



Devotions from Psalms by [John T Polk II](#)

All Scriptures and comments are based on the **New King James Version**, unless otherwise noted.

Psalm 1

9/14/12

Vs. 1-3 show the value and benefit of being "blessed" by God;
Vs. 4-5 show the certainty and condemnation of the "wicked;"
Vs. 6 shows the clarity of God's evaluation of each!

A person is "blessed" for NOT walking, standing, or sitting with sinners; walking is accompaniment, standing shows deeper interest, sitting indicates prolonged acceptance. There could not be a clearer description of the danger of fellowshiping "unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11-12).

The "ungodly" are those with no regard for God," "sinners" are those with little or no regard for God's laws; "scorners" are those who blame God for their self-imposed consequences of refusing to follow God's laws.

The parallel with a prosperous, prolific tree should not be lost to the faithful, nor should the reference to the ungodly as "chaff" be unexpected to the condemned! The "love of God" protects the righteous from the ungodly, certainly in eternity, and is open to accept all sinners who repent (Acts 17:30-31). This psalm (song) strengthens one's faith in God's righteous judgment.

The "ungodly" are to be blown away, as chaff, in the final judgment, and "sinners" will avoid congregating with the righteous because they don't want "light" to shine on their darkness (John 3:19-21).

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### Psalm 2

9/17/12

Vs. 1-3 show the misguided thinking of those who oppose God's plan;  
Vs. 4-6 show God's power to ignore man's opposition and carry out His plan;  
Vs. 7-9 show God's Son will have power to defeat all opponents;  
Vs. 10-12 show God will accept all opponents who learn to trust in His Son.

In the New Testament, the church of Christ, led by Apostles Peter and John, attributed authorship of this Psalm to King David, and the events of Jesus' death as having been described hundreds of years before by its inspired writer (Acts 4:23-31). Thus, this Psalm has absolutely NO reference to yet another attempt to hinder God sending His Son at some future time, as millennialists teach. NO ONE was able to stop God's Gospel plan to send His only begotten Son to die on the cross and establish the kingdom, which, during Jesus' life, was "at hand" (Matthew 4:17). Those who obey

the Gospel for their salvation are added by the Lord to the church (Acts 2:38, 41, 47), and at the same time "delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Colossians 1:13).

After His resurrection, Jesus claimed, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18), which no one can dispute! Jesus first came to give everyone an opportunity to be saved, and will come a second time to separate the lost from the saved forever (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43).

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Psalm 3

9/18/12

Vs. 1-3 show that enemies afflict, but God is our safe haven;
Vs. 4-8 confirm that God hears and responds to the earnest, penitent plea of His wounded warrior.

The incidents that drove King David to his knees in this Psalm are written in 2 Samuel 11- 18. Because of David's adultery and murder, his family was cursed by God. Absalom, his son, brought the sword to David's life, and this self-inflicted pain never left David's heart.

David is a shining example to God's people for all times that, no matter what sins they have committed through weakness, God will forgive when they repent (Psalm 3:4). David's security was in his faith in God to help him. So it is for Christians today (Hebrews 13:5-6).

That "salvation belongs to the LORD" is echoed in Revelation 7:10; 19:1. That's why "there [is no] salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" than Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10,12). No individual, group, or government has a name that saves like Jesus Christ (Acts 2:36-38; Matthew 28:18-20).

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**Psalm 4**

**9/19/12**

Vs. 1-5 as in Psalm 3, places the proper response to one's enemies into the hand of God;  
Vs. 6-8 show the peacefulness that permits God's person to slumber safely.

The command, "Be angry, and do not sin" is exactly quoted in Ephesians 4:26 as inspired advice for human passion, but the New Testament adds the extra step of resolving anger before the day is over (Ephesians 4:26) and it becomes "wrath" and gives "place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:27).

Psalm 3:5 and 4:8 may well have been the beginning of the child's prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep." Certainly the contentment of a child should be in the heart of any adult who would commit his/her soul into the hand of God because of obedience to His word. This truth was included in the Wisdom of Solomon in Proverbs 3:24: "When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet" (Proverbs 3:21-26). This reassurance for the faithful in Jesus Christ in the New Testament says: "For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that

whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11).

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Psalm 5

9/20/12

Vs. 1-3 show that exultation of God should begin each day;
Vs. 4-6 show that God will excuse none of the unrighteous deeds of sinners;
Vs. 7 shows that God's people will distinguish themselves from sinners by worship;
Vs. 8-10 show the rejection of the world's ways God's faithful must have;
Vs. 11-12 show the reward for the faithful who serve God.

"Meditation," "voice," "prayer," and "looking up" are characteristics of God's faithful. The first concerns the thoughtfulness that should begin each day to consider how one is going to serve God; the second is the devotion of one's throat to utter such purpose with conversation; the third is the opening up of the heart before God with sincerity of that purpose; and the fourth demonstrates the source of one's guiding light. Every day should be God-centered or else it will be useless.

The false notion that "God so loved the world" that He cannot reject sinners is discarded in Psalm 5:5, for God hates "all workers of iniquity." Anyone, while in the practice of sin, is outside the reach of God, for evil does not dwell with God (**Psalm 5:4**). Therefore, Isaiah 59:1-2 states the case: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear." Note that it is "your sins" and NOT Adam's! Isaiah 59:3-8 then enumerate some of the sins that those practicing them have placed themselves outside God's love limits. Get used to the expression "workers of iniquity" for it occurs some 15 times throughout the Psalms. AND Jesus rejects all such from entering His kingdom now (Luke 13:23-27).

The "holy temple" in the New Testament is the church of Christ, for Jesus is the head of it (Ephesians 1:22-23), and its people are built to be the "holy temple" (Ephesians 2:19- 22).

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**Psalm 6**

**9/21/12**

Vs. 1-7 show the depth of David's repentance for his sin;  
Vs. 8-10 show God's forgiveness.

King David asks God to spare him from punishment for his sins (vs. 1-2), and appeals to God for mercy to forgive his sins (vs. 2-3). Contrast this with those who tell people today that they should "claim God's forgiveness" for sins, that is, they have a claim on forgiveness, not a request! There is nothing in this Psalm to indicate specifically which sin David had committed, thus it indicates David's general feeling whenever he realized he had sinned. This is what is indicated in the New Testament when God's selection of David as king was with the statement: "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will" (Acts 13:22). David's sensitivity to his own sin is the kind of heart God wants us all to have.

David further shows how deeply one should feel alienation from God: "weary with my groaning," bed swims "all night," "drench my couch with my tears," "my eye wastes away because of my grief." Truly, Paul wrote to Christians in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians 7:10: "For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death." Jesus wept over the impenitence of His own people (Luke 19:41-44), and for those who would need repentance for their sins to come to Him for salvation (Hebrews 5:5-9). It's up to a sinner to keenly feel the need to be rid of his/her own sins, and not point the finger at others for causing them to sin! True repentance is preceded by personal grief and tears!

"Depart from me all you workers of iniquity," is the statement of a person who declares himself separated from sinners. This is David's intention to NOT be associated again with those who could influence him toward sin by exploiting his weaknesses. David's declaration is based upon his confidence that God forgives sincere repentance, and that his sinful associates should not expect him to continue with them in whatever sin had been committed. In the New Testament, Christians are told by Peter that this separation is noticeable. "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (1 Peter 4:3-5). Repentance without this intention to disconnect is usually ineffective. This statement of separation from sinners is also what Jesus will say on the Judgment Day that will begin eternity (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 13:23-27).

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Psalm 7

9/24/12

Vs. 1-2 show David's appeal for relief from his detractors;
Vs. 3-5 show David's presentation of his will toward God;
Vs. 6-17 show David's acknowledgement of God's possibilities against enemies.

David is fully prepared to accept the consequences of his own sins (vs. 3-5). Contrast this with many today who curse God when He will not deliver them from their own sinful consequences (Ephesians 2:11-13; 4:17-24; Romans 6:3-5). David appeals to God for righteous judgment (vs. 6-9), thus placing his own deeds before God for evaluation, as everyone must do one day (2 Corinthians 5:10). David completely trusts in God to deal with the wicked (vs. 10-17), that no wickedness will be unpunished.

When sinners devise ways of evil, they release actions that will come back on them (vs. 15-16), a sentiment echoed by Solomon (Proverbs 26:27), and applied by Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:52). The practices of violating God's Laws become the "rules" by which others justify their own sinfulness. Hence, abortion defines human life as worthless (Hosea 13:16); the riotous lifestyle of those on alcohol or other drugs defines human activity as godless (Ephesians 5:18); the residual anger and hatred of many people defines humans as heartless (Titus 3:3); the merciless get no mercy (James 2:13); etc. People who sin think they are freed from the constraints of God's Laws, but in reality, they have become slaves of unrighteousness (Romans 6:16-20; 2 Peter 2:18-19). Sometimes, the worse God can do to spark a soul to see the error of his/her way is to let them "stew in their own juice," so to speak (Psalm 7:14-16), until they are ready to turn back to God!

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**Psalm 8**

**9/25/12**

Vs. 1-2 show that God’s glory is above the innocent and the guilty, and the heavens;  
Vs. 3-9 show that one “human” is above all the Creation.

Jesus Christ quoted vs. 2 (Matthew 21:16) describing His entry into Jerusalem for His final week on earth; the Hebrews writer (Paul?) quoted vs. 4-5 (Hebrews 2:6-7) as pointing to Jesus Christ; and Paul quoted vs. 6 (1 Corinthians 15:27-28; Ephesians 1:22-23) as fulfilled in Jesus Christ. There can be no doubt but that this Psalm was Messianic in its fulfillment.

The question: “What is man that You are mindful of him?” is asked again by David (Psalm 144:3), but here it shows the insignificance of humankind compared to the awesomeness of the Creation. It is answered in the phrase “son of man” “visited.” Humans are significant to God because He sent His only begotten Son (one special man) on their behalf (John 1:18). Jesus Christ is called “Immanuel” (Matthew 1:22-23), for God was with mankind in bodily form only this once. God “dwelt among us” (tabernacled, John 1:14) temporarily in Jesus’ lifetime (Colossians 2:9). After His resurrection from the dead, Jesus once again could claim that “all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18), for He no longer had any fleshly limitations to His Divinity. To deny that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh (and with some of its limitations) is “antichrist” (1 John 4:1-3).

We must all, ask ourselves the question: “What could I possibly mean to God?” We must, however, be prepared to see the answer: “The Son of God...loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). And, then, give in to what He demands of us (Mark 16:15-16).

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Psalm 9

9/26/12

Vs. 1-2 show “thanksgiving” acknowledges one’s faith in God;
Vs. 3-5 show faith in the defeat of one’s enemies;
Vs. 6-10 show the victory is the LORD’s;
Vs. 11-20 show praise to God for His righteous judgments.

All praise to God should be with the “whole heart” (vs. 1), not with lips only (Matthew 15:7-9), and God knows the difference as David taught his son Solomon (1 Chronicles 28:9) and the New Testament Apostles acknowledged (Acts 1:24).

Victory is always with the LORD (vs. 3-6) and is so complete that God blots out their name, and the memory of them vanishes forever as God promised (Deuteronomy 32:26). Dead people know nothing of continuing life “under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 9:5-6), and the living will forget those who are dead. This humbling thought is wasted on all the egocentric who seek to make a name for themselves in history. Everyone should seek to have God blot out their sins instead (Acts 3:19)!

He shall judge the world in righteousness” (vs. 8) is the very description of Jesus Christ in the final Judgment (Acts 17:30-31). Hence Psalm 9 easily describes the ultimate Judgment of all mankind, which has been committed into the hands of Jesus that all should honor Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God (John 5:22-23).

God is righteous in condemning the wicked, for "The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made" (vs. 15). Damnation is of one's own choosing!

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**Psalm 10**

**9/27/12**

Vs. 1-11 show that it seems God is hiding when the wicked boast and are prosperous; Vs. 12-15 show the appeal to God for justice against the wicked; Vs. 16-18 show confidence that God will act just as He has done consistently in the past.

All people are wicked who: prey upon the poor (v.2); are completely selfish (v.3); are godless (v.4); prosper upon the backs of others (v.5); feel invincible (v.6); use words deceitfully (v.7); make evil plans secretly (v.8-10); think God doesn't see or care what is done (v.11). This description fits every politician, CEO, Union Boss, and any other "power- broker" who disregards God's societal rules.

We must remember when the wicked's "ways are always prospering" that God keeps the books on human behavior, and He will see to it that all is rectified. If not in this life, then certainly after life, "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God" (Romans 14:11; Isaiah 45:23). As "King forever and ever," the LORD has made nations perish, and can cause "the man of the earth" (one given to earthly ways, "carnally minded" Romans 8:5-8) to "oppress no more." Don't look at or listen to the wicked while they are in the "headlines" but remember all of the wicked whom the LORD has left in wreck and ruin throughout history. Every victim of the wicked will be vindicated, if not in this life, then in the life to come (Proverbs 18:5), for, "he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality" (Colossians 3:25).

The arrogance of the wicked toward God is reflected by: renouncing (v.3), ignoring (v.4), defying (v.6), profaning (v.7), blaspheming (v.11), or denying (v.13) God and His Word. This has remained unchanged over the centuries, for v.7 is quoted in the New Testament (Romans 3:14) in describing the wicked's ways! Whether atheist, skeptic, agnostic, or an educated ignorant, being "logical" without God is the baseline for wickedness. The wicked who "did not like to retain God in their knowledge" are given over to "a debased mind" which is "filled with all unrighteousness" (Romans 1:28-29).

The Devil's doctrine that "you shall not surely die" for your sins (Genesis 3:4) is echoed in Psalm 10:6, 11, 13, and is absolutely false, whether believed by Eve, the wicked, or "once-saved-always-saved" disciples! This false sense of security causes sinful behavior.

Deists who claim that God "wound up the universe and lets it run its course without intervention" surely have never read this Psalm (or the rest of the Bible!). God sees, hears, knows, remembers all and forgives, but intervenes and judges according to His will.

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Psalm 11

9/28/12

Vs 1-3 show that running and hiding is not an option to the righteous;
Vs. 4-5a show that God is not inattentive, but may be testing the resolve of the righteous;
Vs 5b-7 show God’s judgment is keen and clear, and still to be trusted.

Confidence in the LORD (vs.1) gives one courage to stand his ground and not fleeing, a recurring theme in the Book of Psalms (27:1; 56:4,11; 118:6) and in the New Testament (Matthew 10:28; Romans 8:31; Hebrews 13:5-6). Today more than ever, Christians must pray, as the Apostle Paul requested: “that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Ephesians 6:19-20). To flee from impending destruction by the wicked is to give up the very “foundation” upon which the righteous live (vs. 2-3). The courage of faith was seen when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were cast into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3) and Daniel was cast into the lion’s den (Daniel 6).The parallel in the New Testament occurs individually when “no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11). This foundation must have the commitment of the Apostles Peter and John, who “answered and said to them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard’” (Acts 4:19-20). Christians must fear no human!

God “in His holy temple” “in Heaven,” may seem slow to respond in order to “test the sons of men,” including “the righteous” (vs. 4-5). In the New Testament this should be viewed as encouraging for: “Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him” (James 1:12). God tempts no one toward sin, but only gives opportunities to grow stronger by making good decisions (James 1:13-15; Hebrews 5:14). The “holy temple” on Earth in the New Testament is the church of Christ, for Jesus is the head of it (Ephesians 1:22-23), and it’s people are built to be the “holy temple” (Ephesians 2:19- 22), where God dwells among His people (2 Corinthians 6:16).

The wicked will suffer destruction (vs. 5-6) just as Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24), and as Jesus described the eternal Hell (Mark 9:41-49a).

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**Psalm 12**

**10/1/12**

Vs. 1-5 show how “bad” times can get;  
Vs. 5-7 show God’s word preserves the godly in the midst of the ungodly; Vs. 8 shows the hard reality that is to be faced.

Surrounded by the sinful (Psalm 12:8), King David points out a most disheartening belief in verse 4: “Our lips are our own; Who is lord over us?” When even sinners abandon speaking truth, there is no confidence in anyone, anything, anywhere. Truthfulness is often the greatest casualty in the moral conflict, and distrust results. Later in history, the Israelis were morally failing again as Isaiah recorded: “For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, Your tongue has muttered perversity. No one calls for justice, Nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; They conceive evil and bring forth

iniquity" (Isaiah 59:3-4). Other expressions of this truth death included: "conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood" (Isaiah 59:13), "truth is fallen in the street" (Isaiah 59:14), thus "truth fails" (Isaiah 59:15). At the same time as Isaiah, Hosea recorded: "Hear the word of the LORD, You children of Israel, For the LORD brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: 'There is no truth or mercy Or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, Killing and stealing and committing adultery, They break all restraint, With bloodshed upon bloodshed'" (Hosea 4:1-2).

In Psalm 12:1-2, David points out that, without truth, "the godly man ceases" and "the faithful disappear" (vs. 1), speaking "idly" with "flattering lips" and a "double heart" (vs. 2). Surely there was no truth in them, as Jesus Christ later described the Devil (John 8:44)! Today, Christians should be "putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another" (Ephesians 4:25) and therefore "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). Beware of any who have abandoned truth.

Every time falsehood abounds, God's Words, purified 7 times (completely pure), are preserved from that generation (Psalm 12:5-7). The accuracy of the Bible is unparalleled and no other book is its equal. No matter how corrupt any age becomes, God's Word remains untouched, protected by God. Hence, we may always rely on the Bible (which is from God) to accurately tell us what His will is (Ephesians 3:1-12). Bible truth contrasts with the lies of: Evolution which is Creation without God (Romans 1:24-25; Acts 14:15- 17; Hebrews 11:3; 1 Corinthians 15:39-40); Global Warming which denies God's universal seasons (Genesis 8:22); Absolute government authority which denies God's limits of human government (Romans 13:3-6); Missing Bible Books which denies God's assertions of the completeness of the Bible (Jude 3; 1 Corinthians 14:37); Internet intimacies which deny God's rules of friendship (John 15:12-15; Proverbs 6:12-15; 17:17; 18:24; 19:4,6; 27:6). To ask "what is truth?" one should accept the answer: Jesus is "the truth" (John 18:37-38; 14:6).

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Psalm 13

10/2/12

Vs 1-2 show King David's impatience;
Vs 3-4 show his importance;
Vs 5-6 show his impression.

To his credit, David is so sin-sensitive that he asks God four times, "How long?" (vs 1-2), which reflect his own feeling of alienation from God. Time is of the essence to humans, thus we ask God "how long?" Since it is our own sins that separate us from God, it is our realization of that condition that should cause us to cry out to God. It is not that God has moved, but that we realize we have moved away from Him! While we are sinners, He could forget us, hide His face from us, leave our hearts in sorrow, let our enemies prevail (vs 1-2). To show us that He was taking the place of sinners alienated from God, Jesus Christ, from the cross, "cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' which is translated, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'" (Mark 15:34), which was a quotation from David's Messianic prophecy in Psalm 22:1. God did not forsake or move away from Jesus, His only begotten Son, but Jesus spoke all sinners' lament to identify Himself with all sinners who learn the truth about their sins. Jesus died on His cross for all sinners who, like David, realize what their sin has done to their relationship to God, and want to repent and come back to Him. In the New Testament, this is still the appeal to sinners: "Now then, we

are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Sinners must not sorrow over sin because it makes them feel bad; or they have been "caught;" or someone else wants them to (parent, spouse, children, preacher, etc.); or they will gain friends or customers if they will; but "godly sorrow" is the only effective motivation. In the New Testament, it is explained thusly: "Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death" (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). Only by being sorry to God will repentance change us.

This leads to David's re-affirmation of his confidence in God (vs. 3-4), that He will "consider and hear" and "enlighten my eyes" lest David sleep in death caused by his enemies. David's reasoning with God is the same that Moses' had, that if God's people are defeated by their enemies, they could boast that they had defeated God (Numbers 14:11- 22)! God is glorified when sinners repent. "Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7). Saved sinners have reason to rejoice (vs. 5-6).

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## **Psalm 14**

**10/3/12**

Vs 1-3 show that fools without God are corrupt;

Vs 4-7 show that God remains on the side of "the generation of the righteous."

"The fool" says "There is no God," with words of denial, or by the life of denial. The New Testament describes people living without God: "They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work" (Titus 1:16). Whether stated or lived, one is a fool to disregard God! "Fool" means empty, evil, corrupt. All who do "not like to retain God in their knowledge" God gives over to a debased mind (Romans 1:28), for they are "having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:18). Psalm 14:2-3 are the basis of Romans 3:10-12 which state that there is sometimes, overwhelming corruption of many in society. But both then in David's day, "now," when the Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans and even today, immorality abounds and is freely publicized through the media.

The "workers of iniquity" may bully God's people, but God remains on the side of the righteous (Psalm 14:4-7)! This same message is repeated in Psalm 53 with the added explanation of why those "workers of iniquity" themselves have reason to fear: "they are in great fear Where no fear was, For God has scattered the bones of him who encamps against you; You have put them to shame, Because God has despised them" (Psalm 53:5; Psalm 14:5). Sinners must notice, when bad things happen to them, God isn't on their side! Truly, "The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1). When the people of God are downcast and appear defeated, knowing the LORD has not left them, and that their salvation from persecution remains in His hand, they shall rejoice and be glad. The Apostle Paul shows Christians the same illustration in 2 Timothy 3:10-12: "But you have carefully

followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra-- what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

The "fool" acts as if there was no God and persecutes the righteous; the righteous, while enduring the "fools," are reassured that they are still on God's "side."

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Psalm 15

10/4/12

Vs 1 asks the question: Who is entitled to live in God's house?
Vs 2-5 show the "house rules."

David asked God who, among so many sinners, would He permit to dwell in His tabernacle, or on His holy hill (vs. 1; Psalm 2:6; 3:4). Both terms refer to places He makes "holy" (designated, set apart). "Tabernacle" is equivalent to "tent, or temporary dwelling." In the New Testament, distinction is drawn between the Israelite tabernacle God gave Moses (Acts 7:44), and the "tabernacle of David" which was then promised (Amos 9:11-12) but is now the church of Christ, which is the people of God in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 15:13-19; Galatians 3:26-29). It is "the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation" (Hebrews 9:11). Individually, each Christian's body is a "tent," not a heavenly body, yet (2 Peter 1:13-14)! Since it is God's house, the Father's conditions must apply!

Though not an exhaustive list, the eleven characteristics of people whom God accepts into His tabernacle, four are positive, the rest are negative (Psalm 15:2-5). What it takes to be "righteous" (upright, obedient to God) is in verse 2. One who "walks," "works," "speaks," all continuous actions, according to God's rule, is acceptable.

(1) "Upright" (used in 23 verses in Psalms) is the: way of God (Psalm 25:8); way every person starts in life (Ecclesiastes 7:29); opposite of slavery (Leviticus 26:13) and of perversity (Proverbs 3:32; 11:3);

(2) "Righteousness" is: all commandments of God (Psalm 119:172); revealed in the Gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16-17); no longer obtained through Moses (Romans 10:1-4); to be desired (Matthew 5:6); to be worked (Acts 10:34-35; 1 John 3:7);

(3) "Truth" (used in 40 verses in Psalms) must be embedded in one's heart. It should be the core of thoughts (Proverbs 23:23; Romans 1:24-25), words (Proverbs 12:17; 22:20-21; Ephesians 4:25), and deeds (John 3:21; 3 John 4);

(4) does not backbite: cowardly attack to harm, not help (1 Timothy 5:13; Romans 1:30);

(5) does no evil to a neighbor: doesn't harm person, character, or property of those nearest (3 John 11);

(6) reproaches not a friend: literally, "to strip bare," spares friends (and certainly family!) from the humiliation of scandalizing them (as through Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, talebearing and all other "social media"), certainly condemned by God (Numbers 15:30; Proverbs 14:34; 18:3; Colossians 1:21-23);

(7) despises vileness: rejects very wicked people (Lamentations 1:8; Romans 1:26), thereby making "righteous judgment" (John 7:24; Ephesians 5:11-12);

(8) honors those who fear the LORD: respects the righteous (John 13:20; Luke 10:16; Romans 12:10);

(9) does not ignore oath: though painful, keeps his word (Matthew 14:6-10; Ecclesiastes 5:4-6; James 5:12);

(10) doesn't charge usury: "a bite," making oppressive money off loans to the poor

(Proverbs 28:8; 22:16, 22; Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:35-38);

(11) doesn't accept bribes against the innocent: (Deuteronomy 27:25; Proverbs 15:27; 29:4; Amos 5:4, 11-13).

Both then and now, God will not accept everyone into His fellowship without their conversion. Today, only the saved are added by God to the church of Christ (Acts 2:38- 41, 47), however, all who turn from their sins to Christ, by obeying the Gospel, are the saved (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Acts 18:8)!

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**Psalm 16**

**10/5/12**

Vs 1-7 show David's praise for God's security;

Vs 8-11 show David's description of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

David's pure trust in God makes him a willing instrument through which this powerful prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus Christ was written. David was pleased with God's: approval of the conduct of saints (vs. 2-3); disapproval of apostasy into idolatry (vs. 4); blessing of David's family line (vs. 5-6); and guidance, even at night (vs. 7).

Psalm 16:8-11 must be describing none other than Jesus Christ, for He:

(1) is at God's "right hand" (Mark 14:61-62; 16:19);

(2) did not "see corruption" that is, His body wasn't dead long enough to decay (Luke 24:19-24; Acts 2:30-32; 10:36-42);

(3) was raised, never to die again (Romans 6:9; Revelation 1:18), thus He is the "firstfruits" of the final, general resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20; Colossians 1:18).

This prophecy of Jesus' resurrection never was intended to apply to anyone else, nor was it worded to permit it being misinterpreted. All who misapply this, or any other prophecy about Jesus Christ, have proven themselves to be "untaught and unstable people [who, jtpII] twist [scriptures, jtpII] to their own destruction" (2 Peter 3:16). None may "dual fulfillment" their way through Messianic prophecies without denying the inspiration of the New Testament Apostles. Peter quoted this prophecy (Psalm 16:10) as fulfilled in the fact of Jesus' resurrection (Acts 2:29-32), and said it was written by David who is still dead and therefore not the subject of the prophecy. Paul said God gave this prophecy (Acts 13:33-38) through David, but since David "saw corruption" the prophecy did not apply to himself! When God gives a specific prophecy, and then identifies a specific fulfillment, only non-believers would look for an alternate application! This, Jesus made clear when He said: "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you-- Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" (John 5:45-47)

When prophets were controlled by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21), they wrote words whose meaning and fulfillment were unknown to the prophets themselves (1 Peter 1:10-12). The Holy Spirit knew when the fulfillment occurred, and revealed it in Scripture (Colossians 1:24-26).

Jesus Christ was raised from the dead "to sit" on David's throne (Acts 2:29-32). If Jesus Christ has not been sitting on David's throne in Heaven since the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, then David, Peter, and the Holy Spirit of God all misunderstood

their prophecy!!! Everyone who thinks Jesus must yet come to earth to sit on David's throne believes a doctrine that denies Jesus Christ was ever raised from the dead!

Our total confidence must always be in God and His word. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5).

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Psalm 17

10/8/12

Vs. 1-2 show David's appeal to be heard by God;
Vs. 3-5 show David's reason he should be heard, that he has obeyed God;
Vs. 6-9 show David's confidence in God's judgment;
Vs. 10-14 describe his enemies;
Vs. 15 shows David's satisfaction with God's action.

"Hear," "attend," "give ear," "let my vindication come," "let Your eyes look," are all ways of describing God's interest in an individual's needs with human terms we can recognize. God has no physical body (John 4:24; Luke 24:39), but we do, and thus we must "personalize" God to understand our communication connection with Him. In verse 3, David is not arguing his sinlessness for he says, "I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me" (Psalm 51:3). He is stating that, no matter what has happened, his resolve has always been to be right with God. This should be true of Christians today (1 Peter 1:6-9).

In verses 4-5, David has overcome temptation, with God's help (God's word and ways).

In verses 6-9, David will be heard because God's practice is to save those who trust Him by focusing His attention on them ("apple of Your eye," is the expression used), and "shadow of Your wings" presents the tender picture of a hen gathering her chicks as God had done for Israel (Deuteronomy 32:8-12), David wanted to be (Psalm 17:8-9), and Jesus had wanted to do for Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37). A question for all today: "To whom will you flee for help?" (Isaiah 10:3). David was being "bullied," but knew no counselors, advisors, teachers, social workers, or psychotherapists help like God!

In verses 10-14, David is the "prey" and his wicked, deadly enemies are "hunters" who, like lions, surround, boast ("roar" Isaiah 31:4), concentrate ("set their eyes"), desire ("eager to tear his prey"). David requests God to confront, cast down, deliver with His sword by His hand "from men." To accomplish His purpose, God can use (and has used!) worldly people who live only for their own existence, enjoy God's blessings, but leave their possessions to children they taught to be as worldly as they have been (Deuteronomy 32:41; Ezekiel 30:24-25; 32:10). It is a sad sight to see so many live only for this life and have nothing to show for it in eternity! When people are abundantly blessed, they forget the God who blessed them (Deuteronomy 8:11-18; Nehemiah 9:24-27)! Agur's request of God is pertinent:

"Two things I request of You (Deprive me not before I die): Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches--Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God" (Proverbs 30:7-9).

In verse 15, David is confident that, after this life, he will be satisfied to be with God. Job had expressed a similar belief (Job 19:26-27), and so today should Christians (1 John 3:2-3).

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## **Psalm 18**

**10/9/12**

Vs. 1-3 express David's complete confidence (faith) in God as Protector;  
Vs. 4-19 describe God as He delivered David from King Saul;  
Vs. 20-28 give the reasons why God delivered David;  
Vs. 21-45 describe how David "felt" to be "empowered" in that deliverance;  
Vs. 46-50 show David's acknowledgement that God is the real power!

This Psalm is exactly recorded in its historical setting in 2 Samuel 22:1-51.

In picturing God and His deliverance, anthropomorphisms and theophanies abound! An anthropomorphism (compound word, "anthropos"="human" + "morphos"="form, shape") is: "an interpretation of what is not human or personal in terms of human or personal characteristics." Theophanies (compound word, "theos"="deity" + "phaneros"=appearance) are also mixed into this language. According to Jesus Christ, "God is Spirit" (John 4:24) and "a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have" (Luke 24:39), therefore there is no physical form for God to be described, except for Jesus Christ as "God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16), and there is absolutely NO physical depiction given of Jesus Christ in Scripture! In Psalm 18, God actually isn't a: "rock," "fortress," "shield," except as physical terms to help us understand what He means to one in distress. God doesn't actually have: "ears," "nostrils," "mouth," "feet," except to help us visualize how He responds to us. God didn't actually move about on: "a cherub," or "wings of the wind," except to help us visualize how easily and quickly God does what He desires. By inspiring men to write the Scriptures, God has used their words and meanings to describe Himself to us in terms we may understand and appreciate, so that we may "know God" (1 Thessalonians 1:5-8; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Galatians 4:8-9; 1 John 4:6-7).

Psalm 18:20-28 explain that David strives to be righteous (obedient to God's Will), and God helps and sometimes delivers the righteous from dangerous enemies. David's profession that his hands were "clean" obviously didn't mean that he had never sinned, but that he had confessed and repented of his sins and was currently obedient. In the New Testament, only the self-deceived say, "we have no sin," and only liars say, "we have not sinned" (1 John 1:8-10). David was neither of these, for God said he was "a man after My own heart, who will do all My will" (Acts 13:22). Everyone should learn this lesson of the Bible: God doesn't expect us to live without sin, as Jesus did (1 Peter 2:22), but to continually repent of our sins, as David did, but today we must appeal to the blood of Jesus Christ to wash us clean (1 Peter 3:18-22).

David was delivered to keep God's promise alive to send His promised "seed" (2 Samuel 7:12-16, which was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, Romans 1:1-4) and to establish a people, both Jews/Israelites and Gentiles, which is the church of Christ and began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:29-36, 37-47). David lived under Moses' Law, which was for Israelites, not Gentiles (non-Jews/Israelites, Deuteronomy 5:1-6). Psalm 18:49 contemplated a worship in song that included Gentiles, which was not done until the New Testament church of Christ (Romans 1:16-17; Ephesians 2:11-22). The only time Jesus used music on earth, He sang with His brethren (Matthew 26:30).

But of all references to musical instruments used by David and Israelites when they lived under Moses' Law, there are only two which apply to the worship in the churches of Christ: Psalm 18:49, quoted in Romans 15:8-9; and Psalm 22:22, quoted in Hebrews 2:12, both of them specify "singing," or vocal music! "Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19) is the only authorized music in Christian worship.

Because Psalm 18:49 is a clear prophecy pointing to the church of Christ, which is the body of Christ (Colossians 1:18), one may re-read the entire Psalm and see a parallel between David's deliverance and God's concern for Christians today (as, for example, in the case of the Apostle Paul, 2 Corinthians 1:8-11).

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Psalm 19

10/10/12

Vs. 1-6 show the awesome power of God's Creative Word;
Vs. 7-10 point to the awesome qualities of God's Word;
Vs. 11-14 praise the awesome effect of God's Word in a human heart.

A "Christian Evidence Textbook" simply makes observations that prove God's existence by pointing to unanswerable facts. The Bible is, therefore, a "Christian Evidence Textbook." Verses 1-6 demonstrate this, pointing to "outer space" with its vastness, set stars, and searching sun. Certainly, no interior explosion ("big bang") but the superior Power ("God") could have perfectly placed it all. God spoke it into existence (Psalm 33:9; Hebrews 11:3; Genesis 1:16). It has taken America's Voyager 35 years to reach what is believed to be the outer edge of our "Solar System."

"Launched on Sept. 5, 1977, Voyager 1 is the most distant human-made object, at about 11 billion miles (18 billion kilometers) away from our sun. Launched Aug. 20, 1977, Voyager 2 is the longest operating spacecraft, past or present. It is 9 billion miles (15 billion kilometers) away from our sun"
10/4/12, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif.

Science is proving what the Bible has been telling us all the time: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The message is that everyone is without excuse who denies God's existence.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:18-20).

Psalm 19:4 is quoted in Romans 10:18 where it points to preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people, both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 10:12-21). The Gospel should be preached wherever the evidence for God exists!

"The heavens" speak of God, without words, by their vastness, the "stars" by their precise place, "the sun" by its function of providing heat, none of which is to be worshiped of itself, but all of which point to their Creator. Most navigation still depends upon the fixed position of some stars, and the sun's heat is essential to life on earth. Some ridicule, but continue to use, the description of the sun's "rising," but rather

than pointing to movement of the sun, it describes the rotation of the earth! The sun's "circuit," however, has been shown to be its own "orbit" through space! These remarks were made thousands of years before "technology" could prove them! Inspired words precede "scientific fact!"

Verses 7-10 give qualities of God's Word: 1) perfect "law" converts; 2) "testimony" educates; 3) "statutes" stabilize; 4) "commandment" clarifies; 5) "fear" motivates; 6) "judgments" secure a receptive soul. Properly understood, God's Word is more valuable than gold and sweeter than honey! No one can do better in life than to incorporate Bible teaching into one's heart.

Verses 11-14 show the understanding God's Word gives: 1) ample warning of dangers in life; 2) knowledge of sin; 3) humility of heart; 4) purity in praising the awesome God!

Truly, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Psalm 14:1).

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**Psalm 20**

**10/11/12**

Vs. 1-5 give "best wishes;"  
Vs. 6-9 give the only resolutions.

Verses 1-4 seem to be a pattern for prayer, and verse 5 could indicate that it is designed to be prayed publicly. This would be like Jesus teaching His disciples to pray by giving a prayer outline (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4). Reciting these verses is not prayer, but letting these thoughts guide one's own expression is prayer. Psalm 20:1-4 express the desire that God would accept the others praying in this same worship time, and respond by: answering, defending, sending help, strengthening, remembering their offerings, accepting their sacrifices, granting according to their heart, and fulfilling their purposes. God is not pictured as a "genii in a bottle," but that worshipers must properly approach God, as He has directed (John 4:24; Psalm 88:2; 95:2; 100:2). Job understood that "a hypocrite could not come before Him" (Job 13:16). Even under Moses' Law, God required more than the sacrifices of worship (which He had specified), but also a life of obedience consistent with His principles (Micah 6:6-8). The prayer's final request of God is in Psalm 20:5. Jesus taught that requesting forgiveness without giving forgiveness is vain (Matthew 6:14-15).

