as we meditate upon it. The first and last verses are



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pure exclamations of adoration unto the Lord, and in the intervening verses David contemplates His condescension toward man.

### ***To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David***

**8:1** - *“O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.”* Oh, the greatness of the majesty of God! It is too vast for mortal man to comprehend. Only in a fragmentary way does he grasp the awesomeness of the Lord, portrayed wherever the hand of God is manifested. His glory and throne are above the heaven of heavens.

**8:2** - *“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.”* This Lord of glory has condescended to manifest the greatness of His power and strength out of the mouth of babes and even through the sucking child, who is able without instruction to draw milk from his mother’s breast. This child speaks in a certain sense of Christ (who was born as a child in a manger) who stilled and thwarted Satan, the adversary of the Lord.

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**8:3** - *“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.”* Then as David went out into the night sky, he contemplated the greatness of God in creation. He contemplated the moon, the stars, the Pleiades, Arcturus and the Orion in the northern skies. They were all flowing in their God-ordained courses with incredible speed, as they have throughout the millennia since their beginnings on the fourth day of creation.

**8:4** - *“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”* Observing such celestial phenomena, David saw the comparative insignificance of man and was overwhelmed that the Lord should be mindful of him, and even more amazed that He should choose to visit him.

**8:5** - *“For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”* Then speaking prophetically again of Christ, David declares that man has been made a little lower than the angels. Paul completes the sentence by saying in Hebrews 2:9 that Christ was made a little lower than the angels so that He might “taste death for all men.” Yet He is crowned with glory

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and honor, speaking of His resurrection and ascension to be seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

**8:6-8** - *“Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.”* In the beginning, man was given dominion over all the works of God’s hands and all the beasts of His creation. These verses have helped me remain calm in adverse circumstances in various parts of the world when facing all kinds of wild and domestic animals.

Many years ago when my wife and I were traveling in a very remote area of East Africa, the Lord spoke to me that I was going to see a lion in the thicket (cf. Jer. 4:7). Sure enough, it was not long before we came across a wild lioness resting on the side of the road. I got out of the Jeep, walked up to this ferocious animal, and looked her right in the eyes. The Lord had quickened these verses to me, so I knew that she was not going to harm me, and she was certain that I was not going to harm her. It was a very wonderful experience.

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Another time while I was in the state of Oregon in early spring, I was riding a very stubborn horse that refused to budge because he had not been ridden for several months. I reminded that horse of this scripture, that man was given dominion and authority over the animals. Then I commanded the horse to move, and it began to move.

The little expression “*paths of the sea*” is very interesting because in our days of submarines and other submersible machines, we know that there are paths along the ocean floor. However, this is something that David in his time could only have known by the Spirit.

**8:9** - “*O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!*” As this psalm closes, David extols the greatness of the name of the Lord who made the heavens and the earth. Like David, may we worship Him in wondrous adoration, and truly come to know His name which is above every other name (Phil. 2:9-10).

# *PSALM 9*

The Chaldee version of this Psalm has a superscription that reads, “Concerning the death of the champion that went out between the camps.” It is the celebration of the victory over the Syro-Ammonitish armies, as well as the Philistines (2 Sam. 8:12). This would have been at the time when David was ruling in Zion after his third anointing.

The Psalm title, *Muthlabben*, literally means “to die for a son.” It is thought by some to commemorate the death in battle of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah, David’s enemy (cf. 2 Sam. 8:3).

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### ***To the chief Musician upon Muthlabben, A Psalm of David***

**9:1-2** - *“I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.”* The call of God upon each of our lives is to show forth the praises of God in every area of our being (1 Pet. 2:9). We should ask the Lord as David did to unite our hearts so that we can praise Him wholeheartedly and give Him our undivided attention in worship. From such a heart it is easy to rejoice and be glad in the Lord.

**9:3-5** - *“When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence. For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right. Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.”* It is when we have this glorious victory in our own hearts that the Lord can turn our enemies back. They shall not be able to stand in the Lord’s presence. Then, because of personal victory in our lives, God will judge in our favor.

Thus, in the days of King David, the Lord was able to judge with awesome severity the heathen nations of Syria and Ammon as well as the Philistines because of the victorious life of the king.

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**9:6** - *“O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.”* The parallel passage in the historical books is found in Second Samuel 12:26-31. This was the time when David had completely destroyed the power of the Ammonites when he captured their capital city Rabbah. Many of these enemy cities have been so completely destroyed that there is no more remembrance of them to this day.

Such will the Lord do for us as we delight in Him. Remember, too, that the setting of this Psalm is after the sin with Bathsheba and after the birth of Solomon when David had been restored to God’s favor and presence.

**9:7** - *“But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.”* The Lord’s throne is forever. All the kingdoms of the heathen shall perish, but His dominion endures forever; and “of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Lk. 1:33).

**9:8** - *“And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.”* At His second coming the Lord will judge the world in righteousness. Then people will receive true righteousness.

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**9:9** - *“The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.”* The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed in times of trouble (see Isa. 32:2). Proverbs 18:10 is very apropos here. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” The Lord is faithful and we can place our trust in Him at all times.

**9:10** - *“And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.”* There is a special blessing upon those who know the Lord’s name *experientially*. This is illustrated in Psalm 91:14. In knowing Him as our Savior, Healer, Provider, and by His many other names, a strong trust and bond is created between us.

One of the names of the Lord is Jehovah Shammah, which means “the Lord is there.” This name became a reality for a certain congregation which had an angelic visitation in the form of a man (cf. Heb. 13:2). This angel stated to the congregation as he stood in their midst, “The Lord is here.” This is an experience many congregations would appreciate, I’m sure.



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**9:11** - *“Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.”* We are instructed to sing praises to Him because in so doing we exalt Him, and also because He inhabits the praises of His people. Praising Him brings His presence *into our situation*.

**9:12** - *“When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.”* There comes a time when God remembers those who were slain by the wicked, and He avenges their blood as He did the blood of righteous Abel. This will He do for all of His blessed martyrs (see Rev. 6:10-11).

**9:13** - *“Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:”* King David cries out to the Lord in the midst of his own troubles. Because of his sin he was brought down to the very gates of death, but the Lord lifted him back up.

I want to encourage those who may have sinned grievously against the Lord. God may bring you down very low, but if you accept His punishments as did David, there is *complete* restoration with God.

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**9:14** - *“That I may show forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.”* Because of God’s mercy, David was able to walk with his head up high and sing God’s praises within the gates of the city of Zion. Zion is the place of the Lord’s habitation, and it is His holy mountain.

**9:15** - *“The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.”* The end of a matter is always what counts; it is the end of a race that determines who the winner is. In spiritual matters the enemy always falls, and God always causes His own to triumph in the end.

**9:16** - *“The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.”* This is one aspect of the revelation of God. He is the One who executes judgment upon the wicked. The Lord is known by His judgments (see Ex. 7:5). *Higgaion* means “to meditate on these things”; *Selah* has the sense of “pausing,” and in this case, “pausing to consider these things.”

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**9:17** - *“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”* The eternal state of the wicked is that they will fall into hell. So it will be with all nations who thrust God out of their lives and mock His Word. We commend the reading of Ezekiel 31, especially verses 14-17, where the prophet describes the eternal damnation of the Assyrians, who many years after David’s time raised up their armies against Israel.

**9:18** - *“For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.”* Seemingly for a time God forgets His own, but in the end He brings forth their righteousness and vindicates them.

For many years I did not have any money or a sure roof over my head. I had to believe God every day for my necessities. Yet in my poverty the Lord kept assuring me that the day would come when I would care for others. It was very hard to believe this at the time, but by faith I embraced what the Lord wanted to do in my life. That day has certainly come now, as God has blessed our fellowship of churches with the responsibility of providing, under God, for many missionaries, native pastors, schools and orphanages around the world. Praise His wonderful name!

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**9:19** - *“Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.”* Therefore, David, well knowing the righteous judgments of God, cries out, “Let not man’s will prevail, but rather judge speedily the heathen.” (See Eccl. 8:11.)

**9:20** - *“Put them in fear, O Lord: that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah.”* Then he continues by asking God to put the nations in a state of fear through His just judgments so that the wicked, who have devised all this evil against God’s people, may in the end realize that they are but men and not God. So, too, will it be for us as we wholly put our trust in the Lord to avenge us of our enemies and all those who rise up against us.

# *PSALM 10*

In our opinion, most commentators have correctly identified this Psalm as a couplet to the previous one. It is seemingly an amplification of King David's cry against the wicked who have raised themselves up against him.

**10:1** - *"Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?"* At times, God allows the wicked to further their evil devices. After long years of study and experience, I am fully convinced that the wicked are used by God to perfect His people. Paul said in Romans 9:22-23, "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much

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longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.” In other words, God uses vessels of wrath to perfect His vessels of mercy.

**10:2-3** - *“The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the [schemes or plots] that they have imagined. For the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.”* One of the chief characteristics of the wicked, if it is not envy or jealousy, is pride. So often the three go together with many other sins such as anger and immorality. The wicked tend to be very oppressive, especially in their attitude and conduct toward the poor. They are also given to boasting and are friends of the covetous, whom God hates.

**10:4** - *“The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.”* Pride deceives and lulls people into a false sense of security. This in turn causes them not to seek God but to rely upon their own thoughts instead of seeking the Lord’s guidance. It is not in man to direct his ways (Jer. 10:23); therefore, we must continually seek the Lord for wisdom in all matters, great and small.

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I have known many people in my lifetime who have risen to some degree of prominence either through God-given abilities or simply by His grace. The unfortunate thing, however, is that many of these people have become proud, and therefore have ceased to go on in God, losing everything. Some were Bible school graduates who left the path of righteousness because they refused to accept God's trials, and eventually they ended up leaving the ministry. Others have degenerated to the point that they are now bar tenders in taverns.

**10:5-6** - *“His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them. He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.”* The wicked do not seek to please the Lord in any of their doings; for the judgments of God and His ways are unknown to them. They live their lives in false confidence and false expectation. In their heart, the wicked say that they will never be overcome by their enemies. Thus we see the deception and presumption that thrives in the heart of the proud (Obad.1:3).

**10:7** - *“His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.”* The heart of the proud is so often filled with cursing, deceit, and lies, which are the three most common

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weapons of the tongue. The wicked bring to pass their purposes through devious and deceitful schemes.

**10:8** - *“He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes [stealthily watch for] the poor.”* The downward plunge of the wicked takes them from being proud to boasting, and then to cursing and all manner of deceit. Eventually they come to the place where they will stop at nothing in order to further their purposes, even the murder of the innocent.

**10:9-10** - *“He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.”* Continuing this comparison of the wicked with the posture of a lion when seeking to pounce upon his prey, David speaks of their crouching in a groveling sense. They are waiting to fall upon the poor, even using their companions to further their purposes.

**10:11-12** - *“He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it. Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.”* Totally blinded by pride, the wicked



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believe that God will forget and not know their evil acts. But David pleads with God to remember the evil that has been perpetrated against the poor and the humble.

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

The wicked have the audacity to revile God and think that He will not require them to give an account of their sin at the judgment seat. O beloved, remember Ecclesiastes 3:15, which says, “God requireth that which is past.”

**10:14** - *“Thou hast seen it: for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.”* David declares that in spite of the impious wishes of the wicked, God has seen all their injustices and He will render justice to the perpetrators of evil. God pities the fatherless, since so often they are poor in spirit and have entrusted their cause to Him.

**10:15** - *“Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none.”* Therefore, with confidence David cries out to God to speedily take action against the cruel. *“Breaking his arm”* means to render him powerless to continue his evil actions against the oppressed

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and to cause all wicked works to cease. Thus should we pray in faith for the Lord to avenge us and cause the wickedness of evil men to be arrested.

**10:16** - *“The Lord is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.”* Because the Lord is truly the King of Kings, He can cause the heathen to perish from off His land. This I would apply to our churches or fellowship, that the Lord would speedily rid us of all evildoers. In the Church today, there is a mixed multitude, and there must come a separation.

**10:17** - *“Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.”* With great confidence, David now declares that the Lord has heard the cries of the humble, those who prostrate themselves before the throne of mercy.

The Lord strengthens their heart to believe that His ear will hear their prayer and give them the desires of their hearts. O dear ones, let us believe that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, as Paul states in Hebrews 11:6.

**10:18** - *“To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.”* The Lord will fight for and plead the cause of the fatherless, those who have none to help them. Then

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He will cause that man who has oppressed us to oppress us no more. There is a time for war, but then it must cease and give way to peace (Eccl. 3:8).

The wicked will not oppress us forever, for the Lord will take away the cup of trembling from our hand and cause our oppressor to drink from it (Isa. 51:22-23). “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord” (Rom. 12:19). If we faint not, in due time we will see God avenge us of our enemies. Praise the Lord!

# *PSALM 11*

This Psalm was written when Saul was persecuting David, hunting him down on every possible occasion.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

**11:1** - *“In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?”* David’s friends suggested that it would be good to hide in the mountains. This David repudiates, for he has put his trust in the Lord. It is noteworthy that during this time of persecution, David accomplished many things for the Lord. Thus, even when we are in distress, let us not hide away, for if we put our trust in the Lord as David did, He will make us fruitful in our times of distress.

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**11:2** - *“For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may shoot [in darkness] at the upright in heart.”* Certainly it was not an easy time for David. Archers were everywhere seeking to bring him down. This thought of archers is not only in the literal sense but also in the spiritual sense, as we see in the life of Joseph. Genesis 49:23 says, “The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.” Thus it applies in Joseph’s case to the cruel actions of his brethren and also to the unjust charges of Potiphar’s wife. Therefore, it can apply to the false accusations of the wicked against us, too, beloved. But let us triumph over them even as Joseph and David did in a spirit of forgiveness, love, and pity for our enemies.

**11:3** - *“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”* It is in such a time as this that we must stand, having done everything we possibly could (cf. Eph. 6:13). If we are moved away by the fear of the enemy, then it will be like the foundations of a building being moved, and the work of God that we are holding up will collapse. David continued to walk in the Spirit and do the work of God in spite of his circumstances. As a result, all the righteous in the kingdom were greatly encouraged.

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Notice, also, the attitude of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 1:14: “And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.” Leaders *must* stand in the time of persecution. This will further the work of the Lord and encourage those who are with them.

**11:4** - *“The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord’s throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men.”* The Lord at this time is testing us. When it says, *“His eyelids try the children of men,”* it means the Lord is narrowly observing our actions, words, and thoughts during such times.

**11:5** - *“The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.”* God purifies the righteous in the furnace of affliction. We must remember, however, that fire purifies gold; it does not create gold. Job was found worthy to pass through a greater ordeal than his friends, since they did not have the character that would have withstood the intense heat of his fiery trial. Also, God’s soul hates those who love violence.

**11:6** - *“Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.”* The wicked shall inherit the lake of eternal fire and brimstone in perpetual

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torments. Also, upon earth we shall see in the end of time, as portrayed in the Book of Revelation, that the Lord will judge with great severity the wicked and evil among mankind (Rev. 16:8).

**11:7** - *“For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.”* The righteous are beloved of the Lord and His favor is ever toward them. Thus, we see that the end of David was good. He will be the king in the Millennium. Saul’s end was terrible—he went down into the pit. Let us never be weary of well doing, beloved, for there is a reward to the righteous, and the wicked will be recompensed also according to their ways.

# *PSALM 12*

Psalm 12 was written, as was the last Psalm, at the time when Saul was persecuting David, and many were favoring Saul's evil cause.

*To the chief Musician upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David*

**12:1** - *“Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.”*

David lamented the treachery of this epoch, when to curry favor with the apostate King Saul, many would seek to betray David. David looked for faithfulness but could scarcely find it. There were very few faithful men. He felt like Elijah who thought he was the only true worshipper, but thank God, He reserves to Himself others who are of like disposition (1 Kgs. 19:14,18).



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**12:2** - *“They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.”* Hardly anyone could be trusted. And we are often in similar circumstances. We look for those in whom we can confide, but they mock us behind our back and betray our confidence.

**12:3-4** - *“The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things: Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?”* David encouraged himself in the knowledge that the time would come when God would cut off those with flattering tongues who have declared that by their conniving speech they would bring to pass their evil purposes. They have said that they will not have to give an account for their words or actions, but nevertheless God will require them to give an account before Him.

**12:5** - *“For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.”* Now the Lord Himself speaks and tells those who mourn because of the oppression that He will arise. He will grant them the protection that they desire from their proud tormentors.

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**12:6** - *“The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.”* How precious it is to realize that amidst all this vanity and double heartedness there remains the true Word of the Lord. God’s words are like refined silver, tested and purified in the fire seven times. What He says will come to pass. May His Word also be in our mouths, so that we speak uprightly even if all those around us are false.

**12:7** - *“Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from [such people] for ever.”* David declared that the Lord shall keep His saints who trust in Him from the evil slanderers.

**12:8** - *“The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.”* Then we are told why the wicked flourish. It is when the vilest men, like Saul, are in places of honor. Oh, may we pray for righteous leaders in our governments and true teachers of righteousness in our churches, for then, and only then, will we be at peace.

# *PSALM 13*

Our view is that this Psalm was written while David was being hunted in the wilderness by Saul, who had posted watchmen to hunt for him from place to place. It was only by constant vigilance that David hoped to escape with his life.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

**13:1** - *“How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?”*

The Psalm opens with the cry of the weary, “How long?” We are often so prone to ask when our trial will end. “Lord, when will You arise for our defense and our enemy be no more?” However, every trial has its predetermined length, to work out in our lives that which is pleasing to the Lord. We must not

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try to shorten it. When my dear wife was in one of the innumerable hospitals she was forced to visit over the years, she was prescribed a certain treatment. The surgeons wanted to terminate it early because her progress was so good. However, the cardiologist overruled them and said the treatment was only efficacious after the full forty-two days. Likewise, a trial must run its God-ordained time period to perfect His work of redemption in us.

**13:2** - *“How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?”* Again we have the question, “How long shall this sorrow have to work in my heart day by day?” It is only the repetitive nature of trials like the sanding of wood that can polish our natures and make us partakers of His holiness. Thus, in David’s situation, Saul was permitted to aggravate him and be exalted over him for more than ten years before David assumed the throne of Judah at the age of thirty.

**13:3** - *“Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.”* This ongoing tension and pressure caused David many sleepless nights. I personally know very well what years of sleeplessness does to one’s physical body as well as the soul and spirit. For a period of

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over four years, I cared for my wife day and night, who was paralyzed on one side of her body. Quite often, she would wake up every twenty or thirty minutes during the night and wake me up too. I survived on only a few hours of sleep for several years because I knew that if I were not alert during the night, my wife could die very easily. Likewise, David had to be alert at all times because Saul was seeking to take his life.

**13:4** - *“Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.”* Unfortunately, there are always enemies who would rejoice if we died, or if we abandoned our God-ordained position. These enemies are in the Church; they are not unbelievers. When David speaks of “the wicked,” he is referring to fellow Israelites.

**13:5** - *“But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.”* Victory is only possible in a trial as we trust in His mercy to preserve us and give us strength. We must continue to fight the good fight of faith and continue to rejoice in His progressive and continuous salvation.

**13:6** - *“I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.”* There is an end to every trial. If we depend upon God for grace as David did, we will come to the place of rejoicing in the fact

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that He will deal bountifully with us. He will bring us out of the darkness of suffering into His most glorious light (cf. Micah 7:8). He will give us an expected end and bring us to our desired haven of rest. Amen!

# *PSALM 14*

We would place this Psalm chronologically at the same time Psalm 53 was written, which was during the time of Absalom's uprising against David. Those who were with Absalom were called simple or foolish (2 Sam.15:11). It is clear from verse seven that David had already been ruling and reigning in Zion. Psalm 14 is a psalm full of instruction for all ages, decrying the atheistic tendencies of the wicked.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

**14:1** - *“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.”* It is a tragic state of affairs when men actually are so depraved

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that they deny the very existence of God. Romans 1:20-32 should be read in conjunction with this psalm, with special reference to Romans 1:28. It is because of sin that the Lord gives people over to a reprobate mind which is incapable of discerning right from wrong.

**14:2** - *“The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.”* The Lord searches for those whose hearts are committed to seeking Him and those who have true understanding.

**14:3** - *“They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”* Of his own volition, unredeemed man will always lean toward evil. Without the manifest grace of God operating in his life, his fallen nature can only produce folly and sinful lusts. The Apostle Paul uses these verses in Romans 3:10-12 to describe the general depravity of mankind.

**14:4** - *“Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.”* Even the heavens declare the knowledge and glory of God (Psa. 19:1). Everything in creation reveals the eternal power of God. Therefore, how can the workers of iniquity imagine that they will not be punished for devouring God’s people? They purposely put the



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knowledge of God out of their mind, and refuse to call upon the Lord who has made heaven and earth.

**14:5** - *“There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.”* When the Lord manifests Himself at the appointed time in their generation, the wicked will tremble with horror. God is on the side of the righteous, but the wicked are without God, awaiting His awesome displeasure and judgment. This psalm is remarkable. It is a direct indictment of atheism. In actuality, some who have seen visions of hell have been able to question some of the atheists in hell. The atheists declared that they persuaded others to believe in the non-existence of God, but they were never able to convince themselves. Even Darwin rejected and denied his own theory of evolution at the end of his life.

**14:6** - *“Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge.”* The poor who have trusted in the Lord seek to admonish men and women to turn into the ways of righteousness. The wicked scorn this godly counsel, and do not make the Lord their refuge.

**14:7** - *“Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.”* This terrible conflict with those

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humanistic spirits tends to wear down one's mind. It causes David to cry out for the Lord's salvation to come to Israel and save them from the powers of heathenism. When the Lord brings back the captivity of His people who are with David, then all who are on the Lord's side will rejoice. Again we must stress, beloved, that every trial has an end. When the ungodly have accomplished their God-appointed affliction in our lives, then God removes them. Be patient and await His mighty deliverance!

# *PSALM 15*

In this Psalm David describes the qualifications God requires to be a citizen of Zion. It was written along with Psalm 24 at the time the ark was carried up to Mount Zion (2 Sam. 6:1-16, 1 Chron. 15:1-16:6). The reason for the birthing of this Psalm can readily be seen. When the ark was being taken from the house of Abinadab in Gibeah on a cart drawn by oxen, the oxen shook the ark as they passed by Nachon's threshing floor. When Uzzah stretched forth his hand and touched the ark, the Lord smote him. Then the ark was in the house of Obed-edom for three months. According to the Lord's instructions, David later took the ark up to Mount Zion upon the shoulders of the Levites. The Lord blessed this obedience to His precise directions, and David placed the ark in a tent which he had

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prepared for it. This became known as David's tabernacle. Thus the ark came to Mount Zion with great rejoicing.

### ***A Psalm of David***

**15:1** - *“Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?”* In a spiritual sense, David asks this question, “Who can abide in the Lord's tabernacle and dwell in His holy hill, Mount Zion?”

**15:2-5** - *“He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.”*

David's question is answered by the Holy Spirit with eleven specific qualifications for abiding in Mount Zion. Psalm 24 gives an additional four qualifications, making a total of fifteen qualifications to abide in His holy mountain.

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**The Eleven Qualifications to Abide On Mount Zion**

- 1.) *“He that walketh uprightly.”* As a contrast to the ungodly in Psalm 1, these walk in the paths of righteousness. They do not walk with the wicked, and they are led and directed at all times by the Holy Spirit. They walk in the light of God’s Word and in the progressive vision that the Lord has given them for their lives. Their path is as a shining light that shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day (Prov. 4:18).
- 2.) *“Worketh righteousness.”* All the works of their hands are works of righteousness. They will not put forth their hands to do any wicked thing.
- 3.) *“Speaketh the truth in his heart.”* Their hearts and their mouths speak the same things, and they only speak the truth. There is no guile in them (Zeph. 3:13).
- 4.) *“He that backbiteth not with his tongue”* - A citizen of Zion does not backbite with his tongue. This means that he does not slander or speak against his neighbor behind his back (Psa. 101:5).

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- 5.) *“Nor doeth evil to his neighbour.”* Those on Mount Zion do not harm their neighbor in any way. They seek at all times to fulfill the second commandment: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”
- 6.) *“Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.”* This signifies that even if one’s neighbor falls into grievous sin, he would not publish that news and seek to defame him—case in question, King David. All those who attacked David verbally and spoke against him because of his sin with Bathsheba were judged themselves by God.
- 7.) *“In whose eyes a vile person is contemned.”* One of the strongest condemnations in Scripture falls upon those who call the evil good. Isaiah 5:20 warns, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” We should never praise an evil person.
- 8.) *“He honoureth them that fear the Lord.”* We should always call the holy of the Lord honorable, even though there are occasions when their actions do not necessarily merit this approbation. John Calvin was gracious to Martin Luther, who at times was less than saintly in his letters to those who did not agree with him.

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**9.)** *“He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not.”* This is perhaps one of the most significant hallmarks of a holy man. His word is his bond. He will stand by what he says at all times, even though it can be very costly. We must be faithful to our commitments. For example, in agreeing to a course of action, it could involve perhaps building a shelter for the poor. Even if we have been misinformed of the true cost, we must keep our commitment if we have given our word.

**10.)** *“He that putteth not out his money to usury [or for interest].”* The Law states in Exodus 22:25, “If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.” Also, Leviticus 25:35-37 says: “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.”

However, Deuteronomy 23:19-20 further adds: “Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury: Unto a stranger thou mayest

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lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.” Thus the Law permits the charging of reasonable interest to the non-Christian, but not to the believer.

**11.** *“Nor taketh reward against the innocent.”* This means not accepting bribes which pervert justice. This statute appears to be an indictment especially of lawyers who take money to obtain favorable judgments for their clients at the expense of the innocent parties.

The reward in this life for those who live according to the fifteen precepts given in Psalm 15 and Psalm 24 is that they will never be moved from the Lord’s holy mountain. They will not be moved when God arises to judge the people. In effect, they will be permitted to remain in the house of the Lord all the days of their lives and have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of heaven, even to ascend spiritual Zion which is within the very portals of heaven itself.



# *PSALM 16*

This Psalm was written in a time of peril and in all probability when David was fleeing from Saul in the wilderness of Ziph. The title “*Michtam*” is used by David in times of trouble and peril (see Psalms 56-60). *Michtam* has the connotation of *a mystery* or *secret*. Sometimes it has been translated *golden*. Therefore, we can say that it is the Psalm of golden secrets, portraying the treasure of the one in trouble who has Christ for his comfort. Psalm 16 is also Messianic, being quoted by Peter in Acts 2:25-31 and by Paul in Acts 13:35-38.