God's salvation is from Heaven, not in the devices or strengths of humans (Psalm 20:6). Military might is represented by horses and chariots (Psalm 20:7), and Israelite kings were forbidden to trust in such, but should have depended upon God and His Word (Deuteronomy 17:14-18). Judah left the LORD by trusting in an assortment of soothsayers, foreigners, silver and gold, horses, chariots, and idols (Isaiah 2:1, 6-9). One may choose to associate with those who bow before human might and power, or stand upright by the mightier power of the name of the LORD. The former is defeated before the battle, the latter is victorious without a fight! David knew this truth when he conquered Goliath with "the battle is the LORD'S, and He will give you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:45-50).

It does no good to pray for God's help when we will not trust Him for the answer! "For according to the number of your cities were your gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars to that shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal. So do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer

for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry out to Me because of their trouble. What has My beloved to do in My house, Having done lewd deeds with many? And the holy flesh has passed from you. When you do evil, then you rejoice" (Jeremiah 11:13-15). Many ignore what God says about proper worship, but want God to hear their prayers of need. Listen carefully: "One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination" (Proverbs 28:9).

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Psalm 21

10/12/12

Vs. 1-6 praise God for all David has already received;
Vs. 7-13 show David's confidence in God's defense.

It does no good to continually request favors of God unless, and until, one praises God for what has already been done! David's joy and reason to rejoice are because God has already: vs.2) granted his heart's desire and voiced request; v.3) met him with "blessings of goodness" including his gold crown; v.4) given him length of life; v.5) placed "honor and majesty" upon him; v.6) given David much for which to praise God. All of these would be fulfilled in Jesus Christ (2 Samuel 7:8-17; Acts 2:22-36), but David would not even be king without the blessings of God. Wicked Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, learned this the hard way (Daniel 4:28-37), and Jesus said as much to the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate (John 19:10-12; Luke 3:1; Matthew 27:2).

In His pattern for prayer, Jesus taught disciples to "hallow" God's name and His Will before any personal request. The Apostle Paul taught "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colosse" (Colossians 1:2) to: "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2).

That God had "given him his heart's desire" or "not withheld the request of his lips" does not picture God as some "Santa Claus" but rather pictures David as a knowledgeable believer. David knew what requests were within God's Will to grant. Requests given to God must NOT be contrary to His Will. Even in the New Testament, those in covenant relationship with God must make submissive requests: "And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:22). "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14). Clearly, God's Will must come before our requests, as Jesus showed: "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will'" (Matthew 26:39). All of our plans must be submitted to God's Will (James 4:13-15).

Psalm 21:7-12 show that David's enemies were God's enemies and David left them in God's Hands to be dealt with justly. In the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 32:35) and in the New (Romans 12:17-21), God still reserves "vengeance" for Himself against His enemies. God is to be praised for whenever He determines to act (Psalm 21:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

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Vs. 1-21 describe the cross of Jesus Christ with details that must have been inspired by God, for this was written several hundred years before Jesus lived on earth; Vs. 22-31 describe the church of Christ, which was purchased by Jesus' blood.

The very words Jesus uttered on His cross as He spoke for sinners quote Psalm 22:1 (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34). God does not forsake those who seek Him (Psalm 9:10), so God didn't actually forsake Jesus on the cross, but Jesus was vocalizing the agony of a sinful soul as He took the sinners' place. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation... For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:19, 21).

Psalm 22:2-5 probably refer to Jesus, "who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:7-8). God let His only begotten Son go to the cross, in contrast to the "fathers" who were heard, and delivered when they cried out to God in Egypt (Exodus 3:7-10).

Psalm 22:6-7 show the lowly assessment those who crucified Jesus Christ had of Him. Isaiah predicted Jesus would be "despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3), and Matthew mentions passers-by blasphemed Jesus (Matthew 27:39), Luke adds Jewish rulers' sneers (Luke 23:35). Psalm 22:8 is almost verbatim the words disbelievers hurled toward Jesus on the cross (Matthew 27:43). Psalm 22:9-10 certainly show that Jesus Christ learned to trust God while on his mother's breast, which should be an example for all godly mothers. Faith is home-built and cannot be "hired out" to grandparents, nannies, day-care, or baby-sitters!

Psalm 22:16 did not apply to David, but came to pass at Jesus' cross. The Apostle Thomas specifically mentioned, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe" (John 20:25), which the other Apostles had already done (John 20:20).

Psalm 22:18 did not apply to David, but is quoted as fulfilled in Jesus' cross. "Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: 'They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots'" (Matthew 27:35; see also John 19:23-24). This is not the first time garments were divided, but the first time they became the stakes in gambling, also!

Psalm 22:22 is one of 2 verses in Psalms that describe the music of the church of Christ. This is quoted in Hebrews 2:12, and Psalm 18:49 is quoted in Romans 15:9. All references to "instruments of music like David" are left in the law of Moses which was nailed to Jesus' cross (Colossians 2:14-16).

Psalm 22:23-31 do not describe the limited reign of David, but instead describe the world-wide extent of the church of Christ we read about in the New Testament. The church of Christ was purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), so since He gave Himself for the church (Ephesians 5:25-27), all who are saved by obeying the Gospel "were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of

life" (Romans 6:3-4). Disciples were to be the baptized "of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19-20).

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Psalm 23

10/16/12

Vs. 1 states the premise of the whole Psalm: If the LORD is an individual's "shepherd," Vs. 2-5 list the many responsibilities the LORD has undertaken for the "sheep;" Vs. 6 teaches the permanent blessing that comes to a faithful sheep.

Psalm 23 is the most requested Bible passage to read at a funeral. It so speaks consolation that many a "battered soul" has found comfort in the troubling time of death. Once again, as a prophet, David writes of his "Lord" who was yet to come. Jesus Christ is this "shepherd," as the Apostle Peter wrote: "For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls (1 Peter 2:25).

Vs. 1 "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."

The sad fact and harsh reality, however, is that not everybody is a "sheep" protected by the LORD as "shepherd!" Jesus set the limit: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27). Jesus set the price: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Since "the church of God [is that] which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28), then everyone saved by the blood of Jesus Christ has been added to His church (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 2:38, 41, 47)! Those who are in the church of Christ must "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" and are promised food, drink, and clothing (Matthew 6:31-33).

Vs. 2 "He makes me to lie down in green pastures;"

A shepherd removes danger from the pasture. Jesus destroyed the work of the Devil (1 John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14-15).

Vs. 2 "He leads me beside the still waters."

Jesus spoken word calmed stormy seas (Mark 4:37-39), and His written word does the same (Colossians 3:15-17).

Vs. 3 "He restores my soul;"

Jesus healed bodies by miracles (Luke 4:40), and now heals souls who obey His Gospel (1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:20-22).

Vs. 3 "He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake."

Moses' Law did not contain "the promise by faith in Jesus Christ" which now saves (Galatians 3:21-29).

Vs. 4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me;" Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2 in Matthew 4:12-17 as He preached His coming kingdom. Jesus Christ is the light for the darkness and despair of sin (2 Corinthians 1:9-10; Luke 1:76, 79; John 1:1-5, 8-9; 8:12). The ominous nearness of death is overcome by nearness to the resurrected Jesus Christ.

Vs. 4 "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

Jesus has the rod of authority to rule (Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 1:8 from Psalm 45:6-7) and the staff of protection (John 10:26-30).

Vs. 5 "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;"

Jesus established His supper for disciples to be eaten each week (Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:20, 23-26; Acts 20:7).

Vs. 5 "You anoint my head with oil;"

Honored guests were perfumed (Luke 7:46) and Jesus' disciples at His table are dedicated with His blood (Hebrews 10:19-22).

Vs. 5 "My cup runs over."

Jesus provides the "living water" (Revelation 7:13-17).

Vs. 6 "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever."

Only Jesus Christ can promise "goodness and mercy" in this life, and that one may "dwell in the house of the LORD Forever." Jesus provides His disciples "goodness" (Romans 15:14) and "mercy" (Matthew 5:7; 1 Timothy 1:12-16) then "eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30; John 10:27-28).

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**Psalm 24**

**10/19/12**

Vs. 1-2 identify God's Creative Power;

Vs. 3-6 identify who may approach God's Presence;

Vs. 7-10 identify the God of All.

Vs. 1-is quoted in 1 Corinthians 10:26 and 28 to teach that a Christian can eat whatever is sold in the marketplace or set before them on the table, because all belongs to the Lord. God is Creator of all, or else He is the Creator of none! Every study of this Creation discovers planning, intricacies, in-bred intelligence, and yet vastness which could only be accounted for by a Creative Power as magnificent as God (Acts 14:17; Romans 1:20). The dry land stands out of water (Genesis 1:9; 2 Peter 3:5-6), and the Flood in Noah's day required "all the fountains of the great deep" to be broken up (Genesis 7:11-12).

Vs. 3 asks a question already dealt with in Psalm 15:1.

Vs. 4 requires "clean hands" (not continually sinning), "pure heart" (not corrupted by cynicism and distrust), not idolatrous (not devoted to material substances), not deceitfully swearing (not using God's name "in vain" or emptily). Frequent sprinklings of "Oh, My God!" would qualify for this condemnation!

Vs. 5 gives benefits for those who qualify themselves by accepting God's cleansing, now through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:20-23).

Vs. 6 uses "Jacob" to represent God's people, applied in both Old and New Testaments: 1) the man through whom they came (Genesis 32:28); 2) the people of his descent (Genesis 46:8-30); 3) the New Testament church of Christ (Romans 9:6-8; Galatians 3:26-29; 6:14-17).

Vs. 7-10 single out the LORD (Hebrew, "Jehovah") as the "King of glory." The call is for people to prepare for the LORD to be permitted inside, as the ark of the covenant represented His presence in the Old Testament (Exodus 29:38-45), and the church of Christ does today (1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 1:1; 6:14-16; Ephesians 2:17-22).

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Psalm 25

10/18/12

Vs. 1-7 acknowledge wrong attitudes that keep a soul from its God;
Vs. 8-14 show God does help those who want to change;
Vs. 15-22 appeal to God for His help.

Verses 1-3 show who should be ashamed. God promised that His people "shall never be put to shame" (Joel 2:26-27), and both Apostles, Paul and Peter quote: "As it is written: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame'" (Romans 9:33; 1 Peter 2:6). Let sinners who deal treacherously be the ones "put to shame!" "Shame" is a sense of guilt, an exercise of conscience in mature people, who should "by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14). If "shame" is counseled away, people have no conscience.

Verses 4-7 appeal to God for help by showing His "ways," "paths," "truth," "tender mercies," "lovingkindnesses," as He has always done, and forgiving our youthful transgressions. This is a timeless "prayer" and all of us may identify with David's plea.

Verses 8-14 identify whom God can help: "the humble," "such as keep His covenant and His testimonies," "the man that fears the LORD," and "those who fear Him." In other words, God responds to those who respond to Him. Jesus taught in parables because some would refuse to hear, understand, and turn to Him to be healed (Matthew 13:13- 15). Jesus further said, "'He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God" (John 8:47). This is what David taught in Psalm 25:14: "The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant." Though they can (and must!) sinners do not turn to God, Jesus Christ or the Bible (John 3:19-21). God "now commands all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).

In Verses 15-22, David's sensitivity to his own sins cried out for God to "forgive all my sins," and requested comfort from God's Hands. The last verse appeals to God on behalf of the rest of God's people then, Israelites. We cannot help others with the "speck" in their eye when we have a "plank" in our own, as Jesus taught (Matthew 7:3-5). We must be sensitive to our own sins first, and then we may help others overcome their sins (Galatians 6:1-2).

The uplifted soul today has obeyed Jesus' Gospel (Romans 6:3-5). The Apostle Paul wrote: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:1-3).

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**Psalm 26**

**10/22/12**

Vs. 1-5 state David's evaluation of his efforts to please God;  
Vs. 6-10 ask God to notice David has avoided sinners' influence;  
Vs. 11-12 give David's knowledge of the safest place to be.

In verse 1, God is asked to give David a "passing grade" because of his "track record" of integrity (as a righteous man, Proverbs 20:7), trust in the LORD (Proverbs 3:5), and determination to not sin (1 John 5:18). This Psalm must have been written when

the youthful David was chased by King Saul, and before David, as King, met Bathsheba!

In verse 2, David requests to be "examined" and "passed" because of his "mind and heart."

Verses 3-5 repeat the disassociation with sinners in Psalm 1:1. Today, it never is good for Christians to run with the wrong crowd. "Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits'" (1 Corinthians 15:33). One is self-deceived who thinks that by running with the wrong crowd, it will be improved and the Christian not stained with its sin! Becoming a Christian often means a change of friends: "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (1 Peter 4:3-5).

Verses 6-8 describe David's awareness that he must cleanse himself to approach God in worship. This is unchanged for Christians, for James said: "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded" (James 4:7- 8). Jesus told Peter, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8). Jesus cleanses sinners today through His baptism (Colossians 2:11-14).

Verses 9-10 make the appeal for the obedient to not be thrown into the same judgment with the disobedient, who are described as "sinners," "bloodthirsty men," "sinister" schemers, bribers. The New Testament reassurance this won't happen is found in 2 Timothy 2:16-19.

Verses 11-12 re-state David's will to continue doing what he knows is right and approved by God, and that sound footing is found in congregating with God's people. Since one person is not a "congregation," it is evident that associations with others who strive to please God should replace socialization with sinners. The New Testament "assembly" (church) who "sing" (not "and play" musical instruments!) are called "brethren" by Jesus in Hebrews 2:11-12. One who is converted to Christ should attend all the church he can!

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Psalm 27

10/23/12

- Vs. 1-3-David's confidence casts out fear of men;
- Vs. 4-6-David's "church time" creates closeness to God;
- Vs. 7-10-David's care is in God's Hands;
- Vs. 11-14-David's courage will overcome in life.

In verses 1-3, God's "light" shows the way and "salvation" gives security, therefore: "Whom shall I fear?" This is a thought continued throughout the Bible, from God's promise to Isaac (Genesis 26:24) to the New Testament church of Christ in Smyrna (Revelation 2:10). Jesus said: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). The Apostle Paul taught: "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). Truly, a soul who is following His "light," secure in God's

salvation, should have no fear of mankind! That promise, though, is not for those walking in the darkness of sin! "The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble" (Proverbs 4:19). Jesus' claims to be "the light of the world" (John 8:12) and that He could forgive sins (Luke 5:24-25) were also claims that He was God in the flesh (1 John 4:14-15), which claims God proved true by Jesus' resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:3-4).

In verses 4-6, since "church" simply means "assembly," then David's "one thing" he "desired of the LORD" was to be in the assembly of God's people for worship! Since "the secret place of His tabernacle" represented God's presence on earth (Exodus 26:33; 40:21; Leviticus 16:2), David finds the most secure place on earth "in time of trouble" is in God's house! "The house of the LORD" (today is the church of Christ, 1 Timothy 3:15), "His temple" (today is the church of Christ, Ephesians 2:19-22) will be a Christian's one desire. This focused purpose in life is also what Jesus taught for today's Christians: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). And no matter what the trouble, David will "sing praises to the LORD," which is vocal without other instrumentation. This is exactly what Paul and Silas did from prison (Acts 16:23-25).

From verses 7-10 we learn God will not turn away from those who "seek" Him. Jesus stressed further not to simply use words "Lord, Lord" (Matthew 7:21), but "strive to enter through the narrow gate" (Luke 13:24). Salvation is not through a "sinner's prayer" but through obedience to God's will of repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38)! This devotion to God's will must take precedence over family ties (Luke 14:27) and, though "hatred" is not required (Matthew 10:37), parents may (and have!) renounced their child for its religious conviction to follow Jesus Christ. In verse 8, David reaffirms his covenant agreement with God, thus his faithful intention.

Then, in verses 11-14, David shows that by learning God's way, he may ignore his enemies and keep his faith intact, fully confident that God will reward faithfulness. Thus we have our word of courage: "Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!" How we need courage of conviction and patience of faith in God today!

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## **Psalm 28**

**10/24/12**

- Vs. 1-2 appeal to God for a hearing;
- Vs. 3-5 justify God's handling of the wicked;
- Vs. 6-7 voice David's praise for God's response;
- Vs. 8-9 include the rest of God's people of faith.

Verses 1-2 express the panic that overcomes us when we keenly feel our need for God, but because our sins may have separated us from Him, we need to know He has heard. In the New Testament, Paul desired "that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Timothy 2:8). Prayer should be from those whose hands are engaged in holy living (Hebrews 12:14).

Verses 3-5 approve whatever God does to the wicked, "who speak peace to their neighbors, But evil is in their hearts." No one is authorized by God to: 1) promise "You shall have peace" to those who "despise" God; or 2) encourage people to ignore God's Word by promising them "No evil shall come upon you," but for them to "only follow

your heart," "do as you please," or "let no one tell you 'you cannot'" (Jeremiah 23:16-18). The Bible warns of those, who "when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage" (2 Peter 2:18-19). Wars abound while worldly leaders ignore the Prince of Peace to have their "peace processes;" sin abounds while religious leaders slice down the Gospel's doctrine to "pray and do good works;" "professors and theologians" deny the Bible's authenticity while proclaiming their own "scholarship;" and, then, all wonder why people don't go to church or read the Bible!

"Though a sinner does evil a hundred times, and his days are prolonged, yet I surely know that it will be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him" (Ecclesiastes 8:12). God is justified to "Render to them what they deserve." The practice of sin "deserves" the punishment for sin. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light" (John 3:19). To "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" Jesus said, "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?" (Matthew 23:33). Jesus came to deliver the obedient from that punishment, as stated by Paul: "Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us" (2 Corinthians 1:9-10).

Verses 6-7 should encourage us to look around and acknowledge what God has done to answer our prayers.

Verses 8-9 show David was not selfish, because he included the rest of God's people in his prayer for assistance. God is not the God of one person, but of any and all who "fear Him" (Acts 10:34-35; Romans 3:28-30). Therefore individual prayers do not overrule "the will of God" (Romans 1:9-10).

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Psalm 29

10/25/12

Vs. 1-2 give praise to God;
Vs. 3-9 emphasize listening, for God speaks;
Vs. 10-11 show God is superior.

Verses 1-2 were spoken by David on the occasion of the ark of God being set in the midst of the tabernacle (1 Chronicles 16:1, 25-29). In praise of God, David acknowledged God's superiority of His: 1) glory; 2) strength; 3) Name; 4) beauty of holiness.

1) God's glory to the Israelites on Mount Sinai was "like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain" (Exodus 24:16-17), and is the brightness of Heaven, itself (Revelation 21:23). At Jesus' birth, this brilliance surrounded the shepherds (Luke 2:9) and will accompany Jesus' Second coming (Matthew 25:31). By obeying the Gospel (Acts 18:8), the Corinthians (and all saints! 1 Corinthians 1:2) enable God's glory to shine in their hearts (2 Corinthians 4:6).

2) God's strength is unmatched, for He is the strength: of Israel (1 Samuel 15:28-29); of Jesus Christ (Micah 5:2-4; Matthew 2:4-6); and of a Christian's human effort to love God (Mark 12:30).

3) God's Holy Name had been profaned by the house of Israel in their land, so God removed them from it. He returned them to it in Ezra-Nehemiah, to "sanctify My great

name" (Ezekiel 36:16-24). In Ezekiel 36:28, God promised them, "Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God." (This last phrase is used of God's people in the church of Christ (2 Corinthians 6:16).) The Israelites dwelt in that land when Jesus was born and baptized of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-2, 15-16). When Jesus' kingdom was established (Colossians 1:13), the Gospel was "for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16-17). The Gospel of Christ gave the Jews opportunity to be spiritually circumcised when they were baptized into Christ (Colossians 2:11-12) and correct their sinful ways (Romans 2:23-24, 28-29). 4) Since God is holy ("untouched by evil"), the high priest under Moses' Law wore it on a forehead plate when he approached God's presence (Exodus 28:36-38); today, Jesus Christ is our holiness (Hebrews 7:26-27); thus, Christians should try to live apart from sin (1 Peter 1:13-16). The expression, "His holiness," is only used of God, Himself (Psalm 60:6; 108:7; Amos 4:2; Hebrews 12:10), and should never be used for, or accepted by, any human on earth! It is "profanity" to so do!

Verses 3-9 are similar to 1 Chronicles 16:30-33, and demonstrate ways the "voice of the LORD" is like the fury of a rainstorm:

- 1) It is "powerful" and "majestic" like "thunder" (John 12:27-30);
- 2) It can make even Lebanon's cedars "splinter" and "skip;"
- 3) It can strike like lightning;
- 4) Its instruction brought water from rock in Kadesh (Exodus 17:1-7);
- 5) It can cause animals to birth, denude forests, and create awe in humans.

Verses 10-11 remind us that the God who destroyed the world by flood in Noah's day (Genesis 6-9), has never been dethroned as Ruler of the world (Daniel 4:28-37), uses His power to also strengthen His people, and let them live in peace (1 Chronicles 22:7-9). There is NO reason to believe human government has (or can!) replace God in these matters.

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**Psalm 30**

**10/26/12**

Vs. 1-5 describe David's relief from God's anger;  
 Vs. 6-10 describe David's despair;  
 Vs. 11-12 describe David's reward of elation.

This Psalm is David's expression of relief that God had not been harsher. After some successes in wars (1 Chronicles 20), David's false sense of security as King caused him "to number Israel" (take a census), that is, assess his nation's strength as if his victories caused peace through power. God had forbidden him to do so (1 Chronicles 21:1-22:5), for the victories were the LORD's, not David's. The language of Psalm 30 easily fits this historical event!

In verses 1-3, for David, God had:

- 1) lifted him above his foes;
- 2) heard his cries and healed him;
- 3) spared him from death.

**1)** David never forgot (and neither should we!) that God provides protection from enemies. ALL peace is because of God's doing, not man's! "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his



fathers" (Acts 13:36). Truth in Solomon's book said: "When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Proverbs 16:7).

**2)** No matter what the sin is, if repented of, God hears and heals! God said, through the last prophet of the Old Testament: "'Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,' Says the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 3:7). Jesus made one exception to this: "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation" (Mark 3:28-29). Truly, God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

**3)** To be "kept alive" and not enter the "grave" or the "pit," was a "near death" experience for David. To be "near death" yet remain alive means one has not in any way crossed over and returned, for that would be "resurrection," not "near death." Certainly, one may be so close to dying that his/her mind conjures up what it may be like, but it is imaginary, not real! Jesus plainly stated that none may cross back to life once they have died (Luke 16:19-31), and it is false doctrine to teach that the general resurrection has already begun or occurred (2 Timothy 2:16-18)!

David's call for rejoicing (verses 4-5) should be a natural response of Christians today when they realize how much worse things would have been had not God helped! "Saints of His" (people devoted to serving God, today all Christians, 1 Corinthians 1:2) live in God's favor, for God's anger at their sin is for "a moment." Most have this mistakenly reversed, for they think God is always angry with them and they "earn" His pleasure moment at a time! Such a mistake causes much frustration and faithlessness. Truth as stated in Psalm 30:5 is much easier to live with.

In verse 6, David makes a mistake of arrogance common to governments: some victories or successes "prove" that "might makes right." The opposite is true: right makes might, for God is on the side of the "right!" Ungodly leaders have faith in their weapons without relying on God, while godly leaders maintain faith in God without relying on weapons! Jesus taught, "all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matthew 26:52). Lesson: Don't let armed might go to your head!

In verses 7-10, David acknowledges that the real power is of God, and only by God's "mercy" and "help" has David won any battle. A question for all today should be: What good are we if we are dead? (Psalm 30:9). Praising and serving God must be on this side of death, and we must choose to live for Him while we are alive! We should become a "living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1), not seek Him after death.

In verses 11-12, David encourages everyone else to join him in praising God "and not be silent." The lesson for Christians today is: "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Hebrews 13:15).

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Psalm 31

10/29/12

Vs. 1-8 have David praising God for delivering him from his enemies;
Vs. 9-18 continue to send the distress signal to God that He, only can help;
Vs. 19-24 reaffirm that the goodness of God outlasts the "badness" of mankind.

In verses 1-8, David describes the total confidence he has in God. He trusts God to be his security or safe place when enemies are after him. God is David's "rock of refuge," "fortress of defense," escape from their "net." So safe is David that he expresses it

thusly: "Into Your hand I commit my spirit." As Jesus Christ launched from His cross, leaving the land of the living, He quoted this expression of confidence that He, too, trusted God's "righteousness:" "And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.' Having said this, He breathed His last" (Luke 23:46). One trusted God's care through life, the other through death. There is never a time, in the life of those who are led and guided by God's will, that God cannot be trusted to act in their best interest! That God had set David's feet "in a wide place" showed his liberation to move about.

With verses 9-13, David's attention turns to his attrition cause by his enemies: "my eye wastes away with grief," "my years [spent] with sighing," "strength fails," "bones waste away." The he mentions the tactics they use: "reproach," "repulsive," "flee from me," "forgotten," "slander," "fear." But David maintains unwavering confidence in God in verses 14-16. "But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD; I say, 'You are my God.'" David trusts the punishment of the wicked into the hands of God in verses 17-18.

God's wonderful reward for the faithfully obedient is discussed in verses 19-24. The bliss is captured in the statement: "Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! For the LORD preserves the faithful, And fully repays the proud person." Those who fear God ("and keep His commandments," Acts 10:34-35) will be protected "secretly in a pavilion," also referred to as "a strong city." The point being, God will protect His people, and punish the persecutors. Today, the church of Christ is such a "refuge," for Jesus Christ is "the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence." (Colossians 1:18). Only those buried by baptism into the death of Christ (Romans 6:3-4) could be described thusly: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:1-4).

Verse 22 should remind us to not draw final judgments too quickly. David had judged himself separated from God, while God responded to David's request, thus showing David's assessment had been wrongly made.

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**Psalm 32**

**10/30/12**

- Vs. 1-2 show happiness is the result of knowing God has removed one's sins;
- Vs. 3-5a vividly portray the personal price of unconfessed sin;
- Vs. 5b-7 describe the great release felt when sin is forgiven;
- Vs. 8-11 give God's description of those whose attitude is rewarded.

It is impossible for anyone to question David's authorship of this Psalm, because the Holy Spirit-inspired Apostle Paul quoted Psalm 32:1-2 and had said "David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:" (Romans 4:6-8). Those whose arrogant "scholarship" floats them above the inspired Word of God need to be deflated. Paul's Romans passage is showing that God justified "the ungodly" by faith before and after the Law of Moses, regardless of circumcision. Under the Gospel of Jesus Christ: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law [of Moses, jtpII]" (Romans 3:28). Abraham was justified by his faith (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3) before he was circumcised, Jews and Gentiles can now be justified by faith without circumcision

(Romans 4:9-12), thus Moses' Law (which included circumcision) is not effective today. Romans 4 does not include the essentiality of baptism, but Romans 6 does!

Psalm 32:1-2 shows how really complex sin, and its forgiveness, is with the terms:  
1) "transgression" (violating the constraint of law) must be "forgiven" (taken away);  
2) "sin" (missing the mark, falling short) must be "covered" (veiled, taken from sight);  
3) "iniquity" (turned out of proper course, perverted) must not be "imputed" (held responsible);  
4) "guile" (trickery, fraud, deception) must be omitted from character (as this phrase has been left out of the passage in Romans!).

In Exodus 34:7, the LORD is "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," which Jesus Christ now does (2 Timothy 2:19; 1 John 3:5).

In verses 3-5, sin does inward, personal damage, so Moses' advice was: "take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 23:32). From Solomon's Proverbs, we glean: "The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1); "He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13); "A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones" (Proverbs 17:22). The New Testament includes this principle: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Sinners who still have active consciences should feel like David describes. Counselors, psychologists, parents, pastors, and psychiatrists should not minimize the awfulness of sin.

Sound psychiatry could not be better described than David does in Psalm 32:5-7, because most issues are the result of spiritual problems, and are solved when a person is reconciled before God.

Verses 8-11 re-emphasize that God expects obedience to be voluntary (and not forced like horses and mules) and will be rewarded, but "many sorrows to the wicked."

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Psalm 33

10/31/12

Vs. 1-5a show happiness centers on God;
Vs. 5b-9 credit God with creating the Earth so remarkably;
Vs. 10-17 remind the "higher powers" that there is "The Highest Power;"
Vs. 18-22 show God's pleasure in "those who fear Him."

"Praise from the upright is beautiful" when rightly done. "Making melody" with "the harp" or "instrument of ten strings" has been replaced among Christians with "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). David introduced musical instruments into worship by his own authority (1 Chronicles 15:16) and God authorized none of them among Christians. David's "harp" has been changed to "heart." To sing "a new song" adds life to worship, not same old ritualistic repetitions. On the Earth, ALL "right," "truth," "righteousness," "justice" is because of God, so that: "The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD."

The earth is full of the Creative Genius of the LORD, as well. Verses 6-9 capsule Genesis, chapter 1. God (Hebrew, Elohim) created it from nothing (Genesis 1:1), using only His "word" (later known as Jesus, Hebrews 1:1-2), "breath of His

mouth" (The Holy Spirit, Genesis 1:2), and therefore everyone living on God's world should "stand in awe of Him." The terms (1) "made," (2) "gathers," and (3) "stood fast" show (1) the Creation from nothing, (2) design and orderliness, and (3) scientific law controlling it, respectively. The only adequate, truly scientific, and humbling explanation of "the heavens and the earth" is written in God's autobiographical book, The Bible! The marvels of Creation are not to be worshiped, but should cause all scientific studies to point to the Creator!

Verses 10-17 explain why mankind has not devised a workable plan for living on God's earth without acknowledging God! The "alphabet powers" (U.N., U.S., U.K., U.A.R., U.S.S.R., E.U., NYSE, WTO), or "short named powers" (Nazism, Marxism, Islam-ism, ad infinitum), fall short of world domination because "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Daniel 4:32). There is no "governing authority" unless it is "ordained of God" (Romans 13:1-2). Psalm 33:12 gives the reason America (like nations before) has fallen on hard times, for its Government has banned God, Jesus Christ, Bible, and Christianity from its public assemblies, public education, public knowledge, thereby making God its enemy! Since "No king is saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength" (Psalm 33:16), the American boast that it has "the strongest military on earth" becomes nothing more than false bravado. A return to God in Government circles is the only remedy. "Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

Godless Government doesn't keep the country going, for "the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy" (Psalm 33:18). God keeps them alive and helps them through famine, therefore God is to be praised, NOT Government! "Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield."

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**Psalm 34**

**11/1/12**

- Vs. 1-3 encourage praise for God whenever one has avoided death;
- Vs. 4-10 have David include his situation and deliverance with all who "fear God;"
- Vs. 11-16 give what it takes to "fear God" and be included in His deliverance;
- Vs. 17-22 state what wonderful security one has who "fears God."

This Psalm, by all accounts, was written by David after the incident 1 Samuel 21:10-15. There, David had fled to Gath (the home of the now deceased giant, Goliath, 1 Samuel 17), was recognized, but he faked insanity and was tossed aside as useless! In Psalm 34 David praises God for giving him the ability to avoid certain death.

In verses 1-3, the words "bless the LORD," "His praise," "boast in the LORD," "magnify the LORD," and "exalt His name" show how much effort it takes to "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" (1 Peter 3:15). Profanity is the lazy way to use God's name! Frequent "OMG" is profanity!

David's personal acclamation ("I sought the LORD") was as one of the "they" ("the humble" verse 2). David is the "poor man" (verse 6) included with those whom "the angel of the LORD encamps all around...and delivers them" (verse 7). In short, God works with all those who "fear Him" and not just special cases such as David! In verse 8, "taste and see" is continued for Christians in 1 Peter 2:2-3. Critics from "outside" cannot authoritatively reject the Gospel unless and until they have tried following

Jesus Christ for themselves! Tasting is more than sampling in the church of Christ (Hebrews 6:4, 5). Psalm 34:10 is applied by Jesus Christ to His disciples (Matthew 6:27-33).

Verses 11-16 are such a good outline of what it means to have "the fear of the LORD" that the inspired Apostle Peter included these verses in his epistle (1 Peter 3:10-13) for Christians. These are some of the "commandments" to keep when one "fears God" (Acts 10:34-35).

While extolling God's protection, the statement is made: "He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken" (verse 20). This is the description of Jesus Christ on the cross: "For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, Not one of His bones shall be broken" (John 19:36). While soldiers broke the bones of those on the cross to hasten their death, Jesus, mercifully, providentially, died before this could be done to Him, thereby fulfilling Psalm 34:20. The care of God for those who "fear Him" extends even to the point of death. The certainty of God's care is expressed in Psalm 34:22: "The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned." This certainty is for God's care, not for the certainty of the faithfulness of those who "fear Him." Jesus spoke of God's certainty of care when He said: ""My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:27-28). God will do His part, but the "sheep" must continue to "hear" and "follow." Nothing is said in Scripture that guarantees that the "sheep" will never stray! There are those who would argue that no sheep could ever go astray, but Jesus said it can (Matthew 18:11-14)! I believe Jesus.

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Psalm 35

11/2/12

- Vs. 1-8 contain David's appeal for God to deal with his enemies;
- Vs. 9-18 depict how merciless those enemies are;
- Vs. 19-28 contrast the effects of God's intervention in the enemies and in David.

David's frequent appeals for protection from his enemies in his Psalms is a reminder to all of us that the doers of good have always had enemies. Beginning with Cain and Abel (1 John 3:11-13), those obedient to God are hated by those who are not. Jesus Christ, the best man of all explained it: "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:18-19). Psalm 35:7 no doubt reminded David of Joseph's brothers (Genesis 37:4,5,8,11,18,23-25) whose "pit" held him till he was sold into Egypt (Acts 7:9). Hatred was in Joseph's brothers, but not caused by Joseph's actions. No cheap, tawdry video today causes the hatred that burns in the hearts of those who are taught to believe someone else is blessed by God while they are not. Good-haters are God-haters! "A disciple is not above his teacher" (Luke 6:40). Psalm 35:19 perfectly stated the case for the perfect Savior being hated by the Jews in His day: ""But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause'" (John 15:25).

Verses 9-10 use "poor and the needy" to show heartlessness in those who would overpower the poor and steal from the needy. Verses 11-14 mention that enemies: make false charges (verse 11), "reward me evil for good" (verse 12), and rejoiced at his stumbling (verses 15-16), but "when they were sick" David's concern was "bowed

down heavily, as one who mourns for his mother" (verse 14). David asks God how much longer this will go on (verses 17-18), the same question asked by those Christians killed in the Jewish persecution (Acts 8:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16; Revelation 6:9-11) and answered in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (Luke 11:49-51; 21:21-24). It is right and proper to pray that God will deal with evil-doers, both in this life and the one to come. Of those who slander the truth: "Their condemnation is just" (Romans 3:8). Christians' faith which endures persecutions and tribulations "is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you" (2 Thessalonians 1:5-6).

In verses 19-28, some 5 times, David says, "let them not..." That is, he wants God to stop what they are doing to him. This is not persecution of those who do good, but of those "who are wrongfully my enemies" and deceitfully have "opened their mouth wide against me, And said, 'Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it'" (verses 19-21). Anyone today who preaches and teaches only what the Bible says knows this feeling when liars make false charges, and can identify these enemies by name. "Therefore by their fruits you will know them" (Matthew 7:20). A person is known by his enemies, as well as by his friends! Paul pointed out that anyone who becomes our enemy when we teach the truth may be using "sectarian" tactics to make us like them: "Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them" (Galatians 4:16-17). Indeed, this Psalm is timeless in application!

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## Psalm 36

11/5/12

Vs. 1-4 describe the character of evil people;  
Vs. 5-9 contrast the wonderful character of God;  
Vs. 10-12 appeal to God for His goodness.

Verses 1-4 identify "the transgression of the wicked," or moral corruption: 1) no fear of God; 2) no conscience; 3) no truth in his mouth; 4) no good deeds; 5) dreams and desires evil; 6) does not hate evil. Any of these character defects bodes ill, and all of them together complete the picture of someone truly hard-hearted.

- 1)** To conclude the universality of sin and the need for the Savior, Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul described the wicked concluding with Psalm 36:1, "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:9-18). Putting the "fear of God" into someone motivates him/her to be saved (2 Corinthians 7:1).
- 2)** Since the common nonbiblical expression is, "flattery will get you nowhere," even those in the world know flattering ourselves about our sins will get us nowhere with God! Jesus pictured the problem by showing how people want to move their brother's "speck" of a sin while a "plank" of sin is covering our own eyes (Matthew 7:1-5).
- 3)** Truth in conversation matters, for words come from the heart (Matthew 12:33-37), and if truth doesn't matter there is no basis for converting to Christ (John 14:6).
- 4)** Jesus Christ noted that the wise person "hears these sayings of Mine, and does them" (Matthew 7:24). One who ceases to be wise, ceases to do good, and vice versa.
- 5)** Evil dreams lead to evil schemes. Give it a rest. "Do they not go astray who devise evil? But mercy and truth belong to those who devise good" (Proverbs 14:22).
- 6)** "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil" (Proverbs 8:13). But the heart must replace the negative with the positive: "Hate evil, love good" (Amos 5:15).

News commentator, Paul Harvey, used to follow a bad news story with a good one, which he preceded with, "But wash your ears out with this." David seems to be doing exactly that in verses 5-9. Having seen the worst of character in mankind, he looks at the best character of all: the LORD! His "mercy" and "faithfulness" reach upward, away from sinners; His "righteousness" goes higher than mountains; His "judgments" show depths of care, even to preserving "man and beast"; His "lovingkindness" creates trust in human hearts; His "fullness" of house appeals to our need for respite; His "pleasure" flows like a river; His "fountain of life" sustains; and His "light" shows us the way. All of these characteristics may be seen in Jesus Christ. What is not to like about God and His Son?

In verses 10-12, David determines his decision between wicked people or the wonderful God. May God "continue" what He already is doing for David's relationship with him; May God stop the "foot of pride" and the "hand of the wicked" from their onslaught; And may "workers of iniquity" continue to fall so as not to rise again! David wants to go away from sinners who seek his destruction and toward the God who loves him.

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Psalm 37

11/6/12

Vs. 1-6 discourage frustrating comparison of do-gooders with evildoers;
Vs. 7-20 discourage comparison of the wicked's prosperity with the meek's gain;
Vs. 21-33 show the wicked's attack against the righteous on God's side;
Vs. 34-40 describe the lasting reward of the righteous and destruction of the wicked.

This Psalm uses the expression, "do not fret" (vs. 1, 7, 8) to discourage believers' comparisons of their blessings from God with the seeming prosperity of evildoers. In David's day, some who would flee from their "promised land" to greener grass needed to be told to: "Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness" (vs.3, also 9, 11, 22, 29, 34). Great emphasis is placed on those who "inherit the earth," described as "those who wait on the LORD" (vs.9), "the meek" (vs.11), "those blessed by Him" (vs.22). Verse 11 seems to be Jesus' very wording in Matthew 5:5, that Christians should be content in His spiritual kingdom (the church of Christ, Matthew 16:18).

Very quotable thoughts are found throughout:

Vs.2-"For they [the wicked, jtpII] shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb" (Isaiah 40:6-8; 1 Peter 2:24-25);
Vs.5-"Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass" (used later by Solomon, Proverbs 16:3);
Vs.8-"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath" (used by Paul, Ephesians 4:26);
Vs.16-"A little that a righteous man has Is better than the riches of many wicked" (Proverbs 15:16; 16:8);
Vs.23-"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way" (Proverbs 16:9);
Vs.24-"Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand" (Proverbs 24:16);
Vs.31-"The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide" (certainly the thought in 1 John 3:6, 9; 5:18).

In verse 21, one who "borrows and does not [intend to, jtpII] repay" are WICKED, governments included! (Ecclesiastes 5:4-5)

There is no "once-saved-always-saved" in verses 23-24, for then a "good man" wouldn't be able to "fall." The persistent recovery promised by God goes to those who "fall," but return to "his way."

Perhaps the entire Psalm is best summarized by the statement: "I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread" (vs.25). In 1 John 3:7, we have: "Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous." Being "righteous" is simply doing the will of God and following the steps of Jesus Christ. Being "righteous" is NOT being "self-righteous," as the ungodly and sinners would self-righteously charge. David's statement is that in the experiences of life, God blesses and cares for His people (those obedient to His Word), and even though at times it seems the wicked prosper more, the final reward will be the ultimate reward. The wicked will be forgotten, but the righteous, never! Righteousness consists, therefore, in: "Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore" (vs.27). Today, only by obeying Jesus Christ can this be done (Acts 2:38, 40-41; 2 Corinthians 7:1).

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**Psalm 38**

**11/7/12**

- Vs. 1-10 describe David's price for his sin;
- Vs. 11-16 show the failure of "friends";
- Vs. 17-20 speak of David's frailty;
- Vs. 21-22 make David's final appeal to God.

The natural sense is that David is describing physical affliction as a direct result of, possibly, a sexual sin ("no soundness in my flesh"); emotional affliction also ("turmoil of my heart"); and spiritual agony that God could reject him ("no soundness in my flesh Because of Your anger"). David realized that he was in over his head ("my iniquities have gone over my head"), and only God could help ("Lord, all my desire is before You"). Would that all sinners shared this feeling.

In verses 11-16 we see that "friends" forsake us when we need them most, and only real friends stick around ("My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague, And my relatives stand afar off"). At the same time, loneliness is facing adversaries with no close support ("Those who seek my hurt speak of destruction, And plan deception all the day long"). The Apostle Paul came to the same realization as David when he said: "At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!" (2 Timothy 4:16-18) No one who serves God while facing the world is ever alone.

As stated in verses 17-18, sometimes it takes paying a price for our sin, losing both God and friends, for us to realize the true love of God who waits for our return with open arms and forgiveness in the new covenant of Christ ("For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more" Hebrews 8:12). Confession of sin is acknowledgement of the sinner's responsibility and God's grace. In the New Testament, John wrote: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). In Psalm 38:19-20 we learn that true friends do not



have a problem with our spiritual attempts to advance toward God ("A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity" Proverbs 17:17). "Fair weather friends" are not friends at all, but mere temporary acquaintances with whom we share a small part of our lives ("Wealth makes many friends, But the poor is separated from his friend" (Proverbs 19:4). Friendship should not be a one-way donation, for "every man is a friend to one who gives gifts" (Proverbs 19:6).

In verses 21-22, David shows our appeal should be to our Best Friend Forever (bff).

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Psalm 39

11/8/12

- Vs. 1-2 show David with nothing to say;
- Vs. 3-6 show David's frailty is shortness of life;
- Vs. 7-11 give David's respectful praise for God;
- Vs. 12-13 make David's final appeal to God.

There are several similarities between Psalm 39 and Psalm 38. It's possible that they were written close to the same incident in David's life, with Psalm 38 showing the great cost he was paying for his sin.

Sometimes silence is essential. Cautiously, David says nothing "while the wicked are before me," which Jesus Christ also did (Mark 15:3-5). In the heat of the moment, answering enemies who are attacking with lies may not be best (Ephesians 4:26-27). The problem, however, as David said, "I held my peace even from good."

Remember our time is limited (Psalm 39:3-6) in our struggle with sin and sinners. This is encouraging because we don't have to withstand sin or sinners for long, but discouraging because we also don't have much time to seek God's forgiveness! When David's "heart was hot within" him, he spoke to God about his concerns. Solomon said, "Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few" (Ecclesiastes 5:2). David's "measure of my days," compared to God, are like a "handbreadth," "age as nothing," "best state but vapor," "shadow," all of which are terms for short or fleeting. This expression does NOT say, "God has predetermined the length of every life," BUT that humans need comparisons to show them how limited their time is, compared to God and eternity. A life of "busy-ness" is for nothing when death comes, for control of that wealth is lost. Wise Solomon will say: "Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun was distressing to me, for all is vanity and grasping for the wind. Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who will come after me" (Ecclesiastes 2:17-18). A life of sharing blessings is fuller and more rewarding than one of grasping and heaping up (Ecclesiastes 1:14).

Through it all, verses 7-11 remind us that God, who is over all, is to be respected. Hard times remind people to draw closer to God, who is the source of blessings. David "was mute," because it was God who, "with rebukes," "correct man for [man's, jtpII] iniquity." For emphasis, in verses 5 and 11 human lifespans are brief, like "a vapor," a thought repeated in the New Testament (James 4:14).

David's personal responsibility for his sins causes his personal outcry and appeal to God for forgiveness, while he is still alive ("Before I go away and am no more"). Time is not on our side!

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**Psalm 40**

**11/9/12**

Vs. 1-10 tell of God’s plan to save through Jesus Christ;  
Vs. 11-17 tell of God’s purpose in that plan.

That this was written by David is of little doubt; that it was written about David, is for complete doubt! David did not know the “sacrifices and offerings” of Moses’ Law were not completely adequate for sins (vs.6); nor was he written about “in the scroll of the Book” that before he was born, he was completely devoted to obeying God’s will (vs.7-8)!

This entire Psalm is about Jesus Christ, and that fact is clearly seen in Hebrews 10. David, in prophesying the future, did not know to whom it applied, or when this prophecy would be fulfilled (1 Peter 1:10-12), but the Holy Spirit who guided the words (2 Peter 1:20-21) did know! And it is the Holy Spirit who guided New Testament writers to show the fulfillment.

**Verses 1-2:** God’s work in the death and resurrection of Jesus, “who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:7-9). “Horrible pit,” and “miry clay” can describe death out of which He was delivered (2 Corinthians 5:15).

**Verses 3-4:** The “new song” is for those who trust God instead of men (1 Timothy 4:10).

**Verse 5:** God’s works are too numerous to recount, as Jesus’ deeds were (John 21:25).

**Verses 6-8:** Quoted in Hebrews 10:5-9 to show that Jesus’ body was devoted as the perfect sacrifice for sins for all time (Hebrews 10:12). Psalm 40:6-8 gives the purpose for Jesus’ first coming, and in Hebrews is prefaced with: “Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering...’”(Hebrews 10:5). Whether this was said in Heaven or on earth, it is the stated purpose for Jesus, who “made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:7-8). Jesus’ death on the cross ended the Law of Moses (Hebrews 10:11-14).

Verse 6: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;”  
“Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require” [to completely remove sins, jtpII] = animal sacrifices and grain offerings were never intended by God to remove all sin, Hebrews 10:1-4, 8;  
“My ears You have opened” [listening to obey, jtpII] = “a body” for obedience Hebrews 10:5;  
Verse 7: “Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart’” = (John 6:38, 40);

**Verses 9-10:** Jesus' proclaimed the "good news of righteousness," as Paul taught: "Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come—that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23). Jesus told disciples: "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15).

**Verses 11-17:** The Gospel of Jesus Christ shows God's: "tender mercies," "lovingkindness," and "truth," for sinners. Verse 12 mentions "innumerable evils" that crucified Jesus (Acts 3:13-17; 13:26-30; Matthew 27:17-18). Jesus had no personal sin (1 Peter 2:21-22; 1 John 3:5), but our sins became for Him "My iniquities" (Isaiah 53:4-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18). "Therefore my heart fails me" was physically true, for Jesus died before soldiers came to hasten it (John 19:31-37).

**Verses 13-17** make a plea that God would justly deal with those who refused to come to Jesus' cross and obey Him (Mark 16:15-16).

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Psalm 41

11/12/12

Vs. 1-4 speak of God's consideration to those who consider the poor;
Vs. 5-8 show the heartlessness of enemies who eagerly await David's death;
Vs. 9 is a prophesy of Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus Christ; Vs. 10-13 anticipate God's mercy and support when needed.

Verses 1-4: If the cause of being poor is a refusal to work, then Christians are forbidden to contribute (2 Thessalonians 3:10)! Otherwise, many will have hardship along the road of life, and "Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy," Jesus said in Matthew 5:7. He was continuing God's wisdom on the subject through Solomon: "He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy" Proverbs 14:31. David wrote these verses for himself, for Jesus Christ never would have said: "Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You" (Psalm 41:4; compare John 8:46).

Verses 5-8: One can identify his/her enemies because they: verse 5) are eager to be rid of you; verse 6) lie to your face and spy out weaknesses to spread to others; verse 7) gather to whisper against you; verse 8) know you suffer with "an evil disease" but hope you not only fail to recover, but it kills you! If this describes any of our "friends," we need new friends!

Verse 9: This is the only verse of this chapter that cannot refer to David, but is one of his prophecies about Jesus Christ! It's true that David had a counselor, Ahithophel (2 Samuel 15:12), who joined a conspiracy against David (2 Samuel 15:31), and advised David's enemies on how to humiliate David (2 Samuel 16:20-23), but when his advice was not followed, Ahithophel hanged himself (2 Samuel 17:23). This might cause some to think Psalm 41:9 might first have applied to David's situation. Jesus Christ told His apostles, "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me'" John 13:18. When Jesus "chose" the Twelve, He chose Judas (John 6:70). However the fact that Jesus quoted this particular verse and introduced it with

“that the Scripture might be fulfilled” puts the cap on speculation. Psalm 41:9 had no “fulfillment” until Jesus Christ said the event of Judas eating bread with Him fulfilled it! If not, why not?

Verses 10-13: David’s proof that he pleased God was in the fact that his enemies would be punished by David’s return to health. Jesus, on the other hand, said, “And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him” John 8:29. Only God is “From everlasting to everlasting,” and therefore can promise “eternal life” (John 10:27-28; 17:3).

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**Psalm 42**

**11/13/12**

Vs. 1-5 picture the despair of captivity and not worshiping God;  
Vs. 6-11 state the confidence to “Hope in God.”

**Verses 1-5:** As a deer must have water, so a soul must have God, and the soul’s question is: “When shall I come and appear before God?” The soul’s frustration produces tears when people keep challenging: “Where is your God?” (verses 3, 10). Today, a Christian is assured: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” (Romans 8:35) It is sad, indeed, when people quit going to church: “For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.” This verse may indicate this was written during the 70 year exile of the people of God from their “Promised Land” (Jeremiah 25:8-14). They were returned as recorded in Ezra 1:1-8; 6:1-15; Nehemiah 9:29-38). No matter what conditions exist, one must “Hope in God” (verses 5, 11), and worship Him.

**Verses 6-11:** The soul was “cast down” by remembering the Holy City, Jerusalem, and why they had lost it. God was not defeated, but His people had let Him down by sinning. Verse 7 appeals to God as Jonah had (Jonah 2:3-5), deeply realizing his sin. Whether in daytime or night, the Psalmist will pray (verse 8), asking God “have I been forgotten since enemies seem to prevail over me?” (verse 9) This indicates the Psalmist’s soul is sensitive to his sins and is concerned that God may not hear and respond because of those sins. The taunt of the enemies (“Where is your God?”) is as hurtful as if they broke his bones! Where is God when enemies temporarily prevail over God’s elect? Those who ask such a question are ignorant of what God does and has done (Jeremiah 2:4-8; 3 John 12). “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:6-9). “It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us” (Romans 8:34). In trials and troubles, it is our faith being challenged, not God’s position. “Where is God” is not the issue, but “where are you enemies in relation to God?” Verse 11 finishes with the calm faith that God notices of our praise of Him.

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Psalm 43

11/14/12

Vs. 1-5 are mostly the same as in Psalm 42.

Because we know that "no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:20-21), then it is useless to exhaust oneself with background information that is not clearly connected with a passage of Scripture! Often, expositors seek their own glory, rather than seeking the truth in a Scripture, and overlook the Apostle Peter's warning: "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:14-18).

When passages of Scripture seem very similar, then the normal reasoning seems to be that they were written at about the same time (Examples, Ephesians & Colossians; 2 Peter & Jude; Psalm 42 & 43). In fact, some commentators unnecessarily make Psalm 43 an extension of Psalm 42! Though Jesus Christ preached His "Sermon on the Mount," as we call it, He could preach various parts of it on other occasions. If the Holy Spirit can inspire the teaching on one occasion, He can do the same another time! So with Psalm 43, it could have been similarly inspired by the Holy Spirit at another time than that which prompted Psalm 42.

Verse 1: The writer seeks relief from "an ungodly nation," "the deceitful and unjust man," and "the oppression of the enemy" by God sending "light" and "truth" that would lead back to correct worship of God ("Your holy hill," "Your tabernacle," "the altar of God"). It sounds similar to Jesus' statement to the Samaritan woman: ""But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him" (John 4:23). Corruption in, or absenteeism from, spiritually-correct worship of God is the Devil's method of weakening Christians. Paul warns Christians, because of their corrupted practice of the Lord's Supper, "many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep" (1 Corinthians 11:30).

Verse 2: echoes Psalm 42:9.

Verses 3-4: speak of the worshipper's missing the joy of worshiping God, and it is similar to Psalm 42:1-4.

Verse 5: is the same as Psalm 42:11, and almost the same as Psalm 42:5.

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**Psalm 44**

**11/15/12**

Vs. 1-8 teach the new generation why God is King and victory is with Him;  
Vs. 9-16 bemoan the punishment meted out by God against His own people;  
Vs. 17-26 confess to God His punishment has worked!

Regardless of whether this Psalm fits into the history of Israel, it certainly is a foreshadowing of what was to happen to Christians in the 1st Century. Read on.

**Verses 1-8:** The solemn obligation upon parents is to teach their children what God has done in the past (Old & New Testaments) and how appreciated He must be in the present and future! The summary mentioned here covers the Books of Joshua & Judges. The Psalmist, understandably, desires such victories again, but not by national strength.

**Verses 9-16:** Something seems to stand in the way to keep this from happening. God appears to be letting the enemies win, but to no profit (verse 12). This "shaming" of God's people by those who are not God's people is of great concern, and only God can change it (verses 13-16).

**Verses 17-26:** Through it all, God's people have not forgotten God (verse 17), but have been faithful to Him (verse 18), even to their near death experience (verse 19). There are 2 ways to leave God: 1) forget Him; 2) replace Him. Either way, God would know their thoughts in their hearts, therefore the truthfulness of their declaration (verse 21). Jesus Christ is described as having this quality of God in Revelation 2:23. "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession" (Hebrews 4:13-14). What's done in Vegas (or everywhere else!) is never hidden!

**Verse 22** is quoted in Romans 8:36 as describing the 1st Century persecution of Christians (Acts 8:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16). If, as Paul argued, Jesus died to save those baptized into His death (Romans 8:32; 6:1-17) and now intercedes in Heaven on their behalf (Romans 8:34), then "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect?" (Romans 8:33).

**Verses 23-26** appeal to God to act on behalf of His persecuted people while they are beat down to the ground. There are those "who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble" (Mark 4:16-17). Such afflictions shouldn't move us. "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:6-7). "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Timothy 2:10-13). Christians don't go after their enemies, like some, rather they ask God to go after them – and He does!

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Psalm 45

11/16/12

Vs. 1-9 describe the Groom to be married, and it points to Jesus Christ;
Vs. 10-15 depict the church of Christ as the Bride;
Vs. 16-17 describe the offspring produced by that marriage (no abortion here!).

Verses 1-9: It's wonderful to read the joyful anticipation of a wedding of two good people (verse 1). Jesus Christ is the Groom being described, and He:

verse 2) has a tongue of grace (Luke 4:22);
 verse 3) has a sword of authority (Luke 9:42-43; 2 Peter 1:16-18);
 verse 4) is blessed for His "truth" (John 18:37), "humility"(Philippians 2:8),
 "righteousness"(1 John 3:4-7);
 verse 5) is victorious (Matthew 12:15-21). This Groom is Regal as only Jesus is.

Verses 6-7 are quoted in Hebrews 1:8-9 to prove the Deity of Jesus Christ: "But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions"" (Hebrews 1:8-9). God's place for angels is different (Hebrews 1:7), therefore Jesus Christ was/is no angelic being at any time! The mythologies that make Him one are patently, completely false! Jesus was/is God, not an angel!

Verse 8-9) His royal robes have the same fragrances as the "holy anointing oil" under the Law of Moses (Exodus 30:22-25), which shows Jesus Christ "has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma" (Ephesians 5:2).

Verses 10-15: describe the Bride, which is the church of Christ: composed of those baptized into Christ "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38); whom "the Lord added to the church" (Acts 2:47); who have died to the Law of Moses (Romans 7:1-4); who live faithfully "betrothed" to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2-4); who love Jesus who died for them (Ephesians 5:22-33); and anticipate their marriage (Revelation 19:5-10; 21:1-27). The church of Christ must be devoted to Jesus Christ:

verse 10) over family;
 verse 11) in adoration;
 verse 12) "praising God and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:47);
 verse 13-14) cleanly clothed (Ephesians 5:25-27);
 verses 14-15) properly presented.

Verses 16-17: Being in the Royal Family is promised to all who obey the Gospel: "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10). The church of Christ can say Jesus "has made us kings and priests to His God and Father." (Revelation 1:6)

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**Psalm 46**

**11/19/12**

Vs. 1-5 emphasize God as the center of His people's life;  
 Vs. 6-11 reveal that God affects the life of nations.

In the text, there is little, if anything, to attach this to a specific historical event, thus this expresses a general reassurance for God's people.

Martin Luther wrote his hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" because of **Psalm 46:1**.

**Verses 2-3** show God's people should not fear political turmoil described by earthly terms. **Verse 2** includes a figure of speech that illustrates overcoming huge obstacles which was also used by Jesus (Matthew 21:21; Mark 11:23) to encourage His Apostles to use the miraculous power they were given.

**Verses 4-5** point to absolute security found in "the city of God," "holy of the tabernacle of the Most High," because God dwells there and will help in the nick of time. The church of Christ, today, is the temple of God where God is among His people (2 Corinthians 6:16). Jesus Christ is High Priest of the "true tabernacle" (Hebrews 8:1-2), who entered the "Most Holy Place" in Heaven by His own blood (Hebrews 9:11-12). Since God is in it, "we will not fear" (Revelation 2:10). The "river" for the city (church) identifies with the description of the church of Christ given in Revelation 21:10-22:5, and shows continuous nurture for Christians in the church (Revelation 21:1-6). Those outside the church of Christ are not promised this water!

**Verses 6-7** mention that God's voice overpowers the raging nations.

**Verses 8-9** point to "the works of the LORD" that bring peace about: God brought "desolations" to empires; "He makes wars to cease" (NOT "peace talks," "treaties," "peace accords," ad nauseum); God "breaks the bow," "cuts the spear," "burns the chariot," in other words, causes dis- armament!

**Verse 10** uses the same words Moses used at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:13), which simply exhorts people to take a deep breath and let God do His work. God will be "exalted" among the nations, when anyone notices that what is done was not done by them!

**Verse 11** is a statement of that exaltation.

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Psalm 47

11/20/12

Vs. 1-2 praise God for being God;
Vs. 3-4 tell what God does;
Vs. 5-7 praise God for being God;
Vs. 8-9 tell what God does.

When Jerusalem was surrounded by Assyrians led by King Sennacherib, then Judah's King Hezekiah takes his appeal to the LORD. The Assyrians then are mightily defeated (2 Kings 19:14-37) and Jerusalem saved (2 Chronicles 32:20-22). Psalm 47 is thought to have been written on this occasion of relief and rejoicing.

Verse 1 praises God with clapping and shouting, neither of which is used in New Testament Christian worship. There are only two verses in Psalms which apply to music in the churches of Christ: Psalm 18:49, quoted in Romans 15:8-9; and Psalm 22:22, quoted in Hebrews 2:12, both of them specify "singing," or vocal music! "Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19) is the only authorized music in Christian worship.

Verse 2 describes the covenant Deity ("LORD") as "Most High," for there is no other god equal to Him. He is the same God Abram respected (Genesis 14:18- 22) and Christians serve (Luke 6:35). He is "King over all the earth," so Jesus Christ today is "King of kings" (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14).

Verses 3-4 use Israel's victory to demonstrate what spiritual victory would later come in the name of "the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" who "is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Philippians 3:20-21). "Nations" is a common term for "Gentiles," and the Gospel of Jesus Christ "is the power of God to salvation for everyone who

believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16). That Jews came first in God's plan to save through Jesus Christ "subdued" the Gentiles, who came next (Acts 13:44-49). For Christians, Jesus provides "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4).

Verse 5 says "God has gone up with a shout, The LORD with the sound of a trumpet." If in verses 3-4, there is the triumph of the Gospel over Jews, and also Gentiles, then this could naturally refer to Jesus ascending back into Heaven when His work here had ended (Acts 1:9-11). At the Second Coming, "the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16), to be heard on the earth. Psalm 47:5 may be speaking of a "shout" and "trumpet" heard in Heaven when He returned from the earth.

Verses 6-7 say "sing praises" some 5 times, and they are to be directed toward "God," "our King," "of all the earth." Since these praises must be "with understanding," and since no instrument of accompaniment has "understanding" except our hearts, then to "sing" here must mean "praises" must come from human hearts without external accompaniment! If not, why not? Please read 1 Corinthians 14:15; Colossians 3:16.

Verse 8 powerfully states what Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar had to learn the hard way (Daniel 4:28-37), and the resurrected Jesus Christ claimed (Matthew 28:18-20). When "God reigns over the nations," He, Himself, is untarnished by those nations, for "God sits on His holy throne."

Verse 9 helps us understand that Jesus commanded His followers "make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19) knowing that "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Daniel 4:25).

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**Psalm 48**

**11/21/12**

- Vs. 1-3 say God saved Zion;
- Vs. 4-7 identify His protection;
- Vs. 8-14 show how free God's people are to worship Him.

Psalm 46, 47, and 48 appear to be rejoicing over the same deliverance from destruction, but there is no certainty as to the exact event. What remains, however, is what God's people must recognize whenever they have been delivered: it was God, not they, who delivered them.

**Verse 1-3** show this deliverance was of "the city of our God," "His holy mountain," "Mount Zion," "the city of the great King," all terms for Jerusalem in Judea. Jesus quoted Psalm 48:1, explaining it referred to "Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King" (Matthew 5:35). God has no "holy city" on earth anymore, for the church of Christ is the "holy city, New Jerusalem" (Revelation 21:2-3), which also is "the tabernacle of God" ("the greater and more perfect tabernacle" Hebrews 9:11-12). The church of Christ today is also "Mount Zion." "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:22-24). Jesus truly said, "And I also say to you that

you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). He has, indeed, preserved and protected the church of Christ throughout history!

**Verses 4-7** mention that while the "kings assembled" for strength, instead "passed by" the city, for once they "saw," they "marveled," "troubled," and left in haste. Once "fear" gripped them like a woman giving birth or "an east wind" forcing good ships to wreck, their attack failed. It was an "east wind" that brought famine to Egypt (Genesis 41:25-32) then divided the Red Sea but withdrew and destroyed the Egyptian army (Exodus 14:21- 28). Again, an "east wind" depicts how God simply brings man's strengths to nothing.

**Verses 8-14** reflect on what God has done in preserving "the city of the LORD" "forever." His "lovingkindness" and righteous "right hand" give rise to thoughts of "praise to the ends of the earth." To "mark well" the "bulwarks" (defense towers) and "palaces" (comfortable rooms), God's people are motivated to "tell it to the generation following." Each generation whose faith understands God's ways has not finished its work unless the next generation has been taught! He "is God, Our God forever and ever" and will always be there for us and the next generation who seek Him. We must see that they know Him!

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Psalm 49

11/22/12

Vs. 1-4 send a clarion call for all to pay attention; Vs. 5 asks a question about the purpose of life; Vs. 6-14 describe the poverty of riches;
Vs. 15 shows the blessedness of a good man;
Vs. 16-20 show the fruitlessness of materialism.

Verses 1-4: The world is invited to listen to "wisdom" as a result of "meditation." A "proverb" (parable) or "dark saying" (riddle) teach clearly when revealed. Again, this "harp" is left behind because Jesus Christ "has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14), so Christians are "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). The "harp" of Moses' Law has been replaced by the "heart" of Christ's Law.

Verse 5: Asks "Why live lives in fear while surrounded by those who commit iniquity?" Specifically, based on this next section, "why fear" those who use wealth to abuse?

Verses 6-14: Those who trust in their riches learn that they: cannot purchase the salvation for one soul (Verses 6-8); cannot avoid death (Verse 9); must leave their riches behind (verse 10); try to live on in fame by putting their names on their possessions (verses 11-12). In verses 13-14 we see that those who trust in their wealth, and those who follow their ways, will be herded like sheep into the grave, where "Death" deteriorates and their "beauty" fades into the dirt from which we all have come. The "upright" who continue in life "shall have dominion over them in the morning," and as God said, "whose will those things be which you have provided?" (Luke 12:20)

Verse 15 plainly states the rich reward of the faithful, whether rich or poor: to be accepted by God!

Verses 16-20: Fear not the rich who trust their riches, for they: carry no riches with them in death (verse 17; 1 Timothy 6:7); have none of their "glory" from life (verse 17); lose all their friends (verse 18; "The poor man is hated even by his own neighbor, But the rich has many friends" Proverbs 14:20); die just like their predecessors, never to see the light of day again (verse 19). Death comes to all, as Solomon said: "All things come alike to all: One event happens to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so is the sinner; He who takes an oath as he who fears an oath. This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead" (Ecclesiastes 9:2-3). Those who live but never "understand" the proper emphasis upon wealth have learned no more than animals, and both will die! The human should make his/her life more spiritually rewarding than living like an animal.

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**Psalm 50**

**11/23/12**

Vs. 1-6 give God's call for judgment;  
Vs. 7-15 contrasts God with idols;  
Vs. 16-23 explain why God condemns the wicked.

This is one of 12 Psalms written by Asaph, who is briefly mentioned in 2 Chronicles 29:30: "King Hezekiah and the leaders commanded the Levites to sing praise to the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the seer." His inspired message here is about judgment.

**Verses 1-6:** This universal call by God to "heaven" and "earth" is "that He may judge His people." "Saints" are described as "Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice," which, under Moses, were the sacrifices of that Law, but today, are Christians with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Exodus 24:1-8; Deuteronomy 33:1-4; Colossians 1:18- 27). "The heavens declare" God's "righteousness" and "glory" (Psalm 19:1), meaning none in Heaven has any evidence to contradict God's absolute right to judge.

**Verses 7-15:** Asaph contrasts needy idols with God, who does not accept the specified animal sacrifices because He needs them to possess (verses 7-9), since all animals in the Creation belong to Him, anyway (verse 10-11); nor does God need animal sacrifices for His food (verses 12-13); but He requires them so the saints who agreed to the covenant may offer acceptable "thanksgiving" to God for what He does/ has done (verses 14-15). Those sacrifices benefit the worshipers, for God is NOT served by them as an idol would be. Paul also contrasted God with idols by saying: "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25).

**Verses 16-23:** Because His people offer thanksgiving as He specified, because He is God over His Creation, then He is justified in condemning "the wicked." Wickedness is described as including: agreeing to the covenant but disobeying it (verse 16-17); not condemning thievery (verse 18); participating in adultery (verse 18); using words for evil, deceit, slander, even against one's own family (verse 19-20); ALL OF THESE (and more!) the Jews practiced in Jesus' day (Romans 1:28-2:10). Verses 21-22 are later echoed by Solomon: "Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do

evil" (Ecclesiastes 8:11). In other words, no wickedness will be unpunished by God! ALL THE WICKED are put on notice to repent (verse 23; Acts 17:30-31). This Psalm surely looks ahead to the time when "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10), and so should we all!

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Psalm 51

11/26/12

Vs. 1-9 make David's prayer for forgiveness;
Vs. 10-17 give David's promise to "do better;"
Vs. 18-19 remember the need for Jerusalem's completion.

There seems little doubt but that this Psalm is from David's agony after the Prophet Nathan has revealed David's adultery with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:1-12:25). God said, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will" (Acts 13:22), which did not mean David never sinned, but that he was willing to repent!

Verses 1-9: In David's appeal for God's mercy, he accepted responsibility for his own sin: "my transgressions," "my iniquity," "my sin," "my transgressions," "my sin." None should expect, or ask for, God's mercy who will blame conditions, friends, spouse, family, or God(?) for their sins. All sin starts by separating the sinner from God: "Against You, You only, have I sinned." David's adultery, deception, lies, and murder were all against God's Law first.

Verse 5 cannot teach "total depravity," or "original sin" for no baby is guilty of sin! Jesus Christ said those in the "kingdom of heaven" must be converted and "become as little children" (Matthew 18:3). If children are "depraved" or "born to sin," why would He want citizens in His kingdom to become like them? David was speaking of his parents who sinned, not himself as the baby.

In **Verse 6** God demands "truth" and "wisdom" which sinners aren't learning.

Verses 7-9 list what it would take for David to be ceremonially cleansed: "hyssop," "wash," "hear joy," healed bones, God to turn away from David's sins, and "blot out" all iniquities!

Verses 10-17: David's renewal would include a: "clean heart," "steadfast spirit," not be "cast away," not "take Your Holy Spirit" away, restored "joy" of salvation, upheld again. Then David could "teach transgressors" and convert sinners to God. Once delivered, David could freely "sing aloud" and praise God. Verses 16-17 explain that, even under Moses' Law of animal sacrifices, God desired more than just the sacrifices, He wanted worshipers to develop a "broken spirit," and "broken and contrite heart" (Hosea 6:6).

Verses 18-19: Jerusalem would become the center of Jewish worship once the temple was built, but David was not permitted by God to build it (1 Kings 8:17-20). So David bought the land and gathered the materials for the building that his son, Solomon would build (1 Chronicles 29:1-9; 1 Kings 8). David asks God to "Build" not "re-build" Jerusalem's walls, thus this was not written in the time of Ezra-Nehemiah's restoration of Jerusalem.

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**Psalm 52**

**11/27/12**

Vs. 1-5 describe a truly evil man;  
Vs. 6-9 contrast the righteous man.

The occasion for this Psalm seems to be Doeg’s betrayal and murder of God’s priests who had helped David and his men in their dire need (1 Samuel 21:1-9), while they were escaping the pursuit of King Saul (1 Samuel 21:10-22:23).

**Verses 1-5:** No evil person should “boast” because “the goodness of God endures continually,” i.e. God’s goodness will triumph always! A person’s evil nature is revealed by the tongue which: “devises destruction,” is like “a sharp razor,” “working deceitfully,” “love lying,” “love all devouring words,” and is a “deceitful tongue.” Truly, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit” (Proverbs 18:21). The destruction of righteous people by tongue is because their good is hated. Solomon’s wisdom said: “Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, And whoever spreads slander is a fool” (Proverbs 10:18). Doeg stated his information in such a way that King Saul drew a wrong conclusion, but Doeg did not correct it. That led to the deaths of God’s appointed priests! It’s not enough “to love,” for a wicked person may “love evil more than good.” Given the choice today, Christians are told, “Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God” (3 John 11). **Verse 5** says, essentially, the same as Proverbs 2:22, that God will punish the wicked!

**Verse 6-9:** The “righteous” shall “hear and fear,” that is, pay attention and respect God’s condemnation of the wicked, and “laugh at him” (the wicked) because he trusted his riches instead of God. Jesus warned of “the deceitfulness of riches” as one of three things that choke out the Word of God in a person’s heart (Mark 4:19-20).

**Verse 8** says: “But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.” “A green olive tree” will grow and ripen by trusting “in the mercy of God forever and ever,” and illustrates the development of faith (“trust”) in God over a lifespan. “The house of God” was a tabernacle (tent) at the time (Levites served in “the tabernacle of the house of God” (1 Chronicles 6:48), for Solomon had not yet built the temple in Jerusalem. **Verse 9** states the persistence of a saint’s praise for the name of God.

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Psalm 53

11/28/12

Vs 1-3 show that fools without God are corrupt;
Vs 4-6 show that God remains on the side of “the generation of the righteous.”

These statements are the same as with Psalm 14, because this Psalm is the same except for: “LORD” is used in Psalm 14:2,4,6,7 but “God” in Psalm 53; and Psalm 53:5 adds God’s judgment against “workers of iniquity,” but Psalm 14:5 doesn’t!