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### ***Michtam of David***

**16:1** - *“Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.”* David opens this Psalm with a cry to the Lord to preserve him. It is a time when he is being pursued by Saul, who is intent upon taking his life. Only God can preserve David, for Saul has a superior army and the nation at his disposal. Oh, how often we, too, feel so outnumbered. But this is the time to put our trust in the Lord, for it is He alone who can save us from the enemy of our soul who puffs at us with all his forces.

**16:2** - *“O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee.”* Our soul cries out to Him and in all humility we can say that He is our Lord, but not for *any* righteousness or goodness on our part.

**16:3** - *“But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.”* Now Psalm 16 is becoming very Messianic. This is actually a prophetic saying of the Lord Himself, who extends His goodness to those saints upon the earth who are godly and worthy of Him. It is in these kinds of people that the Lord delights. Oh, that we would learn to tremble at His Word and realize that we need to qualify for His favor (see Psa.101:6).

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**16:4** - *“Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.”* David continues the narrative in the first person again and declares that those who follow other gods will only have sorrow. He says that he will not even make mention of the names of the pagan deities they worship.

**16:5** - *“The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.”* David reaffirms that the Lord Himself is his inheritance, not the heathen gods, and that it is the Lord who sustains him at all times. We should seek to live our lives in such a way that we win Christ’s approval and obtain Him as our inheritance (Phil. 3:8).

In the days of Ezekiel, the Lord promised the faithful sons of Zadok, who did not go astray with the people and the other priests, that He was their inheritance (Ezek. 44:28). Because of their faithfulness and because they remained true, they were given the privilege of approaching unto the Lord and having intimate communion with Him, while the rest were denied this access into His presence (Ezek. 44:15-16). There is no greater reward and inheritance in life than the Lord Himself. Let us press in, beloved, to win this matchless Christ!

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**16:6** - *“The [measuring or boundary] lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.”* This is the lot given to the saint of God. His life, in reality, despite the heartaches and the crosses, is a life of pleasantness. More importantly, an eternal inheritance in glory awaits him because of his faithfulness to the call of God here below.

**16:7** - *“I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins [heart or mind] also instruct me in the night seasons.”* The joy and confidence of a saint is to be continually guided by the Lord. Meditation upon the Word of God instructs him upon his bed at night as he ruminates over the day’s problems, and he is able to roll them onto the Lord.

**16:8** - *“I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”* This is the key to a victorious life in Christ. We must put the Lord before us so that we do everything with a consciousness that He is watching us. We should never do anything that we would be embarrassed to do in His presence. In actuality, He is watching us at all times. If we practice His presence, He will be at our right hand to strengthen us in all our endeavors. Therefore, no one nor any circumstance can throw us off course or cause us to stumble and fall.

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**16:9** - *“Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory [or soul] rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.”*

The believer who lives in the Lord’s presence will know joy unspeakable and be filled with glory. Our flesh also shall be at rest in the hope and expectancy of His purposes being thoroughly fulfilled in our lives.

**16:10** - *“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”* This verse speaks of Christ Himself who spent three days and nights in the lower parts of the earth after His death on the cross. He was given the assurance that His Father would not leave His soul in hell and that He would only be there three days so that His flesh would not experience decay and corruption. These verses are quoted by both Peter and Paul as proof of Christ’s resurrection (Acts 2:31-32; 13:35).

**16:11** - *“Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”* Here, too, is a promise not only for Christ, but for all of His saints. The Lord will place us upon the pathway of life, upon the path of the just which shines more and more unto that perfect day. Victor Hugo stated, “As I get older my body weakens, but the light within grows

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brighter.” As we spend time in His presence, our joy increases and increases to the extent that we become the most joyful of His created ones, and our whole being is saturated with the joy of Jesus.

True joy is only found in the Lord's presence. Human love and worldly pleasures may bring us an emotional feeling of happiness for a season, but they do not satisfy the longing for joy and satisfaction in the deepest part of our being. This is something only God's presence can fill, for in Him and Him alone are we complete (Col. 2:10)!

# *PSALM 17*

This Psalm is an appeal by David to the King of kings, who is the supreme Judge, to vindicate him of his enemy. This would coincide with the situation recorded in First Samuel 24:15: “The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.” David said this as he cried out to Saul.

## *A Prayer of David*

**17:1** - *“Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.”* This Psalm opens with David taking his complaint to the Lord, the righteous Judge of the whole earth.

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**17:2** - *“Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.”* He then pleads that his fate be determined and come forth from the presence of the Lord. When I have to counsel people, I pray that what I say will come forth from the throne of God. I want the mind of the Lord to be uttered in every situation, not my own.

**17:3** - *“Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.”* David recalls how the Lord has proved and tried him during the night hours. The Lord can show us what is in our heart and what we are capable of doing apart from His grace.

One method God uses comes from the temptations we experience in our dreams. However, David’s heart had been so purified and cleansed that the temptations of the night had no mastery over him. Also, he did not sin with his lips. This is the hallmark of a perfect man or woman of God (Jas. 3:2).

**17:4** - *“Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.”* David was kept from the snares that the wicked had laid for him by heeding the warnings of the Lord and by hearing His word morning by morning (see Mt. 4:4, Isa. 50:4). If we keep our



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hearts open to the Lord, listen to His gentle promptings and corrections, and are sensitive to the Holy Spirit, we will never fall. No Christian has to fall from grace! The problem, however, is that people do not listen to the Lord and His warnings.

**17:5** - *“Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.”* David calls upon the Lord to guard his steps from falling. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Remember, “we are kept by the power of God” (1 Pet. 1:5). The Lord is well able to keep us from falling into the snares of sin.

**17:6** - *“I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech.”* The Lord in His mercy hears us when we call upon Him. God does not listen to everyone, but only those who honor Him.

**17:7** - *“Show thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.”* David continues by acknowledging that it is the Lord who saves all those who put their trust in Him from those who rise up against them. God has the final word on the outcome of every battle.

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**17:8** - *“Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.”* Herein lies the secret to being protected. If we have an intimate relationship with the Lord and we are the apple of His eye, He will protect us and hide us under the shadow of His wings. *To be hidden under His wings* makes allusion to the fact that God dwells over the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies, covered by the wings of the cherubim.

**17:9-10** - *“From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about. They are enclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.”* Here David refers in particular to the armies of Saul who are hunting him. The wicked were feeding upon the fat of the land, while David was fleeing in the wilderness. It was a very lean time for David, but eventually the tide would turn, as it always does for the righteous.

**17:11-12** - *“They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth. Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.”* David continues to describe his enemies as those who were tracking him down. His adversaries were hunting him down like a lion that is hungry for its prey. Many of his enemies were backslidden peers.

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**17:13** - *“Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword.”* Again David pleads with the Lord to disappoint his enemies and rescue his life. It is interesting that David describes his enemies as God's “sword” and God's “hand” in the next verse. He recognized that the Lord uses our enemy as a sword to deal with our flesh, and to judge these things which do not glorify God.

The enemy is God's hand, to help form us into His own image. Thus David could say that God filled the belly of his enemies with hidden treasure. These mysterious hidden treasures are the priceless truths God develops in our lives through our involvement with our enemies.

**17:14** - *“From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.”* David acknowledges his enemies are men who have been created by God Himself, but yet are of this world. They possess no eternal inheritance! Their only inheritance is in their children and they have no other hope than that which is earthly.

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**17:15** - *“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.”* This Psalm finishes on a very triumphant note of comparison between David and his enemies. David's hope is to see the face of the Lord in righteousness, and because this will be his reward, David will have His likeness. First John 3:2 tells us that when Christ appears “we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

This is our hope, beloved, that we shall be transformed as in the twinkling of an eye when the Lord comes for us. This could take place either at His Second Coming or at the appointed time for us to leave this old world with all its unexpected changes, difficulties, and heartaches so that we may be forever with the Lord, rejoicing in His glorious presence and enjoying the delights of our heavenly home!

# *PSALM 18*

As recorded in Second Samuel 22, this psalm was written by David when the Lord had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, especially Saul. At the time of his enthronement as king of Judah at Hebron, David composed this ode of thankfulness to the Lord. There are significant differences between Psalm 18 and the record of David's thanksgiving in Second Samuel 22. The rabbis reckon that there are about seventy-four. The reason for this is obvious. Psalm 18 was penned when David was approximately thirty years of age, while the one recorded in Second Samuel 22 would have been recorded some thirty to forty years later at the end of his life.

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*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David,*

*The servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the words of this song  
in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul*

**18:1** - *“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength.”* The effect of the Lord’s deliverance in one’s life is a profound outpouring of gratitude and love toward Him.

**18:2** - *“The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”* Verse 2 is a declaration of the fact that throughout all life’s hardships and battles, the Lord is our fortress and strong tower. These similes were taken no doubt from the rock formations in the Judean hills where David often hid from Saul.

**18:3** - *“I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.”* This is an elevation of the Lord in praise and a looking forward with confidence to future deliverances, predicated upon his past experiences.

**18:4-5** - *“The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death [confronted] me.”* David recounts the

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terrors through which the Lord guided and preserved him. They were so terrible that David describes them as the sorrows of death and of hell—experiences that must have unleashed the demons from the pit against him. Many have had similar attacks when their enemies who have sought their hurt have become channels for evil spirits to attack them.

**18:6** - *“In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.”* David cried out to the Lord and the Lord heard him out of His holy temple—a scene reminiscent of the last days as recorded in Revelation 15:5-16:2.

**18:7-10** - *“Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.”* There follows a very graphic interpretation of the Lord moving on behalf of David. In the invisible dimensions of the universe beyond the veil, David sees the moving of the heavenly host to fight on

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his behalf. The Lord is on His chariot throne, or as described more poignantly in Ezekiel 1:10, borne upwards by the four living creatures (or cherubs as they are called here).

**18:11** - *“He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.”* Often in the Holy Scriptures the Lord’s residence is described as one of darkness. This speaks of the Most High being surrounded by His judgments that are to be poured out upon the earth.

It is also associated with the fact that He is a God who hides Himself (Isa. 45:15). The Lord said in Second Chronicles 6:1 that He would dwell in the thick darkness. When Moses approached unto the Lord, He was dwelling in “thick darkness” (Ex. 20:21). It is in the *horror of great darkness* that we find Him and come to know His ways.

**18:12** - *“At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire.”* Yet God also is light. When He comes upon the scene to judge and discomfort His enemies, the thick clouds that have shrouded His presence will be removed. The awesomeness of His presence



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disperses the powers of darkness (with His hail stones) as He did against the Egyptians in the plagues (Ex. 9:18), and in the time of Joshua against the five kings (Josh.10:11).

**18:13** - *“The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.”* Again the Psalm reemphasizes the greatness and awesomeness of the judgments of God against the foes of David. His voice is often associated with thunder (cf. Job 40:9). In John 12:29 when the Father spoke to His beloved Son out of heaven, those who were standing by said that it thundered.

**18:14** - *“Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.”* Then He sent forth His arrows. This speaks of the lightening bolts of His Spirit that enter into the hearts of the sinners, bringing them down into the pit of everlasting flames.

**18:15** - *“Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.”* The channels of water that flow under ground will be opened up when He comes in judgment at His second coming (Zech.14:4,8). The

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whole topography of the world, at least in the area of Jerusalem, will be changed when His feet stand on the Mount of Olives.

**18:16** - *“He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.”* The purpose for God stirring Himself in the initial aspects of this Psalm are to afford protection for David. But if we have a heart like David, a man after God’s own heart, then we too may expect with glorious anticipation that He will draw us out of many troubled waters. Waters in this context signify troublous storms and adversities in our lives.

**18:17** - *“He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.”* In particular, the Lord delivered David from his strong enemy Saul and all his hordes.

**18:18** - *“They [confronted] me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay [or support].”* These enemies who confronted David in the day of his difficulties as he was fleeing from Saul, such as the men of Keilah (1 Sam. 23:12), could not overthrow him because the Lord sustained him.

**18:19** - *“He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.”* As all his enemies were removed, David rejoiced exceedingly as the Lord brought him into a large

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place, namely, that of being king of Judah at Hebron. Thus, when the Lord delivers us we may also have expectation that the Lord will enlarge the place of our habitation. The key to being delivered by the Lord, however, is to please Him and be a delight unto Him (see Psa. 91:14).

**18:20** - *“The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.”* The reason all these favors were showered upon David was this—David was being rewarded for his righteous life. As Psalm 58:11 states, “There is a reward for the righteous.”

**18:21** - *“For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.”* David continues to affirm that he has kept the commandments of the Lord and not departed from His ways *intentionally*. Truly it requires purpose of heart to walk with God. This reminds us of Daniel who purposed in his heart not to defile himself (Dan.1:8).

**18:22** - *“For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.”* David continually meditated upon and reviewed the laws of God so that he would walk in all His ways. We should also read and meditate upon His Word day by day, for this is the path to spiritual prosperity.

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**18:23** - *“I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.”* David recognizes the fact that we have besetting sins in our lives because of our forefathers (see Heb.12:1). These sins seem to dominate our lives and they are the ones with which we have the greatest difficulty. David then declares that he has kept himself from this iniquity.

**18:24** - *“Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.”* David repeats that the Lord has recompensed him for his righteousness. He guarded his heart against the generational sins of his family tree.

**18:25** - *“With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt show thyself upright.”* Now David declares one of the most important doctrines that gives us understanding of God and His ways. God will establish us in whichever path we choose to walk. Thus, He will be merciful to the merciful, and to the righteous will He give His gift of righteousness. Daniel 2:21 declares that God will give wisdom to the wise. Matthew 25:29 also states that “unto everyone that hath shall be given and he shall have in abundance.” Therefore, let us set our feet in the paths of good men and reap the peaceable fruit of righteousness in our lives.

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**18:26** - *“With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward [or crooked] thou wilt show thyself froward.”* Likewise, the Lord will cause the pure in heart to be partakers of His holiness (see Heb.12:10). It is also the pure in heart who will see God (Mt. 5:8). But the froward (or the evil ones) can only expect to experience the wrath of God and be given strong delusion because of their love of iniquity (2 Thess. 2:11-12).

**18:27** - *“For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.”* The poor and those who are afflicted in spirit are of special concern to the Lord, but He resists and brings down the proud.

**18:28** - *“For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.”* However, for those such as David who are seeking to walk uprightly, God is their light in darkness. This gift of light is the reward of the righteous, even as Job described his walk with the Lord in Job 29:3, saying, “His candle shined upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness...”

**18:29** - *“For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.”* Like David we will be enabled to run through the enemy’s ranks and leap over all the obstacles by the Lord’s mighty power.

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**18:30** - *“As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a [shield] to all those that trust in him.”* Therefore, David acknowledges through experience (as also must we) that all of the ways of the Lord are perfect. Also, the word that He has spoken to us, although it tries us, will see us through to ultimate victory. He will be our shield against all the darts of the enemy.

**18:31** - *“For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?”* There is no God but our God, and there is no one who is a rock of security in times of trouble except the Lord.

**18:32** - *“It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.”* In every situation and at all times, we must look to the Lord for strength. This is made very clear in Isaiah 40:31: “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”

**18:33** - *“He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet, and setteth me upon my high places.”* The Lord enables us to have hinds’ feet so that we can scale the utmost heights in Him without slipping or falling. This is similar to what the prophet said in Habakkuk 3:19: “The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.”

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**18:34** - *“He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.”* It is the Lord who teaches us to be able to war against the spiritual powers and rulers of darkness in high places as Paul says in Ephesians 6:12. Thus, as David in the natural could have his hands made strong to break an enemy’s bow of steel, likewise we too can break the backs of our spiritual foes.

**18:35** - *“Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.”* It is the spiritual shield of salvation or the shield of faith (Eph. 6:16) that protects us from the attacks of the evil one. It is the Lord’s right hand that holds us up. As a father who holds up his child so he does not fall, so the Lord, who is our Heavenly Father, sustains and holds us up, even into a ripe old age.

Then David declares that the gentleness of Christ has made him great. I realize that this can be interpreted many ways, but I would like to explain it from an experience I had many years ago.

My wife and I were traveling through the southern states of America when the Lord told us to stop at a certain motel. As I entered the room, the presence of the Lord was very strong. We knelt down by the bed to pray, and it was not long before I was caught up in the Spirit to heaven.

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There I was met by angels who escorted me across the river that divides the living from the dead. I knew that I was going to meet the Lord on the other side. However, I was filled with anxiety because when I went through the crystal clear river, I could see the hardness of my heart. I appealed to the angel not to take me on but to take me back through the river again so that my heart could be washed from its hardness. We went through the river again and the vision ceased. Then the Holy Spirit started to speak to my heart that truth by itself is not sufficient, but the attitude in which we deliver the truth is equally important. Paul, for example, appealed to the Corinthians by “the meekness and gentleness of Christ” (2 Cor.10:1). Since that experience I have passionately prayed for the Lord’s gentleness to be developed within my soul and spirit.

**18:36** - *“Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.”* Even as one who travels across the snow wears special snowshoes to enable him to traverse the terrain, so the Lord enlarges our steps so that we are sure-footed in every spiritual terrain that we are called upon to cross.

**18:37-38** - *“I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed. I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.”* David



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now declares a truth that we would all do well to practice, whether in the spiritual or in the natural. We should pursue our enemies until they are rendered wholly inactive or completely destroyed so that they can never rise again to harm us or others. If spiritual, we should pray that they are confined to the pit, and bound there until their day of judgment and torment. If natural, then we must ask the Lord to render them harmless so that they do not perpetrate their evil anymore.

I would also like to add that this applies to the sins and weaknesses that plague our hearts. We must deal with every sin in our life and not quit until we render our Adamic nature inactive and powerless (Rom. 6:6). As you must lay an axe to the roots of any tree to keep it from growing back, so we must lay the axe to the root of our problems in order that they cannot come back to life and plague us again.

**18:39** - *“For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.”* Again David reminds us that it is the Lord who gives us strength to battle our enemies and overcome them.

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

When David speaks of being given “the necks of his enemies” he is referring to an actual victory ceremony in olden times. The defeated foes would prostrate themselves before their conqueror who placed his foot upon their necks, thus signifying that he had broken their strength and obtained the mastery over them.

**18:41** - *“They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.”* David says that his enemies cried unto the Lord. This is an indication that they were from Israel, or the household of God. These enemies are the most difficult for us, for they are people from the Church whose hearts have been alienated from the ways of righteousness.

**18:42** - *“Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.”* Speaking now of his battles with those of Israel who followed Saul, David replies that he utterly destroyed them. This would correspond to the time of David’s wars with Saul’s household (2 Sam. 3:1).

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**18:43** - *“Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me.”* The time comes when the Lord most graciously rescues us from the strivings of the people and then promotes us over others whom we did not know previously. Specifically, David speaks of the heathen, which for him would have meant the nations of Moab, Ammon and Edom, as well as Syria. For us it could be fulfilled in a missionary call whereby the Lord gives us the heathen for our inheritance.

**18:44** - *“As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.”* We will gain immediate acceptance in their eyes. They will look upon us as their spiritual leaders.

**18:45** - *“The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their [strongholds].”* The wicked, on the other hand, will be afraid and tremble.

**18:46-47** - *“The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted. It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me.”* David ends this Psalm on a victorious

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note—it is the Lord who lives and may He be exalted. It is He who will avenge us of our enemies and bring them under us to obey us.

**18:48-49** - *“He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.”* David continues by saying that the Lord has delivered him from all his enemies and lifted him above those who have persecuted him. This He will also do for us, and our mouths will be filled with thanksgiving to the Lord among the nations.

**18:50** - *“Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and showeth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.”* The Lord gave great deliverance to David over all his enemies and He also will give deliverance to us as we seek to have a heart like David’s and wholly follow Him. He will also show great mercy to us, as well as to our spiritual and natural seed, even as He did to King David. Amen.

# *PSALM 19*

Psalm 19 was written by King David, that great student of the law of the Lord and of nature. It is surmised that it was composed during that period of David's life when he was enjoying rest from his enemies. It was during this time that he could give himself to the contemplative study of both the excellence of the Lord in nature and in His Word. He closes this Psalm with the plea for purity of thought and speech. Therefore, in all probability we could assume that the time period for this Psalm was when David was established in Mount Zion, with the ark of the covenant dwelling in the tabernacle there.

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*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

### **Part 1 (19:1-6)**

#### **God's Handiwork in Nature Reveals His Ways to Those who Contemplate Them**

**19:1** - *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."* God has placed the gospel in the skies. The Apostle Paul makes this abundantly clear in Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are *without excuse*." Therefore, since God can be seen in nature, no man has an excuse for rejecting the truth.

In the nineteenth century E.W. Bullinger did a remarkable study concerning the gospel in the skies, showing that the formations of the stars speak of the dispensations of God's purposes in the earth. We know that in February of 1962 the heavenly bodies changed so that we have moved from the age of Pisces the fish, which was the sign of the early Church, to the age of Aquarius the water carrier, which is the sign of the Feast of Tabernacles (the latter-day outpouring of the Holy Spirit) and of the coming Millennium.

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**19:2** - *“Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.”* Thus, day by day, their message pours forth from the stars, the sun, the moon and the other celestial bodies. We can learn so much about God from the contemplation of the stars. They keep their course and light issues forth from them. We should seek not to be as the wandering stars that leave their course, being swept eventually into heaven’s black hole. Rather, our desire is to stay on the God-ordained course for our lives, allowing the light and truth of Christ to pour forth from our lives day by day and night by night.

**19:3** - *“There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.”* Thus the gospel message of the stars is seen wherever mankind lives, and their voice can never be silenced by mortal man or his governments.

**19:4** - *“Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.”* In Romans 10:18 the Apostle Paul reemphasizes this truth, that the voice of the heavenly bodies, proclaiming the gospel of Christ, has gone forth throughout the earth. And in the confines of the lines of heaven, as we can so observe, God has placed the sun.

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**19:5** - *“Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.”* The sun is likened to a bridegroom in his strength and glory, who is like a strong man rejoicing to run the race of life.

**19:6** - *“His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”* It is quite possible that David is changing here to the thought of the Sun of Righteousness who will rise with healing in His wings. Healing is available for all who cry unto the Lord Jesus.

### ***Part 2 (19:7-11)***

#### ***God’s Ways Revealed Through His Word***

**19:7** - *“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting [or restoring] the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.”* David now turns from contemplating the heavenly bodies to the meditation of the riches of the law of God. His law is perfect in the sense that it is complete. The law is also able to make man wise, for in Christ the incarnate Word “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3).



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**19:8** - *“The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”* Through the statutes of God we experience true joy and rejoicing, especially when the Spirit illuminates the Word of God. The law purifies and brings the true light of Christ back into our eyes (cf. Psa. 119:130).

**19:9** - *“The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.”* The fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, makes us clean and keeps us clean. A holy fear of God will keep us from sinning. His judgments are altogether true in whatsoever situation we may be placed. This is something Job discovered in his fiery trial.

**19:10** - *“More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.”* The commandments of God, like wisdom, are of far greater value than anything else we may desire in this life. They are sweeter than the most choice honey that issues from the comb of the young bees before they hatch—a honey that we are told in ancient times was most prized in the Orient. The Word of God is a sure guide, a true light that shows us where we are going and the true meaning of life. Anyone who possesses true light is a very wealthy person.

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**19:11** - *“Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.”* It is through the instruction of the law that we are warned of the pits and snares of this life. By keeping the law we are well rewarded in this life and in eternity. What sorrow there is to the one who rejects the Word. He is ensnared by sins and griefs that plague him throughout life’s pilgrimage.

### **Part 3 (19:12-14)**

#### **David’s Cry for a Pure Heart**

**19:12** - *“Who can understand his [own] errors? cleanse thou me from secret [or unconscious] faults.”* In Part 3 of Psalm 19, David turns to consider his own personal needs, as also we should by the grace of God. How can mortal man be persuaded of his faults and lackings except by revelation of the Spirit of God? There is always the danger of being in the category of those described in Proverbs 30:12: “There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.” We need to continually cry out to the Lord to cleanse us from our secret faults of which we are unaware (see Lk. 9:55).

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**19:13** - *“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.”* David directs his attention toward presumptuous sins which emanate from the pride of the heart. The Rabbis differentiated between sins of ignorance and sins of presumption thusly: those which are committed because of our infirmity and against our will are sins of ignorance.

Paul said in Romans 7:19, “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” Even the great Apostle Paul early in his Christian life had a struggle to do what was right because of his carnal nature. However, sins of presumption are sins that we commit because we find pleasure in them. These are most heinous. The cry of the pious and of the devout is to be restrained by God from indulging in these.

**19:14** - *“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”* Finally, we have the cry of the holy—that our words be acceptable in the sight of a holy God. In this verse the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart are directly linked together. What we meditate upon and think in our hearts will manifest itself

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through our lips. That is why Jesus continually emphasized the need for washing the inside of the cup and not only the outside.

If we are ever to become a perfect man or woman whose words are pure and acceptable in the sight of the Lord, we must have a love for pureness of heart (Prov. 22:11). Also, the meditations of our heart must be pure. We should check every word we speak and every thought we think to make sure they are pleasing to the Lord and not offensive to Him (Phil. 4:8).

May this prayer of David be often upon our own lips, and may our lives (in thought, word, and deed) be pleasing to the One unto whom we shall have to give an account for the works done while in this mortal body of ours.

# *PSALM 20*

This Psalm was composed for tabernacle services when David was going forth into battle or there was a time of distress. It was written at the time that David went out to fight the battles of Jehovah when he was reigning in Zion. It was sung by the congregation to encourage the king as he went forth.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

**20:1** - *“The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.”* The congregation takes up the refrain, “The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble.” The people had great confidence in David’s relationship with the Lord. They fully expected the Lord to hear his faintest cry.

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David knew the names of the Lord experientially. As a by-product of his relationship with the Lord, David knew the blessing of Proverbs 18:10—“The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”

**20:2** - *“Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion.”* The congregation realizes that without the Lord, David could not be victorious. Therefore, they pray that his help comes from the very sanctuary of God in heaven above and that he is strengthened out of heavenly Zion, where the Lord resides. This connotation of help and strength coming from Zion suggests that the one seeking help must be living a holy life in right relationship with a holy God.