Verses 1-3: “The fool” says “There is no God,” with words of denial, or by the life of denial. The New Testament describes people living without God: “They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work” (Titus 1:16). Whether stated or lived, one is a fool to disregard God! “Fool” means empty, evil, corrupt. All who do “not like to retain God in their knowledge” God gives over to a debased mind (Romans 1:28), for they are “having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of

the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:18). Psalm 14:2-3 are the basis of Romans 3:10-12 which state that there is sometimes, overwhelming corruption of many in society. But both then in David's day, "now" when the Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans and even today, immorality abounds and is freely publicized through the media.

Verses 4-6: The "workers of iniquity" may bully God's people, but God remains on the side of the righteous (Psalm 14:4-7)! This same message is repeated in Psalm 53 with the added explanation of why those "workers of iniquity" themselves have reason to fear: "they are in great fear Where no fear was, For God has scattered the bones of him who encamps against you; You have put them to shame, Because God has despised them" (Psalm 53:5; Psalm 14:5). Sinners must notice, when bad things happen to them, God isn't on their side! Truly, "The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1). When the people of God are downcast and appear defeated, knowing the LORD has not left them, and that their salvation from persecution remains in His hand, they shall rejoice and be glad. The Apostle Paul shows Christians the same illustration in 2 Timothy 3:10-12: "But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra--what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

The "fool" acts as if there was no God and persecutes the righteous; the righteous, while enduring the "fools," are reassured that they are still on God's "side." "The wise in heart will receive commands, But a prating fool will fall" (Proverbs 10:8).

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## Psalm 54

11/29/12

- Vs. 1 is David's plea;
- Vs. 2-3 is David's prayer;
- Vs. 4-5 is David's partner;
- Vs. 6-7 is David's praise.

Before the Psalm, instruction for the "Musician" was that this was to be accompanied "With stringed instruments." Like every reference to musical instruments outside of the heart in the Old Testament, all were left behind when Jesus Christ was crucified. For Jesus "has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:13-14). AND of all the references to musical instruments in the Book of Psalms, only 2 verses were quoted in the New Testament as pertaining to music in worship, and both say "sing" (Psalm 18:49=Romans 15:9; Psalm 22:22=Hebrews 2:12).

Abiathar, son of Ahimelech the priest, had escaped from Doeg's slaughter (1 Samuel 21- 22). When he alerted David and his army of 600, they escaped from King Saul who was pursuing. Fleeing into the Wilderness of Ziph, the Ziphites informed Saul of David's whereabouts. Saul returned to his land to defend it against the Philistines, and David narrowly avoided being captured and killed by Saul (1 Samuel 23). Psalm 54 may have come to David during his communion with the LORD in 1 Samuel 23:7-13.

**Verse 1:** David could see no human solution to his trouble. How frequently do we, today, seem to come to "the end of our rope" before we are forced to face the fact that God is our help and the answer? And how often, when we are helped, do we give God glory for it?

**Verses 2-3:** To be heard by God, our prayers must be addressed to God, as Jesus' pattern showed (Luke 11:1-2)! Then we must open our hearts and lay our trouble(s) before Him (Philippians 4:6). Think about it: All trouble comes from people who "have not set God before them." In the New Testament, Christians were reminded: "For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men" (1 Thessalonians 2:14-15).

**Verses 4-5:** Acknowledges that "God is my helper" and He helps those who are with us, to help us! Most people think God must respond to their need by miracle, and ignore God's guiding Providence which provides people to help at the time! THEN, God keeps a record of our enemies' evil deeds, and He will repay those who refuse to repent (Zechariah 1:1-6), and those who aid and abet enemies of Christians (2 John 7-11).

**Verses 6-7:** "Freely sacrifice" today would equate to "going to church." Those who fail to regularly worship God in assemblies of Christians haven't acknowledged God's help in their lives. How numbing that must be! How arrogant must someone be to not give God glory for His help in their miserable lives! And then what satisfaction there is to see that God has defended us and defeated our enemies. This shows He is true to His word, and He knows that we are, too! The Apostle Paul never lost his recognition of this fact (2 Timothy 4:16-18).

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Psalm 55

11/30/12

Vs. 1-2 a call to God;
Vs. 3-5 David's depression;
Vs. 6-15 suggestions for relief;
Vs. 16-23 give the privilege and process of faith in God.

Whatever the event in David's life that produced this Psalm, it seems the "sticking point" is in **verses 12-14**: his troubler was a former close personal friend, or family member.

Verses 1-2: The living God needs no "vain repetitions" (Matthew 6:7) to get His attention.

Verses 3-5: The wicked's words, oppression, and pressures, motivated by wrath, had caused David to descend into: pained heart, terrors of death, fearfulness and trembling, and horror. It's no wonder, then, that God was the only way out. Nothing can hurt someone more than with words: "A man who bears false witness against his neighbor Is like a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow" (Proverbs 25:18).

Verses 6-15: David pictures his peacefulness if he was out of this picture (**verses 6-8**); divided tongues worked to scatter God's enemies at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), and the constant crime and violence in "the city" might be reduced if they were scattered. What hurts the most is to be wounded by close friends or relatives. An "enemy" is an adversary from whom one flees, but if the enemy comes from one's own family, escape may not be an option. Later the prophet Micah decried the same condition: "Do not trust in a friend; Do not put your confidence in a companion; Guard

the doors of your mouth From her who lies in your bosom. For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man's enemies are the men of his own household" (Micah 7:5-6). Jesus quoted Micah 7:6 and showed even in His day, "a man's enemies will be those of his own household" (Matthew 10:34-36). Sometimes an enemy may arise from someone with whom we have had "sweet counsel together," and even congregated for worship! Understand the frustration in Paul's wish in Galatians 5:11- 12.

Verses 16-23: David will not let external circumstances diminish his faithful confidence in God (**verse 16**). **Verse 17** will be repeated by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). By **verse 18**, either relief arrives, or David is claiming that it will arrive. David puts this in perspective, this is not personal with David, for troublemakers have always been those who "do not change," and who "do not fear God" (**verse 19**). **Verses 20-21** show the troublemakers have broken faith with David, for they once were: "at peace with him," in "covenant," users of "smooth words" when "war was in his heart," a slick speaker with "drawn swords." Beware of political or religious leaders who say the right things without the right meaning – who devise "peace processes" without God's plan for conversion. Jesus rightly gave the alarm: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" (Matthew 7:15). Jesus also gave the "fruit test" as the method to reveal them (Matthew 7:16-20). Indeed, **Psalm 55:22** is embodied in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:24-34. **Verse 23** warns that the wicked can (and will!) die in "half their days," meaning God can bring them to nought suddenly!

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**Psalm 56**

**12/3/12**

- Vs. 1-4 speak of the continual problem of David: enemies were relentless;
- Vs. 5-7 tell us what "they" say;
- Vs. 8-13 acknowledge what God has done and will do to save David.

**Verses 1-4:** Because God has not abandoned David, David certainly hasn't abandoned God! According to **verse 3**, fear of enemies should bring out the best in a believer! David's disdain for what enemies have power to do is allowed by his confidence in what God has power to do. **Verse 4** (and **verse 11** uses "man" for "flesh"), says, "In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?" This is quoted in Hebrews 13:5-6 and is true for Christians, as well.

**Verses 5-7:** "They:" "twist my words;" focus all their evil thoughts against David; gather, secretly spy for some way to trap him; seek to ambush him and kill him. David's life, as seen through these Psalms, foreshadows Jesus Christ, who later had enemies characterized the same way. "So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor" (Luke 20:20). This constant deliverance of David from his enemies simply demonstrates how hostile the "world" is toward those who serve God. Again, Jesus taught, ""If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also" (John 15:18- 20). In **verse 7**, he asks: "Shall they escape by iniquity?" He then calls for God to punish them.



**Verses 8-13:** God keeps a tally of how often David has to flee his enemies, how much sorrow they cause, and a book of their misdeeds toward God's anointed. In **verses 9-10**, the enemies know to cower when God is called into the fray. For Jesus, this is illustrated in John 18:1-6. In Corinth, the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision saying, "I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city" (Acts 18:10). **Verses 12 & 13** show the covenant between David and God, for David commits himself to honor his own vow to God, and continues to respect God for delivering David. Today, Christians should respect their covenant relationship with God (Hebrews 8:6-7).

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Psalm 57

12/4/12

Vs. 1-6 show David stating his problem before God;
Vs. 7-11 show David's confidence in God's response.

With King Saul in hot pursuit, "David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam" (1 Samuel 22:1). While in a cave of retreat and defeat, David probably composed this Psalm, and 400 men, including his own family, joined him and began his climb to the throne.

Verses 1-6: The tender picture of God's "wings" overshadowing a frightened David would be later termed by Jesus as He pictured Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Matthew 23:37). In **verse 2**, David says God "performs," which means "God completes" whatever needs to be done, in this case, David's deliverance. Those who would "swallow me up" indicated the butchery at heart of his enemies. Micah 3:1-4 uses the same sentiment, but shows it to be figuratively used for both Northern and Southern Kingdoms turn on each other to rob of all they have as though they were cannibals! David's enemies are savage ("lions"), hate-filled ("set on fire"), vicious in language ("teeth are spears and arrows"), and heart-ugly ("tongue a sharp sword"). They had "prepared a net" and "dug a pit" for David, but as is often the case, fell into it themselves. "Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him" (Proverbs 26:27).

Verses 7-11: David would not take his heart from before the LORD, but kept it "steadfast," and ready to "sing and give praise." In **verse 8**, David speaks to his musical instruments: "Awake, lute and harp!" Clearly, even David did NOT include his musical instruments whenever he said "sing," for they were an addition to his vocal praise of God! This, then, is yet another reference to such instruments left behind in Moses' Law, for Jesus "has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14). **Verse 9** points to David's hope for the future, when God would be praised "among the peoples," and "among the nations," both frequently referring to "Gentiles," which has happened since the church of Christ (the "kingdom of God" Acts 8:12) began in Acts 2. In **verses 10-11**, God's "mercy," "truth," and "glory" are above the earth and cannot be tainted by anything that happens down here. For God to be "exalted" "above the heavens" means that no scientific discovery, no scientist, no human, can ever see, control, reach or ruin the "Most High."

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**Psalm 58**

**12/5/12**

Vs. 1-5 show how thoroughly wicked some may become;  
Vs. 6-9 ask God to dismantle the strengths of the wicked;  
Vs. 10-11 mention how satisfied the righteous are when that is done.

**Verses 1-5:** In **verses 1-2**, David shows his disgust at corruption in judicial matters. "You silent ones" in Hebrew can also be "you gods" reflecting the presumed elevated position judges should occupy. Jesus based an argument on the coordination of Bible teaching when He quoted Psalm 82:6 as "You are gods, And all of you are children of the Most High" (John 10:33-38). "Judges" were being addressed, and they had abandoned their adherence to God's Law, thus could not be counted on to make right judgments! In **verse 3**, the wicked are "speaking lies" as soon as they become "wicked" and "go astray." Since newborns do not "speak," this figure of speech will not permit the doctrine of "inherited sin" or "total depravity." Rather, this verse shows that as quickly as possible, people leave the goodness of God's Law for the evil of the Devil's way, but this is not the condition of the baby at birth! The baby's condition is not sinful, but the world into which he is born! **Verses 4-5** describe David's generation, just as Jesus later would do (Matthew 12:24; 23:33). Like snakes, they inject poison designed to destroy; they strike without listening (Ecclesiastes 10:11; Jeremiah 8:17); they attack when they are not being "charmed." In other words, the wicked are wicked regardless of what the righteous may, or may not, say to them. People act wickedly when there have been no cross words, heated exchanges, pathetic offensive videos, or religious debates set before them!

**Verses 6-9:** In verses 6-8, God is asked to destroy every troubling advantage the wicked may have by: making them toothless predators; drained off waters; broken arrows; diminishing snails; and dead babies! Since God says, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (Romans 12:19), David shows what vengeance one is entitled to ask God for! **Verse 9** shows how quickly this could happen, before a "pot" could heat up over burning thorns!

**Verses 10-11:** The "righteous shall rejoice" to know God will not save the wicked, but they will pay for what evils they have done. David will say more in Psalm 139:19-22: "Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God! Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men. For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain. Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies." And again in Psalm 119:104: "Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way." It is a broken society that would "hate good and love evil" (Micah 3:2).



**Psalm 59**

**12/6/12**

Vs. 1-7 describe the aggressiveness of David's enemies;  
Vs. 8-15 show what God can do to defend the righteous;  
Vs. 16-17 praise God for His deliverance.

This Psalm reflects David's spiritual emotion when King Saul has surrounded his house to catch him when he tries to flee. Though married to Saul's daughter, she now loves her husband and assists his escape (1 Samuel 19:8-18).

**Verses 1-7:** In **verses 1-2**, David prays for salvation from: "my enemies," "those who rise up against me," "workers of iniquity," "bloodthirsty men." All of these terms later describe those who finally crucify Jesus Christ (Luke 11:23; John 13:18; 19:11; Luke 13:27; Matthew 27:25). **Verses 3-4** show familiar evil traits as in Psalm 56: 5-6, except this is an attack on his life, not just his words. Their plan here is: "lie in wait for my life," "gather against me," "run and prepare themselves." This, clearly, is not through any fault of David ("Not for my transgression nor for my sin"). David did sin, but not to cause this. Jesus Christ never sinned, yet had this same attack made upon Him. How wicked can anyone become who would reject the only perfect person who ever lived? **Verse 5** calls for no mercy, but Jesus later would cry: "'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34), and they would be offered salvation that repented and were baptized to be saved (Acts 2:38). **Verses 6-7** show the enemies "return" (are persistent), "growl" (vicious), "go all around the city" (seeking victims), "belch with their mouth" (bark to spread fear), "swords" (destructive intent), all because they have no fear of God! Romans 3:10-18 show how people get to that point of sinfulness.

**Verses 8-15:** The enemies' approach is laughable to God and those whom He protects (**verses 8-9**). In **verse 10**, David shows how personal God's defense is when he calls Him "my God of mercy." The "OMG" in verse 1, as this expression, is always uttered with respect, not mindless profanity! God's slow destruction of them is a visual lesson few will forget (**verse 11**). Ungodly nations that crumble, rather than immediately fall, are included in History books (ex. Persia, Greece, Rome, Germany, Russia, America). Enemies would fall because of their teaching, pride, profanity (**verse 12-13**), and that God brings them down proves God IS! **Verses 14-15** show the wicked persist because they refuse to learn their lesson. Solomon said, "The wise in heart will receive commands, But a prating fool will fall" (Proverbs 10:8).

**Verses 16-17:** When God comes through for David, David rejoices and will "sing praises" and no mention is made of this being accompanied with his musical instruments! Interesting, isn't it, that when James writes of Christians rejoicing with psalms, he says: "Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms" (James 5:13)?

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Psalm 60

12/7/12

- Vs. 1-5 praise God for all He has done;
- Vs. 6-8 make God's assignment for His conquering tribes;
- Vs. 9-12 show the need for God to finish the work.

The history behind this Psalm seems to be in 1 Chronicles 18:1-13. David has enjoyed military successes, but knows to attribute these to God (1 Chronicles 18:6, 13). David dedicated the spoils of war to the LORD (1 Chronicles 18:6-11), much of which was later used by Solomon in building the temple of the LORD.

Verses 1-5: No doubt David felt the discipline God had given him by not letting David build the temple to God in Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 17). In **verse 1**, along with loss of lives in battle, David thought God "cast us off," "broken us down," "been displeased," but would still "restore us again." God is willing to forgive those who are humbled. God's power had shaken up "the earth" and needed to be repaired (**verse 2**); disciplined His people with "hard things," and "confusion" (**verse 3**); given a "banner" (sign) to rally them together (**verse 4**). To be saved "with Your right hand" figuratively suggests that God still helps them with a strong arm (**verse 5**).

Verses 6-8: It says in **verse 6**: "God has spoken in His holiness." God's dispensation of the tribes of Israelites is the final Word on the subject. "His holiness" always refers to God, and not a man (Pope, etc.). Jesus Christ gave Himself that sinners who obey the Gospel "might partake of His holiness" (Hebrews 12:10). Unless that would make each Christian a "Pope," then what each Christian may "partake" of is not limited to one individual! It is a profanity for any religion to bestow upon any human the title of "His holiness," for it is not reserved for one, but to all Christians it is said: "as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16). In **verse 7**, God claims Gilead and Manasseh, both across the Jordan River from the Promised "mainland." The tribe of Ephraim would lead; Judah would rule; **verse 8**, God even claimed their enemies: Moab would be a common "washpot;" Edom would be completely crushed; Philistia would shout triumphantly when taken and included.

Verses 9-12: If God made the assignments in verses 6-8, then in **verse 9**, God asks for a leader to step forward and do this. David's reply in **verse 10** is that it was God who gave them victory, and should again. The principle statement in **verses 11-12** appears to be "For the help of man is useless." That acknowledgment sometimes is difficult, if not, impossible, to hear. Jesus heard the Canaanitish woman beg mercy for her "severely demon-possessed daughter" because she "came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me!'" (Matthew 15:21-28). "Her daughter was healed from that very hour" just as David's help from God had come to him. David will emphasize his conclusion with, "My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth." If God created "heaven and earth" (and all the scientific evidence demands that He did!), then only He has the power to interact and override what happens on that earth. God sees, hears, and influences the affairs on earth, continually, for "He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17).

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**Psalm 61**

**12/10/12**

- Vs. 1-3 acknowledge what God has done for David already;
- Vs. 4-5 state David's resolve to be faithful to God;
- Vs. 6-8 give David's request for God to be mindful of "the king."

There is little to go on in determining when, in David's life, this was written. It was, possibly, before David was the king, but while David was being protected by God.

Before the Psalm, instruction for the "Musician" was that this was to be accompanied "With stringed instruments." Like every reference to musical instruments outside of the heart in the Old Testament, all were left behind when Jesus Christ was crucified, for Jesus "has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:13-14). AND of all the references to musical instruments in the Book of Psalms, only 2 verses were quoted in the New Testament as pertaining to music in worship, and both say "sing" (Psalm 18:49=Romans 15:9; Psalm 22:22=Hebrews 2:12).

**Verse 1-3:** "Thanksgiving" should always be a part of prayers (Philippians 4:6), and what God has done should always be acknowledged. God's hearing is not limited by geographical boundary ("From the end of the earth") or an overwhelmed heart. God has provided protection ("shelter") and strength ("strong tower") against enemies. "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I" inspired an oft-sung hymn. The "rock" of safety for the Israelites in the wilderness is later identified, for "they drank of that

spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:1-4). It was Jesus as God, before His coming to this earth in bodily form (Philippians 2:5-10).

**Verse 4-5:** David's commitment to God included abiding in God's Tabernacle "forever," confidence in "the shelter" of God's "wings," because God heard David's "vows," proof of which are "the heritage" (inheritance) of spiritual blessings to "those who fear Your name." Solomon summarized the "whole" of human purpose when he said, "Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

**Verse 6-8:** Though not specifically quoted in the New Testament, **verses 6-7** well describes Jesus Christ, for He now rules over His kingdom, the church of Christ (Colossians 1:1-2, 13-18); His life is prolonged "with years as many generations" ("alive for evermore," Revelation 1:10-18); who abides "before God forever" (as Mediator, 1 Timothy 2:5-7); and is preserved by "mercy and truth" (Matthew 9:11-13; John 18:37; 2 John 3). David spoke not of himself for he did not live the years of many generations, nor did he represent his people "before God forever." David was inspired by God as a truly "Messianic prophet." In **verse 8**, David's vows will daily be fulfilled as he would "sing praise" to God's name "forever."

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Psalm 62

12/11/12

Vs. 1-2 state David's patience with God's response;
Vs. 3-4 give David's confidence that God will punish the wicked; Vs. 5-6 re-state David's patience with God's response;
Vs. 7-8 give David's confidence in God;
Vs. 9-10 describe wicked people;
Vs. 11-12 ascribe total judgment to God.

It is impossible to accurately associate this Psalm with a specific event in David's life. David and his army captains designated "the sons of Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals" (1 Chronicles 25:1-4).

Verses 1-2: "Only," "truly," "surely" (used in **verses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9**) cancels any contradiction of the statement. "Silently" indicates quiet submission, and this is the "patience" necessary for Christians. "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing" (James 1:2-4). God is the "only" "rock," "salvation," or "defense," and is completely without any proper substitute! David's determination is "I shall not be greatly moved," that is, no one but God is perfectly immovable, so David leaves room for him to be somewhat shaken!

Verses 3-4: "How long" shows the ignorant persistence of the wicked. The wicked "consult" only to bring down a good man "from his high position" (David as king?) with their lies and hypocrisy, but they will "be slain" for they are already on their way down, like "a leaning wall and a tottering fence."

Verses 5-6: This repeats the thought from **verses 1-2**, except with greater confidence when he says: "I shall not be moved," leaving out the degree of movement

("greatly"). Since none but God is "immovable" then those who are faithful to Him cannot be "moved" at all. Christians are thus reassured: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Verses 7-8: To all God means to David, is added: "my refuge, is in God." Not only does God provide solidarity ("rock"), deliverance ("salvation"), protection ("defense"), but also security ("refuge"). There is no one like God! **Verse 8** is David's appeal to all who serve God, but are being shaken by their persecutions, to "trust in Him at all times." Never has God been unfaithful. Wisdom said: "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble Is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint" (Proverbs 25:19). Spouse, friend, co-worker, government, corporation, Christian may all become "unfaithful," but God - NEVER!

Verses 9-10: Put NO total trust and confidence in: (1) "men of low degree" refers to common people, everyone at some time, as "vapor" blow away; (2) "men of high degree" refers to those distinguished by work or position, for they may be established by the "lie;" (3) all of humanity weigh like air compared to God, truth, trust; (4) "oppression" seen in tyrants, dictators, despots (from parents to teachers, from executives to labor bosses, from federal to local); (5) "robbery" whether burglars, bankers, taxation, inflation, lottery, etc.; (6) increased "riches" and the arrogance that accompanies them (1 Timothy 6:17- 19). Lives devoted to these "idols" are truly "life light!" Jesus said, in Matthew 16:26: "what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"

Verses 11-12: If God says something once, we have two ears to listen (Matthew 11:15): All power, mercy, and judgment belong to God. To whom, then, shall we go? That God will "render to each one according to his work" should wake sinners up (Romans 2:6; 1 Corinthians 3:8; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Peter 1:17; Revelation 22:12).

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**Psalm 63**

**12/12/12**

- Vs. 1-2 show David seeking God;
- Vs. 3-6 show David satisfaction with God;
- Vs. 7-8 acknowledge God's past help;
- Vs. 9-11 state David's faith in God's present help;

This Psalm of David fits with his flight through a wilderness of Judah from his rebellious son, Absalom (2 Samuel 15:14-30). Many beautiful Psalms are written out of duress or trouble, and show how humble and frail we really are. Some of the best times to worship God are when we are at our lowest.

**Verses 1-2:** David's personal relationship with God ("my God"), his eagerness ("Early"), his deep desire ("soul thirsts," "my flesh longs"), describe his need to find God ("in the sanctuary"). "Sanctuary" is a sacred place appointed by God for His presence to be represented. God told Israel, through Moses; "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it" (Exodus 25:8- 9). The "sanctuary" for Christians is not a building, but an assembly of the church of Christ. It was to the "church of God at Corinth" that God said: "For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people" (2 Corinthians 1:1;

6:16). Jesus' followers, like David, are blessed "who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

**Verses 3-6:** One must truly be blinded to the truth to speak of the Old Testament God as hate-filled and war-mongering, but the New Testament God as loving and forgiving. What, then, happens to David's reference to this God as having "lovingkindness?" It is "lovingkindness" which prompts David to "praise," "bless," and "lift up [his] hands" to God. In "a dry and thirsty land," David finds spiritual satisfaction ("as with marrow and fatness"); though "there is no water," David's mouth can "praise" God; all night long, David can find comfort in God's care. Physical help did come, however (2 Samuel 17:27- 29).

**Verses 7-8:** Based upon God's protection in the past ("have been my help"), David again seeks shelter under God's "wings," his "soul" following God's direction, feeling supported by God's "right hand." These physical allusions to God as if He had a physical body are purely a human using physical terms to understand how important God really is.

**Verses 9-11:** To "go into the lower parts of the earth" clearly indicates that David's enemies would die; and that "they shall fall by the sword" shows their deaths would be connected with violence; and that "they shall be a portion for jackals" predicts their loneliness in death, for their bodies are left to wildlife, which happened in 2 Samuel 18:6- 8. David's praise for God will continue, but death will stop the "lies" of his persecutors. Solomon's wisdom would say: "A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies will not escape" (Proverbs 19:5).

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Psalm 64

12/13/12

Vs. 1-6 picture David's enemies "secretly" plotting against him;
Vs. 7-10 show God's response and men's reactions.

There is reason to think this Psalm was written while King David's son, Absalom, plotted his overthrow (2 Samuel 15:7-13), but though the names change, the situation prompting this Psalm happen continually: wicked people plot to destroy those obedient to God: "Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all" (Matthew 12:14-15).

Verses 1-6: David seeks relief from "fear of the enemy," because fear is an enemy of faith. Jesus rebuked Peter with: "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:31). God told Israel: "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God" (Isaiah 41:10). David's "fear" is caused by "secret plots of the wicked" and open "rebellion of the workers of iniquity." Tongues that speak sharply-piercing words; launch "bitter words" like arrows "at the blameless;" and who "do not fear." Words can be weapons of mass destruction: "He who speaks truth declares righteousness, But a false witness, deceit. There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health. The truthful lip shall be established forever, But a lying tongue is but for a moment" (Proverbs 12:17-19). There is nothing permanent about some people's words except the hurt they inflict on others! **Verse 5** shows the wicked emboldened by: boasting among themselves; making secret plans; thinking they are hidden from judgment. This verse dissects bullies, gangs, tyrants, dictators, back-room politicians, socialists, religious leaders, ad nauseum. In the shopping cart

of the perverse, one finds "maliciousness," "whisperers," "backbiters, haters of God," "boasters," "unmerciful," and whether cloaked in government, religion, news, entertainment, "those who practice such things are deserving of death" (Romans 1:29-32). What happens in Vegas (or anywhere else, for that matter!) DOES NOT STAY THERE! The wicked could accomplish much good if, as in **verse 6**, they spent their time and energy planning to do good!

Verse 7-10: The best lesson for bullies of every stripe is for them to learn they, too, can be hurt! God will "fire back" at them and they will "suddenly" discover nothing is hidden from God! "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13). **Verse 8** is later spoken by Solomon: "The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will come through trouble" (Proverbs 12:13). **Verse 9** states what the Apostle Paul will write in Romans 14:10-12: "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: 'As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.' So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." According to **verse 10**, as certainly as the unrepentant wicked will be damned, the righteous will be forever blessed.

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**Psalm 65**

**12/14/12**

Vs. 1-5 show God alone rules the lives of the saved;  
Vs. 6-13 show the living God, alone, rules the living world.

There is no good reason for doubting that this is a Psalm of David. There are some who are always critical of what they find in the Bible, and Jesus had a word for them. "Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk." They posed their question, and after answering it, "Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, 'Why do you test Me, you hypocrites?'" (Matthew 22:15-18). It is scholarly to examine the Bible for proof, it is idiocy and sophistry to ignore the proof the Bible gives!

**Verses 1-5:** God is to be praised in Zion ("the City of David," 2 Samuel 5:7) because of His attractive traits (**verse 1**). He: (1) hears prayer (**verse 2**), which all people desire in their God; (2) provides "atonement" for the "transgressions" of some, out of a world of "iniquities," (**verse 3**); (3) blesses the chosen priests who may approach Him on others' behalf (**verse 4**); demonstrates by His "awesome deeds in righteousness" (that is, vanquishing whole armies or nations who oppose His people) that there is but one real, living God over the earth (**verse 5**). It profanes the term "awesome" if everything in life is given that rank.

**Verses 6-13:** Proof of God's Power is in the Creation (Romans 1:20-21), which follows God's rules of orderliness. Proof that God exists and sustains life on earth is clearly seen: (1) "Mountains" (**verse 6**) solidly affect weather patterns; (2) "Noise," whether crashing waves or rioting mobs, is quieted when needed (**verse 7**); (3) Thunder, lightning, windstorms all strike fear in all mankind, and "outgoings" (sunrises and sunsets, Ecclesiastes 1:5) continue to create joy in those who survive (**verse 8**); In **verse 9**, our dependence on water is emphasized: rainfall waters crops and provides continuing supply to rivers (Ecclesiastes 1:7); In **verses 9-10** waterworks begin on the "ridges," running down to settle earth's "furrows," softening the ground for growing, and blessing growth. Paul later will say, "God "did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons,



filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). Waiting for Jesus' Second Coming is learned from farmers: "Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain" (James 5:7); every year with harvest and blessing is from God (**verse 11**); God's "paths" (patterns) even extend to uncultivated areas of the earth (**verse 11-12**); So that "flocks" have pastures, and "valleys" their grain (verse 13). Truly, God is to be praised for saving lives spiritually and physically ALL THE TIME! It takes a "fool" to say, "There is no God!" Life on earth comes from God and Evolutionists who explain life without God are truly fools!

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Psalm 66

12/17/12

Vs. 1-7 call for God to be praised for demonstrating His power in the past;
Vs. 8-12 call for God to be praised for purifying His people;
Vs. 13-20 call for God to be praised for answering their prayers.

This Psalm begins like Psalm 100, and reminds Israelites to remember God is over all. There is no clear-cut description of a particular event in Israel's history, nor is this directly linked to David, but this Psalm is indicating a definite return to God by His people.

Verses 1-7: The "shout" in **verse 1** must be understood as the "sing," "praise," "say to God," with words in **verse 2-3**. "Awesome" best describes God's "greatness of...Power" Whose "enemies shall submit themselves." Not only has God instilled His rules into His Creation, but He rules in human affairs to such extent that He makes enemies do His bidding! God promised Israel: "Also the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you" (Deuteronomy 30:7); and He told Paul: "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10). "All the earth" (**verses 1, 4**) refer to all people, including Gentiles. **Verse 5** calls attention to God's "awesome" work when He "turned the sea into dry land" (**verse 6**). This refers either to the crossing of the Red Sea to make them a nation (Exodus 14:21-31) or crossing the flooded Jordan River to enter their Promised Land (Joshua 3:14-17; 4:18). **Verse 7** says the same God who watches over Israel also watches over all nations! What could "Deists" possibly respond to this verse with? The whole earth is under the direct supervision of and interactions with the living God!

Verses 8-12: In **verses 8-9**, a call for God to be praised for keeping them alive. **Verses 10-12** point out what testing God did while preserving them: refining them like silver; remembers Pharaoh's statement: "They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in" (Exodus 14:3) and their feeling of fear; "We went through fire and through water" possibly the same sign of God's possessing them as in Isaiah 43:1-2 as in the Red Sea all the way to the fiery furnace in Daniel 3:19-27. Hard times for God's people are a way God has of strengthening the faith of some and trimming away those with a lack of faith! "But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you" (1 Peter 5:10).

Verses 13-20: In **verses 13-15**, knowledge of what "awesome" works God has done should cause one to have strong desire to worship God in the manner God has prescribed. Then it was under Moses' Law, today it is under Jesus' Law (John 4:19-24;

Ephesians 2:11-22). God responds to the prayers of those "who fear God" (**verse 16**), "extol Him" (**verse 17**), and refuse to accept sin as normal (**verse 18**), for He "has heard" and "attended to" (**verse 19**), and not rejected prayer nor His mercy in answering (**verse 20**). Any Christian today who cannot thank God for answering prayer in the past doesn't have the spiritual sight to see if, or when, God would answer a present or future prayer (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

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**Psalm 67**

**12/18/12**

Vs. 1 appeals to God for acceptance;  
Vs. 2-4 express desire that all men would praise God;  
Vs. 5-7 show God's blessing to the whole world.

There is nothing about this Psalm to indicate who, when, or why it was written, except that it expresses "the hope of Israel" that God's "seed" would fulfill God's plan of salvation for all mankind. This plan was fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:13-29), and not re-offered again in a future time. This Psalm certainly anticipates the blessing of Abraham through Jesus Christ, the "hope of Israel" (Acts 26:6-7, 22-23).

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**Verse 1:** "Mercy" is behind forgiveness, so it should be the first request a sinner makes of God and the first blessing those forgiven should give to others (Luke 6:36; Hebrews 2:17; 8:12). It reads like the blessing priests gave under Moses' Law in Numbers 6:24-26: "The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." The use of "LORD" showed that blessing was for those in covenant to Jehovah (Israelites), but in the Psalm "God" is used which shows it speaks of all mankind, not just Israelites.

**Verse 2-4:** By using the expressions "all nations," "peoples," "govern the nations," more than just Israelites were to be included in God's blessings. God never planned for the Israelites only to be His people, but it was through them He would send His promised blessing – Jesus Christ, whom Paul preached: "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39). In **verse 4**, that God "shall judge the people righteously" will ultimately fall on Jesus Christ, to whom God has given judgment (John 5:22-23, 30). "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

**Verses 5-7:** When Gentiles praise God along with Israelites (**verse 5**), then "the earth shall yield her increase." God promised in Deuteronomy 28:1-12 to physically bless the Israelites in their land if they "diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today." If God can make land produce when they followed His commandments, surely He can do the same today! Truly, "The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it" (Proverbs 10:22). Don't believe "men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself" (1 Timothy 6:5). There is no "gospel of greed" but sincere obedience to God's principles brings blessings even from the earth! It always comes from "God, our

own God" (**verse 6**), and not government or corporation! Today, Jews and Gentiles must be saved by the same gospel (Romans 1:16- 17), then added to the same church of Christ (Acts 2:38, 41, 47; Ephesians 2:11-22).

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Psalm 68

12/19/12

Vs. 1-6 Let the procession begin;
Vs. 7-14 have the procession continue through the wilderness; Vs. 15-21 describe enemies held off from the procession;
Vs. 22-28 show the unity of God's people in the procession;
Vs. 29-31 have foreign countries impressed with this spectacle;
Vs. 32-35 give praise to the God of gods.

There is no reason to doubt that David wrote this Psalm, thus it could refer to his moving the ark of God from Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:1-19) and establish it as the city of David (2 Samuel 5:6-9). Between the cherubim wings on top of the ark was where God was represented by a cloudy pillar by day and a fiery pillar by night (Exodus 40:38). This Psalm may track the ark from its beginning with Moses at Sinai until it arrives with David in Jerusalem.

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Verses 1-6: It begins (**verse 1**) with the very words used by Moses every time the ark moved (Numbers 10:35). No enemies could prevent its progress (**verse 2**), to the rejoicing of the righteous (**verse 3**). Worship in song to (**verse 4**) THE God ("Yah" a.k.a. Jehovah identified to Moses for their covenant, Exodus 3:13-15; 6:2-6) who (**verse 4**) "rides on the clouds," figuratively showing His freedom of movement. In the wilderness, (**verse 5**) God provided what the orphaned and widowed nation of Israel needed. They were "His holy habitation." God united and freed Israelite families from Egypt (**verse 6**), but made them wander 40 years because they rebelled (Deuteronomy 1:26).

Verses 7-14: In the wilderness (**verse 7**), God "went before them" (Exodus 13:21-22), then (**verse 8**) Mount Sinai appeared like a volcano (Exodus 19:16-18), and (**verse 9**) "the rain" (whether to quench the fire of God's judgment, Numbers 11:1-3, or manna that fell with the dew, Numbers 11:4-9) showed them God cared for them. **Verses 10-11** state the Israelites dwelt in their Promised Land. **Verse 12** points to their victories which drove out those who lived in the land, and verse 13 reminds readers of the peace they had when those kings scattered (**verse 14**) in defeat.

Verse 15-21: Mountains often represent countries, and (**verses 15-16**) Bashan, once conquered, belonged to God! It was God who overcame the chariots (**verse 17**). **Verse 18** is quoted in Ephesians 4:8 to show that "gifts" in the church of Christ came from God (Ephesians 4:1-16). **Verses 19-20** conclude that God blesses and preserves the saved, while **verse 21** gives no hope to those who continue in sin.