**20:3** - *“Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.”* Then the assembly of the saints brings to remembrance all the offerings and burnt sacrifices that King David has offered unto the Lord and lists them as a reason why the Lord should favor him in battle. It is important to realize that when we give to the poor we are lending to the Lord, and He will repay us (Prov.19:17). Oh, that we would invest heavily in the bank of heaven so that in time of need we will have something to draw upon.

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**20:4** - *“Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.”* The congregation continues by praying that the Lord will give David according to the desires of his heart, fulfilling (or confirming) the word of David as the messenger of the Lord.

**20:5** - *“We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.”* The congregation, full of faith and confidence in God’s faithfulness toward David, declares that they will rejoice in God’s salvation for the king. They anticipate setting up the banners of the enemy in the house of the Lord, for God will fulfill all the petitions of the king. It is so good to contemplate how the congregation of Israel was behind their king when he went out into battle. This is how we should act when we send our pastor or a missionary from our church or fellowship into the foreign field.

**20:6** - *“Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.”* Now the Psalm changes its refrain. David, experiencing the strength and encouragement of the prayers of the righteous, declares that he knows the Lord saves His anointed and hears from heaven when he cries unto Him.

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**20:7** - *“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.”* David’s enemies were relying upon their massive chariot armies and cavalries. But David, in a declaration of faith, declares that he will remember the name of the Lord in battle. This is exactly what happened in the days of Jehoshaphat, who cried unto the Lord when he was going into battle (2 Chron. 20:3-13,20-22).

**20:8** - *“They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.”* Ultimately, the righteous always triumph. Our enemies are brought down, but we are raised up and we stand upright.

**20:9** - *“Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.”* This psalm ends with a prayer of confidence: “O Lord, save us, and as our King of kings hear us when we call unto Thee.” May this Psalm always be our testimony and song of victory when we go out to fight the battles of our God against His enemies.



# *PSALM 21*

Psalm 21 is the companion psalm to Psalm 20. It is the realization of the prayers of the congregation on behalf of the king as he went out into battle. Therefore, it has been called “*The Royal Triumphal Ode.*” It was written when David returned from battle against his enemies during the early period of his reign in Zion.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

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

The psalm opens with David rejoicing in the joy that God’s victories give. God strengthened David for his battles and gave him the victory.

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**21:2** - *“Thou hast given him his heart’s desire, and hast not [withheld] the request of his lips. Selah.”*

God has given David the desire of his heart and answered all his requests (cf. Psa. 20:4).

**21:3** - *“For thou [dost meet] him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.”* God has now welcomed, not only David, but His own precious Son back from the battlefield that terminated in the great victory of the cross. He rewarded Him with a crown of pure gold—the victor’s crown.

**21:4** - *“He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.”* Christ has been given eternal life. David also was made a partaker of this eternal life, for he will be raised up at the second coming to be the prince of Jerusalem in the millennium (Ezek. 34:23-24, 37:24-25).

**21:5** - *“His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.”* The glory of David and his greater son, Christ, are enhanced by the victories that God gave them. That is true in our lives too. The more victories we obtain through God’s grace, the greater our eternal glory will be.

**21:6** - *“For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.”* King David and the Lord Jesus Christ are most blessed forever. They have both been

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made glad by appearing before the Heavenly Father. The blessing of seeing His face also awaits all those who overcome, and those who see His face shall be made like Him (1 Jn. 3:2).

**21:7** - *“For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.”* It was the implicit trust that both Christ and David had in the Lord that enabled them to receive His grace to keep them from falling. May we learn this precious lesson too.

**21:8** - *“Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.”* All those who hate the Lord will be revealed. They will not be able to conceal themselves, for God is bringing everything to light in His Church today.

**21:9** - *“Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.”* They will be judged and cast down into the infernal pit at His second coming.

**21:10** - *“Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.”* The fruit of all their wrong doings will also be destroyed, as well as their children, who shall be plucked out of the land of the living.

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**21:11** - *“For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.”* In the first instance, this refers to the enemies of David. They were the surrounding heathen nations (such as the Philistines) that sought David’s overthrow. In particular, it is referring to the time of David’s conquest of Rabbah Ammon (2 Sam. 12:26). However, this verse also refers to the heathen who will come against Christ at His second coming to overthrow His purposes. They, too, will be utterly destroyed.

**21:12** - *“Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.”* They will flee from the face of the Lord as He descends upon them from the east to defend His beloved city Jerusalem.

**21:13** - *“Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.”* The psalm ends on a sweet note of praise to the Lord, exalting the Lord for all His goodness to David and Christ. May we never forget to praise Him for the victories that He gives us by exalting Him with our uplifted hands.

# *PSALM 22*

This psalm more than any other portrays the agony of Jesus upon the cross. It is addressed to “*the morning hind*” (Aijelet Shaha), an allegorical title for the Lord Himself. It begins with His words on the cross, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,” and closes (in the original Hebrew) with the words, “It is finished.” Although we have no record of it in the Gospels, it is believed by eminent theologians that all the words of this psalm were spoken or breathed as a prayer by the Lord Jesus Christ while He was upon earth. The circumstances in which this psalm was composed is unknown.

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### ***To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David***

**22:1** - *“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?”* The opening cry of desperation strikes the very chord of the message of the cross. Christ, the Holy One, became sin; therefore, the Father, by virtue of His holiness, could not look upon His beloved Son. In the Garden of Gethsemane He drank the cup filled with our iniquities. Shrinking from the filth and abominations which that cup contained, Christ cried out, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Mt. 26:39).

He who knew no sin had become sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). He took our sins to the cross. He experienced the sorrows and anguish of being forsaken of man. The disciples had fled when He was betrayed by Judas and taken prisoner by the palace guards. He knew the pain of denial by one who was a member of the inner circle, Peter. Christ bore all of this with holy fortitude by the grace of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Then His Father, the One He had loved from the beginning and the One whose will He had come into the world to do, hid His face from Him. This is the horror of true loneliness—being forsaken by the

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one we love most. Therefore, Christ cried out on the cross of Calvary, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Mt. 27:46). When He needed His Father the most, it appeared as though He had deserted Him.

**22:2** - *“O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.”* Many times we will go through a dark trial where it seems that the Lord does not hear or answer our prayers. The Lord Jesus experienced this as He cried out to His Father in verse two. Christ cried out to Him day and night, yet it seemed as though He did not respond to the prayers of His own Son. For a “moment” the Father withdrew Himself (Isa. 54:7-8).

**22:3** - *“But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.”* Then Christ acknowledges that it was because of His holiness that God was not answering His prayers—He had become sin for us on the cross, and the Father temporarily turned His face away from His Son. God inhabits the praises of His people. When we praise Him and thank Him, He draws nigh unto us and dwells with us, but in this case, the Father hid His face from His only begotten Son.

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**22:4-5** - *“Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.”* Christ is remembering times throughout Israel’s history when His ancestors were delivered because of their trust in the Lord. They cried unto God and experienced deliverance. They were not disappointed because they trusted in the Lord.

**22:6** - *“But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.”* Christ looks at His spiritual condition and declares that He is a worm and not a man. This is a very real place to which the Lord will bring us—a place of nothingness and helplessness—for a worm is hopeless and cannot help himself. This experience causes us to realize that we can do absolutely nothing to change our circumstances, and it makes us completely dependent upon the Lord.

Many saints through the ages have been brought to this place of nothingness. In Job 25:4-6 we read: “How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?”



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The Lord brought Jacob to that place of nothingness, and yet from that position of utter helplessness, the Lord gives this wonderful assurance in Isaiah 41:14-15: “Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.” This is also a promise for Christ at His second coming.

**22:7** - *“All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying ...”*

Continuing the ordeal upon the cross, we are told in what an ignominious manner those wicked mockers reviled the spotless Lamb of God and laughed at Him in His agony. The term “shoot out the lip” is a very vile gesture reserved for those for whom one has the utmost contempt. According to Matthew 27:33-43, there are five forms of taunting that were hurled at the Lord while He was upon the cross.

**22:8** - *“He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.”* Then they mock God Himself, His wisdom, and His compassion, suggesting that He would not deliver the One who delighted in Him. This is actually an attack against God.

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**22:9** - *“But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts.”* Christ muses upon the fact that it is God who brought Him out of the womb of Mary, His mother, and gave Him hope when He was an infant. We need to have an awareness of the call of God upon our lives from a very young age, as Christ and Samuel did. This will preserve us when we pass through the difficult temptations that teenagers pass through, and it will keep us as we get older too.

**22:10** - *“I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly.”* Christ had an attitude of holy dependence upon His Heavenly Father from the womb. Therefore, we might pause here and consider the terrible crime of abortion which challenges the hope of the unborn in God.

**22:11** - *“Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.”* This is still describing the time when Christ was upon the cross. Christ appeals to His Father for help in a time of trouble, for there is no one else to comfort Him.

**22:12** - *“Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.”* “Strong bulls of Bashan” is symbolic of those who are well nourished. Bashan was a region east of Jordan, lying to

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the north of Gilead. It was renowned for its fertility. Therefore, this refers to the fat-laden Pharisees who viciously opposed the Lord, and sought to destroy Him and trample Him under their feet.

**22:13** - *“They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.”* He says that they were also like hungry lions, hungry to devour their prey which was Christ.

**22:14** - *“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.”* He was reduced to water (a place where we no longer have any resistance) through all these afflictions. If we want to be godly leaders in the Body of Christ, we must be brought to this spiritual condition where we joyfully accept whatever the Lord chooses for us. This spiritual state is best described in Proverbs 21:1: “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever he will.” Job also possessed this holy submissiveness, for we read in Job 10:10, “Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?”

Then he says, “All my bones are out of joint.” This is describing the pain and physical consequences of the crucifixion. Laying a victim upon the cross and then elevating it was sufficient to jar every joint of his human body out of place. This also enhanced the possibilities of a quicker death.

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Christ's heart became like wax, melting through the reproaches that eventually killed Him prematurely, for He died of a broken heart (Psa. 69:20). That is why blood and water came out when the spear of the soldier was thrust into His side (Jn. 19:34).

**22:15** - *“My strength is dried up like a potsherd [or earthenware]; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.”* Christ exclaims that His strength is dried up. This is the manner in which those who were crucified suffered. The natural moisture in their body was poured out through the sweat glands because of the pain and agony of the cross. Therefore, He likens the state of His body to earthenware that has passed through the furnace and every particle of moisture has been evaporated.

Because of the scourging which He had already suffered, He probably would have had a very high fever. This would have greatly contributed to the lack of moisture in His body. He was also subjected to the fiery pangs of hell, for His tongue craved for water. His body was near to becoming like dust. As we can see, He suffered terribly upon the cross.

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**22:16** - *“For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.”* Upon that cross the Blessed Lamb of God was not just surrounded by the proud, plump Pharisees, but also by the baser kind of people who vainly reechoed the voice of their masters. They formed what is called “the congregation of the wicked”—which represents people in the Church who have no profession of true godliness. The Lord Himself speaks of these in Revelation 3:9 as being of the synagogue of Satan. These are the people who cried out for Pilate to crucify Christ. They pierced His hands and His feet (see Zech.13:6).

**22:17** - *“I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.”* The frame of Christ’s body was so emaciated through the rigors of His sufferings that even His bones could clearly be seen through taut dry skin.

**22:18** - *“They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”* Then looking down from the cross, Christ observes the soldiers whose payment for this gruesome task was to take the clothes of the condemned. They divided His garments among themselves. He comments with holy

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dispassion and resignation that they are casting lots for the remains of His few earthly possessions. They cast lots for His seamless coat because they could not part it (Jn. 19:23-24).

**22:19** - *“But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.”* Again He appeals to His Heavenly Father to hasten and help Him and not be far from Him. The Lord Jesus tells us where He received His strength—His Father was His strength. So must our Heavenly Father be our strength in every situation.

**22:20** - *“Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.”* Here Jesus says from the cross that His attackers have swords. He was no doubt looking down at the soldiers who were armed with swords, positioned there to ensure that no one tried to rescue Him and take Him down from the cross before He died. However, He also begs of His Father that His soul be preserved from the dogs (representing those who are spiritually unclean), who surrounded Him and were mocking Him.

**22:21** - *“Save me from the lion’s mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.”* Jesus cries out again to be saved from the lion’s mouth, which is the Pharisees and chief priests who had

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engineered His crucifixion. Unicorns, a now extinct beast, were similar to wild horses with horns. They speak of the beast-like quality of His attackers. Then He cries out triumphantly that the Lord has saved Him from them all.

**22:22** - *“I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.”*

Even though the Lord was upon the cross, He was enabled to look beyond the agonies to say triumphantly that He would declare God’s name to His brethren and praise God in the midst of His blood-washed saints. This theme is developed by Paul in Hebrews 2:12 where he says that Jesus will sing praises to God from the midst of His Church. I have known people who have distinctly heard the voice of the Lord singing during a time of congregational worship.

**22:23** - *“Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.”* Even on the cross Jesus was encouraging His people to praise the Lord. The fear of the Lord which is an anointing will cause us to praise Him.

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**22:24** - *“For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.”* In a note of triumph the Lord Jesus says that God has not despised the afflicted, but has heard their prayers.

**22:25** - *“My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.”* How was this note of victory obtained, even in the time of darkness on the cross? Paul tells us in Hebrews 12:2 that it was because of the joy set before Him that Christ was able to endure the cross. Thus, even in the midst of His greatest suffering, He knew the joy that was awaiting Him once He finished His course.

**22:26** - *“The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.”* It is the meek who rejoice and thank the Lord for all His goodness to them. The meek will be satisfied as they feed at the table of the Lord. This must be understood in the context of the cross. Satisfaction is only enjoyed by meek lambs.

**22:27** - *“All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.”* Contemplating what lies ahead for Him and the work of



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redemption among the nations, Christ foresees the nations of the world turning to Him at His second coming.

**22:28** - *“For the kingdom is the Lord’s: and he is the governor among the nations.”* The kingdom referred to here is speaking specifically of Israel. However, it also has a broad application to all the nations that will be governed by the Lord in His Millennial reign.

**22:29** - *“All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.”* Everyone will fall down and worship the Lord when He comes again. This is brought out very poignantly by Paul in Philippians 2:9-11: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**22:30** - *“A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.”* There will be a seed that will serve the Lord, and they will be counted as His offspring. Isaiah prophesied that He would “see His seed” (Isa. 53:10). You and I are that seed when we are born again.

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**22:31** - *“They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.”* Then that seed, which shall endure always before Him, shall declare from one generation to another the righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen!

May we add, beloved, that one of the qualifications for being among those who are raised at the first resurrection is to be a partaker of His sufferings and to be made conformable to His death (Phil. 3:10). May we meditate often in this psalm in order to comprehend the sufferings of Christ of which we all to one degree or another must be a partaker. But surely as the pressures increase, so also will the sustaining grace of God increase, so that we may be “more than conquerors through Him who loves us.”

# *PSALM 23*

This beloved and most quoted of all psalms was not written as many might conjecture, when David was a shepherd boy tending his father's sheep in Bethlehem. Rather, it was composed when he was fleeing from Absalom, for it contains truths that only a mature saint in the midst of years could write. It reveals progressive experiences in our spiritual walk with God that enable us to appreciate His leadings in our lives to bring us to higher plains of glory in Him.

## *A Psalm of David*

**23:1** - *“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”* David presents an aspect of God's nature and character, declaring Him to be his shepherd. The Lord is spoken of as the Shepherd of His people in

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many parts of the Word of God (see Psa. 80:1, Heb. 13:20, 1 Pet. 2:25, 5:4). When the Lord Jesus Christ was upon earth He said, “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11). That word “good” does not mean that the Lord is morally good, although He is—it means that the Lord is good at being a shepherd.

A sheep’s welfare is dependent almost exclusively on the shepherd’s character, although it is also important for a shepherd to have the ability to provide for his sheep. A shepherd owns his flock because he has paid a price for them. Likewise, God bought us with the price of the death of His own dear Son—the greatest price any shepherd could pay for his flock. This is what Paul said in First Corinthians 6:19-20: “Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price.” Therefore, Christ could say in John 10:11,15 that He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. He knows each of His sheep *by name* (Jn. 10:14). The shepherd is so identified with his sheep that he even feels their frustrations (Isa. 63:9).

*“I shall not want.”* David says that because of the greatness and goodness of his Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, he will not lack any good thing, spiritually or naturally. Sheep are utterly defenseless

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and they lack any sense of direction. As Isaiah 53:6 says, “All we like sheep have gone astray.” They need a good shepherd who will provide for them. Whom we choose as our shepherd (pastor or spiritual father) makes all the difference. The thought of “not wanting” is more than just not lacking natural or spiritual care. It speaks of a deep sense of contentment—a peace so deep and a serenity so profound that even the shadow of death cannot disturb us.

**23:2** - *“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.”* One of the most difficult tasks that a shepherd has in caring for his sheep is to get them to lie down, because they are so restless.

Four things are essential before sheep will rest or lie down. 1.) They have to be free from fear because they are very timid. 2.) They have to be free from friction with other members of their own flock. 3.) They must be free from torment by flies or other parasites. 4.) They must be full. In other words, before a sheep will lie down and rest it has to be free from fear, tension, aggravation, and hunger.

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Fear is torment, but perfect love casts out fear (1 Jn. 4:18). A deep love for the Shepherd of our souls and an awareness that He loves us and watches over us will free us from fear. We need a personal assurance of Hebrews 13:5, that the Lord will never leave us or forsake us. Also, we must be free from friction with other Christians. We should make every effort to live in peace with all men without compromising our standards (Heb.12:14).

Contention only comes by pride and an inflated ego (Prov. 13:10). Therefore, if we walk in humility and meekness, others will not cause us to lose sleep or our peace of mind. The key is to not be people conscious, but to be Christ centered. We must be kind to others and forgive them when they do us wrong (Eph. 4:32), not always insisting on having our own way. Flies and parasites speak of evil spirits or bad habits. The yoke of bondage is destroyed by the anointing, by a personal meeting with God (Isa. 10:27).

Sheep will only lie down when they have been satisfied with good food. Green pastures are the product of much hard labor and skill on the part of the shepherd, because the land in Palestine is generally burnt, over dry, and parched. Green pastures are only obtained by careful planting, deep

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plowing, and watering the ground well. Likewise, a good shepherd (pastor or teacher) has to spend much time and energy to find good pastures in the Word of God to feed to his flock. (See Numbers 27:17 for the description of a good shepherd.)

We have to study earnestly and set in order many proverbs for our flock to feed upon (Eccl. 12:9). Everyone who is used by God to teach must constantly be seeking the Lord for fresh truths from His Word and be constantly meditating in His Word. In a certain country where I ministered years ago, all the people in the congregations were very lean spiritually. The reason for this was because their pastors fed them the same diet every week, teaching them only about salvation, water baptism, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Like Ezra of old, we should aspire to be students of the Word who are able to open up the Word of God so that people can understand it. We should have knowledge of every verse of the Bible, making them crystal clear for people as we teach (Neh. 8:7-8).

*“He leadeth me beside the still [or quiet] waters.”* There are three sources of water for sheep: dew on the grass, deep wells, and springs or streams. It should be noted that 70 percent of a sheep is

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composed of water. Thus lack of water will cause dehydration, disease of tissue, and general deterioration of health. Therefore, a good supply of water is essential for healthy sheep.

1.) *Dew* is upon the grass prior to sunrise when it is still dark outside. The dew satisfies the thirst of the sheep, enabling them to lie down contentedly all day as the heat of the sun rises. This corresponds to feeding upon the Lord in the early pre-dawn hours. It is to hear His voice. Song of Solomon 2:17 says, “Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.” This was the key to the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, as we read in Isaiah 50:4, “He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.”

The Lord spent time with His Father every morning in prayer. He heard Him speak every day. David said in Psalm 63:1, “Early will I seek thee.” It is noteworthy in Church history that all those who have ever had a major impact upon their generation and the generations to follow rose early in the mornings to meet with the Lord in prayer.



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2.) Often shepherds would obtain water for their sheep from *deep wells* in dark cavities carved out in underground caves. This speaks of treasures of darkness that we obtain when we pass through the valley of Baca (trouble), as described in Psalm 84:6.

3.) The other source of water for sheep was from *springs or streams*. Achsah cried out to her father Caleb to give her the upper and nether springs (Judg. 1:15). This speaks of the double portion of God's Spirit. These two springs represent the rivers of living waters that will flow out from the Lord's people in the last day revival during the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7:2, 38).

**23:3** - "*He restoreth my soul.*" The historical setting of this Psalm in the life of David is very important. Obviously, David is drawing upon the experiences of his youth as a shepherd boy (1 Sam. 16:11, 17:28). However, this Psalm was composed at Mahanaim, where David fled from Absalom his son (2 Sam. 17:24). Therefore, this Psalm was written after his sin with Bathsheba. David's soul at this time was cast down because of all the troubles he was passing through (Psa. 42:11). His son Absalom had forced him to flee Jerusalem and was chasing him, seeking to kill him.

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“*Cast down*” is an old English expression for a sheep that has turned over on its back and cannot get up. If he is left in this condition, he will either become a victim to wild beasts or the gases that build up within his body will cut off his circulation and eventually kill him. To restore a sheep that has been cast down, the shepherd has to massage him and gently talk to him so that he will want to regain his former walk and demeanor. That is how a Christian who has fallen and is cast down has to be treated, with gentle care and love on the part of his shepherd. Too much rebuke will kill a sheep and a Christian (see Isa. 57:16).

There are three basic reasons why sheep become cast down. 1.) They choose comfortable places. This is a reluctance to move on to more difficult pastures. They camp around the same mountain too long, even as did Israel of old (Deut. 2:3). 2.) If they have too much wool they can become cast down. This speaks of the old life that has become clogged and weighty with dirt. This has to be removed. 3.) Also, if they are too fat they can be easily cast down. This is the Laodicean syndrome—increasing in natural wealth and becoming proud and self-sufficient (Rev. 3:17). The Lord restored David’s soul from this cast down state.

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*“He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.”* One truth must not predominate the life of the shepherd and the sheep. Overgrazing a certain area can destroy the land and the sheep. Going in the same old ruts, the sheep always turn into the old paths and thus ruin the pasture land. The key is to continually lead the sheep into new pastures and then back again into the old pastures that have now become refreshed.

As teachers and leaders, we must continually lead our flocks into new truths in the Word of God, fresh manna, and regularly refresh their memories concerning the old truths. As it says in Matthew 13:52, we must be able to bring forth out of our treasure things new (fresh) and old. We must lead our flocks in the paths of righteousness, making straight paths for their feet. We must show them the direction in which they should walk.

*“For his name’s sake.”* The state of the flocks are a reflection of the shepherd who looks after them. Therefore, it is to the glory of God that we should walk in the paths of righteousness, performing the works that the Lord has ordained before the foundation of the world that we should walk in, for in so doing we bring honor and glory to His Name (Eph. 2:10).

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**23:4** - *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”* This marks a division in this Psalm. In Israel the year is divided. In the summer months the shepherd leads his sheep away from the lower ground and takes them up into the mountains and hill tops. However, this is where the dangers of deep ravines and mountain lions are to be found. This is what is known as “the high places of Jacob” (Isa. 58:14). This speaks of going higher up the mountain in fellowship with the Lord.

It appears that the valley of the shadow of death is the only passage way from the lower plains to the top of Mount Zion. We have to pass through a Ziklag experience to get to the top of Mount Zion (see 1 Sam. 30:1-9). Ziklag speaks of an economic disaster, losing everything we own and those we love. It is a very real experience, during which death is a distinct possibility.

Many years ago my wife and I lived and ministered in Switzerland. Often in the mountain areas of that country the sun blazed down on the lower reaches, but in order to attain unto the mountain tops and higher slopes one had to pass through a cloud cover and a deep valley. In God’s kingdom, the way up is down (cf. Eph. 4:9). We have to be reduced to ashes before we can obtain the Lord’s beauty

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(Isa. 61:3). The key word in this phrase is “through.” The Lord never leads us into caves; He always leads us into tunnels. My point is this—tunnels always have an expected end. We need the Lord’s grace so that we can pass *through* the valley of the shadow of death and come out into life and rest. We are to pass triumphantly *through* the valley of Baca (sorrow and trouble) as it says in Psalm 84:6. We have to be triumphant in the valley of the shadow of death even as David, who said, “*I will fear no evil: for thou [O Lord] art with me.*” We are to be more than conquerors in every situation—in persecution and in distress (Rom. 8:35-37).

“*Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*” The valleys are the best routes. They are usually the quickest route, well watered, and the best pastures. However, they are also a place of danger, where a rod and a staff are a necessity for the shepherd. The rod is a weapon of defense against predators, but it is also a means of correcting the flock. (The Hebrew word for rod, “*shebet*,” is translated “correction” in Job 37:13.) Therefore, it is a symbol of authority. All the miracles of Moses were performed through the use of his rod.

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The purpose of the rod is also to keep a straying sheep in line by a swift blow that sends it scurrying back to the flock. It is the shepherd's duty to examine and count the sheep. In Ezekiel 20:37 the Lord says, "I will cause you to pass under the rod [or be examined]." At the door of the sheepfold the shepherd stops the sheep with his rod and carefully examines them for diseases by parting the wool. It is an act of kindness for the Lord, our Shepherd, to cause us to pass under His rod in order to check us for any spiritual diseases (cf. Psa. 139:23-24).

The staff has three specific uses. 1.) It is used by the shepherd to lift the newborn lamb to its mother's side. 2.) It is used to catch sheep and bring them to the shepherd for intimate examination. 3.) It is also used to guide the sheep by pressing gently on their side and directing them into the right path. Sheep are extremely stubborn and get into many problems because of their self-will, straying into paths that are dangerous and unfruitful. So the Lord uses His staff in the life of a believer to bring him to his parent church, to closely examine him, and guide him in the right path.

**23:5** - *"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."* This can refer to the high tableland where the sheep browse in the summer. The pasture has to be cleansed of all its poisonous

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weeds so that it is suitable for the sheep. Mahanaim, where David in all probability wrote this Psalm, was on the highlands of eastern Gilead. The Lord prepared a table for David in the midst of his enemies. The higher up one goes spiritually, the more exposed to criticism and persecution he becomes. Even though people may be speaking against us, we can have a continual feast upon the Lord's presence and His Word and have peace in our hearts. Psalm 110:2 says that we are to rule *in the midst* of our enemies.