Verses 22-28: In **verses 22-23**, a reminder of exactly how God defeated the king of Bashan (Numbers 21:33-35; and Ahab later, 1 Kings 21:17-29). **Verse 24** draws attention to God's procession into His sanctuary, (**verse 25**) the music accompanying it, and (**verse 26**) focuses worship upon God. (With "singers" going before and "players on instruments" next, there is decided difference in the two kinds of music: vocal and instrumental! Christians today sing, Colossians 3:16). Israel's history

(**verse 27**) in their land had King Saul, leader from tribe of Benjamin, no one leader from the tribe of Judah, and others from the tribes of Zebulon and Naphtali. Later, the church of Christ will use the unified works of: Saul of Tarsus (the "least" Apostle Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:9) from the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5), Jesus Christ is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," (Revelation 5:5), and the tribes of Zebulon and Naphtali in others of the 12 Apostles. **Verse 28** states that Israel would not exist were it not for God's strong arm.

Verses 29-31: Because the Israeli Nation would worship at God's "temple at Jerusalem," it would be the center of worship for all (**verses 29-30**), and the conquered peoples would have to pay in silver. Today, the church of Christ is God's temple (1 Corinthians 1:1; 6:16; Ephesians 2:14-22) for all who obey Jesus Christ (Acts 2:36-38). **Verse 31** predicted widespread prominence and peace for Israel, surely in Solomon's day (1 Kings 4:24-25).

Verses 32-35: "Sing" to God (**verse 32**) because: He is over "you kingdoms of the earth;" (**verse 33**) He "rides on the heaven of heavens" (He is the highest of all!); His "mighty voice" alone has power over all; (**verse 34**) "His strength is in the clouds" means His might is untouchable; (**verse 35**) He is "more awesome" and the source of strength to His people.

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## Psalm 69

12/20/12

Vs. 1-4: David presents his woes to God;

Vs. 5-12: David's zealous obedience to God created the problems; Vs. 13-18: David's heartfelt plea for God to step in with help;

Vs. 19-21: David's hurts caused by his enemies;

Vs. 22-28: David calls for God's wrath to come upon them;

Vs. 29-36: David offers praise to God who looks after His "prisoners."

The inspired Apostle Paul quoted Psalm 69:22-23 in Romans 11:9-10 with the words "And David says." That ends all speculation as to authorship. Psalm 69 is quoted more in the New Testament than most other chapters in the Old Testament. Directly related to Jesus' life are: Psalm 69:4 (John 15:25); Psalm 69:9 (John 2:17); Psalm 69:9 (Romans 15:3). Not quoted, these verses describe things done in Jesus' life: Psalm 69:8 (John 1:11; 7:5); Psalm 69:21 (Matthew 27:34; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36; John 19:28-30). These quotes relate to God's plan for Jesus: Psalm 69:22-23 (Romans 11:9-10) show God's plan always was to include Gentiles; Psalm 69:25 (Acts 1:20) describes Judas Iscariot.

**Verses 1-4:** David's desperation is described as a drowning man; his cries have dried out his throat; his enemies hate him, though unprovoked by offense that he has committed.

**Verses 5-12:** David's appeal is based on his: **verses 5-6**, integrity, which God certainly would know; **verses 7-9**, zealous obedience; **verses 10-12** shameful treatment by his enemies.

**Verses 13-18:** David's prayer and desire is for God to: **verses 13-15**, hear and deliver him from this terrible situation; **verses 16-18**, "draw near to my soul."

**Verses 19-21:** David's deep wounds include: "reproach," "shame," "dishonor," "broken heart," "heaviness," pitiless, comfortless, being mistreated.

**Verses 22-28:** Here, David speaks for himself, for he asks for retribution, a far cry from Jesus Christ on the cross who said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34). Payback to David included: **verse 22**, their prosperity "become a snare;" verse 22, their "well-being a trap;" **verse 23**, darkened eyes means darkened/dim understanding (Ephesians 4:17-20); **verse 24**, God's "indignation," and "wrathful anger;" **verse 25**, a wiped out land. This request is upon enemies who have abandoned God (**verses 26-28**).

**Verses 29-36:** David presents his humility from which he will praise God, which is better than animal sacrifice (**verses 29-31**). God said in Hosea 6:6: "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Dedication must accompany, and be the basis for, the sacrifices of worship. Christians should remember that: "here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Hebrews 13:14-16). Good works are useless without the sacrifices in worship, but worship is meaningless without a consistent service of good works. That God "hears the poor" (**verse 32-33**) shows no one is unimportant to God who serves Him. **Verses 34-36** point universal praise to God because His future plan pointed through Israel to Jesus Christ.

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Psalm 70

12/21/12

- Vs. 1: A call for speedy deliverance;
- Vs. 2-3: A request for opponents to be "turned back;"
- Vs. 4: A desire that those who change glorify God;
- Vs. 5: An appeal from the lowly.

These verses almost duplicate Psalm 40:13-17. Psalm 40 was written by David and prophetically described Jesus' death. Psalm 70 is projects the communication between God and Jesus just before Jesus died. For comparison, read both Psalms.

Verse 1: "God" (Elohim) is the same Deity as "LORD" (Jehovah). The call is for God to be "pleased" to hurry with deliverance, but not from the cross. "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour?' But for this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:27).

Verse 2: Sinners who see the error of their way have a sense of "shame." When Jesus "said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him" (Luke 13:17). "Mutual confusion" is the same as "confounded," and simply expresses the desire for those who wrongly destroy Jesus, to see their error. Shortly after his conversion to Christ, "Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ (Acts 9:22).The Gospel challenges the thoughts of sinners. "Turned back" shows a change of direction, "driven backward" indicates conviction to change, add these expressions and "repentance" is the result. Jesus' cross should cause those who understand its meaning and their own sins, to be driven back from their sins. After He was raised from the dead, "Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise

from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46-47).

Verse 3: Those who would say, “Aha, aha” are the Gotcha people. “And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him” (Luke 11:53-54). Listening for the wrong purpose causes people to not even hear what is said!

Verse 4: “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7:7-8).

Verse 5: Jesus Christ on the cross, substituted Himself for sinners who are the “poor and needy.” “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit” (1 Peter 3:18). This Psalm ends with a statement both Jesus and a sinner can make. The sinner who repents can make the same acknowledgment that Jesus made: only God can deliver. Jesus, in death, committed His spirit to God (Luke 23:46). The sinner must commit his/her spirit into the hands of God’s design. “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6:4-5).

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## Psalm 71

12/24/12

Vs. 1-13 contain a prayer to God;  
Vs. 14-24 contain praise of God.

**Psalm 71** contains a number of verses from previous Psalms which have been identified as David’s. Those Davidic verses will be cited in brackets for comparison. Hence, this could easily have been another Psalm authored by David, who was in “old age” (verse 9) and “old and grayheaded” (verse 18).

**Verses 1-13:** David could trust life, security, and the future into the hand of God (**verses 1-3** [31:1-3]); God is asked to deliver from a “wicked,” “unrighteous,” “cruel” man (**verses 4-5** [140:1,4]); trust in God begins in childhood (**verse 5**); it’s good that God “took me out of my mother’s womb” (**verse 6** [22:9-10]) and not a partial birth advocate (!); “wonder” (**verses 7-8**) refers to a work of God; the plea (**verse 9**) is to not be “cast off” in his “old age,” or forsaken when he is weak; the enemies misrepresent the character of both God and David (**verses 10-11** [56:5-6; 31:13; 83:3-5; 3:2]); David appeals to God to be near and hurry (**verse 12** [22:11, 19; 38:21-22; 40:13]); desires that the adversaries know opposition from God (**verse 13** [35:4, 26; 40:14]).

**Verses 14-24:** David promises to serve God in the future: “will hope,” “will praise,” shall tell,” “will go,” “will make mention.” Our unquenchable hope in God (**verse 14**) should elicit undying praise of God, though “aged” praise of God should not be left to another generation; telling of God’s righteousness and salvation should be continuous

"all the day" (**verse 15** [35:28; 40:5]); to "go in the strength of the LORD God" means simply to rely upon God (**verse 16**) and God's righteousness, not ours, should be the subject; what we learn early in life (**verse 17** [26:7]) we are prone to remember and declare; though "old and grayheaded" our task isn't completed unless we teach "this generation," and the one "to come" (**verse 18**) God's "strength," "power," and "righteousness"; in **verses 19-21**, God is above all for there is none like Him, He repeatedly delivers "from the depths of the earth," and can "comfort me on every side;" true to form, David sings praises to God "with the lute" and "with the harp" (**verse 22**), but he uses his "lips" to do the singing (**verse 23**), and his "tongue" to talk (**verse 24**); David's foes are "confounded," that is, confused, to see their enemy helped by God, and "brought to shame," that is downcast by guilt, for what they have been doing.

Some phrases have worked themselves into our everyday conversations: "all the day" (**verses 8, 15**); "all the day long" (**verse 24**); "more and more" (**verse 14**); "in the strength of the LORD God" (**verse 16**); "old and grayheaded" (**verse 18**).

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Psalm 72

12/25/12

Vs. 1-4 show that a king's judgments should reflect the righteousness of God;
 Vs. 5-11 describe the good influence inside and outside his kingdom;
 Vs. 12-17 list blessings that will come to his people;
 Vs. 18-19 remind us that the glory belongs to God. Vs. 20 brings the prayers of David to a conclusion.

This is commonly attributed to Solomon, as are Psalms 127 and 132, although verse 20 appears to make it a prayer of David about the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which is the church of Christ (Acts 2:47; 8:12). There are several statements that more accurately describe Jesus Christ (verses 5-7, 11, 17) than Solomon.

Verses 1-4: Surely this section was behind Solomon's proverb: "Take away the wicked from before the king, And his throne will be established in righteousness" (Proverbs 25:5). Jeremiah prophesied this for Jesus: "'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth'" (Jeremiah 23:5). The Apostle Peter told Gentile Cornelius that God "commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42).

Verses 5-11: Solomon's kingship did not last "throughout all generations (**verse 5**), "But to the Son [Jesus Christ] He [God] says: 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom'" (Hebrews 1:8). Solomon never "came down like rain" (**verse 6**) out of Heaven, Jesus did: "'For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (John 6:38). Solomon lost the righteousness (**verse 7**) of his kingship (1 Kings 11:9-11), but of Jesus: "Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men" (Romans 14:16-18). Though Solomon's kingdom was extensive (**verses 8-11**), it has been exceeded by that of Jesus (Colossians 1:3-6). Truly "a greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42).

Verses 12-17: Solomon didn't achieve with riches and military might (**verses 12-14**) like Jesus has through humane principles (Galatians 5:19-26).

Verses 15-16 list blessings that accompany obedience to Jesus Christ: "gold," "prayer," "praise," "abundance of grain," fruitful trees, increasing numbers of followers. In **verse 17**, "His name shall" "endure" and "continue," terms not for Solomon's name, but "Christian" generates new followers for "as long as the sun," which still works.

Verses 18-19: The God of Heaven and Earth "only does wondrous things" and alone should receive blessings for them.

Verse 20: This ends this Psalm, and a section of the Book of Psalms (chapters 42-72). A David about to die may have prayed this chapter, and Solomon recorded it. At any rate, Jesus Christ is woven throughout its fabric.

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## Psalm 73

12/26/12

Vs. 1 states the conviction of believers that blessings have come from God;  
Vs. 2-14 state the difficulty for the believer when the wicked are blessed;  
Vs. 15-22 resolve the troubling conflict in faith;  
Vs. 23-28 show renewed confidence in the Lord God.

Asaph was "the seer" (prophet), and with David's words (2 Chronicles 29:30), wrote 12 Psalms (50, 73-83). When Israel was restored to their land, they were reminded of these Psalms (Nehemiah 12:46). A major stumbling-block for believers is: "Why to the wicked prosper?" This Psalm answers that question. Please re-read my study of Psalm 37.

**Verse 1:** The only other time this expression ("pure in heart") is used is by Jesus (Matthew 5:8), and to "see God" (Hebrews 12:14) is to be aware of His "good" that He does (Ephesians 1:17-18).

**Verses 2-14:** It is a slippery slope for a believer to "envy" the "prosperity of the wicked" (**verses 2-3**). David covered this subject (Psalm 37:1-6), Solomon echoed it (Proverbs 23:17), and Paul damned it (Galatians 5:19-21). But it appears the wicked have it easy, even in death (**verse 4**; Job 21:7, 13). Obviously the believer is incorrect at overlooking all the wicked who die horrible deaths (Jezebel, King Saul, Absalom, Ahithophel, Hitler, Mussolini, ad nauseum). The worldly-minded are always looking out for themselves (**verse 5**; Luke 16:8), while the righteous are trying to love God and man (Mark 12:29-31). Believers must take a look at the dark side of the wicked's life: "pride" and "violence" (**verse 6**); covetousness (**verse 7**); their perverse language (**verses 8-9**) cannot be trusted. In the words of Edward Parry: "Their tongue walketh through the earth, and leaves nothing unspoken of. If men be poor, they talk of oppressing and mastering of them; if they oppose, they discourse of violence and suppressing... If in this perambulation they meet with truth, they darken it with lies and home made inventions; if with innocence, they brand it with false accusations and bitter aspersions; if with a strict government and good laws, then they cry, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;' if with religion, they term it heresy, or superstition; if with patience, they term it obstinacy and perverseness; if with the church, they think of nothing less than devouring it, and cry, 'Let us take the houses of God in possession;' if with the thoughts of a resurrection, and of future hopes, 'Let us eat and drink,' cry they, 'for tomorrow we



shall die.' Thus no corner is left unsearched by their abusive tongue, which walks through the earth." Even the ungodly are emboldened by this one-sided thinking, for they: drink his cup of sins (**verse 10**); falsely assume that God doesn't know of their sins (**verse 11**); seem to have it easy and are rich (**verse 12**). Meanwhile, the righteous begin thinking, "Why am I knocking myself out to be right?" (**verse 13**), and "Why do I question the right-ness of everything I do?" (**verse 14**).

**Verses 15-22:** If the believer voiced these doubts, it could undermine the faith of others (**verse 15**), because just the thought of it is "too painful" for one (**verse 16**). The answer is found by going to church (**verse 17**)! When Moses built the tabernacle, God said, "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8). That "sanctuary" then was the gathering place for God's People to worship God. Today, the temple of God is the church of Christ (2 Corinthians 1:1; 6:16), which no church building actually is (Hebrews 8:2)! Since "church" means "assembly," THEN CHRISTIANS WHO ASSEMBLE TO HEAR BIBLE PREACHING WILL BE TAUGHT THE ANSWER TO THIS MOST TROUBLING QUESTION! Bible lessons include the destruction of the wicked (**verses 18- 20**), and the foolishness and ignorance of believers who forget these lessons (**verses 21- 22**)!

**Verses 23-28:** The believer must resolve to be led by faith (**verse 23**) and saved by God (**verse 24**). Faith revolves around these truths: (1) God is faithful in Heaven (**verse 25**; 2 Corinthians 1:18); (2) we must be faithful on earth (**verse 26**; 2 Timothy 2:11-13); (3) God destroys those who "desert" Him (**verse 27**; Proverbs 13:9; Matthew 7:21-23); (4) our lives are best when we "draw near to God" (**verse 28**; James 4:7-8).

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Psalm 74

12/27/12

Vs. 1-11 contain the lament over destruction in Jerusalem;
Vs. 12-23 are the appeal for God to care for Judah as He had so often before.

The background for this Psalm seems to be rooted in the destruction of Jerusalem caused by "Shishak, king of Egypt" (2 Chronicles 12:2-12). It indicated great displeasure by God for Him to allow pagan people to overthrow the Jerusalem, capital of political and religious practices in the Southern Kingdom of God's People. The explanation is found in 2 Chronicles 12:5: "Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah, who were gathered together in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, 'Thus says the LORD: 'You have forsaken Me, and therefore I also have left you in the hand of Shishak.'"

Verses 1-11: The oft-asked question "Why?" (**verse 1**) shows awareness that was lacking previously. This Psalm makes their dilemma belong to God by using "You," "Your," "Yours" some 34 times. Had the people thought of their sinful actions as directly reflecting upon God, and repented before, this might not have had to happen. God did not cast them off "forever," for Jews and Gentiles are the people of God today in Jesus Christ (Romans 11:1-5; 1:16-17; 6:3-7). It takes destruction to drive stubborn sinners to their knees, causing them to appeal to God for forgiveness. Suddenly, they acknowledge they are the "sheep of Your pasture (**verse 1**); it is His "purchased" "congregation," His "redeemed" "tribe" of "inheritance," and His worship place "Mount Zion"(**verse 2**)! God's People had improperly changed their worship of God, but now wanted something done because the enemy had: "damaged everything in the sanctuary" (**verse 3**) but left it standing; set banners of false gods in God's

"meeting place" (**verse 4**); because Solomon's temple and palace were structured with cedar, often gold-plated (1 Kings 6:21- 22), the Egyptians hacked their way through (**verses 5-6**), burning up their rubble (**verses 7-8**). The expression "meeting places" is the same as "assemblies" (**verses 4, 8**), and not the total destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, itself. Why can't people see that to destroy worship practices God has given is no different than an outsider "defiling" the sacred elements of that worship? The same Scriptures that detail the sanctity of worship also demand the sacredness of assemblies. To violate one is the same as violating the other. NOW, after what an enemy has done, God's People become keenly aware that God is not with them through: prophecy (**verse 9**), reaction to reviling (**verse 10**), or protection (**verse 11**)? They should have noticed this when they left the LORD.

Verses 12-23: The people, not God, needed this reminder of God's past dealings. This is simply a re-study of Scriptures, for when God is King to His People (as Jehovah), He saves (**verse 12**). In **verse 13**, He parted the Red Sea for Israelites (Exodus 14:21-31), then drowned Pharaoh's army, whose "gods" were "sea serpents" (Exodus 7:8-13); later in time from Shishak, God would describe Pharaoh as "like a monster in the seas" (Ezekiel 32:2), so **verse 14** pictures Pharaoh as a broken Leviathan head. When God is recognized as Creator (Elohim), He: broke fountain and flood in Noah's day (**verse 15**; Genesis 6-9), and has "dried up mighty rivers," such as the flooded Jordan (Joshua 3:14-17); made day and night and light and sun (**verse 16**; Genesis 1:3- 5, 14-19); set earth's borders and seasons (**verse 17**; Acts 17:26; Genesis 8:22). God's People may become foolish, but an enemy is "a foolish people" who reproach and blaspheme God's Name (**verse 18**); would be a "wild beast" to the "turtledove" Jews (**verse 19**); would provide cruel homes for a covenant people (**verse 20**). God's People needed to be freed so they might praise God's Name (**verse 21**); enemies vanquished because they increase in reproaches and riots against God (**verse 22-23**).

Lesson: The only way to correct corrupt practices is to return to God's Word!

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**Psalm 75**

**12/28/12**

- Vs. 1 thanks God for being near;
- Vs. 2-5 give God's warning to sinners in their pride;
- Vs. 6-8 give superiority to God, who is Judge;
- Vs. 9 praises God;
- Vs. 10 gives God's final Judgment.

There is nothing to indicate exactly when, or to whom, this Psalm should apply, but it is included in Asaph's collection. Certainly, God has rendered rightly in His past judgments that affected the World: Flood over all the earth (Genesis 6-9); Divided Languages over Tower of Babel (Genesis 11); deliverance of Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19); preservation of Israelites in Egypt (Genesis 41-50); deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Exodus 7-14). Psalm 75 could easily be foreshadowing the final Judgment of mankind (Hebrews 9:27-28).

**Verse 1:** God is praised for stepping in with miraculous judgments in the past.

**Verses 2-5:** God speaks out as to "why" He has done so: (**verse 2**) it was "the proper time" for a proper judgment. Such a time when He sent Jesus to earth (Galatians 4:4), and also when He sends Jesus to call everyone

up to Judgment Day (John 5:28-29; Acts 17:30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18); (**verse 3**) it will be when the Creator destroys His created Earth (2 Peter 3:10-12);(**verses 4-5**) it will be the take-down of the uplifted! Boasting in oneself is the product of "bitter envying" and "self-seeking" creating "arrogance" and is "a lie against the truth" and "evil" (James 3:14; 4:16). Hence, "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate" (Proverbs 8:13). It has always been true "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts Shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up-And it shall be brought low" (Isaiah 2:11-12). Surely, the defeats of evil forces in recent history are not wasted on us: European National Socialism (Nazi), Facsism (Italy), European Marxist Socialism, Iraqi (Babylonian) conquests. When evil arises, God can (and has!) leavened it.

**Verses 6-8:** There is no direction on earth from which "exaltation" of this magnitude can come (**verse 6**). Only "God is the Judge" (**verse 7**), and in the "high offices of men," it is "the Most High God [who] rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses" (Daniel 5:21). Jesus reminded a representative of government that "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above" (John 19:11). Today we are reminded: "by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16). The cup of red wine (**verse 8**) represents God's condemnation and judgment against those who participate in the arrogance of power (Revelation 14:9-10).

**Verse 9:** Believers will reaffirm their commitment to God.

**Verse 10:** "Horns" represent the strength of creatures who possess them (Deuteronomy 33:16-17), thus God will "cut off" the "horns of the wicked," but exalt the "horns of the righteous." Justice is found in the Judgment of God, not in the judgments of men. Only when men are guided by God's judgments are they right!

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Psalm 76

12/31/12

- Vs. 1-3 mention the place of the victory;
- Vs. 4-6 describe the strength of the victory;
- Vs. 7-12 point the praise to the Power behind the victory.

There seems to be consensus that this Psalm was written concerning the invasion of Judah and attack on Jerusalem by Assyrian King, Sennacherib (2 Kings 18-19; Isaiah 37:1-38) in Hezekiah's day. This Psalm is one of victory by God's power, not man.

Verses 1-3: Isaiah 37:31-33 seem to form the outline for these verses in the Psalm. God's reputation is great in: (**verse 1**) Judah (the Southern Kingdom), Israel (the Northern Kingdom), (**verse 2**) Salem (the chosen city, Jerusalem, where the "tabernacle" was built), Zion (the Holy mount upon which the tabernacle dwelt). In **verse 3**, we find the thought of Isaiah 37:33: it is impossible to shoot broken arrows, protect with broken shields, or attack with broken swords!

Verses 4-6: God distinguished His Mount above all other mounts (**verse 4**). With the Assyrian weapons broken, they were "plundered", put in the "sleep" of death, and their hands were idled (**verse 5**). **Verse 6** shows the suddenness and completeness with which "the angel of the LORD" killed 185,000 Assyrians.

Verses 7-12: God has distinguished Himself above all "gods" (**verse 7**), because "God arose to judgment" like no other "god" could (**verses 8-9**). "All the oppressed of the earth," in this historical setting, referred to all of God's People back then who had suffered in the invasion of Assyria. Since "the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God" (James 1:20), then man's wrath can only bring a response from God that will defeat it. God's righteousness wins over man's wrath every time! What's left over of man's wrath only strengthens God's resolve to defeat it (**verse 10**). Vows of obedience should only be made to God, but must be kept (**verse 11**; Ecclesiastes 5:4-6), and "presents" of sacrifice belong only to God! To "cut off the spirit of princes" is to use an expression for a gardener or farmer to sever the harvest from its plant (**verse 12**)! One may now understand why the description is given in Revelation 14:14-20 to show God's wrath harvesting those who persecuted Christians before the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. When Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, God "seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:20-21). Truly, "there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God" (Romans 13:1), and can be brought down by God (Ezekiel 31:18).

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**Psalm 77**

**1/1/13**

- Vs. 1-3 indicate the Psalmist's troubling thoughts;
- Vs. 4-9 show doubting questions with no reassuring answers;
- Vs. 10-20 find reassurance in the written Scriptural record of God's past response.

Again, the point is obvious: God does not have to perform His miraculous response for each generation, since He has left a written record from the past. Neither does God have to keep performing identified miracles of Jesus Christ or His Apostles in order for someone today to be convinced. Jesus Christ said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (John 5:24). Since He spoke, everyone may "hear" Jesus' "word" by reading it in the writings. "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30-31). Written miracles do not have to be repeated to be believed. When faith is troubled by questions, the answers are in the Bible! Days of trouble should be days of prayer to God.

**Verses 1-3:** In **verse 1**, the Psalmist doesn't cry out to God because God cannot hear, but because the sins of the nation has separated them from God. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2). in **verse 2**, God responds because the sinner: "sought the Lord," stretched out his hand all night, and "refused to be comforted." In short, the sinner acknowledged his lost

condition without God! **Verse 3** makes clear that the burden should be upon the sinner for his own sins.

**Verses 4-9:** In **verses 4-6**, the thought of living without God drives sleep from the eyes and tone from the voice (**verse 4**); consumes the mind in remembrance of what God did in the past (**verse 5**; Deuteronomy 32:7-9); takes nighttime music away because the mind is focused on this trouble (**verse 6**). How has sin damaged one's relation to God: (**verse 7**) rejected forever? (**verse 8**) no appeal for mercy? (**verse 9**) has God closed His thought of us?

**Verses 10-20:** The anguish is caused within the Psalmist, not because of anything God had done (**verse 10**). The solution was to "remember," "meditate," and "talk" of what was written in the Bible about God (**verse 11-12**). Since God's way is "in the sanctuary," that is, beyond our world, we can but react to His works which are seen, our God is the greatest, for He: "does wonders," declared His "strength among the peoples (**verses 13-14**). His deeds are planned without man, but recorded for man. **Verses 15-20** recount God's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 9-14; 2 Samuel 22:1-51). "Jacob" is their namesake ("Israel," Genesis 32:28), "Joseph" was their Savior (Genesis 47:11-17), and the description of God's power in delivering the Israelites is awe-inspiring, indeed. Nothing in Scripture teaches that God must miraculously deliver His people today, but that He did so in the past surely should be encouraging to believers. Troubles and doubts are cast away when bathed in the faith from the Word of God (Romans 10:17). "Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior" (2 Peter 3:1-2).

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Psalm 78

1/2/13

Vs. 1-8 state the purpose of the Psalm is to tell "the generation to come" what not to do;
Vs. 9-72 review past lessons from the written Word of God.

Teaching now the lessons of the past to "the generation to come" (verses 4, 6) is the main work God gives to parents. Instead of arrogantly, ignorantly cursing one's father or not blessing one's mother (Proverbs 30:11-14), we must learn from whatever their mistakes were what not to do in those instances (1 Corinthians 10:1-12). "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise" (Proverbs 12:15). "A fool despises his father's instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent" (Proverbs 15:5). "A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart" (Proverbs 18:2). A fool has opinions, but doesn't listen to lessons of the past. A word to the wise is sufficient.

Verses 1-8: Jesus' use of parables was explained by quoting **verses 1-2** (Matthew 13:34-35). The generation that had "dark sayings of old" (lessons deeply contained in Scripture) taught to them should have acted better than they had (**verses 2-3**), for God had done "wonderful works," "established a testimony in Jacob," and "appointed a law" in Israel for fathers to teach their children (**Verses 4-6**; Exodus 12:1-28; Deuteronomy 4:1- 10; 6:7). If this was not done, it produced another "stubborn and rebellious generation" (**verses 7-8**).

Verses 9-72: In the Wilderness, they quit fighting too soon (**verse 9**; Exodus 17:8-16), ignored His Law (**verse 10**; Joshua 5:6), forgot His works (**verse 11**; Numbers 14:11). The miracles God did (**verse 12**) starting in Zoan in Egypt (Numbers 13:22) included: dividing the Red Sea (**verse 13**; Exodus 14:21), leading with a cloud and fire (**verse 14**; Exodus 13:21), and giving water from rock (**verse 15-16**; Exodus 17:6). Israelites responded by: more sinning, rebellion, testing God, and questioning God's provision (**verses 17-19**; Numbers 11:4), provoking Moses to strike the rock (**verse 20**; Numbers 20:11), more unbelief (**verse 21-22**; Numbers 11:1). God gave them "manna" (**verses 23-25**; Exodus 16:2-36), meat (**verses 26-31**; Numbers 11:31-34), forgiveness when asked (**verses 32-38**; Numbers 14:18-20). "Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth, And they lied to Him with their tongue" (**verse 36**). Lip service can never deceive the God "who searches the minds and hearts" (Revelation 2:23). The Israelites repeatedly failed in faith (**verse 39-41**; Hebrews 3:8-19). **Verses 42-53** refer back to what God had done to deliver Israel out of Egypt in the Book of Exodus chapters 9-14.

Verses 54-66 summarize the conquest of the Promised Land in the Book of Joshua, by God's help (**verse 54-55**; Joshua 13:17). **Verses 56-66** speak of the days in the Book of Judges, when Israel had failed to clear away all idolatry (Joshua 13:13; 16:10) and became idolatrous themselves (Judges 2:10-23). **Verses 67-72** illustrate that God's plan was carried out, even when Israel demanded a king instead of God's judge to lead them (1 Samuel 8:4-22), for God used "the tribe of Judah," "Mount Zion" (Jerusalem), and "David" through whom Jesus Christ would later come (Micah 5:2; Matthew 23:36-39; Romans 1:3-4).

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## Psalm 79

1/3/13

Vs. 1-5 pour out the painful story of a ruined people;  
 Vs 6-10 request that God punish foreign nations, but have mercy toward God's own;  
 Vs. 11-13 mention the humility a stunned Judah is feeling.

This Psalm seems to be descriptive of the hurt inflicted upon Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (2 Chronicles 36:11-21). The opening lament is an agonizing cry to God who has judged His people for their sins (2 Chronicles 36:14-17). In Jeremiah 52:28-30, the repetitions, length, and numbers of the sieges are listed.

**Verses 1-5:** God's own people, it seems, had defiled the temple of God before the Chaldeans could get to it (**verse 1**; 2 Chronicles 36:14). Babylonian butchery is depicted (**verse 2-3**; 2 Chronicles 36:17; 2 Kings 25:19-21). That this has been done by God for their sins is evident in **verses 4-5**, and their guilty consciences ask "how long?"

**Verses 6-10:** The appeal in **verses 6-7** is for God to turn His wrath on the nations who have violently acted toward Judah. In **verses 8-9**, God is asked to forgive and forget their sins, and only says "we have been brought very low," not the strongest assessment they could have made, and seem to think God must make them right! Then, in **verse 10**, they raise the issue of "will the enemies think they have prevailed against God?" Judeans should have worried about what their sins and corruption did to ruin God's reputation among the nations. With this lesson before us, Christians are reminded: "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they

observe, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:11-12). One of the atheist's arguments against God is the misbehavior of His people, but not only is that unfair because God grants freewill, it avoids the atheist having to acknowledge the living God and one's own sins. "Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?" (James 4:11-12) Who are they to criticize either God (whom they deny exists!) or Christians (when they refuse to become one and see for themselves, Psalm 34:8). The hypocrisy of their position is manifest to right-thinking people!

**Verses 11-13:** Too hurt to sing, too humbled to praise God, their "groaning" is from having been taken "prisoner" (**verse 11**). Retaliation is in the hand of God, not in their own power (**verse 12**). All they have left is to promise to be worshiping sheep in the future (**verse 13**).

This should be a somber reminder to the churches of Christ, that no one is impervious to sin (1 Corinthians 10:12), and God can still allow evil men to prevail when Christians have become like them (Hebrews 12:4-11).

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Psalm 80

1/4/13

Vs. 1-7 laments over the broken condition of God's People;
Vs. 8-16 illustrate the problem with a metaphor of a vine;
Vs.17-19 finish with another appeal for God to change their plight.

There is little information to place this within a particular historical event, although it appears to fit into the Babylonian conquest of the Southern Kingdom of Judah (2 Chronicles 36:11-21). Just as in Psalm 79, God permitted them to be severely punished because "they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy" (2 Chronicles 36:16). This had been, not occasional sin, but an abandonment of God's Law!

Verses 1-7: This Psalm concerns those in **verse 1** who are represented by Joseph, who had saved his brothers, and father, Israel (Genesis 47:11-17), therefore his name stood for all of the Israelites. God's presence was represented over the Ark of the Covenant between angels' wings (Exodus 25:10-22). Jacob's (name changed to Israel, Genesis 17:5) beloved wife, Rachel bore the sons, Joseph and Benjamin (Genesis 35:24). Joseph is represented in the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, in the Northern Kingdom, but Joseph's brother, Benjamin's tribe in the Southern Kingdom. Joseph's tribes and his brother's tribe stood for all of God's People in these happenings (**verse 2**). Only God can change His disfavor (**verse 3**), or change His anger (**verse 4**), stop His People's tears (**verse 5**), or reverse the ridicule from outsiders (**verse 6**). It is left up to God to deal differently with them (**verse 7**). What is missing from this appeal is the humility and repentance of His People! Their anguished cry asks the question "How long will You be angry?" (**verse 4**)

Verses 8-16: The Nation of Israel is the "vine" God brought out of Egypt (**verse 8**); planted, grown, and expanded it in the Promised Land from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River (**verses 9-11**); but now had been destroyed by enemies, described as a "boar" and "a wild beast" (**verses 12-13**). God is asked to reconsider

this "vine," "vineyard," and "branch" (**verses 14-15**), for it presently had been "burned with fire" and "cut down" (**verse 16**).

Verses 17-19: God is reminded (**verse 17**) that to recover Israel would continue the promise to Abraham, "the man of Your right hand," which the New Testament reveals was Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:13-18). Following Jesus' resurrection from the dead, "after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19). If God restores the Nation of Israel, they promise never to abandon God again (**verse 18**). Only God can save His People (verse 19). He did, and they were!

Every prophecy in the Old Testament to restore God's People to the Promised Land was fulfilled in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. There is no Old Testament prophecy that places physical Israel in a physical land after the earthly life of Jesus Christ. Jesus taught that "true worship" of God would no longer be "in Jerusalem" (John 4:21-24); that His sacrifice was to be remembered in the Lord's Supper "in the kingdom of God" (Mark 14:22-25); and it would take a "new birth" to be in His kingdom (John 3:3-7). No one can prove from the Bible of God's promises where the physical Israelites (1) are God's People today; (2) are promised a land on earth; (3) should ever keep Moses' Law after Jesus' cross.

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**Psalm 81**

**1/7/13**

Vs. 1-5 give a call for rejoicing;  
Vs. 6-16 give a reminder of why rejoice.

There isn't much to indicate either the time, place, or event in which this Psalm was written, but it seems typical of many Psalms, in that God is to be praised for His past help of the Israelites. God did not have to repeat His miracles in delivering His people from Egyptian slavery, for their faith had to be in His inspired, written account of those events (Exodus 9-17).

**Verses 1-5:** God is to be praised by those who: (**verse 1**) "sing aloud," "make a joyful shout," (**verse 2**) "raise a song." Music before God, clearly, should be vocal and come from the heart (Ephesians 5:19). Mention of the addition of instruments of music to accompany such singing ("timbrel," "harp," "lute") show they are that, additions. That they were not authorized by God is noticed by:  
(1) nothing is ever said by Moses that God authorized them (Exodus-Deuteronomy);  
(2) they are labeled, "the instruments of David" (2 Chronicles 29:25-26) because David "made" them (1 Chronicles 23:5);  
(3) they were condemned in Amos 6:5.

Instrumental accompaniment of the singing praise for God has never been authorized by God for His pleasure! God is: "God our strength," (**verse 1**) and "God of Jacob," who delivered up Jesus for us to be saved (Acts 3:13). In **verse 3**, the trumpet blast signified that God had something to say (Numbers 29:1-6; Exodus 19:16-20; Leviticus 25:9), as a "statute" and a "law" (**verse 4**) for "Israel," "Jacob," "Joseph," all terms used to represent God's covenant people under Moses' Law (Deuteronomy 5:1-3; Exodus 19:3-6; Genesis 50:24-25). Israelites were delivered from Egypt as a "mixed multitude" speaking "a language I did not understand" (**verse 5**), simply meaning their sinful attitudes were like a foreign language to God, as Jesus will one day say (Matthew 7:21-23).



**Verses 6-16:** God gives Scriptural reminders: **verse 6** that God delivered them while they were being used for slave labor (Exodus 1:8-14); **verse 7** that God heard their pleas (Exodus 2:23), lead them out of Egypt with pillars of cloud or fire over the most holy place (Exodus 13:21), tested them with Meribah waters (Exodus 17:1-7). In **verse 8** the people were admonished to "hear" and "listen," or notice "how" to listen (Luke 8:18). In **verses 9-10**, God starts over with the basic of how to recover their place with God: no other gods (Exodus 20:3-5); for only one God could and did lead them out of Egypt. They had been punished (**verses 11-12**) by God backing away and leaving them to their own devices: "not heed," "their own stubborn heart," "to walk in their own counsels." They quit listening to God, so He left them alone to their own laws and practices (Acts 7:42), which God even does today (Romans 1:28-32). If, and whenever, God's people, then or now, turn, listen to God, and walk in His ways (**verse 13**), then: (**verse 14**) He would protect them from their enemies; (**verse 15**) He would forever deal with "haters of the LORD;" (**verse 16**) fed them with wheat and honey. The fact that these blessings don't happen should cause God's people to examine themselves as to why not!

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Psalm 82

1/8/13

Vs. 1 gives the order of Judges and God is over all;
 Vs. 2-5 list abuses of Judges who have left God;
 Vs. 6-7 appeal for human Judges to change;
 Vs. 8 reminds all of the Supreme Judge.

Asaph was "the seer" (prophet), and with David's words (2 Chronicles 29:30), wrote 12 Psalms (50, 73-83). When Israel was restored to their land, they were reminded of these Psalms (Nehemiah 12:46).

Verse 1: Defines the order of Judges: God amidst the "gods" (or those designated to "judge" among men, but should be guided by God's Will). This follows other references to this under Moses' Law. "'You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people" (Exodus 22:28). King Jehoshaphat "set judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, and said to the judges, 'Take heed to what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment'" (2 Chronicles 19:5-6). "If you see the oppression of the poor, and the violent perversion of justice and righteousness in a province, do not marvel at the matter; for high official watches over high official, and higher officials are over them" (Ecclesiastes 5:8). Calling "judges" "gods" simply meant they were ordained to pass judgments on citizen behavior based upon God's Holy Bible. Would that Judges today followed God's Law, rather than man's rules.

Verses 2-5: Lists direct violations of God's Law these Judges had made in their judgments: (**verse 2**) "unjustly," "show partiality to the wicked"(Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17; Proverbs 18:5); (**verse 3**) uneven judgments involving "poor and needy," or "afflicted and needy" (Exodus 22:21-22; 23:6); (**verse 4**) "poor and needy" delivered from the "hands of the wicked" (Psalm 37:14); (**verse 5**) Judges lacked knowledge of God's Law, lacked judgment standards, and were reckless as if in the dark, which shakes the very foundation of a just society! This pathetic description of minds making decisions without God's Word is used by Paul to show how pathetic people are in the world who refuse to follow the Bible (Ephesians 4:17-32) in obeying Jesus Christ. Every civil Judge today, regardless of rank or court, should be humbled

and tremble before God with the seriousness of God's expectations, and His final disposition of their opinions!

Verses 6-7: They are reminded in **verse 6** that, though they represented God's judgments, they were still but "children of the Most High," therefore subject to Him. Their elevated position would not keep them from dying "like men," probably as despised dictators (**verse 7**).

Jesus Christ quoted **Psalm 82:6** to show that the term "gods" (Hebrew, Elohim) simply referred to "Judges," and they were "children of the Most High." If therefore, God called them "gods" how could anyone question Jesus referring to Himself as "The Son of God?" "Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"'? If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?" (John 10:34-36)

Verse 8: The appeal is for the Highest Judge of all to exercise His righteous, just, and holy judgment upon all, including the unjust Judges. This is the promise of the New Testament (Acts 17:30-31).

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**Psalm 83**

**1/9/13**

Vs. 1-8 describe the ominous situation Israel is in;  
Vs. 9-18 place their appeal before God.

This is the last of the dozen Psalms written by Asaph. Again, there doesn't seem to be any certainty as to when, why, where, or what this Psalm specifically refers to, but there is no reason to question its place in the Book.

**Verses 1-8:** In **verse 1**, there are three ways God could be silent: closed mouth ("silent"), deaf ears ("hold Your peace"), or be in a state of tranquility ("still"). Typically, when trouble arises, people mistake God's quietness for either His inability to respond or His insensibility to their needs. God's silence is not always a sign of either, but may be His way of waiting for people to listen to Him, and obey (what He has said in the Bible, for instance). By contrast, **verse 2-5** describe the activities of enemies: (**verse 2**) "make a tumult," lift "up their head," (**verse 3**) take "crafty counsel against" God's "people," "consulted together against" God's people, (**verse 4**) planned to "cut them off from being a nation," (**verse 5**) "form a confederacy against" God. Verses 6-8 make a composite picture of enemies of the past, thus indicating that God's people have lived, and still live, in a hostile world. **Verse 6:** Edom (Jacob's rejected brother, Genesis 25:20); Ishmaelite's (Ishmael's mother, Hagar, was Sarai's handmaid, Genesis 16:8-11, and he was not the child promised by God, Galatians 4:21-31); Moab (a son of incest by Lot and his daughter, Genesis 19:30-38, whose people caused sin among Israelites, Numbers 25:1-4); Hagrites (vanquished out of Palestine, 1 Chronicles 5:18-21); **Verse 7:** Gebal (vanquished out of Palestine, Joshua 13:5-6; 1 Kings 5:18); Ammon (a son of incest by Lot and his other daughter, Genesis 19:36-38, whose people were slaughtered by King Saul, I Samuel 11:11); Amalek (grandson of Esau, Genesis 36:12, whose people were constant enemies of Israel, Numbers 14:45, and were to be destroyed, Deuteronomy 25:17-19); Philistia and its city of Tyre (constant conquerors of Israel, Book of Judges); **Verse 8:** Assyria (founded by Nimrod and often powerful destructive people to Israel, Genesis 10:9-11).

**Verses 9-12:** Call to God to destroy enemies as He had done before: **Verse 9-verse 10:** Midian (Numbers 31:1-12), Sisera (Judges 4:15-24), Jabin (Judges 4:24; 5:20-21). **Verses 11-12:** Oreb and Zeeb (Judges 7:25), Zebah and Zalmunna (Judges 8:4-28), who thought to capture Israel's Promised Land.

**Verses 13-18:** Only God can destroy these enemies like: (**verse 13**) restless "whirling dust," and "chaff" blown by wind; (**verse 14**) fire burns wood, forest fire on the mountain; (**verse 15**) the terror of "tempest," the fear of a storm. The purpose is to bring them to "shame" (**verse 16-17**) and humility before God; and (**verse 18**) prove that "the LORD" is "the Most High over all the earth."

The church of Christ today, as the body of Christ (Colossians 1:18), lives among diverse enemies (John 15:18-25; 1 John 3:11-13), and still needs for God to hear and help (Acts 18:1-10; 2 Corinthians 13:11).

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Psalm 84

1/10/13

Vs. 1-4 speak of a person's security of place;
Vs. 5-8 speak of a person's strength of person;
Vs. 8-12 speak of a person's shield of purpose.

There is no distinct event or setting for this Psalm, but it states the benefits of worshiping God, seeking God, and obeying God. This can also point to the New Testament church, Messiah, and blessings.

Verses 1-4: God represented His presence among the Israelites in a "tabernacle" (Exodus 25:8-9), which made it "lovely" (**verse 1**). In the New Testament, the church of Christ is where God is represented as dwelling today (Acts 18:8; 2 Corinthians 1:1; 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-22). The natural desire for worship of the Higher Being, "the living God," is expressed (**verse 2**); and using an altar sacrifice is as natural as a "sparrow" finding a home, or a "swallow" making a nest (**verse 3**); therefore, "blessed" (happy) are those who "dwell in" God's house (**verse 4**). The church of Christ offers "spiritual sacrifices" (1 Peter 2:5), not animal, and "the house of God, which is the church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3:15) is "not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).

Verse 5-8: The "strength" (conviction) to attend worship (**verse 5**), like an inner GPS, will carry one through a valley as if blessings were raining down (**verse 6**), and "strength to strength" (**verse 7**) describes the determination never to quit until each individual "appears before God" at the place of worship ("Zion" in the Old Testament, the church of Christ in the New), where God will "hear my prayer" (**verse 8**).

Verses 9-12: God was Abram's "shield" (Genesis 15:1) protecting the genealogy for Jesus Christ through Isaac, not Ishmael (Genesis 17:19). In **Psalm 84:9**, if God would look ahead to His "Anointed" (Jesus Christ, Galatians 3:16-17), the Psalmist's audience would once again be useful to God's long-term plan. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38). The church of Christ is the result of that plan (Hebrews 12:22-24). The importance of worship is depicted in Psalm 84:10: one worship day is worth more than 1000 doing anything else; just opening the door to the worship

assembly is a desirable job; this is better than being in the dwellings of "the wicked" (a.k.a. non-worshippers!). Being in the presence of the LORD God in worship (**verse 11**) bathes one in "sun" and protects one with Him as "shield;" the worshiper is granted "grace and glory;" the worshiper who walks "uprightly" (a life consistent with one who loves God, will have "no good thing" withheld (1 Corinthians 3:21-23). "Then Peter opened his mouth and said: 'In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him'" (Acts 10:34-35). The 3rd "blessed" completes the picture of the person who loves God and worships Him, for "blessed" is the one who: dwells in the House of God (**verse 4**), finds strength in serving God (**verse 5**), and trusts in God (verse 12). All who do not enjoy attending worship services are lacking one or all of these qualities! Everyone in Heaven is a worshiper of God (Revelation 4:9-11; 14:6-7), non-worshippers will not be there! God seeks "true worshipers" who will worship Him "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:21-24), and Christians will (Acts 20:7).

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**Psalm 85**

**1/11/13**

- Vs. 1-3 express Israel's relief from being exiled from their land;
- Vs. 4-7 express Israel's concern that God wouldn't forget their sins;
- Vs. 8-9 express Israel's lesson they learned from 70 years away;
- Vs. 10-13 express Israel's acknowledgement of God's good character.

This Psalm obviously fits into the restoration of the Israelites (including Jews!) to their Promised Land, which indicated that God's punishment for their sins, by removing them from that land, had suddenly ended. All prophecies about Israelites (including Jews!) being restored to their Promised Land have been fulfilled as recorded in the Books of Ezra-Nehemiah (2 Chronicles 36:1-23; Ezra 1:1-11; 3:1-13; 4:4-5).

**Verses 1-3:** The past tense of these verbs describe a feeling of relief that God has finished His past punishment for Israel/Judah's sins: (**verse 1**) "have been favorable," "have brought back," (**verse 2**) "have forgiven the iniquity," "have covered," (**verse 3**) "have taken away," "have turned from." To show this is not just the Southern Kingdom returning, the terms used for this restoration include: "Your land," "the captivity of Jacob," "Your people," "all their sin," "all Your wrath," and the "fierceness of Your anger." Every tribe whom God had removed from that land were represented in those who returned to that land! The Northern Kingdom (Israel) had been removed by an Assyrian king (2 Kings 17:3-6), and the Southern Kingdom (Judah) had been removed by a Babylonian king (2 Chronicles 36:11-23). All that God had brought upon them, now God had removed (**Psalm 85:1-3**).

**Verses 4-7:** When God forgave their sin and restored their land, the sinners needed to be restored in realizing that forgiveness, also (**verse 4**). Their insecurity is expressed in their questioning His plan for them (**verses 5-7**).

**Verses 8-9:** The people's resolve is to "hear what God the LORD will speak" and "not turn back to folly" (**verse 8**). The people's realization is that God will "speak peace," make "His salvation near," and let glory (God's presence, Exodus 24:16- 17; 40:34-35) "dwell in our land" (**verses 8-9**). While rebuilding the temple was progressing, God said there would come another temple whose "glory shall be greater than the former" and "in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of

hosts.” (Haggai 2:1-9). The church of Christ is led by the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6; Ephesians 2:14-18), so Christians “Pursue peace with all people” (Hebrews 12:14; Mark 9:50; Romans 14:18-19).

**Verses 10-13:** When a sinner is forgiven, then “mercy and truth have met together” and “righteousness and peace have kissed” (**verse 10**). “Mercy” is God’s plan for sinners (Matthew 5:7; 9:13) and “truth” is God’s expression of that plan (John 1:14; 8:32, 40; 17:17). “Righteousness” is what God expects people to do (Romans 3:21-26), “peace” is the result of people’s obedience to God’s expectations (Acts 10:38-43; 2:38). **Psalm 85:11** pictures the contentment when such reconciliation occurs; **verse 12** shows what the obedient may expect from God; **verse 13** tell the obedient to look for the way they should follow. Jesus Christ is “the way” (John 14:6; Matthew 7:13-14; Acts 19:9), so “he who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:6).

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Psalm 86

1/14/13

Vs. 1-7 give God reasons to give help;
Vs. 8-10 give God glory;
Vs. 11-17 give God a willing servant asking for help.

Probably written by David, but there is no historical certainty upon which to base a background setting.

Verses 1-7: God is requested to: “bow down” His ear and “hear” (**verse 1**); “preserve” a “life” (**verse 2**); “be merciful” (**verse 3**); “rejoice the soul” (**verse 4**); because the one making this request is: “poor and needy” (**verse 1**); “holy” (**v 2**); crying to God “all day long” (**verse 3**); lifting up his soul (**verse 4**). Requesting favor from God is not being made by someone who has lived life with disdain for God and then, in trouble, prays, but rather, someone who stays in constant effort to contact God! A Christian equivalent might be in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. The character of God is that He is: “good” (**verse 5**), “ready to forgive,” “abundant in mercy” to “all those who call upon” Him. The New Testament emphasizes this: “in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Acts 10:35). God will hear “supplications” (not demands!) from the obedient (**verse 6**). The Psalmist declares: “In the day of my trouble I will call upon You” (**verse 7**), but this is by no means the first time God is approached by this person (**verses 3, 4, 11, 12**). To “call upon” God cannot mean lifting the voice only without also lifting the life. Jesus taught: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Verses 8-10: Since nowhere in the Bible is the term “gods” used of angels, then “gods” (**verse 8**) must refer to all humanly-invented deities, which by comparison have no comparison with God. “Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live” (1 Corinthians 8:4-6). God’s “works” are unmatched, such as making nations (**verse 9**; Acts 17:26; Colossians 1:15-20; Philippians 2:9-10), or the “wondrous things” He has done (**verse 10**; Genesis 8:22; Acts 14:14-18).

Verses 11-17: God responds, of course, to a heart willing to be taught to walk in His Way (**verse 11**), uniting the heart to "fear" God's Name (Ecclesiastes 8:12; 12:13). "Praise" and "glory" should go to God (**verse 12**) because of His "mercy" in delivering the Psalmist's "soul from the depths of Sheol" (realm of departed spirits whose dead bodies are in the grave). The Psalmist praises God for sparing him from death (**verse 13**). The problem with "proud" and "violent" enemies who jeopardize his life, has arisen (**verse 14**). Interesting to see how often pride and violence accompany the godless! To state God's qualities (as in **verse 5**) is to praise Him (**verse 15**; Exodus 34:5-8). The final request is that God grant "mercy," "strength," and salvation to a faithful follower (**verse 16**). A "son of Your maidservant" is a way of indicating that he had been raised by a godly mother, like Timothy in the New Testament (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15). For God to grant the prayer of David would be "a sign" to his enemies they are in the wrong and should be ashamed of their hatred of one who does good (**verse 17**).

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**Psalm 87**

**1/15/13**

Vs. 1-3 show all is well with God when He is recognized in worship;  
Vs. 4-6 show the universal desire of people to be spiritually born;  
Vs. 7 says worship in song comes from blessings.

This Psalm involved the "sons of Korah." Korah was a "son" of Esau (Exodus 34:6), whose descendant, Korah, died in the rebellion against Moses in the wilderness (Numbers 16), but whose children did not die (Numbers 26:9-11). The name "Korah" is associated with sinful rebellion against God and His worship, thus this praise should be in the heart of any sinner, and reflect deep respect for such service. Since the church of Christ is God's temple today (2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 1:1, 22-23; 2:14-22), this Psalm is phrased in such a way as to describe the church!

**Verses 1-3:** God designated "Zion" (**verse 1**) for a permanent temple place (2 Samuel 24:24-25; 1 Chronicles 17:1-15), but began the church of Christ on Zion so it would go forth into all the world (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:1-4, 16-21; Hebrews 12:18-24) The "gates of Zion" (**verse 2**), when the church of Christ was established (Acts 2), allowed "all nations" to flow to it (Isaiah 2:1-3; Luke 24:44- 47). God left a record of "glorious things" about it (**verse 3**) in the New Testament.

**Verses 4-6:** There is a list of nations, some former enemies of God and His people, where, when the church of Christ goes forth, people "who know" God are born again. In **verse 4**, the Gospel of Jesus Christ made converts (Acts 2:5-11, 22-47) from "Rahab," not the person but the country of Egypt (as in Isaiah 51:9-10), Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, Ethiopia, even in Jerusalem, itself (**verse 5**; Acts 4:4). "The Most High" (God) built the church (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:47; 20:28; Romans 16:16). God keeps the record of those who have obeyed Him (**verse 6**; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:47; 2 Timothy 2:19; Revelation 7:9-17).

**Verse 7:** Clearly, "singing" does not automatically include playing "instruments" for they are separate methods of producing music. Therefore when the New Testament specifies "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19), "playing instruments" is not included nor associated with it in worship! The Gospel of Jesus Christ becomes in the obedient "a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13-14).

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Psalm 88

1/16/13

Vs. 1-9 acknowledge the anticipation of impending death;
Vs. 10-14 reveal an uncertain relationship with God;
Vs. 15-18 picture the loneliness of a soul without God.

It was said that Solomon "was wiser than all men-than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman" and others (1 Kings 4:30-31). Heman, a Kohathite, was "a singer," and one of those appointed by David to serve at the tabernacle, and later, the temple built by Solomon (1 Chronicles 6:31-33). This is one of the darkest and gloomiest of all the Psalms, with a minimum of the uplifting encouragements usually found in them. This could be titled "A Song of Dejection."

Verses 1-9: To cry out "day and night" before God (**verse 1**) doesn't reflect on God's inaction, but on the petitioner's despondency and persistence (**verse 2**). "And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:7-8) When a soul is "full of troubles" there is no room for any more, and the grave is near (**verse 3**); to be "counted" for death, one is powerless to live (**verse 4**); "adrift," already "slain," frees one for death, but released by God, also (**verse 5**). The "lowest pit," "darkness," and "depths" could not be more descriptive of dying (**verse 6**). There are seven descriptions of death: "the grave" (**verse 3**), "the pit" (**verse 4**), "among the dead," "lie in the grave" (**verse 5**), "the lowest pit," "darkness," "the depths" (**verse 6**). To die feeling God's rejection (**verse 7**), already considered dead by "acquaintances" (**verse 8**), exhausting appeals to God (**verse 9**) is as despondent as one may become.

Verse 10-14: These questions answer themselves: (**verse 10**) Since "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32), then God will not reverse death; (**verse 11**) God's "lovingkindness" and "faithfulness" are for the living, as are His "wonders" and "righteousness" (**verse 12**). Additional terms which describe going down from life are: "the dead" (**verse 10**), "grave," "destruction" (**verse 11**), "dark," "forgetfulness" (**verse 12**). Facing death is no reason to quit praying (**verse 13**), though there has come from God no immediate reassurances (**verse 14**).

Verses 15-18: Whatever the affliction since youth (**verse 15**), the Psalmist's life was lived in the pale of death, terrified, and distraught over the problem. Feeling God's wrath is the curse and cause cause (**verse 16**), it has been overwhelming to live with. Life has been likened to struggling to keep one's head above "terrors" (**verse 17**). Life ebbs away without "loved one," "friend," or "acquaintances" (**verse 18**).

The Psalm ends without happy reassurance, hope for tomorrow, or a pleasant relationship with God. Such gloom and doom comes to those who live and then die in sin, separated from God. "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ" (Ephesians 4:17-20). "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16); that is to obey "from the heart that form of doctrine to

which you were delivered" (Romans 6:17). We must remove the affliction of sin while we can.

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## Psalm 89

1/17/13

Vs. 1-4 speak of God's faithfulness;  
Vs. 5-14 point to reasons for God's impressiveness;  
Vs. 15-18 show the happiness of those who serve God;  
Vs. 19-37 give more details of God's covenant about a king;  
Vs. 38-52 present a problem before God.

This Psalm is from "Ethan the Ezrahite" (1 Kings 4:30-31), one of the men Solomon was wiser than! Many references to a king fit Jesus Christ as the one promised through David's kingly lineage. Thus, "the assembly of the saints" (**verses 5, 7**) dwell on God's "wonders," selection of Jesus as the Christ, and focus on respect ("fear") of God, not men (2 Corinthians 4:5).

**Verses 1-4:** God's faithfulness is a reason to "sing" (**verse 1**), for it is based upon "mercy" (**verse 2**). The "covenant" is to set a descendant ("seed") of David on a throne "forever" (**verses 3-4**). This was promised in 2 Samuel 7:11-17, a basis for obeying Jesus Christ in Acts 2:25-33, and remembered in the New Testament (Romans 1:1-4).

**Verses 5-14:** God can fulfill that covenant because He, alone: does these "wonders" (**verse 5**); is mightier than the mighty (**verse 6**); "feared" and "reverenced" in "the assembly of the saints" (**verse 7**), surrounded by faithfulness (**verse 8**). It is God, alone who: rules and stills a raging sea (**verse 9**); defeats "Rahab" (Egypt) and scatters enemies (**verse 10**); owns "the heavens" and the fullness of the world (**verse 11**); gave Promised Land to the Israelites, from "north" to "south" and Mounts Tabor and Hermon (east and west) (**verse 12**); unquestioned authority (**verse 13**); a throne based upon "righteousness and justice," actions based upon "mercy and truth" (**verse 14**). God can promise an eternal king on a throne in Heaven because He promised and gave His people a land on Earth!

**Verses 15-18:** "Blessed" (happy) are the people who want God to be satisfied with them (**verse 15**); "all day long" (we say, "24/7") they rejoice in God's name (**verse 16**); because they walk in His "glory" and "favor" (**verse 17**); who are protected by His "shield" and ruled by "the Holy One of Israel" (**verse 18**). The virgin, Mary, was pregnant with "that Holy One" ("the Son of God," Luke 1:35); demons confessed Jesus Christ was "the Holy One of God" (Luke 4:34); the Apostles preached Jesus Christ was "Your Holy One" prophesied by David (Acts 2:27; Psalm 16:10); the Jews had crucified "the Holy One" (Acts 3:14); the Holy Spirit was sent upon Christians in the 1st Century by "the Holy One" (1 John 2:20). It is Jesus Christ being singled out as the fulfillment of God's plan discussed in Psalm 89:19-37!

**Verses 19-37:** God has: revealed His plan to David (**verse 19**); stated His covenant began with David (**verse 20**), will be fulfilled through David (**verse 21**); David (and his lineage!) will be protected (**verses 22-23**). Beyond David, Jesus Christ would be: given authority by God (**verse 24**; Matthew 28:18); given widespread power (**verse 25**); confessing God as Father (**verse 26**; John 5:18); "firstborn" from the dead (**verse 27**; Colossians 1:15-18); given to "mercy" (**verse 28**; Matthew 9:27-30); of David's "seed" (**verse 29**; Romans 1:1-4). Back to David, God decreed:



sins of "his sons" would be punished (**verses 30-32**); this covenant would not be annulled (**verses 33-34**); this covenant was sworn by God and upon God's "holiness" (**verse 35**); the throne of David would not be on earth for it would "endure forever," be as permanent as the "sun," "established forever like the moon," (**verses 36-37**) none of which would be true if the fulfillment was in an earthly throne!

**Verses 38-52:** To the Psalmist, it seems, God's punishments are so great as to keep His covenant with David from coming true (**verses 38-45**). Human impatience is voiced in **verses 46-48**, because humans must certainly die in a relatively short time to us. The plea is for God to remember His Davidic covenant and let it be seen in their lifetimes, that it will be done (**verses 49-51**). In **verse 52**, the Psalm ends in faithful confidence, with a positive praise for "the LORD."

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Psalm 90

1/18/13

Vs. 1-6 remind us of the eternal power of God;
Vs. 7-12 remind us of the brevity of life and certainty of its end;
Vs. 13-17 point out, therefore, the lesson of life.

Moses wrote this Psalm toward the end of the 40-year Wilderness Wandering (Exodus 16 - Deuteronomy 34). There is no good reason to doubt that this Psalm is "a prayer of Moses the man of God." "Moses the man of God" is used some 5 other times in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 33:1; Joshua 14:6; 1 Chronicles 23:14; 2 Chronicles 30:16; Ezra 3:2). The phrase "the man of God" frequently refers to a prophet of God, except for the one time it occurs in the New Testament, when it refers to everyone who uses the completed Scriptures for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). "O man of God" is used specifically of Timothy (1 Timothy 6:11) who is "an example" to believers (1 Timothy 4:12).

Verses 1-6: Concerning Earth's existence: without a permanent home, **verse 1** is quite poignant, for God is Moses' constant "dwelling place." Before our home was formed ("the earth and the world"), there was God (**verse 2**), existing "from everlasting to everlasting." Since "matter is not eternal," since there must be an "uncaused first cause," then only God could "create" (bring into existence from nothing, Genesis 1:1). Therefore "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible" (Hebrews 11:3). "Faith" is based upon solid, scientific fact, that confidently points into the unseen, "while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:17-18). Only "God" makes sense of the world.

Concerning life on Earth: God can: bring down or build up (**verse 3**; Daniel 4:29- 37); outlive everyone (**verse 4**; 2 Peter 3:8); remove people suddenly "like a flood," make their lives brief as a night, or frail as grass (**verse 5-6**; 1 Thessalonians 5:3-4; 1 Peter 1:24).

Verses 7-12: Having come through the Wilderness (Hebrews 3:16-19), Moses had seen that God had: "anger" and "wrath" (**verse 7**); thorough knowledge of their sins (**verse 8**); life after their "sigh" (**verse 9**); limited their life-span (**verse 10**); potential for more judging (**verse 11**); taught the lesson of life (**verse 12**).

Verses 13-17: Moses' appeal is for God to: "Return" with "compassion" (**verse 13**); give "mercy" that they may "rejoice and be glad" (**verse 14**); give them as many years of gladness as of affliction (**verse 15**); return to His "work" of fulfilling His promise to Abraham (**verse 16**; Deuteronomy 4:23-40); let His beauty show through blessings to Israelites (**verse 17**).

Some oft-heard thoughts are: "A thousand years" (which is a measure of time to humans) to God passes as fast as "yesterday" (**verse 4**). Human life is about 70 years, by strength 80, but further is accomplished by precious few (**verse 10**), and then "it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Knowing where we are on life's scale, we should wise up and live right (**verse 12**).

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## Psalm 91

1/21/13

Vs. 1-2 specify exactly Who it is that gives a believer security;  
Vs. 3-8 describe what kind of security can be expected;  
Vs. 9-16 designate what is expected of the believer.

There is no definite author or history to explain this Psalm, but there is also no reason to question its place in this Book. It may well have been written by Moses, as was the previous Psalm. Let us emphasize, rather, the terms for God: (1) "Most High" (Hebrew El Elyon), because there is none equal to Him (Isaiah 45:20-23; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6), therefore "the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:48; 17:24-25). The virgin Mary was told her son "will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David" (Luke 1:32). (2) "Almighty" (Hebrew, El Shaddai), because He is the source of all blessings, therefore He could deliver on His promise to Abram (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-6). To the church of Christ in Corinth, God promised, "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty"(2 Corinthians 6:18), who "has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). (3) "LORD" (Hebrew Jehovah), the name God revealed to Moses that neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob knew (Exodus 6:2-8). This name is associated with the covenant God made with Israelites only, that brought us to Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:13-29)! (4) "God" (Hebrew Elohim), means "Strength, Power," and "In the beginning" would be the only "power" present who could create and organize "the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 33:6-9). There is only one God of Heaven and Earth.

**Verses 1-2:** The four figures of speech denote security for someone who keeps close to God: "secret place;" "shadow;" "refuge" and "fortress;" "trust."

**Verses 3-8:** Rather than speculate as to specific distresses, these figures of speech, some applied to Satan, should help God's obedient people visualize His protection by staying close: (**verse 3**) "snare of the fowler" (2 Timothy 2:26); "perilous pestilence" (2 Timothy 3:1); (**verse 4**) wing cover and feathers (Matthew 23:37); "shield and buckler" (Ephesians 6:16). Things God's people should fear not: (**verse 5**) "terror" by night (John 12:35); arrow by day (Ephesians 6:16); (**verse 6**) "pestilence" in darkness (John 3:19-20); "destruction" at noon (Matthew 27:45-46); (**verse 7**) thousands dying on each side; (**verse 8**) "the reward of the wicked" will not mistakenly come upon the righteous.

**Verses 9-16:** As a consequence of living closely with "the LORD" (**verse 9**), the obedient can expect: protection from "evil" or "plague" (**verse 10**); angelic help (**verses 11-12**); (**verse 13**) to walk over the "lion," "cobra," "young lion," "serpent" (representations of the Devil, 1 Peter 5:8; Matthew 12:34; Ezekiel 19:1- 9; Revelation 12:9). This is to be done for one who has: (**verse 14**) "set his love upon Me," "known My name," (**verse 15**) desire to "call upon Me." "Long life," and "salvation" will go to the faithful (**verse 16**).

The Devil tempted Jesus Christ to sin by misquoting **Psalm 91:11-12** (Matthew 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12). The Devil omitted the phrase "to keep you in all your ways," leaving the impression that God had promised to save any obedient person from being injured altogether. God's protection promise was not that, but that "angels" were "charged" with encouraging after temptation, as in the case of Jesus, Himself (Matthew 4:11; Mark 1:13). The Devil's "guardian angel" doctrine was designed to give a false sense of security, thus minimizing the strengthening of one's faith by perseverance. "You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord--that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11).

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Psalm 92

1-22-13

Vs.1-4 give praise to God;
Vs. 5-9 remark about God's wisdom in dealing with enemies;
Vs. 10-15 observe God's refreshing for the righteous.

There is no historical setting, therefore no certain author for this Psalm. It is unchallenged, however, for its inclusion in the Book of Psalms.

Verses 1-4: Among the 23 times the phrase "sing praises" (**verse 1**) occurs in the Book of Psalms, the one that is quoted in the New Testament is Psalm 18:49 (in Romans 15:9). There it refers to "singing" and not playing instruments with the singing (refer back to Psalm 18:49 in these studies). Thus, by the inspired use of this phrase by the Apostle Paul, it would be natural to conclude that Psalm 92:1 should also mean "sing praises" to the "Most High." His "lovingkindness in the morning," and "faithfulness every night" (**verse 2**) show that 24/7, there is not a time He is not responsive to His faithful people. If the instruments (**verse 3**) are correctly translated, they were introduced to Old Testament worship by David (2 Chronicles 29:26-27); if these should be instructions to the singers, instead, this is no authority for musical instruments in the passage; regardless, nothing in this verse is authorized in the New Testament for Christian worship. God's Creation is a marvel to be praised (**verse 4**).

Verses 5-9: God's "thoughts" (**verse 5**) are embedded in all He does. The Creation shows such planning, foresight, and intricacy that it has taken the several thousand years since it began for humans to "discover" some of what was in it all the time! "Wisdom" was with God in the Creation (Proverbs 8:1, 22-31), and for Evolutionists to extoll chaos and chance instead of God's wisdom is purely blasphemy and profanity! Indeed, the "senseless," "fool" (**verse 6**), "wicked," "workers of iniquity" (**verse 7**) may "flourish" on earth, they are to be "destroyed forever." God is NOT "the force" IN the Creation, He is the Deity over and above the Creation (**verse 8**; Acts 14:14-17), who's enemies will "perish" and be "scattered" as in Matthew 25:31-33 describes (**verse 9**).

Verses 10-15: By contrast, the faithful are blessed with: "horn" (or strength), and selection by anointing (**verse 10**); "eyes" and "ears" (**verse 11**) that witness their enemies' destruction. "The righteous" flourish like "a palm," "a cedar" (**verse 12**), "planted in the house of the LORD" (**verse 13**), bearing good fruit throughout old age (**verse 14**), who can declare "the LORD is upright," "rock," with "no unrighteousness" (**verse 15**).

THOUGHT: When the wicked people flourish on earth, it is easy to overlook the righteous who also flourish, AND, not to notice the promise of God that the wicked will perish.

ALSO: "LORD" (Hebrew, Jehovah) is used 7 times, a number that often signifies completeness of God's work. Hence this Psalm could be God's final, complete statement of His disposition of Good and Evil.

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### Psalm 93

1/23/13

Vs. 1-2 establish God's throne;  
Vs. 3-4 speak of God's great power;  
Vs. 5 speaks of God's holiness.

There is nothing in the Bible to indicate that this (or any other Psalm!) was used by the Israelites in some special ceremony to recognize God enthroned. Because Jesus Christ was God in the flesh (Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:5-10), Psalms 93- 99 have many references to Jesus Christ in these references to God.

**Psalm 93:2:** "The author of [*The Book of*] Hebrews listed the credentials of the King of Kings, namely Jesus Christ; and, of course, those credentials are the same as those of the ruling Jehovah in this passage. These are: (1) King by right of eternal existence; (2) by right of creation; (3) by right of personal excellence, majesty and strength; (4) by divine right; (5) by right of maintenance, upholding all things by the word of his power; (6) by right of purchase (This establishes God's right to rule over humanity in that he purchased, or redeemed us, through the blood of His Son); and (7) by right of his present position on the Eternal Throne (God is not a mere pretender; his rulership is a fait accompli)." James Burton Coffman, **Commentary on Psalms**

**Verses 1-2:** "LORD" is used 5 times and is the only term for God in this Psalm. The assertion is made; "The LORD reigns" (**verse 1**), then reasons for His prominence are given. He: (1) is "clothed with majesty" (magnificence and splendor); (2) "girded Himself with strength" (binding up clothing for work or a journey, hence ready to work. No one else could "bind" God!); (3) "established" the world (that operates by His laws which are settled and unchangeable); (4) is upon a "throne" (**verse 2**) "established" even before the world; (5) whose existence is "everlasting!"

**Verses 3-4:** Multitudes of peoples who have opposed God are couched in the term "floods." Hence (**verse 3**) their arrogant attitude "lifted" them up; then "their voice;" then "their waves" (battles and wars). It got them nowhere, for "The LORD on high" proves "mightier" than their "noise," (**verse 4**) and their "mighty waves of the sea." Tsunami victims and many seafarers can attest to the size and power of waves of the seas on earth, but figures of speech aside, "The LORD on high is mightier!"

**Verse 5:** Back to The LORD on His throne, all people may totally depend upon: God's "testimonies," for "every word of God is pure" (Proverbs 30:5) and "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Luke 4:4); AND "holiness" is throughout God's "house," "forever." If "righteousness" is the right- doing by following God's laws (1 John 3:7), then "holiness" is the purity of character caused by "righteousness." "For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness" (1 Thessalonians 4:7).

**Thought:** Since God raised Jesus Christ from the dead "to sit on his [*David's, jtpII*] throne" (Acts 2:29-31), and since "to the Son *He says:* "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever" (Hebrews 1:8), then to claim that Jesus Christ is NOT NOW on the throne of David in Heaven IS TO DENY THAT GOD RAISED JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD! If not, why not? Since Jesus IS now on His throne in Heaven, the kingdom of God has been established (Colossians 1:13). Since Jesus is the King of His kingdom, but also the Head of the church of Christ (Colossians 1:18), the saved people who are in the church of Christ are also in His kingdom! If not, why not?

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Psalm 94

1/24/13

Vs. 1-3 appeal for God to Judge humans;
Vs. 4-7 appalling behavior deserving condemnation;
Vs. 8-11 above all is God;
Vs. 12-15 approved of God;
Vs. 16-23 assurance from God.

There is no definite time or person originating this Psalm, but it does seem to deal with Israel's corruption, and could have applied to the time of 2 Kings 17:1-23. There are numerous verses that are either quoted or referred to in the New Testament, as will be indicated.