*"Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."* Quite often a sheep's head would get bruised or become infested with fleas. The shepherd would anoint the sheep's head with oil as a preventative which would calm down the sheep. Anointing our head spiritually protects us from the flies of Satan (evil thoughts, etc.) and produces peace in our minds. The anointing oil in Palestine was olive oil, mixed with sulfur and spices.

We need to be anointed with *fresh oil from the throne* (Psa. 92:10) and with *the oil of gladness* (Psa. 45:7). We thank the Lord for His anointing upon our lives, but we need to be anointed with a new and

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fresh anointing. The way to increase the anointing in our lives is to spend time with the Anointed One (*Christ* means “The Anointed One” in Greek).

*“My cup runneth over”* speaks of an abundance of joy and contentment—more joy and blessings than we can contain—and the anointing.

**23:6** - *“Surely goodness and mercy [loving kindness] shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”* Goodness is the inherent quality of God. Goodness means to be doing what is best for others and to be incapable of doing evil. God is abundant in goodness (Ex. 34:6). David was confident, not in himself, but that God’s goodness and mercy would always be extended to him. This is a positive statement of faith and assurance in his Lord’s love for him.

When we are walking in the light as the children of the Light, all things work together for our good (Rom. 8:28). The Lord is the Good Samaritan who pours in the oil and the wine when we have been beaten or have experienced some form of misfortune. Also, if we walk in obedience, we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever, not only in this life, but also in eternity. (See Eph. 2:7, Psa. 27:4, Jn. 8:34-35).



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One time Stanley Frodsham, the former editor of the Pentecostal Evangel, a dear friend of ours, was walking down a street in his hometown. A palm reader came up to him, grabbed his hand, and said, “Mr. Frodsham, let me tell you your fortune.” Mr. Frodsham shook his hand loose from her clutch and said: “No thank you, Madame. My fortune has already been told. ‘Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever’.” Yes, that is our glorious assurance as Christians. God’s goodness will always cover us and when this life’s trials are over, we will dwell with Him forever. Amen!

# *PSALM 24*

Psalm 24 was written in conjunction with Psalm 15 at the time when David was moving the ark from the house of Obed-edom to its resting place in the tabernacle upon Mount Zion (2 Sam. 6). It was at this time that this anthem was composed and sung.

*A Psalm of David*

**24:1** - *“The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.”* All of creation, as well as every living creature, belongs to the Lord.

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**24:2** - *“For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.”* He has founded the earth upon the waters, meaning that He has fixed the shore lines of the sea. The Lord said to the waters, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed” (Job 38:11).

**24:3** - *“Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?”* David asks, in the Spirit, who can go up to Zion the holy hill of the Lord and appear before His presence. Now in verse four, the Holy Spirit in David answers this important question.

**24:4** - *“He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.”* The answer of the Holy Spirit is fourfold:

1.) *“He that has clean hands”* - This signifies that their service is pure and clean, for hands speak of our service. This has an application for our secular life. In Ephesians 4:28 Paul said, “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

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It also has the connotation of the ministry. In Second Corinthians 4:1-2 Paul says, "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

2.) "*A pure heart*" - This speaks of moral purity and purity of motives. Paul's instruction to Timothy was to treat the elder women as mothers and the younger women as sisters, with all purity (1 Tim. 5:2). We must continually pray the prayer of David in Psalm 51:10, "Create in me a pure [or clean] heart, O God." In Ezekiel 36:26-27 the Lord promises to give us a new heart.

In Revelation 21:21 we are told that the street of the heavenly city is pure gold, like transparent glass. Clear distortionless glass, fine Danish glass, for example, is produced through many grindings or breakings. It is very costly because it takes a very long time to produce glass that is distortionless. Job 41:25 says, "By reason of breakings they purify themselves." It is through many breakings and difficulties that we become transparent, having a pure heart.

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3.) *“Who hath not lifted his soul unto vanity”* - No one knew this world’s vanities more than Solomon, and he gives us an understanding of them in Ecclesiastes 2:1-11: mirth, laughter, wine, houses, vineyards, trees, ponds of water, servants, maidens, great possessions, silver and gold. This reminds us of Christ’s warnings in Luke 12:15: “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”

Solomon received no pleasure from his life of wantonness. He said in Ecclesiastes 2:10, “And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.” Yet he concludes by saying in verse 11 that it was all vanity and vexation of spirit.

4.) *“Nor practiced lying”* - A man’s word must be his bond. All those who purposefully seek to deceive by means of oaths will be cast into the lake of fire, for that is the end of all those who habitually lie (Rev. 21:8).

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**24:5** - *“He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.”* Those who follow these four things will inherit the blessing of the Lord, which is His righteousness. The Apostle Paul speaks of the gift of righteousness in Romans 5:17.

This in turn flows with the Lord’s words in Matthew 5:6: “Blessed is he that hungereth and thirsteth after righteousness for he shall be filled.” Let us earnestly desire not our own righteousness, which is as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6), but the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:9).

**24:6** - *“This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.”* Those who ascend Mount Zion to dwell in the presence of the Lord are those who continually seek the face of the Lord.

**24:7** - *“Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.”* Then comes the cry for us to lift up our heads, and the King of glory will come in. This is the promise of John 14:21-23, where the Lord states that the Father and the Son will make their abode with those who keep His commandments, for only men and women who are obedient are those who truly love Him.

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These verses also apply to the second coming of the Lord. Jerusalem will welcome her Deliverer, the Lord of glory, who comes in the clouds to fight for her against all those nations that are encamped against her in the last days. The Lord, who is strong and mighty in battle, will defeat all of Israel's foes. As we walk through the steps listed for us in this psalm, the Lord will fight our battles too.

**24:8-10** - *“Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.”*

This Psalm ends in a true Hebraistic form by a repetition of the question: Who is the true King of glory? He is none other than the rejected Jesus of Nazareth who will come from heaven riding upon His white horse at His second coming. He is the Captain of the Lord of Hosts, who met Joshua on the plains of Jericho to fight for His people. Thus He will return and fight for them against all their enemies at His second coming. Zion is exhorted to open her gates wide to receive Him. Let us likewise be ever ready to open the gates of our hearts and receive our blessed Lord as our warrior King.

# *PSALM 25*

This psalm was written in David's latter years after Absalom's insurrection when many people were rising up against him. It is one of the acrostic (or alphabetical) Psalms, meaning that the twenty-two verses of this Psalm start with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order. However, there are exceptions in verse two, the letter "vau" is omitted, and "resh" is repeated in verses 18,19. Other acrostic Psalms are 37, 111, 112, 119, and 145. All these psalms are didactic, and therefore their form is chosen, in all probability, to aid in their memorization. Psalm 25 is a prayer for instruction and forgiveness.



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### ***A Psalm of David***

**25:1** - *“Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.”* It seems as though David is lifting up his soul in anguish to the Lord. This is the only way the devout and pious can triumph in times of adversity, by lifting their saddened soul up to God. It is an effort, requiring great discipline, but it is the way of victory.

**25:2** - *“O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.”* We must cry unto the Lord and put our trust in Him; otherwise we will be put to shame by our enemies.

**25:3** - *“Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.”* For our sakes, he repeats this thought—if we put our trust in the Lord we will not be ashamed. As we wait upon the Lord for His perfect timing, we are assured that the tables will be turned. Those who have risen up against us will most certainly have shame poured upon their heads.

**25:4** - *“Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.”* We need God to show us His ways in every situation, especially in times of sorrow. A revelation of His ways will teach us how we are to walk through every difficulty we face.

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**25:5** - *“Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”* David cries out to be led in the truth of God. It is so important for us to humble ourselves before the Lord, for if we walk in pride and stubbornness, we will be given over to doctrines that do not profit. Many believers, because of a lack of righteousness, fall into grievous errors and spend their lives embracing doctrines of demons to their eternal loss. We need to wait upon the Lord day by day, at appointed times. If we do this, He will graciously preserve us from error.

**25:6** - *“Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.”* David pleads with the Lord to remember His tender mercies that He has shown toward the king in times past.

**25:7** - *“Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness’ sake, O LORD.”* David prays that the Lord may graciously forget the sins of his youth. It is a fact that as one ages there is an ever-increasing awareness of the wild oats that have been sown in one’s youth. However, we can meet God in this matter and those youthful lusts

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can be put under the precious blood of the Lamb. Then David continues by saying that the Lord will remember us because of His goodness.

**25:8** - *“Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.”* The Lord teaches both sinners and saints alike the way in which they should walk. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge and experience of salvation by faith in Christ (2 Pet. 3:9).

**25:9** - *“The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.”* Meekness is one of the foremost qualifications in order to be taught of the Lord and be directed by Him. Meekness can be defined as a holy acceptance with joy of all circumstances and situations that have been sent our way or permitted by God. Meekness is the quality of spirit spoken of in Proverbs 21:1. The heart of a truly meek person is so pliable in the Lord’s hands that He can turn him, like water, in whichever direction He wants.

**25:10** - *“All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.”* As we walk in the paths that the Lord has prescribed for our lives, we find that goodness

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and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives (Psa. 23:6). The paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to those who obey Him. The Lord said in John 8:32 that we will know the truth and the truth will set us free. Therefore, as we walk with the Lord, we shall know in an ever-increasing measure His lovingkindness and His liberating power in our lives.

**25:11** - *“For thy name’s sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.”* Again reference is made by David to his great sin with Bathsheba and the slaying of her husband Uriah. It is no doubt that David lived out Proverbs 6:32-33: “But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.” David’s sin will be remembered until the new heavens and the new earth, for Isaiah 65:17 says, “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” Until then David’s sin will always be remembered, even in the Millennium.

**25:12** - *“What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.”* Throughout Holy Scripture there are constant reminders of the blessedness of those who fear the

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Lord. In this particular verse, we see that those who fear the Lord will be guided by the Lord in the way that He has chosen for their lives before the foundation of the world.

**25:13** - *“His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.”* There is the beautiful promise of rest and ease for those who truly reverence and fear the Lord. They will be free from the torment of life’s difficulties and turmoil, enjoying rest in the midst of their enemies. Also, there is a promise for their natural and spiritual seed—they shall inherit the earth. This is brought out in a very beautiful way in Isaiah 58:12: “And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.” Therefore, it is through our seed that we receive our inheritance.

**25:14** - *“The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.”* The Lord will share His secrets with those who fear Him, for they are His friends (Jn. 15:15). The Lord said of Abraham, His friend (Isa. 41:8), “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” (Gen.18:17). Clearly, the Lord reveals His secrets and the things which He intends to do with those who fear Him.

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In addition, they will be shown His covenant. This speaks of having God's laws written upon the fleshly tables of our hearts (Heb. 8:10). Jeremiah 31:33 says, "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."

**25:15** - *"Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net."* David looked to the Lord at all times. Therefore, he had a holy confidence that if he became entwined like a dove in the net or snare of a hunter, God would pluck his feet free so he could soar again into heavenly vistas. The impaired bird is a solemn type of a person who is caught up in the cares, pleasures, and sins of this world and desires to be free, but is unable to be freed without the Lord's help.

**25:16** - *"Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted."* The great cry of David is a cry that is evoked by so many saints throughout all generations: "O Lord, in spite of all my sins, turn unto me again and show Thy lovingkindness unto me." We feel so lonely at such times and yearn to feel the comfort of the Lord's presence.

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**25:17** - *“The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.”* As we carefully study the Scriptures and Church history, and even our contemporaries, we find that those who seek God’s highest and best have the most troubles in this life. The path to heaven’s glories is soaked with blood, sweat, and tears. Those who know the fellowship of His sufferings cry out more than others to receive an abundance of His grace. Abundance of trouble is an opportunity for abundance of grace to be poured into our lives.

**25:18** - *“Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.”* Thus the psalmist cries out to God to be gracious and consider all of his afflictions and pain. David’s heart was in pain and torment because of the secret plots of the enemy. David continued by beseeching the Lord to forgive all of his sins in His mercy. Certainly, David also experienced bodily pain (Psa. 32:4). However, whether we are in pain because of our enemies or physical sickness, there is only one Physician for both—the Lord Jesus Christ.

**25:19** - *“Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.”* Then David cries out because his enemies are both numerous and cruel. Let it not be thought strange that the

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man or woman of God will have enemies, and have them in abundance. The Word of God distinctly tells us, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12).

**25:20** - *“O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.”* In times of persecution from our enemies, it is God alone who can keep us. All those who put their trust in Him shall never be ashamed (Isa. 49:23).

**25:21** - *“Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.”* However, trust alone is not sufficient. A godly life is essential to receive God’s deliverance. Faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:20).

**25:22** - *“Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.”* Realizing his responsibilities for Israel as leader of the nation, David cries out, as all true leaders do, for God to deliver those for whom he is responsible. Deliverance is the result of carefully honing our lives to the precepts enunciated in this beautiful psalm. Therefore, in times of difficulties let us read this psalm and follow carefully the instructions that it provides.



# *PSALM 26*

The time and occasion of the writing of this Psalm are open to conjecture. Some scholars place it at the time of Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 15-18), but others lean to the time of the assassination of Ishbosheth by Baanah and Rechab (2 Sam. 4:1-12). David declared his innocence of this heinous crime. We tend to agree with the early period (2 Sam. 4) because the tenor of the psalm speaks more of the plea of a righteous man, whereas the psalms written at the time of Absalom's rebellion, like Psalm 25, tend to declare his penitence for his sins.

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Psalm 26 declares David's separation from the congregation of the wicked and his determination to praise the Lord among the congregations of the Lord. This differentiation of congregations is very important for all generations, as we shall discuss in more detail later.

### ***A Psalm of David***

**26:1** - *“Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.”* David had a consciousness of a continual need to be judged (or examined) by the Lord. Devout saints throughout the ages have also had this same conviction. Like David, we must seek God's approval, not man's. Paul recommends that we practice this spiritual exercise of judging and examining ourselves when we partake of communion (1 Cor. 11:28).

**26:2** - *“Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.”* David continues by asking the Lord to examine the innermost thoughts of his heart and even his inward and hidden desires. We need God to cleanse our hearts, for “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Mt. 12:34). Whatever is in our hearts will come out.

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**26:3** - *“For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.”* As Christians we are called to be followers of Christ (Eph. 5:1), yet we all need role models to help show us the way. Paul could say by the Holy Spirit in First Corinthians 11:1, “Be ye followers [or imitators] of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

Scripturally, the lovingkindness of the Lord is manifested in the restoration of the backslider and by the mercy that is shown to him. We should consider the Lord’s attitude through the lips of Hosea when giving His reasons for not destroying idolatrous, backslidden Ephraim (Hos.11). The Lord’s goodness is clearly demonstrated in the promised restoration of Israel as a nation when Christ returns (Zech. 9:16-17).

Christ’s parable of the prodigal son being so wonderfully received back into the open arms of his father (Lk.15:20-24) places before us a timeless example of the Lord’s lovingkindness. Also, who can forget the Lord’s own compassionate dealing with the woman caught in the act of adultery? (Jn. 8:10-11).

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Here we are exhorted to meditate upon His loving mercies so that we in turn might become tender and merciful to others. As we muse upon His truth, the result is that we will be able to shun all evil.

**26:4** - *“I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.”* Who we associate with determines our eternal destiny. If we walk with the wise, we will become wise, as it says in Proverbs 13:20. However, evil companionship will likewise corrupt our good manners and ways of living (1 Cor. 15:33).

**26:5** - *“I have hated the congregation of evildoers; and will not sit with the wicked.”* There are basically two congregations cited in the Word of God. There is the congregation of the righteous (Psa.1:5) and the congregation of the wicked (or evil doers).

The congregation of the righteous is also called the congregation of the saints (Psa. 89:5, 149:1), and the assembly of the upright (Psa.111:1). Job 15:34 calls the congregation of the wicked the congregation of hypocrites, and in Revelation 3:9 it is called the synagogue of Satan. It is also called the congregation of the dead (Prov. 21:16).

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The life of Jesus is not flowing in the congregation of the wicked, for they are spiritually dead. We should always go where the Spirit of God is moving. There must also be a complete separation between ourselves and the wicked. It is also noteworthy that there are principally two women in the Word of God: the virtuous woman (Prov. 31) and the strange woman (Prov. 7:5); and two churches: the true Church of Christ (Rev. 19:7-8) and the false church (Rev.17:1-6).

**26:6** - *“I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I [go about] thine altar, O LORD.”* Our hands, which speak of our service to the Lord, must not be tainted with any shedding of blood, literally or spiritually speaking. We must always faithfully serve others with pure intentions, so that when we come to the altar of the Lord, we will know we are irreproachable and there is no one who can justly accuse us of anything.

**26:7** - *“That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.”* Hands of innocency cause us to rejoice greatly in the Lord with a free spirit, and we can declare with a thankful heart all of the wondrous works He has wrought on our behalf.

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**26:8** - *“LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.”*

The presence of God is the place where every devout and pious worshipper of the Lord desires to dwell. His presence is found in His house of worship, where He is exalted by those who are wholeheartedly in love with Him. We must not be those who forsake the assembling together of the saints (Heb. 10:25), but we must be those who are found in the sanctuary of the Lord at service time. It is dangerous and unscriptural to separate ourselves from the body of believers.

**26:9** - *“Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men.”* This needs to be the cry of the godly, since it is only by grace that we stand. Paul wrote in First Corinthians 9:27, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway [or be rejected].”

Furthermore, the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24:48-51, “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the

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hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” We are kept by the power of God (1 Pet. 1:5).

It is horrible to consider the eternal habitation of darkness and torment of those who have shed the blood of the innocent.

**26:10** - *“In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.”* We should pray to the Lord to be found worthy to stand before Him in the last days. When harvest time comes, the sickle will be put in and the evil ones will be gathered to the evil as in bundles (cf. Rev. 14:14-19). May we not be found with the tares that will be burned with unquenchable fire, but with those who are wheat that will be gathered into the Lord’s garners (cf. Mt. 3:12; 13:24-30, 37-43, 49-50). Let us not even consider receiving or giving bribes to pervert justice.

**26:11** - *“But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.”* Our only hope is to find grace to walk uprightly and be redeemed in every area of our lives—spirit, soul, mind, and body. Yes, it is only by the Lord’s grace that we can walk uprightly, but it is also our *choice*. David said, “No matter what anyone else does, I choose to walk uprightly (by the Lord’s grace).”

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Joshua said, “Choose this day whom ye will serve ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh. 24:15). It is all a matter of *personal choice*. When we choose and determine in our hearts to do what is right, then the Lord gives us His grace (divine enablement) to walk uprightly.

**26:12** - *“My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.”* The foundations upon which we stand must be none other than the foundation stones of the Church, namely, the apostles and prophets, and the Lord Himself who is the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:20). Our feet must be perfectly balanced upon an even foundation of obedience to the Word of God (the *logos*, written Word of God) and the Holy Spirit (the *rhema*, the spoken and quickened word from God).

So in reading this psalm prayerfully, may our desire be to ask the Lord to examine us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness so we may be counted as members of the congregation of the righteous.



# *PSALM 27*

In all probability, this psalm was written by David when he was being pursued by Saul after Doeg the Edomite had betrayed him (1 Sam. 22:9). It is a psalm that portrays the deep devotion of David to the Lord at a young age, in his early twenties. However, it is a model for believers of all ages of the singleness of eye and heart that David had toward the Lord at all times. This psalm gives us the key to having the presence of the Lord in our lives. Because David loved spending time with the Lord, the Lord loved spending time with David.

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### ***A Psalm of David***

**27:1** - *“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”* In the darkness and obscurity that envelop us during life’s trials, the only true light emanates from the Lord who is the Light of the world (Jn. 8:12). It is to Him alone that we can turn to for salvation in the storms of life. Abiding in Him alone, we are preserved from fear, for He is our strength against whom no enemy can prevail.

**27:2** - *“When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.”* When our enemies launch their attacks against us, they will stumble and fall. Seemingly, as in the case of David, we are hopelessly outnumbered as well. Yet, those arrayed against us cannot prevail, for the angelic hosts will fight against them on our behalf.

**27:3** - *“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.”* Even a mighty army, which was arrayed against him, could not shake David’s confidence in the Lord or cause him to lose his serenity of spirit.

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**27:4** - *“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.”* This verse contains in it the secret to the life of victory and peace that David enjoyed at all times. The key to victory is fourfold:

First, we must have singleness of heart for the Lord, whereby our sole desire is to win Christ (Phil. 3:7-8). We must have dove’s eyes (which can only focus on one object at a time) for the Lord. Secondly, we must abide in the Lord’s presence and sanctuary all the days of our life. This is a conditional blessing, for Christ said in John 8:34-35: *“Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.”* We cannot assume that we will always remain in the Lord’s house. The Lord raises up stumblingblocks to turn those who are disobedient out of the path of the congregation of the righteous (cf. Ezek. 3:20).

Thirdly, we must meditate upon the beauty of the Lord’s character, for as we do, we will be transformed more and more into His likeness (see Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18). May the promise of Isaiah

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33:17 be our portion in this life and in eternity. “Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.”

Fourthly, we must be guided throughout life’s journey only by the Lord’s counsel (Prov. 3:5-6). Thus we should always enquire of God for every decision we face.

**27:5** - *“For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.”* To those happy souls who have made Christ their sole desire in life, the joy and privilege of being hidden by Him in time of distress is their reward. The word *“pavilion”* comes from the word *butterfly* (papilio). It means to be under the Lord’s outstretched wings of protection. *“Tabernacle”* signifies being hidden in the Holy of Holies from our enemies.

**27:6** - *“And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.”* Because of our devotional life and our intimate communion with the Lord, we can enjoy the privilege that David experienced of being exalted above our enemies. When the Lord lifts us up, our hearts are filled with

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praise, thanksgiving, and joy. However, the foundation for that privilege is spending time with our Beloved.

**27:7** - *“Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.”* David is crying out to the Lord not to hide His face from him but to hear him. David knew he was dependent upon the Lord to answer his prayers for deliverance, and even his very existence.

**27:8** - *“When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.”* David continues by asking the Lord to remember that he had responded and sought His face when he was commanded to by Him.

There is a constant reminder in Scripture that there are appointed times when we should, above all else, earnestly seek the Lord. The Lord spoke, for example, of Jerusalem’s day of visitation in this way in Luke 19:44: “And [they] shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

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The Lord also spoke through Isaiah, saying: “Now is the day of salvation. Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (Isa. 55:6, see also 2 Cor. 6:2). Therefore, let us be sensitive to respond as David did when the Lord is wooing and drawing us to seek Him. Jerusalem was destroyed because they did not know or recognize the day of their visitation. Let us pray, “May this not be said of us, dear Lord.”

**27:9** - *“Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.”* Because of his quick response to the Lord, David pleads for the Lord not to forsake him.

**27:10** - *“When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.”* Even though David had godly parents for whom he cared, there came a time when they rejected and misunderstood him. There often comes a time in each of our lives when we are tested by the attitude of our very close family members.

Just as the Lord’s own brothers did not believe He was the Messiah (Jn. 7:5), we may also have parents or close relatives who do not believe in the path in which the Lord is leading us. They may

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even oppose our following the Lord's call for our lives. It is at times like these that we have to cleave even more to the Lord, who becomes our father and our mother (Isa. 66:13).

**27:11** - *“Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.”* When we are encompassed by our enemies it is very important for us to walk circumspectly and carefully, making sure that we are on the correct path.

In the heat of a trial or battle, the path of God for our lives can become quite obscured. This is why David cries out, as we should, that he might plainly see the path down which the Lord was leading him.

**27:12** - *“Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.”* It is a heartbreaking experience to have people lie about you and tarnish your character in the eyes of those who are over you and in the eyes of those whom you love dearly. David acknowledges the sovereignty of God and the fact that we are only kept by His power.

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**27:13** - *"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living."* The enemy and his constant aggressive tactics can be so wearing that we are close to fainting at times (cf. 1 Sam. 27:1).

If it were not for the fact that the Lord's faith within our hearts causes us to believe that He will yet turn things around to our advantage, we could very easily give up. However, hope springs up in the child of God so that we anticipate with confidence His goodness toward us, not only in heaven, but also here on earth.

**27:14** - *"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."* David ends this psalm with the exhortation to encourage ourselves in the Lord; for not only will He strengthen our hearts to keep them from fear, but He will also physically strengthen our hearts and heal them from the ordeal of the battle that has weakened them. (Read Joel 2:25).



# *PSALM 28*

In all probability, this psalm was written at the same time as Psalm 27. Certainly, the allusion to the Lord as his rock gives credence to the belief that David was wandering in the wilderness and still fleeing from Saul. It is this constant grief that produces the solemn heart cries for which the Psalms are so well known. It is also those times of intense grief in our own lives that send us to the Psalms for solace and strength.

## *A Psalm of David*

**28:1** - *“Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.”* On the battlefield, we are told that there are no atheists

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in the trenches. Certainly, heaven and hell are very prevalent in the minds of soldiers in combat. Herein is David's lament before the Lord.

**28:2** - *"Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle [or thy most holy place]."* Therefore, in times of anguish there is one thing of which we need to be sure—that we have an open heaven and God hears our cry.

**28:3** - *"Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts."* Again we see David's acknowledgment of a very important truth. It is God who determines our final, eternal dwelling place.

We need to obtain mercy so that He does not appoint our portion with the wicked. The wicked are "two-faced." They treat us nicely to our faces, but inside they are full of hatred and jealousy toward us. Therefore, they speak evil of us to others behind our backs.

**28:4** - *"Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert."* David prays that the wicked may receive their due and just deserts. There are ample and repeated warnings throughout Holy Scripture

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that we will be recompensed according to our works and deeds. Paul said in Romans 2:6 that God will “render to every man according to his deeds.”

**28:5** - *“Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.”* Because the wicked do not consider the Lord’s dealings in the world or in their lives, they despise God. Therefore, He will destroy them.

**28:6** - *“Blessed be the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.”* We must come to the place where we have the assurance that the Lord has heard us and will answer our prayers. Many people pray, but they do not pray through until the answer comes (see Lk. 11:5-10).

**28:7** - *“The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.”* One of the most beautiful promises that is held out to the children of God is that the Lord can be our strength (if we will let Him). Isaiah 40:28-31 shows us that we can exchange our strength for His. When we are strong, it is so easy to be gracious and victorious in every situation. When we are strong, fear is banished and our confidence is great, and we sense that in Him we are masters of every situation.

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**28:8** - *“The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.”* We are so happy when the Lord is our strength; for in each situation we experience His power to save us.

**28:9** - *“Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.”* David closes this psalm with a prayer that the Lord will save His people and enable them to triumph over their circumstances. This is a very real position that each one of us can and should experience in the Spirit. Therefore, let us walk in the victory that His strength gives us.

# *PSALM 29*

This psalm was most likely penned at the same time as Psalm 27 and Psalm 28, during the time of David's wilderness sojourn when he was fleeing from Saul. David often camped out in the wild and meditated upon the majesty of God in the elements of nature. As a shepherd boy, inspired by the Holy Spirit, he composed Psalm 8, which describes the glory of God and His greatness in the heavens. Now he reveals God's strength demonstrated in the thunder and in flames of fire.

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### ***A Psalm of David***

#### ***Part 1 - Our Duty Toward God (29:1-2)***

**29:1** - *“Give [or ascribe] unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.”* Giving breaks down into three basic areas, as we see in Second Corinthians 8:1-24: firstly, giving ourselves to the Lord (cf. Rom.12:1-2); and secondly, giving ourselves to our leaders; and thirdly, giving our tithes and offerings to the Lord. However, in verse 1 we have another aspect of giving. It is to offer “the calves [or sacrifice] of our lips” (Hos. 14:2), praising the Lord for His strength and might, which we see manifested in nature as well as in our lives.

**29:2** - *“Give [or ascribe] unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”* Instead of murmuring and complaining, we should extol the Lord and magnify the various aspects of His name that we see revealed in Holy Scripture. Above all else we should worship the Lord (bow down before Him) and desire to be made conformable to His image (Rom. 8:29). David exhorts us to worship the Lord *in the beauty of holiness*. Oh, may we live a holy life before the Lord

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and be those who worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth, not just offering “lip service.” It is so glorious to be made pure, freed from sin’s cruel bondage, and brought into the liberty of the life of the Spirit.

### ***Part 2 - The Awesomeness of the Voice of God (29:3-11)***

**29:3** - *“The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters.”* In the creation of this earth, the Lord spoke everything into existence. He said, “Let there be light,” and there was light (Gen. 1:3). The power is in the voice of the Lord. This is confirmed in Revelation 1:16, where John saw a sharp two-edged sword come out from the mouth of Christ, signifying again that the power is in the mouth (or the voice). The Lord’s voice is also like the sound of many waters (Rev.1:15, Ezek. 43:2). There is tremendous power in the spoken word. Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov.18:21). We should read Genesis 1:7 in conjunction with this verse. “And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.”

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**29:4** - *“The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.”* There is awesome dignity and majesty in the Lord’s pronouncements. If we stand in awe of His Word, we will be recognized by the Almighty.

**29:5** - *“The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.”* The cedars of Lebanon are symbols of great strength. In fact, they are the national emblem of Lebanon and appear on its flag. Cedars were also their symbol of pride in olden days. Therefore, by His word and by His voice the Lord breaks the pride and strong will of nations and individuals alike. At times, heavy rains and thunderstorms have removed whole mountain slopes and have buried villages.

**29:6** - *“He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.”* Verse 6 does not refer to cedars because cedars did not grow upon Sirion. Sirion is also called Shenir or Hermon (Deut. 3:9). The mountain ranges of Lebanon and Sirion dominate the landscape in that region. Thus at the voice of the Lord these mountains at times would appear to skip like a calf or a young unicorn kicking up its heels.



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**29:7** - *“The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire.”* As forked lightning, the flames of heaven are divided by the voice of the Lord. This happened spiritually on the day of Pentecost when cloven (or parted) tongues of fire came upon the 120 that were present in the Upper Room.

**29:8** - *“The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.”* This alludes to the sudden torrents that sweep through the wilderness at times when the rain falls upon the mountain ranges. When we were in the Judean desert we were shown the dry beds of brooks. These, we were assured, become swelling rivers when the rain falls in the vicinity of Jerusalem. The noise of stones tossed up and down by the advancing waters would give a few minutes warning of the impending flood, enough time for the alert traveler to hasten to the safety of higher ground. So it is spiritually. Even in the wilderness places there is the moving of the Spirit of God at times. These outpourings remove all impediments to its flow and leave, at least for a season, fresh pastures to nurture one who has been dwelling in places that did not have the Lord’s presence.

**29:9** - *“The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve [bring forth and give birth], and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.”* One of the questions God

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challenged Job with was whether he knew the time when the hinds calve (Job 39:1), showing that the Lord rules in the most minute details of nature. The Lord Jesus said that a sparrow does not fall to the ground without the notice of the Father in heaven (Mt. 10:29). At the set time, the deer leave their parents and discover the pleasant forests by which they are nurtured. Therefore David, contemplating once again the Lord in His creation, explodes in ecstasy and declares that those who dwell in the temple of the Lord speak constantly of the revealed glory of God in all His works. We need to cry out for the Lord to give us wisdom like Solomon's to see His truths that are hidden in nature (1 Kgs. 4:33-34).

**29:10** - *"The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever."* An alternate rendering is "Jehovah sat upon the deluge." This is in reference to the time of the Flood in the days of Noah. The Lord was ruling then, He rules today, and He will always rule. This applies particularly to the time of the Great Tribulation when the Lord will send all kinds of plagues upon the wicked.

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**29:11** - *“The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.”*

The psalm closes with comforting promises that the Lord will give His people strength and peace—enabling them to go through all of life's sorrows, heartaches, trials and disappointments.

# *PSALM 30*

The superscription of this psalm tells us that it was written at the time of the dedication of the house of David. However, this date has been somewhat of an enigma to theologians throughout the generations.

When was the house of David actually dedicated? Many have suggested that it was dedicated at the time of the dedication of Solomon's Temple (1 Kgs. 8). Yet, that would have been quite illogical to dedicate a house some forty years after it was completed. Others place it at the time of David's correction by the angel after numbering the people (2 Sam. 24).

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However, neither of these seem to fit the circumstances of the psalm. We would place the occasion at the time of the building of the house of cedar for David in Second Samuel 5:11-12. It was the time when David had captured Zion and entered into rest from all his enemies.

### ***A Psalm and Song at the dedication of the house of David***

**30:1** - *“I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.”* Now, at about thirty-eight years of age, David returns thanks to the Lord for delivering him from all his enemies. Saul and all the foreign armies that he was obliged to combat in order to reign in peace had been defeated, and his foes were no longer in a position to attack him.

**30:2** - *“O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.”* There is no account in the chronicles of the kings that records that David was critically ill during this time of his life. Yet, it is evident from these verses that he was sick and close to death.

**30:3** - *“O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.”* In the lives of God’s choicest saints, there are times of sickness and suffering that mellow them and prepare them for positions of responsibility in His Church, and for ministry and

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encouragement to others. We see this in the formative years of Christ in Hebrews 5:7: “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.”

Thus the Lord passes His choicest and most beloved servants through such a veil of suffering that at times it brings them to the very gate of hell. However, these experiences can produce carefulness and thankfulness in us. Only piety, awareness of eternity and God’s grace can save us.

**30:4** - *“Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.”*

As His loved ones, we should sing unto the Lord with a voice of triumph. We should also give thanks unto Him because through these chastening experiences He is making us a partaker of His holiness and divine nature (Heb.12:10).

**30:5** - *“For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”* One of the most precious facts of the Christian life is that even though God may allow affliction for a season, there is always the joyous time of release that is coming.

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Hosea 6:1 says, “Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.”

**30:6** - *“And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.”* Having been blessed by God in some peculiar way like David, we often say such things as, “This is my rest forever, here will I dwell,” or like Job said, “I shall die in my nest.” I remember being in circumstances like these.

My wife and I were on the faculty of a certain Bible school where I thought I would be for the rest of my life because it was such a pleasant place. However, just as I was telling my wife this, I saw a vision on the far wall in our room of a flask of wine being poured into another vessel. Then I said to my wife that I did not think we would be there much longer. Sure enough, within the year the Lord moved us on into higher fields of service. David was going to be moved to a higher spiritual plain.

**30:7** - *“LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.”* David acknowledges it was only by the Lord’s favor that he was able to remain strong against all the attacks of his enemies. Yet, when God later chose to hide His face from David,

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he was troubled. The Lord leads us also into strange and dark experiences when He wants to bring us up into higher plains of glory with Him.

I remember a time when I was contemplating remaining on a certain plateau. The Lord showed me in a vision that the sun would certainly be my portion at that place, yet He wanted to lead me higher up the mountain. We lived at that time in Switzerland where mountains surrounded us, and it was not unusual to see the sun's rays at the foot of these mountains. A little higher up, however, clouds would envelop a portion of the mountain in foreboding darkness. Yet, even higher up, the pure light from the sun would stream unhindered and undistorted from the azure sky above.

Thus the Lord made the vision very clear to me. To remain below where we were was to enjoy the rays of His presence that had penetrated through the clouds, only sparsely. Going through the clouds meant enduring a time of darkness, but later we would experience the privilege of unhindered and unbroken communion with the Lord, the Sun of righteousness.

**30:8** - *"I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication."* When we are going through darkness we cry profoundly unto the Lord. Yet, through those cries for help, we are actually drawing



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closer to Him. And even though it appears He does not respond at first, if we persevere He will appear unto us in all His glory.

**30:9** - *“What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?”* In this instance, since it was not the time of martyrdom or the fulfillment of the seventy years allotted to man upon earth (Psa. 90:10), there seemed no purpose in his death. Therefore, David pleaded with the Lord to spare him from death.

The Old Testament saints were afraid of death (Heb. 2:15), because prior to the cross they did not go to heaven. They went to Paradise, which was in the center of the earth (Lk.16:19-31). David also bemoans the fact that he would have fewer days appointed to him in which to praise the Lord.

**30:10** - *“Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.”* Therefore, King David appeals to the Lord to show mercy to him and help him because of his terrible sickness, which the physicians of his day were unable to cure.

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**30:11-12** - *“Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. To the end that my glory [or my soul] may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.”*

Then comes this triumphant ode of deliverance by David. This has been put to music in our days by a beloved brother from New Zealand. The circumstances were very poignant. He returned grief-stricken and brokenhearted from his dear wife’s deathbed to his home and family of six young children.

As he paced his living room floor, the Spirit of God fell upon him and he started to sing the last two verses of this psalm, dancing under the anointing. Yes, God can and does turn our mourning into dancing. He can fill our mouths with singing where only deep sighs and laments had been issuing forth. He is the God of restoration, recovery, and joy.

These verses have also become my own personal testimony. At the time of the funeral of my own beloved wife, the power of God came upon me several hours after we had laid her to rest. I saw in the Spirit all my mourning clothes fall off me, and such joy and gladness encompassed me.

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I have danced ever since, filled with His joy that passes all understanding. My grief He has surely changed to gladness. Whatever circumstances of grief or sadness you may be experiencing, dear ones, the Lord certainly can do the same for you. If He did it for me, He will most assuredly do it for you. Be encouraged in the Lord today!

# *PSALM 31*

Psalm 31 was written by David during the long period of his deep repentance and remorse that followed his sin with Bathsheba. It would also be appropriate to place it after the rebellion of Absalom. It was a time when very few supported David, since the name of God was openly blasphemed because of David's sin.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

**31:1** - *"In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness."* David's sole hope in such circumstances was the Lord in whom he had put his trust. When we consider the enormity of his sin, it gives us great hope and assurance that God is a God of

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mercy and forgiveness. We can go to Him with the confidence that He will accept us when we fail at times.

**31:2** - *“Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.”* With vastly superior forces coming against him, David turns to God alone in such perilous times. He also appeals to the righteousness of God against his enemies. God had pardoned David; therefore, David was justified in His sight.

**31:3** - *“For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name’s sake lead me, and guide me.”* Often in the Psalms the Lord is referred to as a “rock of defense.” The reason is that David, a warrior king, would use rocks as protection against the oncoming enemy because rocks formed a natural fortress of defense. He also appeals to the Lord for His guidance and His strategy against his foes.

**31:4** - *“Pull me out of the net that they have laid [secretly] for me: for thou art my strength.”* Our enemies, as well as David's enemies, are as cunning as the serpent whom they serve. Therefore, we need to be as wise as serpents, but as harmless as doves (Mt. 10:16). Yet, even with all this precaution, like David, we are sometimes caught in the net or devices that the wicked have laid for

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us. We are often no match for the superior numbers and might of our enemies. God alone is our saving strength.

**31:5** - *“Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.”* As we have previously stated, the Psalms are Messianic in nature. Here we have a direct quotation of Christ while He was upon the cross (Lk. 23:46). As we wholeheartedly rely upon the God of truth, as David and Christ did, He will defeat the liars and gainsayers who seek to ensnare us.

**31:6** - *“I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.”* Lying vanities are idols and false gods, David’s enemies were so often the Philistines who worshipped pagan gods. The Philistines, who are the modern day Palestinians have been throughout history the mortal enemies of God’s people. A true believer puts his trust in the God of Israel, the only true and living God who made heaven and earth.

**31:7** - *“I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities.”* In times of difficulty in our own lives, the Lord has so very often encouraged

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and even commanded us to rejoice. The spiritual exercise and attitude of rejoicing lifts us out of the doldrums of despair and causes our soul to soar into the heavenlies.

**31:8** - *“And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.”* It is God who alone disposes. It is so very wonderful when He elects not to give us into the hand of our enemies, but rather to deliver us by His own strong right arm. He also sets us in a large place where we are no longer confined by the straits into which our enemy seeks to restrain our God-given and God-appointed ministries. The Lord therein causes us to break forth on the right hand and on the left (Isa. 54:3).

**31:9-10** - *“Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly. For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.”* As evidenced in this psalm and in others written concerning this period of David's life, God had allowed affliction to produce within David a complete acknowledgment, confession, and repentance for his sin (see Psa. 38:18). Certainly, there

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were years of judgment meted out to David by God because of his sin. His heart pined within him and his whole being suffered debilitating sickness during these years.

**31:11** - *“I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.”* During these years of chastisement, which lasted no less than three or four years, David not only suffered physically and mentally, but he was also constantly reproached by his enemies. This reproach nearly broke his heart, as in the case of Christ Himself (see Psa. 69:20). We all, I am sure, have experienced the tremendous pressure that is exerted upon our heart when people are attacking us. Our enemies become conduits for evil spirits, which can affect us physically as well as spiritually. Not only his enemies, but also those who were his personal friends fled from David wherever he appeared. There was no one to comfort him.

**31:12** - *“I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.”* David, the king of Israel, instead of being the delightful subject of conversation by the faithful, was in actuality forgotten like one who was already dead.



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**31:13** - *“For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.”* Those who spoke against King David were seeking to destroy him and cause his untimely death, as the Pharisees later did with Christ. However, while this was the will of God for Christ, it was not the Lord’s will for David.

**31:14-15** - *“But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.”* In the final assessment, it is God who gives us length of days. It is He who gives us over to death or preserves our soul according to His awesome sovereignty. Therefore, let us serve Him with reverential fear.

**31:16** - *“Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies’ sake.”* David had been preserved by the grace of God; however, this by itself is not sufficient, for we want to be restored to His grace and favor.

**31:17** - *“Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.”* Although David had sinned grievously, in the final analysis he was a godly person who was truly repentant for his sin. However, this was not, and is not, the case of

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the wicked who love their sin and reject God's righteous ways. On this premise, David cries out that he might be justified while the wicked will be silent in the grave.

**31:18** - *“Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.”* The wicked not only practice sin openly, but they try to undermine those who seek to walk uprightly. Lies are a way of life to them, and therefore they will be cast into the Lake of fire (Rev. 21:8, 22:15).

**31:19** - *“Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!”* Those who fear the Lord and trust Him have a great inheritance—His goodness. However, the wicked and all liars will go into eternal judgment. Those who are truly repentant as was David and are walking again in the paths of righteousness shall know the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

**31:20** - *“Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.”* One aspect of the goodness of the Lord is that

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He hides us in such a way that the tongues of the wicked cannot afflict us. At times we are even ignorant and oblivious to what the wicked are saying about us. This is truly a place of rest and bliss.

**31:21** - *“Blessed be the LORD: for he hath showed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city.”* This strong city, where David experienced God’s deliverance from Absalom, was undoubtedly Mahanaim (2 Sam. 17:27). Here he was comforted and made secure by his friends who visited him and provided for his needs. It is so wonderful to be the beneficiary of God’s goodness, even when we are wanderers in a foreign land, as in the case of David.

**31:22** - *“For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.”* David was human and prone to think in times of darkness, as we do, that he had been abandoned by the Lord. However, David freely acknowledges the goodness of the Lord that had delivered him so magnificently.

**31:23-24** - *“O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.”* This Psalm of David’s personal testimony of God’s goodness to him in his time of need

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ends with an exhortation to the faithful. We are to be of good courage, for what God did for David He will surely do for us. Praise the Lord!

# *PSALM 32*

This is one of the most blessed of all Psalms, because it is a teaching psalm concerning God's forgiveness of sin. It is quoted by Paul in Romans 4:6-8 as part of his argument that salvation is by faith and faith alone. Certainly, King David did nothing to merit God's forgiveness, which was showered upon him solely because of God's mercy. Psalm 32 was written after David's sin with Bathsheba and his consequent repentance.

Psalm 32 is a teaching psalm, the second of the "seven penitential Psalms," and the favorite psalm of Saint Augustine. Here David seems to be doing what he promised to do in Psalm 51:13, where he

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states that he will teach transgressors God's ways of repentance, and as a result, sinners shall be converted unto the Lord. This is something that is very dear to the heart of God. For this very reason, Christ was sent to save helpless sinners who are bound by the shackles of sin's dark power. This psalm shows us the way back to God.

### ***A Psalm of David, Maschil***

**32:1-2** - *“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”* In these first two verses David gives his personal testimony of the blessedness and joy that we experience when we know our sins have been forgiven. Then he shows us the path by which he came to realize this joy and assurance after he had sinned with Bathsheba.

**32:3-4** - *“When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.”* Here is a fact that we have already mentioned, that the Lord afflicted David to produce an acknowledgment of his sin. Remember, he had sought to cover his adultery with Bathsheba by having her husband Uriah

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the Hittite murdered (2 Sam. 11). Therefore, his tongue had to be loosened so that, as in the words of verse 5 and Psalm 51:3, he would openly acknowledge his sin which he had sought to cover at the price of the death of another.

No doubt alluding to Uriah and himself, it is interesting that David teaches his son Solomon in Proverbs 16:32 that “he that rules his spirit is better than he that takes a city.” This speaks of the fact that Uriah had control over his passions in not going into Bathsheba when the army of Israel was in the field camping against Rabbah Ammon. However, David had not controlled his passions and he committed adultery with Uriah’s wife. Yet, David took the city of Rabbah and was crowned with the crown of the king of Ammon (2 Sam. 12:26-31).

**32:5** - *“I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”* Here is the first step to being blessed. We must freely acknowledge and make full confession of our sin to the Lord. Then we will receive forgiveness of our sin according to His mercy, as it says in First John 1:9: “If we

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confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

**32:6** - *“For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.”* There is a note of caution in this verse. God limits a day! Psalm 95:8-11 alludes to the fact that God limited a day when the children of Israel could go into the Promised Land at Kadesh-barnea. Because they did not go in at the appointed time, He turned them back into the wilderness for another thirty-eight years. Paul quotes this in Hebrews 4:7. They tried the very next day to take Canaan, but God would not allow them to.

So many people say, “Tomorrow I will meet with the Lord and obey Him.” The sad thing, though, is that many times tomorrow is too late! The Apostle Paul quotes Isaiah 49:8 in Second Corinthians 6:2: “For [Isaiah] saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” When we experience the



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Lord's salvation, we will be protected from trouble when it comes like floods to sweep away the ungodly.

**32:7** - *"Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah."* In times of judgment, God is our hiding place; while the wicked are in terror we sing the songs of Zion.

**32:8** - *"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."* Another blessing of the redeemed is that we do not walk as others who stumble through life, not knowing where they are going. Rather, as the Lord Himself stated in John 16:13, we have the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth and show us things to come. (See also John 14:26.) God will show us the path of life and the way He has foreordained for us before the foundation of the world.

**32:9** - *"Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you"* (NKJV). We must not harden our hearts or be rebellious. We should seek to have a soft heart that can be turned in whichever direction

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the Lord desires to lead us. Let us never be stubborn as the mule that has to be beaten to get its attention and to obey.

**32:10** - *“Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.”* The wicked and the backsliders will be filled with their own ways, which end in disaster and sorrow. Many times they get the desires of their heart, but God sends leanness into their souls (Psa. 106:15). Sorrow after sorrow follows them. However, as Psalm 23:6 states, goodness and mercy shall follow the righteous all the days of their lives.

**32:11** - *“Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.”* This is the portion and continual state of the redeemed and the restored. To have the assurance that our sins are forgiven brings gladness, rejoicing, and shouting for joy. This blessed state is available to everyone. “Whosoever will may come,” said Jesus. Beloved, go to the Lord in whatsoever state you are and receive His full salvation for body, soul, and spirit. Receive His restoration and forgiveness. Blessed be the Lord our Savior and Redeemer!

# *PSALM 33*

This is one of the few Psalms in this section (Psalms 1-50) which does not have a title. As some theologians have conjectured, the reason for this is possibly so that it does not diminish the greatness, splendor, and majesty of God. This psalm directs our praise and worship toward the Person of our Almighty Creator, and therefore it is thought that a title might distract from the eulogy of God Himself. Therefore, we have no means of identifying the author.

**33:1** - *“Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.”* A rejoicing spirit is a refreshing attitude that quickens our whole being. Yet it is an exercise in which only the upright can

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be partakers. It is very unseemly for those who are not living in harmony with the precepts of God to presume to praise their Creator. Their praise cannot be acceptable in His sight, and is hypocritical, because they are giving the appearance of being righteous while, in reality, they are of the congregation of the sinful.

**33:2** - *“Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.”*

The instruments of worship and praise in King David’s day were predominately stringed instruments led by the psaltery and harp. The mention of the instruments of ten strings gives credence to the thought that those who worship and praise the Lord should be living in accordance with the ten commandments, as well as using their fingers to pluck the strings of the musician’s tools.

**33:3** - *“Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.”* Alas, many when worshipping the Lord do not give room to the Beloved Holy Spirit to bring forth new songs of praise from their lips, and instead are content to remain in the hymnals of yesteryears. Also, the command to play skilfully is an exhortation to excel in our craft of melody, paying diligent heed to the way in which we play upon our instruments.

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Even as the teacher is told by Paul to wait upon his teaching (Rom. 12:7), so the church choir members and musicians should spend time each week perfecting their skills so that they play in a manner that brings ever increasing honor to the Lord.

**33:4** - *“For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.”* While composing this commentary on the Psalms, I have been engaged in journeying through the beloved land of India. Moving from one hotel room to another as we have passed through city after city holding pastor’s seminars, we have been kept informed of the news through the newspapers which the hotels provide.

In the Sunday Times today I read a quotation from Fay Weldon’s book “Sacred Cows” in which she concluded: “You can build a decent society around the Bible ... but the Koran? No!” Certainly, it is a fact that the Word of God helps shape and mold every facet of our lives as it framed the worlds. All of God’s works manifest His truth as Solomon declared. God taught Solomon lessons from the hyssop plant, the beasts, the fowls, and the fishes (1 Kgs. 4:32-34).

**33:5** - *“He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.”* All the ordinances of the Lord (natural, moral, and spiritual) are right and true. Everything He does is perfect

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and just. As it was in the beginning of creation, God saw that everything He had created was good (Gen. 1:31).

**33:6** - *“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”* The Lord spoke into existence the whole of His creation. Genesis chapter 1 declares that He spoke and it was so.

**33:7** - *“He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.”* One of the marvels of creation is surely the seas and how they keep their God-appointed boundaries. Job 38:11 records how the Lord said to the waters, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.”

**33:8** - *“Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.”* Surely, if mankind would think about the wonders of the creation around him, his mind and heart would overflow with astonishment at the wisdom, knowledge, understanding and power of Almighty God. As a result, he would serve this wonderful Lord to whom we all must give an account for the deeds done in this life.

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**33:9** - *“For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”* The act of creation is greatly contested by liberal minded scientists and philosophers. It is only understood by God’s people through faith, which is by the grace of God (Heb. 11:3). His spoken word is creative, and brought all things into existence, including mankind. Therefore, we should serve Him with reverential fear, for our times are in His hand.

**33:10-11** - *“The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.”* Because of His wisdom, the Lord reigns over the heathen. He brings their purposes to nothing so that what He has already decreed and predetermined for His chosen ones throughout all generations shall come to pass and be established.

**33:12** - *“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”* What a profound privilege it is for Israel and for us, who form a part of that holy nation (1 Pet. 2:9), to have the Lord as our God. We did not choose Him but He chose us (Jn. 15:16).

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**33:13-15** - *“The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.”* The Lord who humbles Himself to regard man, sees all of us. There is nowhere that we can go that His all vigilant eyes do not watch over us, more surely than a mother who cares for her child. He makes our hearts alike. It cannot mean that we are all equal or all equally endowed, for that obviously is not true. We are all individually known of Him and all our works are recorded in the heavenly registers.

**33:16-17** - *“There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.”* At the battle of Arbela, the Persian army under Darius III numbered over 500,000 men, but they were vanquished by Alexander the Great who had only 40,000 men.

Why? As God had shown in Daniel chapter 8 about two hundred years before, the he goat (Greece) would destroy the ram (Persia), because it was in the pre-determinate counsel of God. Thus, in all the



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affairs of man, it is God who rules. We cannot save ourselves, even in battle, for salvation is of the Lord. Therefore, we should not lean on our natural abilities or strength.

**33:18-19** - *“Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.”* The Lord cares for all of His creation, making His sun to shine upon the thankful and unthankful alike (see Mt. 5:45). However, He especially watches over the needs of those who serve Him day and night with reverential fear and those who continually hope in His mercy in whatsoever circumstance they find themselves.

Over the years, during the many sufferings my wife and I endured together, we constantly hoped in the Lord’s mercy. And may I say, He never failed us. The Lord delivered us in times when we had little or no food, and He kept my wife from the door of death for several years, when the doctors had given up all hope. They even placed their hands upon my shoulders and said to let her go. But until the day when He chose to take her unto Himself, the Lord had told me to hold on. Praise His matchless Name!

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**33:20** - *“Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.”* Truly with great anticipation and faith our souls have waited upon Him, and He in His appointed time has answered. Praise the Lord!