Verses 1-3: God claims the power to rightly dispense "vengeance" (Deuteronomy 32:25; Hebrews 10:30), and this is acknowledged (**verse 1**) appealing for God to "shine forth," "rise up," "render punishment to the proud" (**verses 1-2**). The question "how long will the wicked triumph" (**verse 3**) is asked before the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Revelation 6:10).

Verses 4-7: Explain how corrupt the people had become that justified God's vengeance. Their disobedience to God was seen in their: idle and arrogant speech (**verse 4**); oppression (**verse 5**); heartlessness toward the hurting-widow, stranger, fatherless (**verse 6**); blindness toward God (**verse 7**). They thought "whatever is done in Israel stays in Israel," when the truth is "there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13).

Verses 8-11: "The LORD" is untainted by their evils because He is wise, they are "senseless among the people" [*Israelites, jtpII*] (**verse 8**); He created human ears and eyes because He hears and sees (**verse 9**); He is the source of "knowledge," therefore is the only One who can "correct" "the nations" [*Gentiles, jtpII*] (**verse 10**); He knows all the "thoughts of man, That they are futile" (**verse 11**), quoted in 1 Corinthians 3:20.

Verses 12-15: By contrast, those who remained faithful to God: received His teaching "out of Your law" (**verse 12**); were given "rest from the days of

adversity" (**verse 13**) while "the wicked" were targeted, that is, even the righteous were included in God's discipline of removing all the Israelites from their land; were not included in the number of those who were to lose their inheritance (**verse 14**). When the people came to their moral senses (**verse 15**), the righteous would have learned the lesson. **Verse 14** is explained in Romans 11:1-5 that God did not completely cast off His people for their sins, but kept His part of the promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:15-16) by returning the faithful to the Land after 70 years exile (Ezra-Nehemiah) until the Gospel of Jesus Christ came.

Verses 16-23: Who stands with the righteous when sinners prevail (**verse 16- 17**)? "The LORD" without Whom a righteous soul would "have settled in silence," or be destroyed by his enemies. This is what Paul claimed had happened to him: "At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Timothy 4:16-17). When we fail, God is there to help (**verse 18-19**), which happened to Peter (Matthew 14:22-33). This case is summarized (**verses 20-21**) and reassurance repeated (**verses 22-23**). **Verse 21** aptly describes the situation that sent Jesus Christ to the cross (Matthew 27:1-5, Matthew 20-27).

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**Psalm 95**

**1/25/13**

Vs. 1-7a describe the God Whom we should serve;  
Vs. 7b-11 emphasize that He means business!

When **Psalm 95:7-11** is quoted in Hebrews 3:7-11, the author is "the Holy Spirit" who wrote through David (Hebrews 4:7-8). The Holy Spirit inspired the writing of all Scripture (1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17) by revealing the message (Galatians 1:11-12), controlling the words to be used (Acts 2:1-4), then guiding the pen on the page (Luke 24:44-49; Revelation 1:3). Hence, whether it was a Prophet, Apostle, or Christians copying Apostolic letters (Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27), it came from "the Holy Spirit." He completed His work, for we are "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Psalm 95 teaches "The Lesson of the 40-year Israelite Wilderness Wandering" (noted in the Book of Numbers). This is a must-read for the churches of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:1-12; Hebrews 3:1-19).

**Verses 1-7a:** This is a call to worship God, because worshipping God helps to drive away unbelief. This is why the Devil discourages attending worship services with statements like: "This is boring;" "You're just as much a Christian as church-goers;" "You don't believe in 'corporate religion;" "Only hypocrites attend church;" "Worshipping God is a waste of time when you have more important things to do," ad nauseum. If you have accepted any of these for yourself, you better read on! The call is for "us" to "come before His presence," not the other way around! We come to Him to: "sing," "shout joyfully" (**verse 1**), offer "thanksgiving," "shout joyfully to Him with psalms" (**verse 2**). In the churches of Christ, Psalms are to be sung, not played (Ephesians 5:19; James 5:13). The Bible God is "the great God," "the great King," "above all gods" (**verse 3**). There is no other (Deuteronomy 4:39; 1 Corinthians 8:4). He, alone, owns the Earth by right of Creation (**verse 4- 5**; Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 40:18-26; Colossians 1:12-20). "Worship and bow down," "kneel" are physical

postures that signify humility of heart (**verse 6**), for "God" is over us, who are like "sheep" in "His pasture" (**verse 7a**; Psalm 23:1-3; 100:3).

**Verses 7b-11:** The Israelites have always been "a rebellious people" (Deuteronomy 32:19-39; Psalm 78:8; Isaiah 40:9-17). God lead them out of Egyptian bondage but they complained about food (Exodus 16:1-36), they complained about water (Exodus 17:1-7), while He was giving them His Law they worshipped idols (Exodus 32:1-14), then they refused to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 13:1-14:38)! When Jesus was tempted of the Devil, He quoted Deuteronomy 6:16, which placed hard-hearted Israelites on the same side as the Devil: "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God'" (Matthew 4:7). "Today" (**Psalm 95:7b**) is the time to "hear His voice" (Hebrews 3:12-15) before our heart is hardened (**verse 8**) like those Israelites (**verse 9**), who grieved God 40 years with willful ignorance of His "ways" (**verse 10**), prompting Him to swear "in His wrath" (**verse 11**; Hebrews 3:10-11) they would not enter the Land they had refused (Numbers 14:26-35). God has said who will be saved in Heaven, all others will be lost (Matthew 7:21-27; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 1:16-32; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21).

**Thought:** Those who refuse to learn from the lessons of history, are doomed to repeat them. That physical destruction in the Wilderness is a lesson which can keep souls from the Hell of eternity. Did they die in vain?

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Psalm 96

1/28/13

Vs. 1-3 all the earth should sing praise to God's glory;
Vs. 4-6 show that no nation has a god to compare with God;
Vs. 7-9 show that giving to God comes from His might;
Vs. 10-13 show God is over all the earth and will judge.

This Psalm is given by David as recorded in 1 Chronicles 16:7, 23-33. There is no manuscript evidence to the contrary, as some commentators are wont to imagine. Psalm 96 appeals to "Gentiles" to worship the God of Creation, which proves beyond all doubt, that God's eternal plan was never to have the physical Israelites (including Jews!) only, as His people. He has revealed in the New Testament that "the mystery of Christ" (Ephesians 3:4) is "that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel" (Ephesians 3:6). That the Bible is inspired of God shows in passages like this one, which, if left to uninspired Jews, would never have been included and protected as it has been.

Verses 1-3: The "new song" (**verse 1**) is to declare God's glory "among the Gentiles" ("nations"). That people should "sing" (**verses 1-2**) shows pure worship without artificial instruments; and the message of God's offer of salvation should be proclaimed daily (**verse 2b**), His glory and miracles declared (**verse 3**) among "all the earth," "the Gentiles," "all peoples." Truly, He is not just a "Jewish" God!

Verses 4-6: What other "god" is: "great," "greatly to be praised," "feared above all gods" (**verse 4**). Other nations' "gods" are "idols" contrasted with "the LORD" who created "the heavens" (**verse 5**). The terms for the LORD describe His true greatness: "Honor," "majesty," "Strength," and "beauty" are "in His sanctuary" (**verse 6**). His sanctuary under Moses, was on the ark of the covenant and under the tabernacle (Exodus 25:8), but in the New Testament, Jesus Christ is "a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man" (Hebrews 8:2).

“Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation” (Hebrews 9:11).

Verses 7-9: The living God requires giving as a part of “worship,” for “the LORD” should be given “glory and strength” to “His name” (**verses 7-8a**). “Bring an offering” (**verse 8b**) uses a term for bloodless sacrifices that surely showed God’s plan would later, through Jesus Christ, include Gentiles (and Jews!) as “living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). God is to be worshipped by Gentiles in “the beauty of holiness” (**verse 9**), that is, clothed by clean living: “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

Verses 10-13: That Gentiles should worship God shows He is universal and that He “reigns” and “shall judge” everyone “righteously” (**verse 10**). His Creation (and all who live upon it) gladly point to His righteousness (**verses 10-12**), for “the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:17). “He is coming to judge the earth” (**verse 13**) is a warning to Gentiles (and Jews!), and “He shall judge the world with righteousness” is applied to Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30-31; Psalm 9:8).

Thought: Since God will judge the world by Jesus Christ, then there is nothing in the plan of God that will excuse the workers of iniquity without obedience to Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:21-23). God’s world declares a Creator (Romans 1:20), God’s Word declares which god is God (1 Corinthians 1:21), God’s Christ declares how we should live (2 Peter 1:2-11), and the invitation is for “every creature” (Mark 16:15-16).

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## Psalm 97

1/29/13

Vs. 1-6 show the Earth speaks of God;  
Vs. 7-9 contrast the LORD with idols;  
Vs. 10-12 show how God connects with people for good.

The description of God’s presence on Earth clearly shows how impressive His power is, certainly producing awe.

(1) If the description in **verses 1-6** is physical, then God coming to Mount Sinai and giving Moses His law would fit this word picture (Exodus 19:1-25) but the kingdom of Jesus Christ now on Earth did not have that physical terror (Hebrews 12:18-29).

(2) If, however, **Psalm 97:1-6** is descriptive of the effect of God’s presence on Earth, then it could refer to the first coming of Jesus Christ to Earth (Isaiah 9:1-2 quoted in Matthew 4:13-16; Malachi 3:1-3 quoted in Matthew 11:7-10).

(3) Or it could describe the awesomeness of God in Heaven (Revelation 4:1-5). Regardless, God’s Presence is duly noted and to be respected with reverence, so “let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Hebrews 12:28).

**Verses 1-6:** The claim is: “The LORD reigns;” the effect is: “Let the earth rejoice;” the extent is: “Let the multitude of isles be glad!” (**verse 1**) Jehovah is over more than just Israelites in their land. The Earth operates by His Laws. “Isles” often refers to areas beyond Israel, referring to “Gentiles” (Isaiah 40:12-17; Jeremiah 31:10). Jesus’ powers over Earth’s might was manifested in His miracles: (**verse 2**) “clouds” (Matthew 26:63- 64), “darkness” (Luke 23:44-45). “Righteousness and justice” go hand in hand: “To do righteousness and justice Is more acceptable to the



LORD than sacrifice" (Proverbs 21:3), with both being hallmarks of Jesus' kingdom on earth (Romans 3:20-26; Matthew 12:14- 21). In **verse 3**, "Fire" will be Jesus' punishment on sinners at His Second Coming, 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10. Jesus' life was a flash of light (**verse 4**) while on earth (John 12:44-50). No mountain was outside of His control (Matthew 17:1-9; 21:18-22). Hence (**verse 6**) Jesus would have the endorsement of "The heavens."

**Verses 7-9:** There can be only shame in serving "carved images" (**verse 7**), for their substances are made from God's Creation (Hebrews 11:3). Jerusalem and Judah should "rejoice" because God is right (**verse 8**). Only God is "Most High" and above "all the earth," and "far above all gods" (**verse 9**). The term "gods" cannot rise to the level of "angels" in Hebrews 1:6, as some have mistakenly applied it. The history of mankind and the Bible record are positive proof of the claim in **verse 1**.

**Verses 10-12:** One cannot follow both God and evil (**verse 10**; Psalm 34:14; Romans 12:9), but God "preserves the souls of His saints," and delivers them from the wicked (as Jesus taught disciples to pray, Matthew 6:13). God's way provides "light" and "gladness" (**verse 11**) not dark and sadness (Acts 2:38-41, 46; 14:17). Therefore His saints "Rejoice in the LORD," (**verse 12**) "And give thanks" every time they remember "His holy name" and all He has done and continues to do.

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Psalm 98

1/30/13

Vs. 1-3 point to Whom we should give praise;
Vs. 4-6 mention how thoroughly we should give praise;
Vs. 7-9 show how widespread this praise should be shared.

There is no indication of time, place, or author for this Psalm, although it easily matches some of David's Psalms of praise to God. For those who desire positive messages, this is THE Psalm! There is no description of enemies, destruction, death, sorrows, punishments, or afflictions. It speaks of salvation, which only completely comes through Jesus Christ. All animal sacrifices before Jesus Christ were reminders that the worshipers were not completely forgiven. "But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins" (Hebrews 10:3-4). "And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:11-14). Psalm 98 emphasizes a "salvation" so complete and universal that it could only be describing that found in Jesus Christ.

Verses 1-3: "Sing to the LORD," (**verse 1**) says how, "a new song" is what, and is the same song before God's throne in Heaven about the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Revelation 5:6-10). This Psalm is pointing to the future forgiveness through Jesus' blood (Hebrews 9:15). God's "marvelous things" are all He did to deliver Israel from Egypt (Acts 7:35-36), and ultimately through Jesus Christ (Matthew 8:23-27; 9:1-8, 32-33). "From His right hand Came a fiery law for them" (Deuteronomy 33:2), "and His holy arm" redeemed Israel from Assyria so that they might offer animal sacrifices under Moses' Law (Isaiah 52:9-10). God's plan of salvation (**verse 2**), "now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all

nations" (Romans 16:25-27). God's "faithfulness to the house of Israel" (**verse 3**) was to offer salvation through Jesus to "the ends of the earth."

Verses 4-6: Those who understand and accept this wonderful salvation cannot contain it. They will: "Shout joyfully to the LORD" (**verse 4**), "Break forth in song," "Sing to the LORD" (**verse 5a**). Interestingly, the instruments are listed in addition to, and not included in the "singing" (**verse 5b-6**): "with the harp," "With trumpets," and to "Shout joyfully." As they were introduced into Mosaic worship as "instruments of David" (2 Chronicles 29:26), this Psalm may well have been written in his time.

Verses 7-9: The universal extent in God's plan of salvation (**verses 7-8**) is seen by the use of terms beyond the Jewish "Promised Land:" "the sea" "and all its fullness," "world and those who dwell in it," "rivers," "the hills." The universal responsibility to obey is worded in Jesus' Second Coming: "With righteousness He shall judge the world" (**verse 9**). This latter thought is found in Acts 17:30-31: "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). Truly, complete salvation is now offered "to every creature," for Jesus said, ""He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

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## Psalm 99

1/31/13

Vs. 1-3 claim for the LORD a superior place;  
Vs. 4-5 mention His superior characteristics;  
Vs. 6-9 show His superior "track record."

This Psalm is one of three beginning with "The LORD reigns" (**Psalms 93; 97; 99**). Each section ends the same: "He is holy" (**verse 3**), "He is holy" (**verse 5**), "God is holy" (**verse 9**), or He is above any and all taint from sin. Couched in language identified with Old Testament Israelites, its claim for God is true with the churches of Christ.

**Verses 1-3:** Jehovah ("LORD," **verse 1**) is superior ("reigns"); Gentiles ("peoples") "tremble;" "between the cherubim" (either over the ark of covenant, Exodus 25:18-22, or Jesus as the Christians' mercy seat, a.k.a. "propitiation," 1 John 2:2); and all people be impressed ("moved"). The LORD's greatness is seen in Jerusalem ("Zion," **Verse 2**), but He is also above Gentiles ("all the peoples"), for Jesus taught "true worshipers" must not now go to Samaria or Jerusalem (John 4:21-24). God deserves His "great and awesome name" (**verse 3**).

**Verses 4-5:** But God uses His "name" for the establishment of "justice," "equity," "righteousness" (**verse 4**) among His descendants of Jacob (or "Israel"). Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary, and "the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:30-33). "The house of Jacob" refers not to "children of the flesh" but "the children of the promise" (Romans 9:6-8), or Christians (Galatians 3:24-29). To "exalt" God (**verse 5**) and for us to "worship at His footstool" would widen the gap between God and His worshippers, for earth is His footstool (Acts 7:48-49).

**Verses 6-9:** In **verse 6**, the accurate Bible records of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel are offered as proof that "They called upon the LORD, and He answered them." That same inspired Biblical record (with no missing books!) shows that God answered (**verse 7**): Moses with Law (Exodus 33:9); Aaron with judgment (Numbers 12:5-9), and Samuel with victory (1 Samuel 7:9; 12:18). God forgave the sinners (**verse 8**), but punished the sins of Moses and Aaron (Numbers 12:20), and Samuel's undisciplined sons (1 Samuel 8:1-20). In Jesus Christ, God forgives sinners who repent (Luke 5:30-32; 24:46-47; Acts 2:38), and punishes sinners' sins: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). To "exalt God" (**verse 9**) is to raise Him highest in our devotion; "His holy hill," once Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 3:1), is anywhere Christians assemble to worship Him His way (Acts 17:24-25; 18:7-8).

**Thought:** as each section of this Psalm ends with "He is holy" we may praise Him who is "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty."

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Psalm 100

2/1/13

Vs. 1-5 make an open invitation for all to approach God.

This Psalm describes God's accessibility for all who will hear and obey. Though not directly "Messianic," that is, pointing specifically to Jesus Christ, this invitation can be fully appreciated today because we have Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

Verse 1: A "joyful shout" speaks of the happiness in the heart of one who obeys God. When the children of Israel returned to their Promised Land after 70 years of exile, "they kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy; for the LORD made them joyful" (Ezra 6:21-22). Jesus said; "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11). Paul wrote: "I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith" (Philippians 1:25). Christians hope to hear, "Enter into the joy of your lord" (Matthew 25:21, 23). In Psalm 100:1, the expression "all you lands" reaches beyond the Israelites who were limited to their land.

Verse 2: "Serve" with "gladness" shows the satisfaction one has in knowing that God is pleased. One of God's witnesses to all people is that: "He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). King Hezekiah and the priests offered their sacrifice and "sang praises with gladness" (2 Chronicles 29:27-30). When people obeyed the Gospel of Christ for the first time by repenting and being baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," they "they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart" (Acts 2:38, 46). To "Come before" God "with singing" shows values in congregational song: God is praised, and the people are taught (Ephesians 5:19-20). Israelites could "come before the LORD on the appointed feast days" (Ezekiel 46:9), thus to "come before the LORD" showed congregational worship. Job rightly said, "a hypocrite could not come before Him" (Job 13:16).

Verse 3: "Know" acknowledges certainty of faith: (1) "The LORD, He is God" and no one else can be. At no time can a human claim to be or become "God." (2) God decides who are, or are not, His people. Humans do not make this decision with their prejudice, membership rolls, or creeds, rather "he who glories, let him glory in the LORD. For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends"

(2 Corinthians 10:17-18). (3) God is the Shepherd of the Israelite sheep, a role Jesus Christ claimed for His Christians (John 10:1-5, 11-18; Hebrews 13:20-21).

Verse 4: "Enter" with "thanksgiving" and "praise" is the word of an open door to all who will come with appreciation for God. Jesus said we must "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:13-14). "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).

Verse 5: Because the LORD has provided the way, this offer stands, for God's "goodness," "mercy," and "truth" never changes or passes away. Jesus' invitation still stands: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

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**Psalm 101**

**2/4/13**

Vs. 1-4 declare David's personal resolutions;  
Vs. 5-8 declare David's royal resolutions against others' evil.

This Psalm was written by David as he became king (by Samuel, 1 Samuel 16:13; at Hebron, 2 Samuel 2:4). David truly understood a king's responsibility, as Solomon later wrote: "A king who sits on the throne of judgment Scatters all evil with his eyes" (Proverbs 20:8); "A wise king sifts out the wicked, And brings the threshing wheel over them" (Proverbs 20:26); "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes" (Proverbs 21:1). There was no "separation of church and state," for the head of "state" determined his "church" would influence him to lead well. And so it should be!

**Verses 1-4:** The King would praise the God who was over him (**verse 1**) and follow the principles based upon God's characteristics of "mercy and justice." To "behave wisely in a perfect way" (**verse 2**) refers not to sinlessness, but to "completely, or consistently," even at home! The difference between public and private behavior should not be drastically different, as YouTube and Facebook could show. If "what you see is what you get," then David didn't want to see it (**verse 3**)! A man, with the best of intentions, may still fall to his temptations (2 Samuel 11:1-5; 12:9). It is loyalty to God to hate those who "turn aside" (Proverbs 8:13). "A perverse heart" (or "twisted") kept him simple, honest (**verse 4**) to accept rebuke for his sins (2 Samuel 12:1-14). To "know wickedness" is to give it your time and attention. David was determined "not to know wickedness," that is, keep all who carried this dreaded spiritual condition far from him (to have a child's heart, Deuteronomy 1:39; Jonah 4:11).

**Verses 5-8:** "Secret slander" (**verse 5**) cannot be mistaken for good (Proverbs 10:18), nor can it be passed off as "being a sound preacher!" The fact that it is "secret" shows the disgusting underhandedness of the one spreading it, and it is an obvious manifestation of a perverse heart without love. "Whisperers, backbiters" are listed with "haters of God" and given up by God (Romans 1:28- 32)! Such people are

also guilty of a "haughty look" and "proud heart" and seldom repent of their "secret" wickedness. Since Jesus Christ now sits on David's throne in heaven (Acts 2:29-32), these sins are an abomination to Him and banned from His kingdom (2 Corinthians 12:19-21). David's attention will be to "the faithful of the land" (**verse 6**), for only they would help him in the right way (Proverbs 11:20). David seemed to know: "If a ruler pays attention to lies, All his servants become wicked" (Proverbs 29:12). Since **verse 7** is the negative of **verse 6**, applied today, no faithful Christian "works deceit" and no one who "tells lies" "walks in a perfect way." David would waste no time in ridding the land of "all the wicked," (**verse 8**) as defined in Moses' Law (Exodus 34:10-17). Jesus Christ now reigns over his kingdom (the church of Christ, Colossians 1:9-14) and Psalm 101 could be His banner over His throne.

**Thought:** From our hearts to God's ear: Give us government leaders like David, and help us know how to select them. May we teach all who would lead to follow **Psalm 101** and Jesus Christ.

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Psalm 102

2/5/13

Vs. 1-11 describe feeling of suffering;
Vs. 12-22 speak of the hope that God would act on their behalf;
Vs. 23-28 acknowledge that only God can help.

Though the author of this Psalm is unidentified, the reference to "Zion" (Jerusalem) needing to be restored (**verse 13**) places the time frame at the end of the Babylonian Captivity (2 Chronicles 36). Psalm 102:25-27 are quoted in Hebrews 1:10-12 as an address to the "Son" of God (Hebrews 1:8). Therefore this reference in Psalm 102 was far-reaching toward "the generation to come" (**verse 18**), and the work of the eternal Son of God (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 2:1-21).

Verses 1-11: This begins with an urgent appeal for God to hear (**verses 1-2**) because: (**verse 3**) life is brief as smoke and fire; (**verses 4-5**) the heart is burdened and body aches; (**verses 6-7**) loneliness is like the "pelican," "owl," "sparrow" all out of their element, and keeps the Psalmist "awake;" enemies are active (**verse 8**); food doesn't appeal (**verse 9**); the feeling of alienation from God (**verses 10-11**) is like a lengthening shadow.

Verses 12-22: God, however, is capable of helping because He: is timeless (**verse 12**); has reached the end of the 70 years of exile for Judah/Israel (**verse 13**; 2 Chronicles 36:15-23; Jeremiah 25:8-14); sees His people seeking to return to the Promised Land (**verse 14**); preserves His people (**verses 15-17**); will see that this return is preserved in Scripture for all time (**verse 18**; Ezra-Nehemiah; Haggai; Zechariah; Malachi); is merciful and forgiving (**verses 19-22**).

Verses 23-28: Our lives are in the hand of God (**verses 23-24a**), but God is above all time constraints (**verses 24b-27**), and eternity is for those who faithfully serve Him (**verse 28**; 1 Peter 1:23-25; 1 John 2:17).

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Vs. 1-5 describe what individual attention God provides;  
Vs. 6-14 describe what national attention God gave Israel;  
Vs. 15-18 describe human frailty, and therefore, need for God;  
Vs. 19-22 show the place and work of angels.

This Psalm is written in the style of other Psalms written by David; for those under Moses' Law (**verse 7**), which "was appointed through angels" (**verses 19-21**; Acts 7:52-53; Galatians 3:19); and illustrates what God still does for Christians (**verse 19**). Thus, this Psalm is most popular among Christians. The work of "angels" is described in **Psalm 103:21**, and used in Hebrews 1:14. "Bless the LORD" occurs some 6 times in this Psalm, but because it is not the 7 times which often speaks of God's perfection, indicates we cannot perfectly "Bless the LORD."

**Verses 1-5:** "Bless the LORD, O my soul" (**verses 1-2**) indicates how personal one's relationship with Jehovah should be: "all that is within me," "forget not all His benefits." He is identified as the God Who: "forgives all your iniquities" (**verse 3**); "heals all your diseases;" "redeems your life" (**verse 4**); "crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies;" "satisfies your mouth with good" (**verse 5**); "renewed" "like the eagle" when molting, produces new feathers with which to fly. All of God's blessings for individuals are designed for renewal of the soul (2 Corinthians 4:16; Ephesians 4:20-24).

**Verses 6-14:** Collectively, as a nation, Moses' Law described what God did for them: "righteousness" and "justice" for their oppression (**verse 6**); (**verse 7**) encompasses Exodus-Malachi; "merciful," "gracious," "slow to anger," "abounding in mercy" (**verse 8**; Joel 2:12-14; Jonah 4:2); however, there is a limit to His patience (**verse 9**); there is unlimited mercy for the sins of "those who fear Him" (**verse 10-11**); complete in His forgiveness (**verse 12**; Hebrews 8:6-13); parental in "pity" (**verse 13**; Proverbs 3:12); thorough in his understanding "that we are dust" (**verse 14**; Genesis 3:19; 1 Corinthians 15:47-50).

**Verses 15-18:** Regarding human frailty, life is like "grass:" limited in length of days (**verse 15**), and easily blown away (**verse 16**). God, however, may always be counted upon for "mercy" (**verse 17**) "on those who fear Him;" and guide toward righteousness for generations to come those who (**verse 18**): "keep His covenant," and "remember His commandments to do them."

**Verses 19-22:** Since the LORD's "throne" is "in heaven" (**verse 19**), and His "kingdom rules over all," then the work of "angels" is to bridge the chasm between God and men. "Angels" compared to humans are: stronger (**verse 20**); more obedient; "bless the LORD" by complete obedience (**verse 21**); "bless the LORD" completely (**verse 22**).

**Thought:** All of God's blessings are now found in Jesus Christ, offered to all who obey Him (Romans 6:1-14; Ephesians 1:1-14; Galatians 3:13-29).

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Vs. 1 regards the Greatness of God;
Vs. 2-30 describe the powerful orderliness of God’s Creation;
Vs. 31-35 show the effect of God upon an honest soul.

Though not named, David may easily be associated with this Psalm by its style of writing. The emphasis is upon the subject of the Psalm, and not the writer. Let nothing be said to distract us from the awesome God who “created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). He is “the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them” (Acts 14:15).

Verse 1: (Genesis 1:1) God is “very great,” “clothed with honor and majesty,” and yet “my soul” may “bless the LORD.” The greatness of God doesn’t exceed the worth of each soul.

Verses 2-30: This is a recounting of the 24-hour days of the Creation in Genesis 1:1-2:3.

DAY 1: (Genesis 1:2-5) God who “is light” (1 John 1:5) begins his Creation with “heavens,” “upper chambers,” “clouds,” “wind” (**verses 2-3**) or “without form and void” (Genesis 1:2-5). “Angels” work as “spirits,” or winds (**verse 4**) is quoted in Hebrews 1:7.

DAY 2: (Genesis 1:6-8) The “foundations of the earth” (**verse 5**) cannot “be moved forever,” meaning the destruction of the earth is NOT within the power of mankind!

DAY 3: (Genesis 1:9-13) Though the mountains were covered with “the deep” (**verse 6**), God’s word made the “dry land appear” and set the boundaries of the oceans to keep land dry (**verses 7-9**). However, vegetation, and later, animals, are continually watered by “the springs” which “flow among the hills” (**verses 10- 13**). That vegetation produces “food from the earth” (**verses 14-18**) which provides for animals and “for the service of man” (Acts 14:15-17).

DAY 4: (Genesis 1:14-19) The 24-hour cycle of Creation days is set by “two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.” The “moon for seasons” and the “sun” for each day (**verses 19-23**) will govern life cycles for the animals who will hunt and humans who will work by day, when they are created later that Creation week.

DAY 5: (Genesis 1:20-25) The “great and wide sea” would be filled with “living things both great and small” (**verses 24-26**) and later used by humans for “the ships” to “sail about.”

DAY 6: (Genesis 1:24-31) Every living creature, including mankind, depend upon God for their “food in due season” (**verses 27-30**). God, through His Creation, provides what humans “gather in;” through His opened hand of blessing, humans are “filled with good;” because of His interaction, humans may be “troubled” at His displeasure; by God’s rule, when breath leaves the body, it returns to dust; by God’s Spirit, inspired humans have left God’s Holy Word to instruct in the way of renewal.

DAY 7: (Genesis 2:1-3) When God “rested” on the seventh day of Creation, He called attention to the need for meditation and worship because of His tremendous power. He would later “sanctify” for the Jews/Israelites the seventh day of each week for a “sabbath” (meaning rest) in Exodus 16 by giving them “manna” for their wilderness wandering. **Psalm 104:31-32** reflect upon the God of heaven and earth who should be held in highest esteem. The honest heart will “sing to the LORD as long as I live” (**verse 33**); have “meditation in the LORD” (**verse 34**); and eagerly anticipate God’s Judgment which will rid eternal life of “the wicked” (**verse 35**).

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Vs. 1-6 remind God’s people to keep their focus on God;  
Vs. 7-15 remind them of His provision for their fathers;  
Vs. 16-23 remind them of how He got them into Egypt;  
Vs. 24-38 remind them of how He got them out of Egypt;  
Vs. 39-45 remind them of His original plan to get them into the Promised Land.

**Psalm 105:1-15** is quoted in 1 Chronicles 16:7-22 where it is attributed to David who gave it to “Asaph and his brethren to thank the LORD.” It recounts the history of Israel recorded in the inspired Bible Books of Genesis-Joshua. The lesson is that this history is part of remembering “His marvelous works which He has done,” in other words, preaching the Bible to strengthen our faith.

**Verses 1-6:** The Bible is all about God and His dealings with mankind, Psalm 104 starts at “the beginning,” and Psalm 105 takes it from there to the Israelites settled in their Promised Land. “His name” (**verse 1**) is behind “His deeds; His “wondrous works” cause singing and rejoicing (**verses 2-3**); security is found in “His strength (**verse 4**)”; faith is based upon “His marvelous works,” “His wonders,” and His “judgments” (**verse 5**); surely Israelites should have learned to obey Him (**verse 6**).

**Verses 7-15:** God made “judgments” “in all the earth” (**verse 7**); so certainly He “remembered His covenant forever,” which is “a thousand generations” (**verse 8**); “He made with Abraham” (Genesis 12:1-3; 22:15-18), “oath to Isaac” (Genesis 26:3-5), “Jacob for a statute” (Genesis 28:13-15; 35:9-15) for “an everlasting covenant (**verses 9-10**)”. This promised them “the land of Canaan” (**verse 11**) when they were few in number and not native to it (**verse 12**; Genesis 34:30). **Verse 13** covers the time in Genesis 12-36, while **verses 14-15** include incidents showing God’s protection as written in: Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-18; 21:22-34.

**Verses 16-23:** The story of Joseph (**verses 16-23**) is detailed from Genesis 37:1-36; 38:1-50:26.

**Verses 24-38:** **Verses 24-25** condenses the narrative in Exodus 1:1-22; **verses 26-36** covers the plagues that released the Israelites in Exodus 2:1-12:30; **verses 37-38** recaps Exodus 12:31-36 and the desire of Egyptians to let them go with some of their silver and gold.

**Verses 39-45:** **Verse 39** is in Exodus 13:21; **verse 40** is in Exodus 16:1-36; **verse 41** is in Exodus 17:1-7. God led Israel, though they murmured and complained about their situation, He kept “His holy promise” (**verse 42**), and delivered them “with joy” and “gladness” (**verse 43**). They conquered the Land of Canaan (**verse 44**; Book of Joshua), to give them opportunity to “keep His laws” (**verse 45**).

**Thought:** This narrative in **Psalm 105** leaves out the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 13:17-15:21), their lack of faith by sending 12 spies into the land first and their consequent 40-year wilderness wandering (Numbers 13:1-14:38), or their failed attempt to attack anyway (Numbers 14:39-45). **Psalm 105** emphasizes God’s plan, provision, and protection for Israel in keeping His part of the covenant, rather than dwelling upon Israel’s disregard for their part of the covenant. After all, faith in God is worthy of praise and strengthening to a believer’s faith, instead of hovering over the example of failure of the Israelites.





Vs. 1-5 praise God for preserving His nation;  
Vs. 6-46 trace Israelite sins from Exodus-Judges;  
Vs. 47-48 praise God for preserving His nation.

If **Psalm 105** follows God's promise and plan from Abraham - through the Exodus of Israelites from Egypt under Moses; then **Psalm 106** traces the sins of those people from their formation as a people in the Book of Exodus - to their settling in the Promised Land in the Book of Judges. The history of the Israelites is not a witness to their righteousness but a testimony of God's plan, providence, and patience in using them until Jesus Christ was born. They were never God's "permanent chosen people," but a means to the end of the promised "seed," "who is Christ" (Galatians 3:16-17).

**Verses 1-5:** God is best to be praised, thanked, and remembered by "he who does righteousness at all times" (**verse 3**). To be remembered by God, one must remember God!

**Verses 6-12:** Exodus 6-15. This illustrates how hard-hearted Israelites have been - immediately after the miracles in Egypt to release them, they desired to return when Pharaoh pursued them to the Red Sea! God completely destroyed the Egyptian army in the same Sea the Israelites had crossed: no shallow end of the pool, this!

**Verses 13-15:** Numbers 11. Emphasis here is upon the phrase "soon forgot His works" (**verse 13**).

**Verses 16-18:** Numbers 16. The challenge to the leadership of Moses and Aaron was met with the earth swallowing up the challengers, and fire from heaven consuming 250 men illegally offering incense to God.

**Verses 19-23:** Exodus 32. Israel exchanged the living God "Who had done great things in Egypt" (**verse 21**) for "an image of an ox that eats grass" (**verse 20**). Go figure!

**Verses 24-27:** Numbers 13-14. Because "they did not believe His word" they sent 12 spies into the Promised Land to see if they could conquer it, and even after 2 spies showed faith to then enter, the 10 spies prevailed. God made them wander in the wilderness 1 year for every day the spies had taken, and only the 2 spies with a good report were allowed to enter that Land along with all numbered under 20 years old who had come out of Egypt.

**Verses 28-31:** Numbers 25. Adultery with the women of Moab prompted Jehovah to caused a plague of death come to 24,000 Israelites.

**Verses 32-33:** Numbers 20:1-13. The Israelites' constant murmuring provoked even Moses to disobey God in providing them water from a rock. This was his only sin that kept him from entering the Promised Land.

**Verses 34-39:** Joshua. In conquering the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua, the Israelites were to completely eradicate the Canaanites. This was not done, and the Israelites were easily influenced into idolatry by those Canaanites.

**Verses 40-46:** Judges. Because of their partial obedience in the Book of Joshua, a pattern was established that when they sinned, they would be overcome by a non-

Israelite people, cry out to God, who would provide them a "judge" to lead them to overcome their oppressors.

**Verses 47-48:** Acknowledge God who can gather the Israelites "from among the Gentiles." The "Praise the LORD" at the beginning and end of this Psalm shows that, in spite of their sins, God is willing to forgive those who repent and turn back to Him.

**Thought:** This list of horrible sins done by God's own people under Moses' Law proves they were not chosen because of their inherent righteousness; God could have used "rocks" instead of people as John the Baptist said (Matthew 3:1-9); and that there is no such thing as "once-saved-always-saved" and never has been! The bad example of the Israelites is a lesson never to be forgotten by Christians (1 Corinthians 10:1-12; Hebrews 3-4).

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Psalm 107

2/12/13

- Vs. 1-3 give a well-deserved praise of the LORD;
- Vs. 4-9 show God's deliverance to the bewildered;
- Vs. 10-16 show God's deliverance to the bowed down;
- Vs. 17-32 show God's deliverance to the busy;
- Vs. 33-42 show God's abundance for the blessed;
- Vs. 43 describes those who pay attention.