**33:21** - *“For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.”* Therefore, with joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation and in that day say, “Praise the Lord” as dear Isaiah says in Isaiah 12:1-4.

**33:22** - *“Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.”* The psalmist concludes with this prayer that the Lord’s mercy will be upon us in the measure and to the degree that we hope in the Lord. Therefore, let us hope in Him continually, beloved, that we may receive an ever-increasing flow of His mercy into our lives. The saint of God is begotten unto a living hope—one that will never fade away but burns more brightly unto that perfect day.

# *PSALM 34*

According to the superscription, this Psalm was written when David feigned himself mad before Achish, king of Gath, as recorded in First Samuel 21:14: “Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man [David] is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?” David purposely did this in order to escape from the accusations of the king’s servants who feared that David would slay the Philistines.

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*A Psalm of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech; Who drove him away, and he departed*  
**34:1** - *“I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.”* There is sometimes concern that David acted improperly in feigning madness to escape arrest and possible execution by Achish, king of Gath. However, if we carefully examine Holy Scriptures we find that even the prophet Samuel was fearful of Saul when he was going to anoint David. He was divinely instructed to say that the Lord had told him to take an heifer to sacrifice unto the Lord (1 Sam. 16:2-3). The point is mute, but suffice to say that this beautiful Spirit-inspired psalm was birthed after David experienced deliverance from Gath.

David opens this Psalm with a declaration that he will bless the Lord at all times and His praise will continually be in his mouth. This is a most wonderful spiritual exercise and attitude of the pious in heart. It is one of the keys to a life of constant victory, which we should seek to emulate.

**34:2** - *“My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.”* When the Lord has most graciously delivered us from our enemy’s clutches or from a circumstance that was too great for us, we then laud Him at every occasion. All those who are true followers of the Lamb

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rejoice greatly at His graciousness to us. Therefore, David encourages everyone to join with him in glorifying the Lord when he says:

**34:3** - *“O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.”* I believe that this is one of the reasons for giving testimonies—that others may see how wonderful the Lord is and unite with us in praising Him for His goodness to those in the land of the living.

**34:4** - *“I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”* In view of this verse, it would be correct to suggest that the Lord had shown David how to avoid arrest by Achish, king of Gath.

**34:5** - *“They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.”* David apparently was not alone when he was in the land of Gath; both he and his companions turned to the Lord in their distress until the Lord gave them the key to their predicament. The pain of their situation must have shown upon their faces. The Lord has so often quickened this verse to us when we have been in one dilemma after another. Surely, He has proven Himself faithful to us on every occasion as we know He will do for you as you also look to Him to meet your need.

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**34:6** - *“This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.”*

Although this is obviously David speaking, describing his pitiful condition in the court of Achish, yet it speaks prophetically of Christ who is described in other Psalms in this manner. (Please see Psalm 69:26-29, 109:16.) This is the place that the Lord often brings us to—a helpless situation where we are so weakened either physically, economically, or spiritually that we are incapable of helping ourselves. It was at such times in his life that David found comfort from the Lord in all of his troubles, for they were many.

As everyone who has been in a place of leadership can testify, there are times when troubles like a flood of water seem to burst out from every conceivable place. Yet very often we have felt like David, and crying to the Lord have experienced complete salvation from all those onrushes of the enemy.

**34:7** - *“The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”* In the midst of these torrid attacks, that at times feel like every evil fiend of hell is taking a part in, there comes the reassurance of the presence of the angel of the Lord. He envelops us with his mantle,

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wards off those pernicious attackers, and causes them to flee back to the pit from whence they have come.

**34:8** - *“O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”* According to our suffering, so also is our consolation, even as Paul writes to the Grecian believers (2 Cor.1:5). After our trials, we are privileged to taste of the sweetness of the Lord's presence. At such a time all of our sufferings are, as Paul says in Romans 8:18, not worthy to be compared to His glory which we experience in our inner man. And this all comes to those who put their complete and loving trust in the Lord.

**34:9** - *“O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.”* Here again is a precious promise concerning the Lord's provision for His elect. He may lead us through trials, yet we have never been completely destitute. Many times my wife and I have been without food and shelter, but it was not until we had reached our extremity that deliverance came.

**34:10** - *“The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.”* This verse has succoured us in our times of testing and distress. Companion verses to

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this are found in Matthew 6:24-34, where we are clearly shown that our Heavenly Father perfectly understands our needs. The Lord reasons that if He looks after the welfare of young lions and even clothes the grass of the field, He will surely provide for His people.

**34:11-14** - *“Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.”* These four verses are devoted to teaching us one of the most important spiritual truths we can possibly learn in this life and in eternity. It is concerning the fear of the Lord.

“The fear of the Lord” is a phrase that occurs about thirty times in Scripture. It is often the condition for the Lord’s blessing upon an individual’s life. The fear of the Lord is an anointing, and it is one of the seven Spirits of the Lord (Isa. 11:2).

In Proverbs 8:13 we are told that “the fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, as well as the froward mouth.” The Psalmist, who declares that he is going to teach us how to obtain the fear of the Lord, shows us in verse 13 how we do indeed obtain the fear of the Lord—by



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not offending in word and speaking only the truth (see Jas. 3:2). The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil and practice goodness in the land of the living (Psa. 34:14). We are to seek peace, even as Hebrews 12:14 declares that we should follow peace with all men. This is to be one of our prime pursuits in life.

**34:15** - *“The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.”* This verse reminds us of Second Chronicles 16:9, where we are told that “the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose hearts are perfect toward Him.” However, the Lord is against all those who do evil, as verse 16 tells us.

**34:16** - *“The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.”* The memory of the just is blessed and they leave a testimony that lasts for generations and even centuries (Prov.10:7), but the Lord cuts off the remembrance of the wicked. They are forgotten after they die, while the righteous are remembered and held in high esteem.

**34:17** - *“The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.”* Again and again we have the repeated promise that the Lord will deliver us out of all our troubles, if

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we walk uprightly and in the light. All the promises in the Word of God are to those who walk uprightly and obey the Lord's commandments. There are no promises to the half-hearted Christians like Saul who only *partially* obey the Word of God with the exception perhaps of the promise in Revelation 3:16 that the Lord will spew them out of His mouth! Oh, let us walk uprightly and put our trust in the Lord at all times, and we will see His hand mightily outstretched to bring deliverance.

**34:18** - *"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."* Now we are given a further qualification to see the Lord move on our behalf. It is also enunciated by David later in his life after his sin with Bathsheba in Psalm 51:17, where he declares, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

It is, after all, our heart attitude that determines our access to our Heavenly Father and His approval or disapproval of us. Humility, brokenness, and meekness are the qualities and virtues that are well pleasing to the Lord, and they are the qualities that will cause the Lord to draw nigh unto us and set his affection upon us (see Song. 7:10).

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The Lord is very close to those who are humble and broken, but the proud and self-willed He knows afar off (Psa.138:6). Pride repels the Lord, but humility attracts Him and draws Him near to us. Humility is one of the qualities that attracted King Ahasuerus to Esther, and resulted in her promotion.

**34:19** - *“Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.”* Here again is the often-repeated promise by the Lord to deliver the righteous from his many trials. We must never fall into the error of thinking that if we walk uprightly before the Lord we will not have trials. Let us remember the saint Job, who is one of the three most righteous men in the whole history of mankind (Ezek. 14:14), and consider all of his manifold trials and afflictions. However, he was eventually delivered by the Lord (Jas. 5:11).

**34:20** - *“He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.”* This is one of the prophecies that was fulfilled by the Lord upon the cross (Jn.19:36). The Father orchestrated everything so that not even one of His Son’s bones would be broken, as were the bones of the other two who were crucified beside Him.

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The reason is that He was the Passover Lamb. A lamb who is rebellious and keeps straying has a leg broken by the shepherd so that forever after he will remain close to the shepherd. Obviously, this is, in type, proof of the fact that Jesus was the obedient Servant of God (cf. Phil. 2:8). He was not rebellious or self-willed in any way. His heart's cry was always—"I delight to do Thy will, O God."

**34:21** - *"Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate."* Throughout Holy Scripture we find that the evil are quite often destroyed by those who are evil. Saul, for example, was destroyed by those whom he was commanded to destroy—the Amalekites (see 1 Sam. 15:3; 2 Sam. 1:6-10). He is the one who hated righteous David.

Those who hate the righteous are desolate and never bear fruit, because they are full of hatred and jealousy. However, as the next verse states, those who are upright and put their trust in the Lord will not be desolate, but fruitful.

**34:22** - *"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate."* Thus the Psalm that was written as an expression of David's gratefulness for the Lord's

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deliverance terminates with a reaffirmation of this truth that the Lord delivers all those who put their trust in Him. And as it was for David, so the Lord desires that it will be our testimony as well. Amen!

# *PSALM 35*

The internal evidence of the Psalm itself suggests that it was composed during that heart-breaking time in David's life when he was being pursued by Saul in the wilderness of Judea. There is a remarkable parallelism that flows through this Psalm of complaint, prayer, and praise. This is repeated three times, dividing the Psalm into three divisions:

Part 1 - v. 1-10; Part 2 - v. 11-18; Part 3 - v. 19-28.

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### ***A Psalm of David***

#### **Part 1 - 35:1-10**

**35:1** - *“Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.”* We must not forget that on Saul’s side was a large segment of the nation, as well as the whole army of Israel. In addition, there were those who sided with Saul because they wanted to destroy David. Thus we can see that David had many adversaries.

**35:2-3** - *“Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.”* David implores the Lord, in the language of his time, to fight against his enemies with the weapons of his day. Then he asks God to speak a word of encouragement to his heart.

**35:4-6** - *“Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt. Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them. Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.”* David does not mince his words when pleading with God to destroy his enemies through the

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agency of the Angel of the Lord. On several occasions we have known of God's intervention through angels, sometimes being visibly seen fighting with swords drawn.

It is important for us to realize that as God's children, even from the womb there are angels designated to watch over us. We refer to the Lord's own words in Matthew 18:10: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (See also Hebrews 1:14.)

I remember some of our friends in Switzerland who lived in an apartment on the fourth floor. The mother had left their two year old boy playing on an open balcony. Since the balcony wall was certainly too high for him to see over, she felt he was perfectly safe. She was in another room when she distinctly heard a voice saying, "Go quickly to the little fellow." She did so just in time to see that he had placed a box by the balcony, had climbed on to it, and was hanging precariously over the edge of the wall. She grabbed him just in time. Thank God for angels who keep a watchful eye on our little boys. Angels of girls that age don't seem to have to work so hard!



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**35:7-8** - *“For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul. Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.”* There was no justification for their actions. David pleads that the very plot which they had schemed for him will reverse and be their portion. We have seen often that those who have sought to do us evil have indeed suffered that very same fate themselves; and whatever they have accused us of has come upon them.

**35:9-10** - *“And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation. All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?”* Now this section ends with rejoicing for the Lord’s salvation because He has delivered the poor man from those who were too strong for him. It is so very true that the poor are blessed (Mt. 5:3), for the whole of heaven works upon their behalf when they are in right relationship with the Lord.

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### *Part 2 - 35:11-18*

**35:11** - *“False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.”* False witnesses are the heartache of the righteous throughout all generations. David and the Lord both experienced those who lied about them and accused them of things of which they were innocent (cf. Mt. 26:60). We can expect no less from the wicked in our lifetime.

**35:12** - *“They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.”* As strange as it may seem—so often it is those whom we have helped and have been good to who are responsible for these unfair accusations.

**35:13** - *“But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.”* They are also those for whom we have prayed when they were sick.

**35:14** - *“I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.”* Perhaps our accusers are even those who have been our closest friends.

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**35:15** - *“But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects [or attackers] gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not.”* In our times of need, the true disposition of people’s hearts are revealed. We personally have experienced betrayal several times and it is a very painful disclosure. However, the Lord gives grace in abundance so that Psalms such as this one give us solace, comfort, and strength, enabling us to praise Him and triumph in what could otherwise become a very bitter valley.

**35:16** - *“With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.”* They are hypocritical, for in the Sunday services or times of conference they pray, worship, and even preach the Word with ability and perhaps an anointing. Yet, in private they criticize and plot against us.

**35:17** - *“Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my [dear and only life] from the lions.”* We often cry out, “Lord, how long can You tolerate such base deception?” However, the Lord continues to speak soothingly to us and assures us that these people and circumstances are working out His plans and that ultimately He will not allow them to triumph over us.

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**35:18** - *“I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.”* The Lord causes us to praise Him before many people during and after the trial.

### **Part 3 - 35:19-28**

**35:19** - *“Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.”* Even during this time we see that there are ebbs and flows of the enemy’s attacks and like David we are forced to our knees again and again. This is at least one of the reasons I believe that this Psalm is essentially divided into three parts. Only too well have we seen the conspirators wink at one another with devilish glee anticipating their final act that they think will net them their anticipated victory over us.

**35:20** - *“For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.”* One of the remarkable facts concerning those that practice evil is that they can never be at rest; nor can they leave those who are at peace alone. Truly, as Isaiah states, “There is no rest (or peace) to the wicked” (Isa. 57:21).

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**35:21-23** - *“Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it. This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O LORD, be not far from me. Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.”* They find fault and make an issue out of the slightest mistake or word (cf. Lk. 11:53-45). Therefore, in the greatest anguish of spirit David pleads with God to stir Himself up to action on his behalf.

**35:24-26** - *“Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me. Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up. Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.”* In times like this we, too, cry to the Lord to vindicate us, because we have walked to the best of our ability in righteousness.

God will not permit our enemies to have the final word in our situation. We should pray: “Lord, do not let our enemies triumph over us or engulf us, for they are more numerous than us. Rather, Lord, bring them to shame and dishonor.” We have seen this take place on a number of occasions. It appears at

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one moment that our enemies are going to triumph; everything appears to be in their favor. Yet, almost at the last moment, we have seen the Lord turn events around and they have been overwhelmed and consumed in shame (cf. Job 20:4-5).

**35:27** - *“Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.”* The ultimate desire of the Lord toward his servants is that they should prosper. And He does indeed bring us out into a large place, where we forget the sorrow of yesterday’s battles and rejoice in His great goodness unto us.

**35:28** - *“And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.”* At the time when the Lord turns our captivity, all those who have been praying for us and are truly with us and seek our good will rejoice with great rejoicing too. There is great rejoicing in the camp of the righteous, as there was in the camp of David when the Lord caused him to triumph over the house of Saul. When our captivity is turned, then all who have prayed for us will have a testimony too. They can declare that there is a God who judges righteously and causes us to prosper. Praise the Lord!

# *PSALM 36*

This Psalm was written toward the end of King David's life when he was experiencing continual mini-rebellions because of his sin with Bathsheba—according to the word of the Lord to him through the prophet Nathan in Second Samuel 12:10. The Lord said in that verse that the sword would never depart from his house. This Psalm is an ode expressing the joy of those who are faithful in the Lord's service despite the conflicts occasioned by the wicked.

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The Psalm can be divided into four basic sections.

- 1.) The rebellious analyzed (36:1-4)
- 2.) The ways and attributes of the Lord exalted (36:5-9)
- 3.) David's prayer to the Lord (36:10-11)
- 4.) The ultimate destruction of the wicked (36:12)

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD*

### **Part 1 - The Rebellious Analyzed (36:1-4)**

**36:1** - *“The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.”* The rebellious are daring in sin, casting off all restraints because they do not fear God. Their actions prove that they do not fear him, and the terrors of hell will therefore be their eternal reward.

**36:2** - *“For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.”* The wicked flatter themselves, deceiving themselves into thinking that they are all right as they are. As a result, they do not address the sin in their hearts so that it is exposed and appears abominable.



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**36:3** - *“The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.”*

There is such hypocrisy in their mouths that lying is a way of life to them. In this account it appears that David is speaking of someone who has known the way of salvation and yet has departed willingly from the paths of life and righteousness.

It is so tragic that there will be many in hell who once had their feet firmly planted upon the solid rock—Christ. Oh, may we heed these warnings and seek to major on the seven pillars of wisdom (Prov. 9:1 and Jas. 3:17-18). Let us provoke each other to good works (Heb. 10:24).

**36:4** - *“He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.”* The wicked plot and plan during the night hours how they can do more wickedness. One Bible scholar has suggested that there are six different beds of wickedness—the bed of luxury, avarice, ambition, greediness, slothfulness, and cruelty. To this I add the bed of sensuality and the bed of the plotting of the destruction of the righteous. Thus, as a man thinks in his heart, so is he (Prov. 23:7). The wicked planner sets himself in concrete in the ways of wickedness. He has an ever-increasing and ever-lasting love for evil.

**Part 2 - The Ways and Attributes of The Lord Exalted (36:5-9)**

**36:5-6** - *“Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.”* David lauds the Lord’s:

- 1.) Mercy (v. 5a)
- 2.) Faithfulness (v. 5b)
- 3.) Righteousness (v. 6a)
- 4.) Judgments (v. 6b)
- 5.) Lovingkindness (v. 7)

**36:7-8** - *“How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.”* Because of these beautiful attributes of the Lord, the sons of men may fully trust in the Lord, and they will be abundantly satisfied with His goodness.

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**36:9** - *“For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.”* The Lord is the Fountain of Living Waters (Jer. 2:13). He is our source of life, spiritually and naturally. Also in this verse, we have a truth that is repeated through Holy Scriptures. As we walk in a certain path of truth and continue to walk in it, more of that virtue and truth will be given unto us. The Lord said in Matthew 25:29, “For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.” The Lord gives wisdom to the wise (Dan. 2:21). Therefore, it is as we walk in the light we have, that we will receive more light and more truth (1 Jn. 1:7; 2 Pet. 1:12).

### ***Part 3 - David’s Prayer To The Lord (36:10-11)***

**36:10-11** - *“O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart. Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.”* Here David cries out to the Lord (as also we should) to continue to show forth His lovingkindness and righteousness and not to permit the proud and the wicked to gain the ascendancy over him. We have noticed over the years that these are two of the motivating forces that come

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against the righteous. Those who are driven by pride try to exalt themselves over us, and those who are just plain evil, through jealousy try to overthrow us.

### ***Part 4 - The Ultimate Destruction of the Wicked (36:12)***

**36:12** - *“There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.”*

This theme is repeated time and time again in the Word of God. The end of the matter for the wicked is that they will be cast down, never to rise again. This brings comfort and yet sorrow to the righteous. It brings comfort because the Lord will indeed cause us to triumph over our adversaries, and yet we are sorrowful because we realize that they will be eternally doomed.

# *PSALM 37*

By the very confession of David himself, this Psalm was written in his old age (see verse 25). It is written in the style of the book of Proverbs. The primary theme is the seeming prosperity of the wicked in contrast to the affliction of the righteous. This fact has perplexed so many throughout all generations, and David seeks to address the matter here. He tries to reconcile God's actions to our understanding of Biblical doctrines, which, quite frankly, state, "Do good and thou shalt be blessed in the land of the living, whereas if you do wickedly you shall not prosper and you will not have any rest." We shall attempt in this short exegesis to clarify these contradictory situations.

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### *A Psalm of David*

**37:1-4** - *“Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”* In these first four verses David warns against becoming upset when the wicked are apparently prospering; for he says that their prosperity is not for long and they shall soon fade away and be cut down like grass.

The righteous should not be moved by these things, even as Job admonished his friends in Job 21:7-9, saying: “Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.” Yet, he adds that in the end: “How often is the candle of the wicked put out! and how often cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away. God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it” (Job 21:17-19).

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This thought will be developed also by David later in this Psalm. The righteous must never give in to temptation, thinking that they should do as the wicked. Instead, the righteous should trust in the Lord and then they will inherit the promises, knowing in the end they will obtain all that God has promised to them. For the Old Testament saints, that essentially meant that they would remain in the Land of Promise and all their needs would be met. For us, it means that all the Lord has purposed for our lives will be fulfilled. Oh, that we may receive that commendation, “Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Mt. 25:21).

Furthermore, as we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our heart. Another rendering of this verse says that as we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will place His desires in our hearts, and then bring them to pass.

**37:5-6** - *“Commit [or roll off] thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.”* These verses are very similar to Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” The Lord

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will plead our cause. As we trust in Him, the Lord will accomplish all that He has purposed before the foundation of the world for our lives.

We will also know the blessing of Isaiah 58:8: “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy [rear guard].” One of the most difficult things for the saint of God is to rest when the wicked are prospering. That is why we have David’s next exhortation in verse 7.

**37:7-8** - *“Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.”* This particularly applies to those who are in the ministry. It is difficult when we see the congregations of our colleagues, who are compromising on doctrinal and moral issues, continue to grow and be very large, while, as we stand for the truths that are so precious to us, we find that our congregations remain small.

However, when I have visited some of these growing churches, I have noticed that although they may have many people and a healthy budget, yet they lack the one ingredient which for me is the most



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important—the presence of God. For what reason, may I ask, does the Church exist if it is not to house the manifest presence of God? The Lord said in Exodus 25:8 concerning the building of Moses' Tabernacle, “Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”

Many ministers do all sorts of things to get people to attend their church, but there is only one person whose attendance is important—the Lord Jesus Christ. The presence of God is the all-important factor, and every decision we make must be made with that in mind.

**37:9-10** - *“For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.”* It is the end of the matter that counts in life—whether it is a race, an examination, or simply the end of our life. In such matters, in over forty years in the ministry, I have personally seen that those who have been raised to positions of preeminence too quickly have come crashing down and been reduced to shame. On the other hand, those who wait for the promises and for the Lord to raise them up instead of exalting themselves, inherit the earth and all of God's promises to them.

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**37:11** - *“But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”* This verse is quoted by the Lord Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:5. The end of the matter for the meek is that they shall enjoy the wonderful peace of God that passes all understanding. Peace is among the most precious of all God’s gifts; many seek it, and yet so few find it.

**37:12-15** - *“The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.”*

When the wicked attack the righteous, it appears that might and force are on their side and that they are going to overwhelm the poor man. However, although they apparently triumph for a time, even bringing to pass their evil intent, yet the Lord who is in heaven laughs at them. It is absolute futility to think that evil will win. Therefore, let us consider the lessons of history.

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Napoleon, the unstoppable master of Europe, defeated the Russians and took Moscow on September 14, 1812. Yet, he was placed in disgraceful exile on April 11, 1814 on the isle of Elba, less than twenty months later. Alexander the Great and Adolf Hitler also rose to great prominence, yet in remarkably short periods of time they committed suicide.

Now, as so often occurs in the Book of Proverbs (and David was responsible for more than one third of that book), the life of the wicked is contrasted with that of the righteous.

**37:16** - *“A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.”* The fact here is that the wicked seek to amass great treasures during their lifetime, but the treasures bring them no happiness. Also, verse 16 teaches us that we should be satisfied and content with whatever the Lord provides for us, even if it is very little.

**37:17-19** - *“For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous. The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.”* The power of the wicked

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is eventually broken. All the great and wicked rulers of history in due time saw their power and might come to naught.

The book of Revelation declares that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever (Rev. 11:15).

In contrast, the righteous are forever watched over by the Lord. He it is who chooses their inheritance—an abiding portion with Him throughout all eternity. The righteous are fed and nourished by the Lord in times of great affliction and tragedies, for not even famine can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35).

The prophet Elijah was nourished by the Lord when there was famine in the land of Israel (1 Kings 17; 18:2). When famine comes in the last days, if we are willing to walk uprightly we will have this same assurance that the Lord will provide for us and care for our every need (cf. Job 5:19-26).

**37:20** - *“But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”* Here is a very graphic description of the end of

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the wicked. Like smoke they shall pass away, but in actuality they shall be consumed eternally in the lake of everlasting fire.

**37:21** - *“The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth.”*

We should be generous with the substance that the Lord has given to us, but also wise with our resources. In Matthew 5:42 Christ said, “Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.”

**37:22** - *“For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.”* Those who are blessed of the Lord inherit the earth. However, those who are cursed and abhorred of Him because they do not seek to please Him are cut off. The righteous and the wicked are contrasted in this verse.

### **The Righteous**

Show mercy and give

Inherit the earth

### **The Wicked**

Borrow and do not repay

Are cut off

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**37:23** - *“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.”* When we please God and give Him the steering wheel of our life, He only chooses what is best for us. He closes the doors that are not good, and opens the right ones.

**37:24** - *“Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.”* This phrase, “Though the righteous fall,” is very similar to Proverbs 24:16, which says, “For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.” The graciousness of the Lord is here manifested. Even though many of His choicest servants fall into all kinds of temptations and may yield to them in times of weakness, yet He is quick to lift them up again and restore them to fellowship with Him that they may continue on their courses.

**37:25-26** - *“I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.”* Here is the wonderful testimony of David. He says he has never seen the righteous forsaken by God, and his seed is also taken care of by the Lord. They have all they need, spiritually and naturally. I think of so many widows who have spent their lives giving and caring for others. When their husbands died, the Lord raised up

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friends and relatives who in turn lovingly cared for them until they were reunited with their loved ones in heaven.

Surely, all these comparisons between the righteous and the wicked should persuade everyone to forsake the way of the wicked and turn to righteousness. Therefore, David continues by saying in verse 27:

**37:27-28** - *“Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore. For the LORD loveth judgment [or the just], and forsaketh not his saints [or faithful ones]; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.”* This is an exhortation for us to depart from evil, be wise, and follow that which is good; for if we do we will dwell with Him for evermore. The Lord loves the just and does not forsake His saints (those who are holy). However, He cuts off the offspring of the wicked.

**37:29-30** - *“The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever. The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.”* Now we have further qualities of the righteous who will inherit all the promises of God. Their mouth speaks wisdom (Prov. 10:31), and they talk of judgment (Psa. 119:13).

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**37:31** - *“The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.”* The reason they do these things is because the law of the Lord is in their hearts. That is the key to a holy life—allowing the Lord to write His laws upon the fleshly tables of our hearts (Heb. 8:10). The man or woman who has God’s laws in their heart will be the recipient of the glorious promises of Jude 1:24: “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” None of their steps shall slide. The Lord will preserve them from falling and present them faultless before the throne of God. Again there follows the promise to the righteous that the Lord will aid them in their battle with the wicked.

**37:32-33** - *“The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.”* The wicked closely watch the righteous, continually looking for a way to accuse them of wrong doing. They seem to be right there taking note of it when the righteous make the slightest mistake, and immediately spread it abroad. However, God will not condemn us when they judge us; He will cause our verdict to be “not guilty.”



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It is a source of constant comfort for us, when we have periods of being under attack and criticism from the wicked in one form or another, that the Lord will fight for us and not permit the wicked to triumph over us. A verse that flows so well with this is Isaiah 54:17. “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.”

**37:34** - *“Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.”* Again we are admonished to wait for the Lord’s timing to fulfill all His promises to us. David knew what it meant to wait for the Lord. He was anointed to be king by Samuel at about the age of seventeen, but then he was chased by Saul for about thirteen years until he was finally made king of Judah at the age of thirty.

And when he had the opportunity to slay Saul and take the crown that God had promised to him, he refused. He wanted to wait for the Lord to bring His promises to pass. If we will wait, we will see our

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enemy cut off (Psa. 118:7), as David eventually saw Saul cut off. Moreover, we will see the Lord Himself bring us into prominence.

**37:35-36** - *“I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.”* In the end all those who have risen up against us will disappear in one fashion or another.

**37:37** - *“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.”* The end of the perfect man, who seeks to follow the Lord with all His heart is that he receives the Lord’s peace.

**37:38-40** - *“But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.”* Yes, if we walk uprightly the Lord will fight for us and in the end our enemy will be cut off. The Lord will save us out of all our troubles. Praise His holy name!

# *PSALM 38*

This Psalm flows in the series of Psalms that consist of Psalm 6, 38, 51, and 32. They form a chronological sequence, having been written after David's sin with Bathsheba. Saint Augustine called them the *Penitential Psalms*. They should be read in conjunction with Second Samuel 12:1-14. The depth of despair to which the Lord brought David should remind us of the total abhorrence that the Lord has for adultery. (Please see Proverbs 6:29-35).

*A Psalm of David, To bring to remembrance*

**38:1-2** - *“O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.”* Like sharp arrows, the rebukes of the Lord

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exerted tremendous pressure on David. This may be likened to heavy weights which are placed on the diaphragm of a weight lifter to develop his stamina. If increased, they are breath arresting. This is perhaps the best description of the sufferings the Lord was taking David through.

**38:3-7** - *“There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh.”* As this passage is carefully studied, it is clear that the Lord smote David with a physical sickness that was eating away at his flesh.

It could well have been something similar to the effects of cancer. It certainly was not a little fever or a small virus. His whole body—his flesh, intestines, and bones—were being consumed by this deadly disease. David lists his sin with Bathsheba as the reason for this disease.

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**38:8** - *“I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.”* This disease had taken its debilitating course. David was reduced to a state of feebleness and his spirit was truly broken because of this sickness.

**38:9-10** - *“Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.”* The pain that is caused by cancer and certain other diseases causes the afflicted one to groan constantly.

This I know through experience, for my dear wife groaned in the night hours for many years, even while she was sleeping, because of tremendous pain. It was a heartbreaking experience to listen to her cries and groans and yet know that there was nothing that mortal man could do but hope in God’s mercy. Her heart did not beat normally and so she panted and gasped for air constantly.

**38:11-12** - *“My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off. They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.”*

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David's friends and family members all deserted him during this trial. They did not comfort him. The sore upon his flesh was obviously highly visible where the cancer had eaten through his skin. Therefore, it was so odious that no one wanted to come near to him. Furthermore, his enemies sought his life and spoke lies about him, all of which were dutifully reported to him by palace officials, some of whom may have been David's enemies themselves.

**38:13-15** - *“But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.”*

However, it is important for us to see here that David made no response to all these humiliations. He did not permit them to enter into his mind and affect his spirit; nor did he retaliate. David's hope was in the Lord who made heaven and earth. He was hoping in the promises the Lord had made to him, especially the promise God made to him through the prophet Nathan that he would not die (2 Sam.12:13). Therefore, David had great confidence that the Lord would hear him when he called.

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**38:16-17** - *“For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me. For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me.”*

One of David's most often repeated pleas for help from the Lord was that his enemies might not triumph over him. We must remember, though, that these enemies were not just David's enemies, they were also the Lord's enemies. They were wicked men, and therefore with confidence David makes this plea that the Lord would fight for him.

**38:18** - *“For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.”* Now David exudes the marks of true repentance when he states that he will confess his sin. In this case he had to confess his sin publicly because it was known by the whole nation. Another mark of true repentance is what all judges look for—a sorrowful attitude on the part of the guilty. One scholar calls this the twin graces of confession and contrition. In Second Corinthians 7:10 the Apostle Paul writes, “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” (See 2 Corinthians 7:8-11.)

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One case that will illustrate this was of a young minister in another land who had fallen grievously into sin. He came to me brokenhearted by saying he was willing to do whatsoever I told him to do, whether it be to tell his wife, his senior pastor, or stand up before the congregation and resign. I asked him to come back the next day so I could have enough time to seek the Lord and obtain the mind of God on the matter.

When I sought the Lord, He said that his confession to me was all He required. On the next day when I told this young man of the Lord's decision, a holy joy and gratitude toward the Lord just flooded his soul. In other cases, God may have judged differently. For some, He may have required something else.

**38:19-22** - *“But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is. Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.”* In nature weeds grow and propagate more quickly than the good seed. So it is, too, with the wicked who multiply very rapidly when an evil cause is being espoused. Their numbers increase



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greatly when slanders are being hurled at the righteous, who perhaps have fallen from grace. Yet, the cause of these malicious statements is not just, for the righteous have sought and have been granted forgiveness from a merciful God. The real reason for attacking the righteous is hatred of what the righteous stand for, and that is goodness.

Therefore, David concludes this Psalm with a further cry to God that He will hasten to save him. I think one of the most difficult aspects of a trial is not knowing how long the trial will last, unless, of course, God sovereignly chooses to tell us. Actually, not knowing how long a trial will last works out God's redemptive purposes in us; for it ensures that we are seeking God day by day to perfect that which is lacking in our lives. Hopefully, this process will hasten the day of our deliverance.

# *PSALM 39*

This psalm is a companion to Psalm 38. It was given into the hands of Jeduthun, who was one of the three choir masters of David's time, along with Asaph and Heman (1 Chron. 25:6). Jeduthun and Heman apparently were trumpeters par excellence (1 Chron. 16:37-42), and their musical direction brought the true prophetic word of the Lord (1 Chron. 25:1). Jeduthun was also the king's seer (2 Chron. 35:15). This is the first of three Psalms that were given into the hands of Jeduthun, according to the superscription of these Psalms. Psalm 62 and 77 are the other two Psalms given to Jeduthun.

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### ***To the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David***

**39:1-2** - *“I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.”* Here David steadfastly resolves to take heed to his conduct. This is the fruit of the Lord’s rebukes mentioned in Psalm 38:1. Paul also noted what carefulness was wrought in the Corinthian believers after he reprimanded them for permitting gross immorality in their church (2 Cor. 7:11). May we learn *before* we fall into sin rather than *after* a terrible fall that a circumspect lifestyle is pleasing to the Lord and praiseworthy. David was not defending himself here against the crafty schemes of the wicked; he was, in fact, appealing to God.

**39:3-5** - *“My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.”* Then in the heat of his spirit David turns to the Lord so that God might make known to him by revelation the end of his life.

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This, I believe, is very important for each one of us too. We should inquire of the Lord concerning how our life will end, especially when we are going through deep, dark foreboding valleys of despair. When He answers us, it is like a light shining in darkness, and it lifts our soul from despair to hope.

However, to exegete these verses correctly, it appears that David is asking that question in order to appreciate his frailty and the vanity of life. Incidentally, this was developed by his son Solomon in his treatise on that subject in the book of Ecclesiastes.

Many truths and lessons can be learned through the Spirit without having to pass through painful ordeals to learn them by *experience*. If only Solomon had possessed this psalm, and understood it, it could have saved him from amassing all those riches at the cost of over-taxing his people and impoverishing them (and his own spirit as well).

**39:6** - *“Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.”* Many people seek fortunes and incur restless nights. Then they have to leave their riches to people whom they do not know, as Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 2:18-19: “Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should

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leave it unto the man that shall be after me. And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.”

**39:7-10** - *“And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish. I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it. Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.”* In our dealings with the Lord, it is essential to follow the steps listed here in this Psalm.

- 1.) We must cry out to the Lord for deliverance from sins.
- 2.) We must also cry out to the Lord to release us from being reproached by the foolish so that we can speak, rule, and minister with authority.
- 3.) Then we must not fight our own battles and not retaliate when we are falsely accused by our enemies.
- 4.) Lastly, we can appeal to the Lord to remove His arm of correction from us.

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**39:11** - *“When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.”* This reminds us of God’s dealings with Job, for among other things, Job was smitten with boils and his flesh was filled with wrinkles (Job 2:7, 16:8).

**39:12-13** - *“Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.”* Now concluding the psalm, David appeals again to God for mercy so that the Lord will heal him, restore him, and strengthen him before he dies. It is noteworthy that Christ also besought His Father with strong cryings and tears that He might be spared from death (Heb. 5:7). Thus God responds to those whose whole being is consumed with a plea for His mercy out of a spirit of reverential fear for Him.

# *PSALM 40*

Based on its content, this psalm must be placed again after David's sin with Bathsheba. In all probability, because he was awaiting deliverance from a horrible pit, it would appear that it was written soon after Nathan declared him to be that sinful man seen in Second Samuel 12:1-14. This Psalm is remarkable in the sense that even in spite of his sin, David receives very profound dispensational truths from the Lord, as well as truths that pertain to the life of the Lord Jesus Himself. Here we see the grace and mercy of the Lord to the repentant sinner. He forgives and restores him, and then takes him to higher heights in Him.

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### ***To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David***

**40:1** - *“I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.”* These verses are believed to have been written when David had fallen into the pit of adultery and murder through his sin with Bathsheba. Although the pit is not literal, it is likened to many prisons of those times. These prisons consisted of pits having no opening except the hole at the top, which served as both a door and a window. The bottom of these pits were filthy, slimy, and often very muddy. When prisoners such as Jeremiah were lowered into them (Jer. 38:6), there was a very real possibility that they would sink into that miry clay, which was like quicksand, and die.

In reality, if David had not been delivered and forgiven by the Lord, he would have sunk into a similar pit in hell, along with other adulterers. This is a very graphic and true description of hell's miseries, and it should not be dismissed or taken lightly.

The original Hebrew actually reads, “In waiting I waited patiently.” David's patient waiting presents to us an excellent example. Whenever we are in a pit, such as despondency or sickness, we should adopt the same demeanor as David and exude that same sweet spice of holy resignation until God



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speaks. Admittedly, this attitude requires an abundant, continuous flow of God's grace, but is an attainable position for the quiet and meek in spirit. However, let me emphasize that it is not possible by a stoic fortitude, but only by a dependence upon His abundant grace. The cry of triumph follows the period of holy waiting, "He heard me and lifted me up." Oh what a glorious day it is when the Lord comes to us, lifts us up, and opens the prison doors and sets us free.

**40:2** - *"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."* Yet, not only does the Lord bring us out of our prison, He also lifts us up to the same degree that we went down. He establishes us again upon the rock, Jesus Christ (1 Cor.10:4), and puts His ways within our hearts.

**40:3** - *"And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."* A song of victory springs up within our hearts and bursts forth from our lips. We sing an ode of praise to our Divine Deliverer as we see His deliverance in our lives. It is not something that is done in a corner, for the whole congregation will know and see the

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transformation. It will be a testimony to many of God's transforming power, and they in turn will fear God with a holy reverence and put their trust in Him.

**40:4** - *“Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.”* Therefore, David declares as he has so often in previous psalms, “Blessed [or serenely joyful] are all those who put their trust in the Lord and lean upon Him at all times and in all circumstances, not putting their confidence in those who are proud and disdainful of spiritual truths.”

**40:5** - *“Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.”* David continues by extolling the Lord for all His wonderful works. His thoughts and plans are, as Isaiah says, so much higher than ours, even as the heavens are higher than the earth, and the skies higher than the waters (Isa. 55:8-9). They are truly immeasurable and only eternity will reveal how much He has cared for us.

**40:6** - *“Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.”* Now David, forgiven, restored, and established once again in God's

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ways, is given a revelation of God's will for the Son of man. This revelation came through ears that were opened by God to hear His voice in a new way. I had a similar experience many years ago. I had asked the Lord if a certain thing was His will for me, and I received my answer in a church service. It was like a shaft of light that went into my ear and straight to my heart. The Lord said: "No. That is not My will for your life. I have other purposes for you."

David lived in the age of sacrifice and burnt offerings, but God was saying that the sacrifice of animals was not really His purpose, even though He had instituted those laws. Rather, what He desires is a man who delights to do His will from a heart upon which His laws have been written. This is the fulfillment of the new covenant—to have the laws of God written upon the fleshly tables of our heart (Heb. 8:10).

**40:7** - *"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me."* This is obviously speaking of Christ when He came to do the will of His Father, as it was spoken of Him in Scripture. Paul quotes these verses in Hebrews 10:6-9 as referring to Christ.

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**40:8** - *“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”* The Lord spoke to my wife one time and said that there is something greater than doing His will. My wife was amazed, for she could not think of anything that could be greater than doing God’s will. When she asked the Lord what was greater, He spoke to her from this verse and said, *“Delighting to do My will is greater than simply doing My will!”*

**40:9** - *“I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.”* One of the characteristics of a true man of God is that he does not compromise, but like Paul of old he preaches the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). May we take heed to the admonition of Christ in Matthew 5:19: *“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”*

May God grant that we be faithful to preach and do that which is true and upright, and not be among those who are mentioned in Exodus 23:1. To compromise or change God’s Word is to be a false witness.

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**40:10** - *“I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.”* We must not be “closet Christians”—those who are Christians in private but not in public. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 5:14-16: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

**40:11** - *“Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.”* Therefore, if we have been faithful to preach the whole truth and nothing but the truth, then we can be sure that the truth will keep us and set us free from all of our bondages (Jn. 8:32). Thus we shall find favor in His sight.

**40:12** - *“For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.”* David turns again to the effects of sin upon his life. They became bondages that governed his

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life and caused even the heart of this warrior king to fail. Never think that sin does not have its cruel price tag.

**40:13** - *“Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.”* Only God can break the chains of sin. Therefore, to God alone David cries for deliverance.

**40:14** - *“Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.”* When we allow sin to come into our lives, an occasion is given to our enemies to persecute us. Thus David appeals to God for deliverance from them and cries out to Him to drive them away.

**40:15** - *“Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.”* To rise up against the righteous is to put oneself on a collision course with a righteous God. He will make those who rise up against the righteous desolate. Never allow yourself to be in a position to punish the righteous, because those who do are themselves severely judged in time. Shimei was allowed by God to curse David because David had sinned. Yet, later on Shimei was slain (see 2 Sam. 16:6-12, 1 Kgs. 2:36-46).

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**40:16** - *“Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.”* Those who seek the Lord out of a heart of sincerity rejoice and are exceeding joyful.

**40:17** - *“But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.”* David is the poor and needy man, the one who has fallen from grace, but the Lord was gracious unto him. May we conclude this psalm by saying that the story of David’s rehabilitation and restoration reveals the awesome mercy of God. His restoration and mercy is available to all of His people who fall into a horrible pit as did David. However, it is far more wonderful to have the testimony that the Lord kept us from falling.

# *PSALM 41*

Psalm 41 is the last psalm in Book I of the Psalms. We place this psalm at the time of Absalom's rebellion when David's friend Ahithophel betrayed him by becoming Absalom's counselor (2 Sam. 15:31).

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David*

**41:1-4** - *“Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of*



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*languishing: thou wilt [sustain him on his sickbed]. I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.”*

This is the third Psalm that opens with a blessing. Psalm 1 pronounces a blessing upon those who meditate upon the Lord and do not fellowship with those who are evil. Psalm 32 describes the blessing of having our sins pardoned. Psalm 41 speaks about the fruit of mercy and caring for the poor, which is the result of a godly life. I have literally seen verses one through three enacted before my very eyes.

My wife’s uncle had taken some poor and abandoned children into his own home and adopted them. I visited him many years later when he was upon his death bed. He lay there dying from cancer that was literally consuming his body. However, to the amazement of his doctor, he felt absolutely no pain whatsoever. Therefore, I feel that the best health insurance is to bless the poor. As Abraham Lincoln once said, “God must really love the poor because, after all, He made so many of them.” It is upon his kindness to the poor that David predicates his appeal for God’s mercy to heal his soul. Damage done to our soul when we sin is eternal unless we receive healing and forgiveness from God. Sin destroys

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our body, soul, and spirit. We wound ourselves through our sin because it is deceitful and a mortal enemy to our whole being.

**41:5** - *“Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?”* Also, as we have already mentioned in previous Psalms, when we sin we open doors through which the enemy can attack us. Our enemies speak evil of us and desire only our death. They hope that we are soon forgotten and that we vanish into obscurity.

**41:6-8** - *“And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it. All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt. An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.”* It is evident from these verses that David’s enemies, feigning loyalty, came to see him. In actuality, they only wanted to find out the seriousness of his sickness. They told it abroad and whispered against him, seeking to hurt and defame him. It was certain from all appearances that David appeared nigh unto death and his disease, which in all probability was cancer, was medically incurable.

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**41:9** - *“Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.”* Compounding his problems, David’s own special friend and royal counselor Ahithophel rose up against him (2 Sam. 15:12). Ahithophel had a tremendous anointing. It was said that hearing him speak and give counsel was like listening to God Himself (2 Sam. 16:23). We know that Ahithophel was Bathsheba’s grandfather (compare 2 Samuel 11:3 with 2 Samuel 23:34). It is quite possible that Ahithophel could not forgive the king’s seduction of his granddaughter. What a lesson for us to learn! Oh, may the spirit of forgiveness freely flow through us so that no offense will turn us from God’s course for our lives.

**41:10** - *“But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.”* David pleads with the Lord to show mercy upon him and heal him that he might punish his enemies. However, God did not answer David’s prayer exactly as the king requested. Actually, it was God who destroyed the counsel of Ahithophel. The Lord caused him to realize that his cause was lost, and as a result he committed suicide (2 Sam. 17:23). Absalom was killed by an act of God when a tree bough caught him by his hair and his mule kept on riding. He was hanging from the tree, but still alive, when

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Joab came along and killed him (2 Sam.18:9-14). Vengeance is of the Lord (Rom. 12:19). We should not seek to lay our hands upon our enemies. Rather, we should commit them into God's hands.

**41:11** - *"By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me."* One sign of God's favor upon our lives is that ultimately He will not allow our enemies to triumph over us. I have seen times when the enemy seems to have the upper hand, and is about to administer the *coup de grace*, the final blow, but he stops for some unexplainable reason that can only be attributed to Divine intervention.

**41:12** - *"And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever."* Our goal must never be to obtain blessings and to be victorious over our enemies, but rather our goal must be to desire to see God in all His beauty (Isa. 33:17). This is the reward of the pure in heart, those who live their lives in holiness before Him (Mt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14).

**41:13** - *"Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen."* The Psalm closes as do Psalm 72, 89, and 106, with a doxology followed by a double Amen; thus indicating the close of one book of the Psalms and the beginning of the next book.

# *PSALM 42*

Although not specifically so named in the superscription, we believe, as do many commentators, that Psalm 42 was written by David for the sons of Korah to sing. It is called “Maschil,” meaning a didactic or teaching ode. The sons of Korah were descendants of the children of Korah who were spared when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram went down alive into the pit (Num. 16:1, 33). They later became responsible for the music in Israel. They sang praise unto God, which is a song that grace alone can teach. (See also 1 Chron. 6:16-33, 9:17-19, 12:6, 16:1-19, 25:1-31, 2 Chron. 20:19.)

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We place this Psalm at the time when David was fleeing from Saul, as is evident from the context of the Psalm.

### ***To the chief Musician, Maschil, For the sons of Korah***

**42:1-2** - *“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?”* This psalm commences with the panting and thirsting of a pious soul for the presence of God. It expresses the longing of every true saint of God, not for the blessings, but for the Blesser—not for the gift, but for the Giver. The psalmist expresses a longing to meet Him face to face.

**42:3** - *“My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?”* Here is the heartfelt cry of the one who weeps from deep within for the reality of God. His enemies are saying to him, “You trust in God, but where is He?”

**42:4** - *“When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept*

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*holyday.*” The Psalm evidently was written after the fact, for David is remembering past taunts of the enemy. He is also contemplating times of blessing in the past during holy day festivities.

**42:5** - *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.”* Now David dwells upon his own soul, which is *cast down*. As we have already mentioned, this is an old English expression used of sheep when they have rolled over on their backs. If they are allowed to remain in this state, dependent upon the weather and the physical condition of the sheep, they could die within hours or days. Therefore, the sheep are given up to death without hope unless the shepherd comes and rolls them over.

This was the case with David’s own soul—it was troubled and without hope. However, David takes courage when by his spirit he takes charge of his soul, as he commands it to hope in God. David declared that He would yet praise the Lord for uplifting his crestfallen countenance. We need to learn this lesson as well. Our spirit must not permit our soul or our emotions to govern us. We want to be governed by our spirit, not our soul and emotions, which fluctuate with circumstances.

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**42:6** - *“O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.”* Then turning to God, he declares to Him the condition of his dejected soul. “Yet,” he says, “I will meditate upon Thy lovingkindness from the land where the River Jordan flows, where You have placed the beautiful range of the mountains of Hermon, and even the little hills of Mizar, dotted throughout the land.”

**42:7** - *“Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.”* In his present condition when his foes were pressing him from every quarter, it appeared to David that his situation was like the terrors of a storm at sea. The deep opened up its cavernous jaws and the waterspouts from above engulfed him.

Those who have been in such storms know the helplessness that even the most experienced sailors feel. My wife and I once were on one of the world’s largest ocean liners in the midst of a storm. The waves came crashing over the upper decks and that boat seemed nothing more than a buoy bobbing up and down in the raging sea.



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**42:8** - *“Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.”* However, despite the tossing billows, David held steadfast to his faith in the Lord's tender mercies. He then speaks of the Lord's song in the night. With all that we personally passed through with my wife's painful illness, there remained that blessed song in the night from the Lord that comforted us in all our tribulations.

**42:9** - *“I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?”* So often I cry out like David to the One who has throughout my forty years of ministry been my strength and solace: “Have You forgotten me? Must the enemy of sickness cause me to mourn continually?”

**42:10** - *“As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?”* And seemingly, with ever increasing regularity, our enemies reproach us saying, “Where is God's deliverance in which you hope?”

**42:11** - *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”* So again David re-

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echoes the cry of verse five, but concludes with the triumphant assurance that God is and will yet be his strength. This gives us, and all who suffer grievous physical affliction, much hope and assurance.

# *PSALM 43*

This psalm flows so beautifully from Psalm 42 and completes the prophetic message. We attribute it, therefore, to David and as at previous times we have taken the liberty of interweaving a personal testimony by way of introduction and explanation.

**43:1** - *“Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.”* Many years ago I had the privilege of ministering in a certain country. Because I was a foreigner, I needed a visa to remain there. However, the local government official

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refused my application, which lawfully had every right to be accepted, because he did not like English people.

The senior pastor told me that if I had given the official some money all would have been well. But I could not do that because I am a Christian. Fortunately, there was a member in our congregation who knew the Justice Minister of the country very well. He provided me with an introduction, and with it I was ushered into the Chief Secretary's office. After I explained my request, he said that I was lawfully entitled to that visa.

Then he wrote a note to that official with orders to grant my request. But the local official replied that he was not concerned with what the government officials in the capital said, he was the lord in the city where I was the assistant pastor and he would not issue the visa. Therefore, I could no longer remain in that country.

At that time I was offered a position in an organization in another country. The Lord indicated that I should accept it, so I left for that nation. Many months later I had an occasion to pass through the frontier of the previous country. The Custom's Official, seeing my passport, told me that I could not

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enter the country again since my name had been posted at every frontier of that nation. Naturally I was very confused and when I prayed that night, the Lord lead me to pray verse one of Psalm 43.

Some weeks later I received a letter from that first official who had originally refused my visa saying that I could come to his office at my convenience and receive my visa. This I did, and I took the occasion to ask him what had caused his change of heart.

He replied that when he had posted my name on every frontier he was obliged to notify the British Counsel General. This official in turn was stirred up by God to protest to the local Governor that this official had done this to a pastor. The Governor, in turn, had his spirit stirred up by God to order the local official to grant my request for a visa.

Thus we see the power of a Spirit-directed prayer, which can even change the minds of government. Beloved, under the direction of the Spirit we should pray scriptural prayers, and we will see God work mightily on your behalf!

**43:2** - *“For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off ? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?”* Now we will revert to the life of King David. Here David is

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bemoaning the fact that even though he has made God the source of his strength, it appears that God has cast him off because he is experiencing great oppression from the enemy. Those who make the Lord their refuge will experience times that they consider paradoxical. How is the enemy able to almost overwhelm us with his forces when God, who is far stronger, apparently does not come to our aid when we cry?

**43:3** - *“O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.”* Therefore, David cries out for God to send him light in his darkness and perplexity, to show him the way and truth, and to give him understanding of this painful, heartbreaking situation. And as with all true saints of God, he wants his experiences, sorrowful or joyful, to bring him to Mount Zion, the dwelling place of God Himself.

**43:4** - *“Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.”* Travelling, therefore, through life’s enigmas and sometimes dark and foreboding valleys, the expected end is always God’s altars, God’s dwelling places where God alone is our exceeding joy. Then will we praise Him, as the Bride rejoices in her Bridegroom.

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**43:5** - *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”* Then, for the third time in these two Psalms, David speaks to and takes command of his own soul. We need to learn this important spiritual exercise so that we are Spirit-led and not governed by our emotions.

The end of the spiritual man is serene joyfulness and wholesomeness, whereby our body, soul and spirit rejoices in God and in His ultimate victory over all of life’s vicissitudes.

Some feel this verse is also applicable to David’s feelings when he was fleeing from his son Absalom. Surely, his soul was cast down at that time, but he continued to praise the Lord in the midst of it all and God caused him to triumphantly return to his throne in Jerusalem. Praise the Lord!

# *PSALM 44*

Many of the psalms in the second book of the Psalter are written by the sons of Korah. Undoubtedly, the mantle of revelatory music that was accorded David, who was called the sweet psalmist of Israel in Second Samuel 23:1, covered these musicians who descended from the one who rebelled against Moses. How true it is that our Heavenly Father often takes the descendants of those who disdained His ways and causes them to enter into the inheritance that their fathers refused. Thus unto the sons of Korah God accorded this order of instructions to be given for the enlightenment of all generations.



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### ***To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil***

**44:1** - *“We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.”* Here we have the method of oral instruction whereby the Hebrews instructed their young from generation to generation. This was in obedience to the instruction given by God through Moses (Deut. 6:7).

One scholar finds three keys to learning in this verse: 1) to hear, in the sense of understanding; 2) to hear from those who can speak and teach authoritatively—the Fathers; and 3) to learn in the context of the intimate relationship between pupil and teacher expressed in the phrase “our fathers.”

**44:2** - *“How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.”* Then follows a statement concerning Canaan, when God drove out the Canaanites from the land, and planted the Israelites in their stead. As we have said before, one of the hallmarks of God’s favor is that He does not permit our enemies to triumph over us.

**44:3** - *“For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a*

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*favour unto them.*” Thus one of the key truths that we as Christians must learn too is that we achieve and enter into the inheritance that the Lord promises us only by His grace and by His mercy. There is no other way! Zechariah 4:6 states, “It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts.”

**44:4** - *“Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.”* Therefore, we should cry out that the Lord would give the order to the heavenly angels to bring us to victory over our enemies.

**44:5** - *“Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.”* By the anointing we are able to have the ascendancy over our enemies.

**44:6** - *“For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.”* We must be very careful to put our trust solely in the Lord and not to place our confidence in our own weapons—whether they be our intellect, education, strength of will, or our numerical supporters.

**44:7** - *“But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.”* We must acknowledge, as the Apostle Paul stated, that we are what we are by God’s grace, and that everything we have accomplished is by His grace and His grace alone (1 Cor.15:10).

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**44:8** - *“In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.”* Therefore, we delight and regale ourselves in the Lord and praise His name forevermore.

**44:9-16** - *“But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies. Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us spoil for themselves. Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen. Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase thy wealth by their price. Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us. Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people. My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me, For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger.”*

The psalmist, who has lauded the Lord because of the past glories of Israel, now comes to the present pitiful condition of the nation. It is a passage that is reminiscent of Job's complaint in chapter 29, where he remembered his former glory, and then in chapter 30, where he recounted his present woes and afflictions. But as with Job and Israel, so it will be for us, too, that this saying will become a

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truism—“Rarest gems bear the hardest grinding.” We are the Lord’s own workmanship (Eph. 2:10). If we are going to amount to anything in this life and in eternity, we must qualify for the dark valleys as well as the mountaintop experiences. In this psalm the author recounts the deep suffering to which God’s people are being subjected.

It is evidently a psalm written in the time of the diaspora (or dispersion) when Israel had been scattered firstly by the Assyrian Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal and later by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. But in the time of their captivity when they were shamefully treated by those who had taken them from their own land, they worshipped God and refused to follow heathen deities.

**44:17** - *“All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.”* In times of great adversities we are tested by God Himself to determine whether we will hold true to Him or we are serving Him only because of the blessing that He allocates to us. Certainly, we should reflect upon the warning of our Lord Himself in John 6:26: “Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.”

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**44:18** - *“Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way.”* There must always be within our heart the firm determination that having once put our hand to the plow, we will not turn back. Those who do turn back are not worthy of the kingdom of God, as the Lord warns us in Luke 9:62: “No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

**44:19** - *“Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.”* The trials of the righteous are by no means light, but they test us to the very extremities of that which mortal man is able to bear. Being plunged, as it were, into the very abyss, and forced as John Bunyan’s Christian to face Apollyon himself in his very own lair, are daunting experiences for the most courageous of saints.

**44:20** - *“If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god.”* In times like these, we should not be as the Israelites of old, who were so prone to turn to other avenues to seek relief. They turned to none less than Satan’s own emissaries—the gods of the heathen.

I wish this were true only of Old Testament days, but regretfully I have met many who have been brought up as Christians in the true light that turn to Buddha and other false religions because of

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disappointments in their lives. Turning from the faith in Christ, they seek to find their solace and deliverance in gods who are not gods at all.

**44:21** - *“Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.”* But the Lord who proves the hearts of all mankind surely shall know it and reward them for their unfaithfulness. He will plunge them into the darkness that only a reprobate mind can know (see Rom. 1:19-28).

**44:22** - *“Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter”* [quoted in Romans 8:36]. At times God gives His very own over to martyrdom and in some cases nothing short of genocide, as in the case of the slaughter of the Innocents in the time of Catherine de Medeci, and the persecution of the Huguenots in France and the Lollard preachers of the days of John Wycliffe. However, still we dare not turn away from Him who is the Creator and only true Savior of our souls.

**44:23** - *“Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.”* Now turning wholeheartedly unto the Lord, who alone is able to save, the psalmist pleads with the Lord to stir Himself and come to his aid and the aid of His elect.

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**44:24** - *“Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?”* At times, it is as though the Lord has hidden His face and cares not for His people. Yet how untrue this thought would be. The prophet Malachi assures us that, in reality, the Lord watches over us in the same way that the refiner of gold sits and assiduously watches over the precious metal at the time when the furnace is at its most critical temperature.

“And [the Lord] shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness” (Mal. 3:3). Make no mistake—He is right there watching and waiting, and He will bring you through!

**44:25** - *“For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.”* In this state of great dejection, the psalmist still lifts his voice to the Lord. In all our afflictions, may we also remember that the Lord is afflicted too. Isaiah 63:9 says, “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”

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**44:26** - *“Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies’ sake.”* In closing, the psalmist, undoubtedly remembering the glorious days of old in Israel’s history, lifts up his voice yet again and pleads for the Lord’s deliverance. Let us meditate upon this psalm when we are sorely tempted by trials of great magnitude so that we, too, may be ever faithful to our blessed Lord!



# *PSALM 45*

*Shoshannim—Upon the Lilies*

Psalm 45 is a betrothal psalm, depicting Solomon and the greater King, the Lord Jesus Christ. The superscription tells us that it is a song of loves which is on a par with the Song of Songs. It is a Maschil or didactic Psalm that teaches us of the heavenly relationship and the union and communion here in this life between the eternal Bridegroom and His Church. This life is a preparation to be wedded to our Heavenly Bridegroom.

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*To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves*

**45:1** - *“My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.”* Oh, the meditations of a good heart! What joy and rejoicing they produce, especially when like David of old they center around the life, ministry and person of our blessed Lord. The bubbling heart flowing forth expressively through the eloquence of the tongue is likened to the writings of an impulsive, Spirit-led writer—intent upon putting all that he hears, sees and feels upon paper for all to appreciate, throughout timeless generations.

**45:2** - *“Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.”* Turning to the person of the matchless Christ of God, the Psalmist declares that the beauty of the Lord far exceeds that of any of the sons of men. He is truly the Bright and Morning Star and the Lily of the Valley—the personification of the matchless purity of a holy God.

**45:3-5** - *“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies; whereby the*

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*people fall under thee.*” Then the cry goes forth from the heavenly host that the Lord of glory would go forth to battle against His enemies, and not He alone, but also it is a clarion call to us too. We, like our precious Savior, are to take up the holy sword—the Word of God—with a heavenly authority, remembering that we are seated in heavenly places with Him in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6). We will ride victoriously over our foes, bringing them down by the arrows of God’s sentence upon them which flows from our lips.

**45:6** - *“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre” [quoted in Hebrews 1:8].* The throne and authority of God are established forever, and it is His good pleasure to establish the work of our hands, too, when we have labored to build according to His Word and by the Spirit (Psa. 90:17).

**45:7** - *“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”* Here we come to the essence of the Christian life. We need to have a love for that which is right and true and a hatred for iniquity, even as the Lord Jesus did (Heb.1:9). He warned us that unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the

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scribes and Pharisees, we will in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:20). May we be among the blessed who have such a hunger and thirst for righteousness that the whole of our being—body, soul and spirit—become enveloped with and manifest His righteousness.

**45:8** - *“All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.”* If we have a love for righteousness and a hatred for evil, our whole demeanor will portray the meekness (myrrh), temperance or self-control (aloes) and humility (cassia) of the blessed Son of God Himself. It will be like a fragrant odor that emanates from our very being.

**45:9** - *“Kings’ daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.”* Then we shall be sought out by all the honorable companions of the Lord, who hold, perhaps, an earthly rank of prominence, and certainly by those who have attained unto heavenly stature and distinction. Speaking of Solomon in particular, the Psalmist alludes to his betrothals, declaring that the Queen, Solomon’s royal mother Bathsheba, would be there in all her splendor to honor this joyous occasion with her presence.

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**45:10-12** - *“Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.”*

Now the psalmist turns prophetically to the Bride of Christ, giving her pertinent instructions to please her Heavenly Bridegroom. He commences by exhorting her to consider what he is saying and to listen attentively. It is similar to the closing admonitions to each of the letters to the seven churches in Revelation chapters two and three. Also, the Lord Himself pronounced a blessing upon His disciples who hear His words and keep them (Lk. 11:28).

Now comes a very important law for all those who wish to progress in their pursuit of higher heavenly vistas. It is repeated on several occasions. We must forget our father’s house, or our natural earthly family ties. Remember also the awesome warning of the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11:15: “And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.”

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“Remember Lot’s wife” is the cry that came forth from the lips of the Lord when expounding on the events leading to His second coming, for she looked back and became a pillar of salt (Lk.17:32). This reminds me of a vision a certain young girl had. In this vision she was being raptured, and she looked back toward the earth, and then she began to descend again, returning to the earth with the damned. Thus we can see from her vision how extremely important it is for us to keep our hearts focused on the Lord.

When our eye is single toward our Heavenly Bridegroom, He in turn beholds His reflected beauty in us. He should be the sole object of our adoration. When we seek first the King, and His kingdom and righteousness, all other things shall be added unto us (Mt. 6:33). This is exemplified by the reference to the daughter of Tyre who will ever be at our service to meet our natural needs, just as King Hiram of Tyre built David a house. This can be illustrated, too, in the life of Christ who Himself was ministered to by several notable women of rank and dignity (see Lk. 8:3).

**45:13** - *“The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.”* The Church is alluded to here as the royal offspring. As such, she is all glorious within and without, as befits her

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regal descent. She is worthy of her Heavenly Father, for He has worked within her so that His purity and graces flow from her regenerated heart.

**45:14** - *“She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.”* “The Bride hath made herself ready” is the triumphant cry exclaimed in Revelation 19:7. She has prepared herself through intricate patterns of grace woven into her garments, which are works of righteousness, by which she presents herself to her Divine Lover.

**45:15** - *“With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king’s palace.”* With her virgin companions, who are similarly clad, she is brought with joy and rejoicing into her Bridegroom’s royal palace. How triumphant it will be when we are presented faultless before the presence of the Lord with exceeding joy!

**45:16-17** - *“Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.”*

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As befits those who are seated in heavenly places with Him, we are permitted the honor that divine grace alone can bestow. We may appoint our spiritual children to places of authority and responsibility in all the places that the Lord has most graciously given to us for our inheritance.

Those who overcome and qualify by the Lord's grace (and His grace alone), will be given a name that will be remembered like the great men of the earth (see 1 Chron.17:8). We will be known from generation to generation because we are called, chosen, and found faithful by our blessed Lord (see Isa. 56:5).

Let us meditate often upon Psalm 45 and the characteristics of the Bride of Christ listed in this psalm, and seek to be that glorious Church without spot or wrinkle!



# *PSALM 46*

Psalm 46 is another song of the sons of Korah. It is a song sung with a didactic or teaching ode. *Alamoth* refers to music which is pitched high for the treble or soprano voices of the Hebrew virgins, but it also refers to an instrument that was used by Zechariah, Eliab and Benaiah (1 Chron. 15:20). This Psalm is best remembered as Luther's Psalm because of the Reformer's soul-stirring hymn "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." The Psalm divides easily into three parts, and each section concludes with the word *Selah*.

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### ***To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth***

**46:1-3** - *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”* In some ways, Luther’s hymn eloquently depicts the Psalmist’s revelation of God as that Mighty Fortress. He is a strong tower into which the righteous may run and be hid in safety (Prov. 18:10). Even in a time of natural disaster, our God is our safety. In times of earthquakes and raging fires, He is our protector.

**46:4-7** - *“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”*

Now we are transported in thought and vision to behold the splendor, beauty, and quiet serenity of the holy heavenly city of God, New Jerusalem. God is there, but He is also in the Church so that even

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though the wicked heathen seek to destroy her, she shall not be moved. From her flows the unending river of God's peace.

**46:8-11** - *“Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”*

The Psalmist invites us to behold the works of God, which are given a millennial reign setting. God will cause wars to cease, and the inhabitants will beat their swords into ploughshares. At that time, the Lord will rule and reign in Jerusalem, and the heathen will come and bow down before Him and His throne.

# *PSALM 47*

Psalm 47 was written by the sons of Korah, or for the sons of Korah by David. It is a Psalm of rejoicing and victory. It is divided into two parts by the word *Selah*, which means a pause.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah*

**47:1-4** - *“O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.”* This Psalm opens with a demonstrative exhortation to clap one’s hands, which is a sign of joy and appreciation, and to “shout with a voice of triumph.” The Lord is a God of joy, and He

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rejoices and delights in all our appropriate expressions of joy and gladness. He is glorified when He is exalted by our praise and worship. These forms of true worship are very pleasing to the Lord.

Jesus came that we might have life, and life more abundantly (Jn.10:10). Therefore, it is understandable that the Lord would appreciate a lively expression of adulation and worship, such as clapping, shouting, and dancing, coming from the congregations of His people. When we enter into times of joy, it is exhilarating and liberating to our bodies, souls, and spirits to give expression to our worship.

God is glorified as the One who subdues and brings our enemies down under us. He is the One who chooses our inheritance for us—geographical and spiritual. Therefore, we should humble ourselves before the Lord at all times. Realizing that He has preordained our inheritance for us and that it is only by His grace that we can enter in, we should ask Him what His will is for us, both in the area of our ministry and the places that He has chosen to give us as our inheritance. We should enquire, “Lord, in what way can I serve You best, and where?”

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**47:5-9** - *“God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness. The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.”*

Now the psalmist returns to the theme of the triumphant, victorious God who is the King over all the earth. It must be emphasized that God rules even over all the nations who have rejected Him and strayed into idolatry or atheism. Upon the throne of His holiness, He tries and judges the nations.

In conclusion, the psalmist sees, as in a poetic vision, all the princes of the earth bowing in humble submission before His Majesty. All the pomp, rank and dignity of the men of this world are ordained, ordered, and placed by God into those positions that He has predetermined, and in the end they will all acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Lord of all.

# *PSALM 48*

This psalm was written by the sons of Korah, possibly at the time of the victory of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:19, 25, 36). We should pause to explain at this juncture that the sons of Korah were blessed as a family throughout many generations to produce able singers that glorified the God of Israel. It is sad indeed that the patriarch of this family chose to rebel, seeking a position that had not been given him by God. However, his sons chose to remain in their God-ordained course. How blessed and fruitful they became, and what a lesson their simple and devoted obedience is for us! This psalm itself is divided into two easily defined sections—verses 1-8 and verses 9-14—divided by *Selah*.

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### ***A Song and Psalm for the sons of Korah***

**48:1-3** - *“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge.”* The greatness of the Lord is magnified by the praises of God’s people in Zion, the city of God. Zion, the epitome of the beauty of holiness, will become the joy of the whole earth in the last days of the Church and during the millennium. In our days, both naturally in the last siege of Jerusalem and spiritually for the Church, Zion is the place of God’s habitation and therefore the place of safety and security.

**48:4-8** - *“For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail. Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.”* Now speaking of the last days when the kings of the earth will encompass Jerusalem, they will



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tremble in awe as they realize the impregnability of Zion. For us as Christians, let us be sure that we are dwelling upon spiritual Mount Zion. Zion is a realm of the Spirit.

God destroyed the strong arm of the enemy's fleet. Their means of commerce were the ships of Tarshish. God destroyed these ships in the days of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, who made an unholy alliance with the evil ten tribes of Israel under King Ahab, and later under his son King Ahaziah (1 Kgs. 22:48-49). God's purpose is for Zion to be eternally established, both as the natural and spiritual mountain. The Lord also desires that all alliances for financial benefit be removed from His Church, which should be the house of prayer, not a house of commerce.

**48:9-14** - *"We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple. According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."*

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Let us meditate on the sweetness, goodness and benefits that the Lord showers upon His people, and also on His righteousness, which pleads the cause of His people.

Let us muse upon Zion and all for which it stands so that we may impart the vision of Zion to further generations. The measurements for our spiritual life are taken from Zion, which symbolizes the holiness and beauty of its builder, the Lord Himself. And may we allow God to be our guide throughout our life's pilgrimage, even unto our dying days. The Lord will bring us to Zion as we choose those things that suit the inhabitants of His Holy City. See again Psalms 15 and 24 for the qualifications of being a citizen of Zion.

# *PSALM 49*

Like the previous psalm, this psalm was also sung by the sons of Korah. It was probably written and composed at the same time during the reign of Jehoshaphat, the teaching king.

*To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah*

**49:1-4** - *“Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: Both low and high, rich and poor, together. My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.”*

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The psalm opens with a solemn call to all men of every degree in life to pay attention to this psalm, because the psalmist speaks of wisdom and understanding in these twenty verses. The psalmist speaks of parables, which the Lord Jesus used to teach when He was upon earth to veil truth from those who were not sincere (cf. Mt. 11:25). It is only given to those who find favor in the sight of the Lord to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of God (Mt. 13:11-13).

**49:5-13** - *“Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about? They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption. For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.”*

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Herein is the wisdom of the psalmist who warns that those who trust in their riches cannot redeem the soul of their brother or their own. There is no price that we can give to God that will buy our eternal salvation. In their folly, many seek to preserve their memory by calling their lands after their own name. This is foolishness, but earthly wisdom calls them wise.

**49:14-15** - *“Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.”*

The end of foolish mankind is that they will be laid in the grave like the dumb animal, whereas on resurrection morning the wise, who have trusted in the Lord for their salvation, will rule over them.

**49:16-20** - *“Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him. Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.”*

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The psalmist exhorts us not to fear those who are made rich, for when they die none of their wealth will follow them into the grave. This is seen very vividly by the Pyramid tombs of ancient kings. When these kings would die, their graves would be filled with rich treasures, so that they would be bountifully endowed in the after life. But how deceived they were by the doctrines of Satan, the archdeceiver of their souls.

The psalmist clearly tells us that their riches will not descend with them, but rather they will join their fathers in the sides of the bottomless pit. We are also told by King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 3:18-21 that those who seek the honor and glory of this world will be like the beasts that perish.

“I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?”

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Therefore, let us not follow the way of the foolish, but rather the way of wisdom, which in actuality is none other than the Lord Himself, who is our wisdom, and the very embodiment of wisdom (1 Cor. 1:30).

# *PSALM 50*

This psalm is attributed to Asaph, who lived in the time of King David. The Levites were commanded in the days of Hezekiah to sing praises to the Lord with the words of David and Asaph the seer (2 Chron. 29:30). Psalm 50 is a psalm of instruction, portraying the sacrifices that are acceptable in the sight of the Lord.



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### ***A Psalm of Asaph***

The psalm may be easily divided into four parts:

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|--------------|--|
| 1.) 50:1-6   | The glory of God manifested through Zion |
| 2.) 50:7-15  | The pleasing sacrifices of thanksgiving  |
| 3.) 50:16-22 | The wicked reprov'd                      |
| 4.) 50:23    | The way to glorify God                   |

### ***Part 1 - 50:1-6 The Glory of God Manifested Through Zion***

**50:1** - *“The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.”* Here we see the greatness and majesty of the Lord in creation, whereby He may summon the whole of mankind into His presence to give an account of their ways.

**50:2** - *“Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.”* As we see in Psalm 78:68, He chose the Mount Zion which He loved. Mount Zion is a hill in natural Jerusalem and a spiritual mountain in heaven which speaks of the abode not only of God Himself, but also of the spirits of just men which

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have been made perfect (see Heb. 12:22-23). Mount Zion is identified with the perfection of the beauty of Jesus being formed in His saints.

**50:3** - *“Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.”* Fire is associated with judgment and purification whether it be the baptism of fire that purifies us from the dross of the old life or the Spirit of burnings mentioned in Isaiah 4:4. “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.” When the Lord moves in this way in our lives, everything that can be shaken is shaken.

**50:4** - *“He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.”* This is evidently the time of the second coming when the Lord will judge His people and everyone will have to give an account of the things done in the flesh while upon earth.

**50:5** - *“Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.”* The Lord here singles out those who have entered into a special relationship with Him through some form of sacrifice. This can take many forms. In Psalm 20 the congregation reminded the Lord how

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David had given burnt offerings and sacrifices. For us, however, these sacrifices could take the form of monetary gifts which, like the widow's mite, is virtually all that we have. On occasions the Lord requires such sacrifices from us. Sacrifices also can take the form of time when we abstain from certain natural pleasures like sports, watching television or reading a novel. Instead, we dedicate that time to the Lord. Such sacrifices cause us to enter into a covenantal relationship with the Lord.

**50:6** - *“And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.”* It is impossible for the Lord to judge the world unless He first judges His own people. Peter said, “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (1 Pet. 4:17-18).

### ***Part 2 - 50:7-13 The pleasing sacrifices of thanksgiving***

**50:7** - *“Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.”* In holy writ when the Lord has something of great importance to say it is almost always prefaced with this phrase in one form or another, beginning with the injunction to *hear*. One of the

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best known among these phrases is the exhortation to obedience in Deuteronomy 6:4-5: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”

**50:8** - *“I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.”* In these verses the Lord is seeking to correct their manner of living. Verse 8 is so reminiscent of Micah 6:6-7: “Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” No! The Lord is not interested in animal sacrifices, as He now makes clear.

**50:9-10** - *“I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.”* There is no shortage of animals for the Lord. David said in Psalm 40:6, “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.”

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**50:11** - *“I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.”* Then the Lord declares His omniscience. He knows all things. This wonder is reiterated by the Lord Jesus Himself when He said in Matthew 10:29, “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.” Luke 12:6 reads, “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?”

**50:12** - *“If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.”* Obviously, the Lord does not need animals to be given to Him, for He is the Creator of everything. When considering the needs of the Godhead, and any spiritual being for that matter, I am reminded of a demon who spoke to a certain missionary who was casting him out. The demon said to him, “Do you think that our food is meat and drink? No, we feed on hatred.” Incidentally, this demon was a demon of hatred and thus it fed upon that which sustained and strengthened its nature.

**50:13** - *“Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?”* The Lord Jesus supplies the answer in one sense to what nourishes the Godhead in John 4:32-34. Jesus said to His disciples, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.” Then His disciples said to each other, “Hath any man brought him

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ought to eat?” Jesus replied, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” What, then, is God’s desire for His people with respect to sacrifices? It is seen in Psalm 40:8, where David says, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” The sacrifice that really pleases the Lord is to delight to do His will.

**50:14** - *“Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:”* It is glorifying to the Lord when His people are thankful. It tells Him, the heavenly angels, and all the earth that He is a good God who loves His people. May the Lord continually be our source of thanksgiving.

It is so important that we keep our vows unto the Lord, as we see from Solomon’s exhortation in Ecclesiastes 5:4-6. “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?”

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We must be very careful about making vows, because even if they were made rashly, God still requires us to keep these vows. This is especially true concerning marriage vows. Remember, it is those who keep their commitments that will abide in Mount Zion (Psa. 15:4). Wisdom would teach us to be slow to speak and quick to listen when we are in the presence of the Lord.

**50:15** - *“And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”* Deliverance is predicated upon the following precepts being observed: we must be thankful and we must keep our vows.

### ***Part 3 - 50:16-22 The Wicked Reproved***

Now the Lord considers the wicked. Who are these wicked people? From the context of these next eight verses, there is convincing evidence that the wicked the Lord is speaking of here are people who have known the truth but are no longer walking in the light.

**50:16** - *“But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?”* So often those who declare God’s statutes are not keeping them themselves. Paul says in Romans 2:1, “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man,

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whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.” The Lord condemns those who are declaring His Word while living unrighteously themselves.

**50:17** - *“Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.”* Regretfully, I have known many ministers who cling to false doctrines, seeking to justify themselves. Peter speaks of those in his days who were twisting the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Pet. 3:15-16).

**50:18** - *“When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.”* These people are committing the sins they preach against. This was the case of many of the Jewish teachers in Paul’s days whom he confronted in Romans 2:22: “Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?” The wicked always criticize those who walk uprightly.

**50:19-20** - *“Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother’ s son.”* As Paul says in Romans 3:13, “Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit ...”



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**50:21** - *“These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.”* Let us keep in mind that we are speaking of Christians who have erred from the pathway of life. These people could possibly still be occupying pulpits and teaching in Sunday school classes. Because the Lord has not hastened to correct them and He has been silent, they think they have His approval for their wicked ways. Remember, the Lord waits, sometimes for a very long time, that He may be merciful to us (Isa. 30:18), and gives people time to change and repent (Rev. 2:21).

**50:22** - *“Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.”* God limits a day, and when that time runs out, there is no more grace. But a fearful judgment awaits those who have presumed upon His goodness. Paul warns those Roman believers who were not walking uprightly, *“But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds”* (Rom. 2:5-6).

**Part 4 - 50:23 The Way to Glorify God**

Now the Lord turns back to address those who are walking in their integrity by showing us again how we please Him.

**50:23** - *“Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.”* We want to be a people who are constantly praising the Lord, as Mahalaleel of old (Gen. 5:12), whose name means “Praisers of God.” Let us be Mahalaleels of our generation who offer the sacrifice of praise unto the Lord (Heb. 13:15).

As we seek to glorify the Lord by our conversation and our mouths are filled with thanksgiving, we will know Him who is able to save us to the uttermost. May we be found among those who speak often one to another of the Lord’s goodness, and in so doing, we will know His glorious salvation. Amen and amen!

# CONCLUSION

Thus, dear reader, we come to the end of Part One of our devotional study of the Book of Psalms. The other two books follow. However, having read the Psalms unlike perhaps any other literature available to mankind, we can never in one reading assimilate all of their beautiful truths. It takes a lifetime of browsing, sampling individual verses and meditating upon them to really appreciate all that the blessed Scriptures contain.

May we therefore commend a daily reading of the Psalms to give you a well-nourished soul, and to lift your spirits into new heights and deeper depths of communion with our blessed Lord!