This Psalm fits into the continuity of the preceding few, tracing God's preservation of Israel through more of the Old Testament history, notably, bringing them back to Canaan after their Babylonian "captivity." OR this Psalm is also worded in such a way that it might describe God's salvation of any sinner with figures of speech that describe what it would mean to be saved. OR the wording may well point forward to events in Jesus' life that would show God's works through and about Jesus in order to convince sinners to come to Him for salvation. The historical Israelite setting is probably more fitting. The repeated formula of repentance in **Psalm 107:6, 13, 19, 28** IS the history of Israel, AND of the churches of Christ. The repeated refrain in **Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31** should be the learned lesson heeded by all of "the children of men," that is, everyone!

Verses 1-3: Those who thank God for His goodness and mercy (**verses 1-2**) are those who realize He paid their price ("redeemed") to make them His own. The "gathering" (**verse 3**) easily depicts Israel gathered from all directions to repossess their Land of Canaan (historically recorded in the Books of Ezra & Nehemiah).

Verses 4-9: The "wandering" easily describes Israel after Egyptian bondage (historically recorded in the Book of Numbers), ending in their land with "a city for habitation," Jerusalem (as recorded in the Books of Joshua-2 Kings). Jesus offers to satisfy the hungry and thirsty (Matthew 5:6).

Verses 10-16: The "bondage" easily fits the Israelites' life in Babylon as punishment for their rebellion against God's words (historically recorded in 2 Chronicles 36:1-23; Jeremiah 25:1-14). Jesus discussed the Jews' bondage in sin (John 8:30-36) and freedom is in Him (2 Corinthians 3:12-18).

Verses 17-32: The "affliction" easily fits Israel's (the Northern Kingdom) crumbling to Assyrian conquest (2 Kings 17:1-23). Jesus stilled stormy seas (Mark 4:36-41),

and also healed the "afflicted" (Matthew 4:24; 2 Corinthians 1:6). Congregated people should "praise Him" (in other words, "go to church").

Verses 33-42: Abundance, or lack, is in the hand of God, and can depend upon a people's wickedness or righteousness. When things go wrong, the first place to look for a reason is one's own life! "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: 'He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.' Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God" (2 Corinthians 9:8-11).

Verse 43: The "wise" will "observe," that is, pay attention to the lesson of history, and "Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off" (Romans 11:22).

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**Psalm 108**

**2/13/13**

Vs. 1-5 repeat Psalm 57:7-11;  
Vs. 6-13 repeat Psalm 60:5-12.

This Psalm was originally written by David as **Psalm 57** and **Psalm 60**, but parts of those have been combined into **Psalm 108**. Since this Psalm repeats the previous Psalms, the comments are the same as for the previous Psalms.

**Vs. 1-5= Psalm 57:7-11 comments:**

**Verses 7-11:** David would not take his heart from before the LORD, but kept it "steadfast," and ready to "sing and give praise." In **verse 8**, David speaks to his musical instruments: "Awake, lute and harp!" Clearly, even David did NOT include his musical instruments whenever he said "sing," for they were an addition to his vocal praise of God! This, then, is yet another reference to such instruments left behind in Moses' Law, for Jesus "has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14). **Verse 9** points to David's hope for the future, when God would be praised "among the peoples," and "among the nations," both frequently referring to "Gentiles," which has happened since the church of Christ (the "kingdom of God" Acts 8:12) began in Acts 2. In **verses 10-11**, God's "mercy," "truth," and "glory" are above the earth and cannot be tainted by anything that happens down here. For God to be "exalted" "above the heavens" means that no scientific discovery, no scientist, no human, can ever see, control, reach or ruin the "Most High."

**Vs. 6-13= Psalm 60:5-12 comments:**

To be saved "with Your right hand" figuratively suggests that God still helps them with a strong arm (**verse 5**).

**Verses 6-8:** It says in **verse 6**: "God has spoken in His holiness." God's dispensation of the tribes of Israelites is the final Word on the subject. "His holiness" always refers to God, and not a man (Pope, etc.). Jesus Christ gave Himself that sinners who obey the Gospel "might partake of His holiness" (Hebrews 12:10). Unless that would make each Christian a "Pope," then what each Christian may "partake" of is not limited to one individual! It is a profanity for any religion to bestow upon any human the title of

"His holiness," for it is not reserved for one, but to all Christians it is said: "as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16). In **verse 7**, God claims Gilead and Manasseh, both across the Jordan River from the Promised "mainland." The tribe of Ephraim would lead; Judah would rule; **verse 8**, God even claimed their enemies: Moab would be a common "washpot;" Edom would be completely crushed; Philistia would shout triumphantly when taken and included.

**Verses 9-12:** If God made the assignments in **verses 6-8**, then in **verse 9**, God asks for a leader to step forward and do this. David's reply in **verse 10** is that it was God who gave them victory, and should again. The principle statement in **verses 11-12** appears to be "For the help of man is useless." That acknowledgment sometimes is difficult, if not, impossible, to hear. Jesus heard the Canaanitish woman beg mercy for her "severely demon-possessed daughter" because she "came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me!'" (Matthew 15:21- 28). "Her daughter was healed from that very hour" just as David's help from God had come to him. David will emphasize his conclusion with, "My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth." If God created "heaven and earth" (and all the scientific evidence demands that He did!), then only He has the power to interact and override what happens on that earth. God sees, hears, and influences the affairs on earth, continually, for "He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17).

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Psalm 109

2/14/13

Vs. 1-5 show how hateful someone can become;
Vs. 6-15 appeal for God to "let" bad things happen to an evil-doer;
Vs. 16-20 give the reason for God to let it happen;
Vs. 21-27 contrast how God would help the righteous;
Vs. 28-31 praise God for handling judgment right.

This Psalm was written by David, who had been betrayed by his trusted counselor, Ahithophel, who counseled rebel son Absalom against his father, David, but when that counsel wasn't followed, went out and hanged himself (2 Samuel 15:12- 17:23). This paralleled Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus Christ, and went out and hanged himself (Matthew 26:45-56; 27:3-5). Psalm 109:8, therefore, is quoted by Peter in Acts 1:20 as a prophecy of Judas Iscariot. Interesting to note, Psalm 109 says about a betrayer what Jesus would never say, but is a fair judgment for such a dastardly deed.

Verses 1-5: The problem is laid before God (**verse 1**; 1 Peter 5:7); the wicked speak from the heart (**verse 2**; Matthew 12:33-37); hate speech leads to the death of a righteous person (**verse 3**; quoted by Jesus, John 15:23-25); only wicked people return evil for good (**verses 4-5**) the opposite of what Jesus taught (Luke 6:27-28), for David and Jesus gave themselves over "to prayer."

Verses 6-15: What worse punishment could be done, than to do to the wicked what they do to others, with Satan ("accuser") standing by? (**verse 6**); his prayers mean nothing (**verse 7**); for God to stand back and "let" the wicked: live a shortened life and be replaced (**verse 8**); be the last of his family (**verse 9**); leave nothing to his children (**verse 10**); lose all his life savings (**verse 11**); be shown no mercy (**v 12**); lose his legacy (**verse 13**); pay for the sins of his parents (**verses 14-15**).

Verses 16-20: This is justifiable "because" the wicked: showed no mercy to the poor, needy, broken hearted (**verse 16**); cursed others and seldom blessed (**verse 17**); wore cursing as clothes that rot his inside (**verses 18-19**); so let it be done (**v 20**).

Verses 21-27: Plead for God to deal differently with the righteous: to show others His "name's sake" (**verse 21**); to see David's frailties as "poor and needy" and "wounded (**verse 22**)"; disappearing shadow, or wind-blown locust (**verse 23**); weakness through fasting (**verses 24**); object of ridicule (**verse 25**); only God can change things (**verse 26**); and so doing, demonstrate to others something only God could do (**verse 27**).

Verses 28-31: Trust God to judge rightly between the wicked and His servant (**verse 28**); let wicked be covered in their own shame (**verse 29**); God is to be praised "among the multitude" (**verse 30**); for His deliverance of the "poor" from those who "condemn him" (**verse 31**).

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**Psalm 110**

**2/15/13**

Vs. 1-7 are a purely prophetic picture of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ said this Psalm was written by the Holy Spirit through David (Mark 12:35-36). All commentators who question or challenge this authorship are unworthy of any consideration, and probably are wrong in many other places in their comments! Commentators who cannot see this absolute conclusion about this authorship are blind, and "if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch" (Matthew 15:14). Psalm 110 is one of the purest, clearest, prophecies of Jesus Christ in the entire Old Testament!

**Verse 1:** Contains a fact about Jesus Christ being King that is quoted by: Jesus Christ to show that David spoke of Him as "Lord" and not "son"(Matthew 22:41- 46); Peter quoted it (Acts 2:30-35) to prove that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead to sit on David's throne in Heaven; probably Paul (Hebrews 1:13) to show that Jesus Christ is NOT an "angel;" and again by Peter (1 Peter 3:21-22) to show that after Jesus' resurrection, He has all authority "in heaven and on earth" (as Jesus claimed, Matthew 28:18). "For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:25-26).

**Verse 2:** Jesus began His Kingdom Rule "out of Zion" (often a reference to Jerusalem), for after His resurrection, He went outside of Jerusalem and "was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19). Anyone who teaches a doctrine that denies that Jesus is now on David's throne in Heaven is denying that He was raised from the dead and ascended into Heaven.

**Verse 3:** "Volunteers" describes the free-will obedience of all who follow Jesus today. Jesus commanded "the wind and the sea" to obey and they did (Mark 4:35- 41), but Jesus gave people choice as to whether or not to obey Him (John 6:44- 45). Paul preached the Gospel to Bereans, who "received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). There never has been forced obedience by the Holy Spirit!

**Verse 4:** God has sworn that Jesus Christ is "a priest forever:"  
 (1) on David's throne, He is Priest and King (Zechariah 6:12-13), but on earth, Jesus was not from the priestly tribe under Moses' Law (Hebrews 7:11-14), therefore David's throne is not on earth;  
 (2) only Jesus Christ has ever been a "High Priest" "according to the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:6, 10; 7:11, 17, 21), whose history is in Genesis 14:18-24, and, since no mention is recorded of his beginning, tribe, or death (Hebrews 7:1-4), only Jesus could parallel that background;  
 (3) Jesus, to be High Priest, "has passed through the heavens" (Hebrews 4:14-15) and was "without sin," which never was true of anyone else who claimed to have "the priesthood of Melchizedek" bestowed upon him.

**Verses 5-7:** Jesus Christ has been given all judgment (John 5:21-23), and will execute that judgment against "workers of iniquity" on the Day of Judgment (John 5:28-30; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Corinthians 5:8-10). To "lift up the head" in total and complete victory concludes Jesus' work, and our "thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57); and, "this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith" (1 John 5:4).

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Psalm 111

2/18/13

Vs. 1 gives praise to "the LORD;"
 Vs. 2-9 point to His works as evidence;
 Vs.10 gives the conclusion for those who praise Him.

This Psalm seems to call to mind why Israelites, particularly, should "praise the LORD." Another reminder of God's works for them appeals to their gratitude. There is a corresponding reminder for Christians today in these words, also.

Verse 1: "Praise the LORD" (or Hallelujah) with the "whole heart" (nothing held back), in the "assembly" (small gathering), and "congregation" (larger, more public gathering).

Verses 2-9: "The works of the LORD" are: (**verse 2**) "great" (impressive), "studied" (sought out), by those who serve the LORD wanting to know more (Judges 2:7); (**verse 3**) "honorable and glorious" (His perfection) "righteous" (always the right thing to do); (**verse 4**) designed "to be remembered" (Ecclesiastes 3:14), even His grace and compassion (bringing Israel out of Egypt, Exodus 6-14, or saving sinners through Jesus' cross, Hebrews 2:1-4); (**verse 5**) God provides for those who "fear Him" (having gone through the wilderness, Deuteronomy 8:1-9; or becoming a member of the kingdom of Christ, Matthew 6:25-33; 1 Timothy 6:6-8), always true to His "covenant" (to preserve Abraham's descendants until Jesus Christ, Exodus 2:24-25; or fulfill His covenant with salvation through Jesus Acts 3:24-26); (**verse 6**) God gave "His people" their Promised Land taken from "the nations" in Canaan (Joshua 21:43-45; or Christians making disciples "of all the nations," Matthew 28:18-19); (**verse 7**) all God does is based upon "verity" (truth) and "judgment" (justice) and are "sure" (never needing to be appealed); (**verse 8**) God's plans, purposes, and precepts "stand fast forever" (are above any failure or "shadow of turning," James 1:17); (**verse 9**) He has given "redemption" to His people (Israelites, Exodus 15:11-13, Christians, Colossians 1:13-14), hence "His name" is in a category to itself (at the burning bush for Israel's deliverance, Exodus 3:1-15, for sinners today, Acts 8:12- 17).

Verse 10: Respect for God ("fear of the LORD," Proverbs 1:7; 14:27; 22:4) is "the beginning of wisdom." Little wonder, therefore, how unintelligent people become who keep God out of their classrooms, governments, businesses, or homes (Ephesians 4:17-20). Everyone who searches the works of the LORD finds praising God easily done!

Thought: In the King James Version, Psalm 111:9 used a Latin word, "reverend," the only time that word is used of God. Actually, the word, which is translated "awesome" in the New King James Version is used many other times in the Scriptures, but still mostly only of God and His works. Just as the word "reverend" has been profaned by false teachers in religion, so the word "awesome" has now become commonly used for mundane things. It is a never-ending struggle to keep some word, or words, reserved for God, alone, but wholly worth it! Christians must "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

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**Psalm 112**

**2/19/13**

Vs. 1-9 show God reflected in His people;  
Vs. 10 shows who can't stand this.

**Psalm 111** describes the character of God that prompts praise; **Psalm 112** describes the character of those who "fear God and keep His commandments" (Ecclesiastes 12:13; Acts 10:34-35). "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:3-6).

**Verses 1-9: (Verse 1)** "Praise the LORD" (is the word, Hallelujah). To "fear the LORD" is to respect His commandments. **(Verses 2-3)** Right-thinking can be passed on to children and grandchildren (Genesis 18:16-19), but so also can disobedience (2 Kings 17:41). Benefits of right-thinking ("Wealth and riches") may also be shared with children, as Solomon will later say: "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous" (Proverbs 13:22). **(Verses 4-5)** If troubles are like "darkness" then "light" is what God provides the righteous to help guide them through it: "The light of the righteous rejoices, But the lamp of the wicked will be put out" (Proverbs 13:9). God's person will develop God's characteristics of being "gracious," "righteous," and "full of compassion." Jesus later teaches this in Luke 6:35-36. **(Verses 6-8)** There will be stability in the life of the righteous, not a total absence of difficulties, but the certainty that comes of knowing how to return to life's main purpose: to please God (Hebrews 11:6). To "never be shaken" means knowing on whose side one stands, even when "evil tidings" are hurled by Satan's followers, and knowing God's final judgment condemns "his enemies" (Proverbs 10:24-25). "For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. And again, 'The LORD will judge His people'" (Hebrews 10:30). Christians today should "not be carried about with various and strange doctrines" (Hebrews 13:9); "that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ" (Ephesians 4:14-15). **(Verse 9)** This good behavior is suitable for everyone, everywhere, thus "dispersed abroad" (without

prejudices, Mark 16:15-16; Romans 10:8-18) and "given to the poor" (who cannot repay, Luke 14:12-14; Matthew 25:31-46).

**Verse 10:** "The wicked" can't stand to see the righteous rewarded, which was first seen when Cain killed his brother (Genesis 4:1-8; Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:11-12). Ever since then, doing good can be dangerous, but always right. "Therefore 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.' [quoted from Proverbs 25:21-22] Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:20-21).

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Psalm 113

2/20/13

Vs. 1-3 call for man to **give** praise to God;
Vs. 4-6 because of God's "**glory**;"
Vs. 7-9 remembering God's **grace** toward men.

This is the third straight "Hallel" Psalm, so-called because each begins with "Hallelujah" ("Praise the LORD"). The Israelite "Passover" was an annual national holiday celebrating the death of the first-born in Egypt, when the angel of God would "Passover" the Israelite houses where doorways were stained with blood of a lamb (Exodus 12). This pictured Jesus' sacrifice for those baptized into His death, so God would "Passover" a person's sins (I Corinthians 5:7; Romans 6:3-7). The Israelites would sing Psalms 113-114 before observing Passover, and Psalms 115-118 afterwards.

Verses 1-3: (Verse 1) Who should "praise the LORD?" "Servants of the LORD." That means that those who haven't obeyed, or refuse to obey, the LORD, cannot properly praise Him. Only those in the kingdom of Christ by "new birth" (John 3:3-5) "are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28). **(Verse 1) What** should be praised? "The name of the LORD." It represents power over life, loving concern for our lives, and the longsuffering in time while we change our lives. **(Verse 2) When** should His name be praised? "From this time and forevermore." Praise should last as long as time. **(Verse 3) How often** should His name be praised? "From the rising of the sun to its going down." Any time of any day is appropriate. Praising God's name is not to be limited to, nor fulfilled by, an hour or two on Sunday, but not also home, school, business, government! Doing some good deeds does not cancel the need for worship gatherings (Hebrews 13:15-16).

Verses 4-6: (Verse 4) God is above the nations and heavens, and therefore untouched by human hands! That's why no astronaut or space probe can ever "see" Him. **(Verse 5)** There is no "god" or "myth" equal to Him. Christians "know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live" (1 Corinthians 8:4-6). **(Verse 6)** There is no "god" or "myth" which intervenes in human matters, as Bible history shows.

Verses 7-9: (Verses 7-8) Years before, Hannah had praised God with these very words (1 Samuel 2:8), and was blessed with the son, Samuel; it was part of Mary's appreciation for birthing Jesus (Luke 1:52); and happens when a sinner is raised from

defilement (1 Corinthians 1:26-31). God has brought His people up from human dust and dunghill, and continues through the Gospel of Jesus Christ to call people from their miserable, sinful state (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-41). (**Verse 9**) A "barren woman" who is granted the joys of having a child has feelings almost unmatched in human hearts. Just so, God blesses His people (then Israelites, now Christians) with "life, breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25), and "every good gift, and every perfect gift" (James 1:17), so that Christians now "do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8).

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**Psalm 114**

**2/21/13**

Vs. 1-8 look back at what God had done to make Israel a nation.

It is always beneficial for a people to look back to their origins, unless they continue to live in the past and not appreciate their present. Israelites needed to meditate upon the God whose works delivered their "fathers" from slavery in Egypt, and made them a nation, with a covenant law with God, and a land from God. It's pathetic to see people with slavery in their people's history, who are blind to their advantages since then. In America's history, there have been slaves brought across its shores (for example, Irish indentured servants or Africans as household or plantation slaves), but to live with the present blessings, while complaining about the past, refuses to acknowledge the blessings that have come from God with the passing of time. Nothing in **Psalm 114** was designed to inflame the Israelites against the Egyptians because of their enslavement in the past. Christians look back at their past, grateful for their deliverance from their sins, and their perseverance toward their heavenly goal (Hebrews 10:32-35).

**Verses 1-2:** Jacob and Esau were twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 25:26-28). Esau, also named, "Edom" (Genesis 25:30), and then Jacob, whom God renamed "Israel," (Genesis 32:24-32), were the beginning of God's covenant people, "the children of Israel," and "Edomites" represented Gentiles in prophecy. Jacob fathered "Judah," and along with his other sons, the Children of Israel were thus divided into the 12 tribes of the Children of Israel. Thus, [The Children of] "Israel went out of Egypt" (Exodus 1-14), also known as "the house of Jacob," with special emphasis on the tribe of "Judah" (through whom Jesus Christ would be born, Hebrews 7:14). The "people of strange language" were the Egyptians, because their language was different from the Hebrew spoken by the Israelites.

**Verses 3-6:** "The sea" was the Red Sea that God divided (Exodus 14:15-31) to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt, and "Jordan" River was also divided (Joshua 3:14-17) to permit the Israelites to cross over its flooded bed on dry land into their Promised Land. "The mountains skipped" when God's presence was represented on Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law to Moses (Exodus 19:16-20), and other parts of the mountains ("little hills") participated, as well. "What ails you" calls attention to the fact that these disturbances could not have been caused by anyone, except God!

**Verses 7-8:** Since "God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3), and God destroyed all life on the dry land of the earth with a universal flood (Genesis 7:21-23), then the "earth" and all people on it, should "tremble" (quake in awe) "at the presence of the Lord," "the God of Jacob." If the children of Israel were in awe when Moses received their Law at Mt. Sinai, how much more should all people

respect "Him who speaks from Heaven," that is, Jesus Christ and His Law, the New Testament (Hebrews 12:18-29)?

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Psalm 115

2/22/13

Vs. 1-3 indicate the inquiry of Gentiles, and the answer;
Vs. 4-8 give contrasts between idols and God;
Vs. 9-15 list God's interactions with His people;
Vs. 16-18 remind people why idealize God now.

This is another "Hallel" Psalm, for it gives reasons to end with "hallelujah" ("praise the LORD"). The date and authorship of this Psalm are indefinite, but the challenge to idolatry in this Psalm certainly would have been an answer to the Rabshakeh. He represented Sennacherib, King of Assyria, whose army surrounded Jerusalem in the days of King Hezekiah, and dared "the LORD" to deliver His people (2 Kings 18:27-36). The LORD prevailed (2 Kings 19:1-37), then, and always.

Verses 1-3: (**verse 1**) None of us are worthy of the "glory" belonging to the "LORD," for only His "name," "mercy," and "truth" deserve such praise. (**verse 2**) "Gentiles" (non-Israelites) question God's Being with: "Where is He?" When worldly people define every deity in worldly terms, they cannot know "God [who] is in heaven" and "does whatever He pleases" (**verse 3**). God's sovereignty is not limited to: "temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24), "neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem" (John 4:21), and remains above Jesus and the kingdom (1 Corinthians 15:25-28).

Verses 4-8: (**verse 4**) An "idol" (term meaning thing seen, form, figure) must be made out of physical substance, often precious metal ("silver and gold"). Humanly-devised "gods" represent qualities humans appreciate, but, as "gods," they have absolutely no power. (**verses 5-7**) Idols have: wordless mouths; sightless eyes; deaf ears; insensitive noses; unfeeling hands; unmoving feet; soundless throats. (**verse 8**) People shape their lives to be like their "god:" poor or no communication ability; can't see opportunity and responsibility; don't listen to God's rules of righteousness; disregards the stench of sin and foul living; fumbling away good works; unresponsive action; laryngitis of praise for God.

Verses 9-15: By contrast, (**verse 9**) the "LORD" of Israel helps and protects them; (**verse 10**) Aaron, Moses' brother (Exodus 4:14), was the first of the Levitical priesthood representing those closer to the LORD in worship; (**verse 11**) all "who fear the LORD," also know the living God helps and protects. (**verses 12-13**) That "the LORD has been mindful of us," historically is written throughout the past, for God has helped and is helping "both small and great." (**verses 14-15**) This why prayerful desires are given to God (1 Peter 5:7; 3 John 2), for all blessing come from the God who created "heaven and earth."

Verses 16-18: (**verse 16**) God has total dominion from "the heavens," but has endowed mankind with "dominion" over life on earth. (**verse 17**) Since all must die (Hebrews 9:27) our time is limited, for we cannot convert or worship God like we once could have, beyond the grave (Ecclesiastes 9:1-6), therefore we must give God glory from now on (**verse 18**). "Praise the LORD!"

Thought: God-given abilities of hearing, sight, and intelligence are to be used to learn more about God (Psalm 94:8-11). All idols are created by humans to represent some "god" or power greater than the human: sex, fame, fortune, wealth, popularity, friends, drugs, entertainment, covetousness, etc. From the Law of Moses (Exodus 20:4-5) and into the Law of Christ (1 John 5:21), God has condemned idols of every kind. One who obeys Jesus Christ has "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

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**Psalm 116**

**2/25/13**

Vs. 1-11 explain why one should "love the LORD;"  
Vs. 12-17 discuss what one can do in response to God's love;  
Vs. 18-19 tell where one should payback their debt.

This Psalm is from an individual soul freed from near death. A "near death experience" means the person stays in "the land of the living" because if they had died, it would be a "resurrection." The King of Judah, Hezekiah, was spared death by God's heeding his prayers (2 Kings 20:1-11; Isaiah 38-39), so this easily could have come from him on that occasion. This is a personal Psalm, for "I," "me," "my" are used some 34 times.

**Verses 1-11: (Verses 1-2)** A good listener should be easy to love, for it shows individual interest (God hears "my voice," "my supplications," "me"). Family and friends who listen deserve life-long love. **(Verses 3-4)** Death came so close the Psalmist felt its "pains" (or cords) and knew its "pangs" (or distresses), and "trouble and sorrow." A "near death" prayer is: "O LORD, I implore You, deliver my soul!" "Then I called," but he had worshiped and prayed long before he faced death (2 Chronicles 30:18-20; 31:20-21). **(Verse 5)** The LORD is "gracious," "righteous," "merciful" (Exodus 34:6-7; Psalm 112:4). **(Verse 6)** The LORD disciplines to produce humility. **(Verses 7-8)** "Rest" is for a soul blessed by God who is "delivered from:" "death," "tears," or "falling." **(Verses 9-10)** Such a beloved soul lives "before the LORD" while life remains; speaks faithfully amidst affliction. **Psalm 116:10** is quoted by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:13 because hearts are united by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. **(Verse 11)** That "all men are liars" cannot be true, for then the person making that statement would not be true. Hence, it is wrong to conclude "all men are liars," though there may be many who do lie. A person who says anything that contradicts what God has said "is a liar" (1 John 1:10; 2:4, 22; 4:20; 5:10), hence, compared to God, "every man [is] a liar" (Romans 3:4).

**Verses 12-17: (Verse 12)** Realizing no person can give equally or above what God has given, an honest conscience would ask: What can I pay back to God? **(Verse 13)** "The cup of salvation," under Moses' Law could be "drink offerings" (Numbers 15:1-13, 5, 7, 10), but under Christ, ourselves (Romans 12:1; Philippians 2:17-18; 2 Timothy 4:6). To "call upon the name of the LORD" means to obey Him. Jesus said the words were not enough (Matthew 7:21-24); Peter included obedience to the Gospel (Acts 2:21-38, 41); and Saul of Tarsus had not "called" on the Damascus' Road, but in Damascus (Acts 22:16). **(Verse 14)** God is owed worship, including public worship with others. **(Verse 15)** To "die in the Lord" (Revelation 14:13) is "precious" because it means:

- (1) A "saint" has believed to the saving of the soul (Hebrews 10:39);
- (2) The worldly temptations or afflictions can give no more problems;
- (3) A "saint" has reached God's promised "rest" (Hebrews 4:1, 11).

(**Verse 16**) The soul that experiences its obedience to God and His blessing becomes a true disciple (John 7:16-17; 8:28-32; 1 Peter 1:22-2:4). (**Verse 17**) Every offering a saint may make must include "thanksgiving" (Philippians 4:6).

**Verses 18-19:** There is no payback we may make equal to God's gifts, but all who are saved are indebted: "in the presence of all His people," "in the courts of the LORD's house," "in the midst of...Jerusalem." The Lord's house, today, is the church of Christ (1 Timothy 3:15), and not bound to a holy city (John 4:21-24; Matthew 28:18-20). Indeed, "Praise the LORD" (*Hallelujah!*).

**Thought:** To be "simple" means unschooled, untaught, easily lead, and Solomon equates it with being "foolish, silly," misled into sin (Proverbs 1:22, 32; 7:7; 8:5; 9:4, 13, 16; 14:15, 18; 19:25; 21:11; 22:3; 27:12). Solomon's proverbs were to provide "prudence" (judgment) to such people (Proverbs 1:1-4). **Psalm 116:6** uses "simple" to refer to someone who has been "brought low" and therefore reduced to life's basics, thus readied to receive the LORD's instruction.

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Psalm 117

2/26/13

Vs. 1-2 give "praise to the LORD."

This is the last of the "Hallel" **Psalms (113-118)** which begins and ends with a "Hallelujah." This 30-word Psalm is the shortest chapter in the Bible. This Psalm is addressed to "Gentiles," which proves the Jews were never intended by God to be His people forever. God's plan for salvation always included "Gentiles" as this Psalm shows. God promised a people to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), and a land (Genesis 13:14-16). The land promise was fulfilled (Joshua 21:43-45) and preserved (2 Chronicles 36:15-23; Jeremiah 25:1-14), the Israelites kept to preserve the lineage for Jesus to be born as the "only begotten Son of God" (Matthew 1:1-25; Galatians 3:1-29; Ephesians 3:1-12). Jesus Christ is now the King of His kingdom of Christians (John 18:36; Acts 17:7; 2:29-38).

Verse 1: "Praise the LORD" (Hallelujah), a thought common to Israelites, is directly pointed to "Gentiles" (an Israelite term referring to all non-covenant people). The call is for all people to have one worship for the One God, and for the same reasons. The Law of Moses stood between Jews and Gentiles, requiring Gentiles to observe Moses (Exodus 12:49; Numbers 15:1-31), but now that Law has been removed and Jews are expected to obey the Law of Christ as well as Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-22). The only unity is found in Christ (Romans 3:19-31).

Verse 2: God's "merciful kindness" has been demonstrated not only for the Jews, but also the rest of humanity, time and time again. Only in "Harlotwood's" fantasies does Satan, evil, and wickedness prevail. Another expression for "merciful kindness" is "grace," best expressed in Jesus Christ. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:11-12). God's "truth" is the only absolute truth to be found: His promises stand until He fulfills them; His Creation operates by His complex laws; His people (Christians) know His moral code brings purity to the impure; His Bible withstands every challenge to its integrity; faith in Him gives certainty to the fearful. There is no other "truth" except that which is based upon God's truth contained in His Creation and Bible. Solomon's Book of Proverbs recorded: "So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed

you today, even you. Have I not written to you excellent things Of counsels and knowledge, That I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth, That you may answer words of truth To those who send to you?" (Proverbs 22:19-21)

Because God's Way is best and planned for all men, indeed, "praise the LORD."

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## Psalm 118

2/27/13

Vs. 1-4 give a burst of praise to be offered throughout all the people;  
Vs. 5-14 indicate the deliverance from distress God gave that prompted praise;  
Vs. 15-18 give appreciation for the "near miss;"  
Vs. 19-29 show rejoicing when one rejected by men is accepted by God.

The "praise the LORD" (hallelujah) occurs in **verse 19**, and this Psalm completes the "set" used in Israelite services. It is intensely personal ("I, me, my" occurring over 30 times), speaks with the authority of a king (**verses 10-12**), and fits the entrance of David to Jerusalem following the battle and death of Saul (2 Samuel 5:1-13). Though not parallel in every detail, there is a section that is prophetic of Jesus Christ entering Jerusalem for the last week of His life (**verses 19-26**). Chapter and verse numbers and divisions were added to the Bible text by uninspired men as an aid for finding statements within the Bible. It seems to be guided by Providence that the middle verse of the entire Bible is **Psalm 118:8!**

**Verses 1-4: (Verse 1)** It begins and ends (verse 29) with the same gratitude toward God. (**Verses 2-4**) First the Israelites, then their priests (Aaron), then all others who "fear the LORD" (extends to Gentiles?) should say, "His mercy endures forever."

**Verses 5-14: (Verse 5)** God heard and responded to a cry in "distress," proving (**verse 6**) "the LORD is on my side," concluding "I will not fear" men. This is echoed for Christians in Matthew 10:28 and Romans 8:31, then quoted in Hebrews 13:6. (**Verse 7**) God will be "for" the obedient and against those who oppose them. (**Verse 8**) States the main premise of the entire Bible: "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in men." The history of mankind and God's dealings with them proves this simple truth! People fail, God—never! (**Verse 9**) States the same thing, applying it even to government personnel! (**Verse 10**) "All nations" indicates total rejection, both Jew and Gentile, and surely describes the reason Jesus died on the cross (Acts 2:22-24; 13:26-33). (**Verses 10-12**) David had been "surrounded," with the ferocity of "bees," but "in the name of the LORD" would be "destroyed;" "quenched" as if a flash fire of "thorns." (**Verses 13-14**) Though "pushed" "violently," God assisted with "strength," reason for "song," and is his "salvation."

**Verses 15-18: (Verses 15-16)** There is "rejoicing" "in the tents of the righteous;" because they have seen "the right hand of the LORD" in action on their behalf. Since "God is spirit" (John 4:24), and Jesus added, "a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have" (Luke 24:39), then obviously we are dealing with a figure of speech in Psalm 118:15-16! (**Verses 17-18**) This refers to David, because Jesus did see death in His experience (Hebrews 2:9).

**Verses 19-29: (Verses 19-20)** Jesus was obeying the Father when He entered Jerusalem to face the cross (Hebrews 5:5-11), thus passed through "the gates of righteousness," "through which the righteous shall enter." The "hallelujah" is given here. No one is more "righteous" than Jesus (1 John 2:1)! (**Verse 21**) God is to be

praised "for" responding to the righteous with salvation. (**Verses 22-24**) Prophecy Jesus Christ as "the stone" rejected by men in the crucifixion, but exalted to "chief cornerstone" by God (Jesus claimed it, Matthew 21:33-45; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19; Peter preached it, Acts 4:8-12; 1 Peter 2:1-8). Jesus Christ is "the stone" so rejected by those charged with building, but "the LORD's doing" raised Jesus from the dead to be on David's throne in heaven (Acts 2:29-32). This began the new Law with Jesus as King over His kingdom, and "the day the LORD has made" for rejoicing being "the first day of the week" (John 20:1, 19, 26; Acts 2:1, 38-41, 42-47; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). (**Verse 25**) The "prosperity" God gives is salvation in Jesus Christ (John 10:10), and not the "Gospel of Greed" as some have twisted this verse to mean! Money-grubbers try to take this spiritual meaning from this passage and force it to refer to money. (**Verse 26**) The very words of the people welcoming Jesus entrance to Jerusalem for His final week are from this verse (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9; Luke 19:38; John 12:12-13)! (**Verse 27**) The idea of tying "the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar" simply expresses how continual the need for approaching the altar for forgiveness of sins. With David, certainly he did this (2 Samuel 6:17-19), and Jesus Christ "was offered once" (Hebrews 9:23-29; Hebrews 10:12-14) but continually intercedes for the saints (Hebrews 7:24-27). (**Verse 28**) People who profanely use "OMG" have not obeyed God and fully appreciated who He is and what He does. (**Verse 29**) After all is said and done, God is to be "thanked" because "His mercy endures forever."

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Psalm 119

2/28/13

It is fitting that the greatest tribute to the Word of God is IN the Word of God itself, and is in the longest chapter of the Word of God! This Psalm has no author's name, historical incident, or other distraction from its theme. It is divided into 22 sections (one for every letter in the Hebrew alphabet), each consisting of 8 lines, each line beginning with the alphabet letter of that section (aleph is the first letter of each line under the aleph section, for instance). The chapter uses some 8-10 different words to describe the Word of God, each bringing something extra to the total picture of the Word of Truth.

In order to savor the depth and richness of teaching in this Psalm, we will examine each section as if it were its own chapter.

Aleph: Psalm 119:1-8: Walking "In The Way"

Verses 1-3: The "undefiled" are "in the way" described, because they "walk in the law of the LORD." Sin is a "transgression" of (crossing over) God's Law (Hebrews 2:2-3), obedience is respecting and staying within that Law. "**Law**" is from a word meaning to "direct, guide, teach," God's Law led to Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:19- 24). This "walk" must be "with the whole heart," and will help one "do no iniquity."

Verses 4-6: God has "commanded" that we should "keep His **precepts** diligently," that is, apply ourselves to what His instructions say. "**Statutes**" are the marked-out lines that show the course of conduct God wants us to follow. If "my ways were directed" by God's Law, then "I would not be ashamed" to read His ways. Many people quit their Bible study, it seems, because they find things God expects of them and they don't want to do them!

Verses 7-8: God has given us His "righteous **judgments**," or decisions that are right, but the choice to follow them is left up to the individual. Praise to God flows from a heart full of: His Word, submission, appreciation, association with God. When we study and see what God expects, we immediately realize we need His help to accomplish it.

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**Beth Psalm 119:9-16:**

**Cleansing One's Way**

**3/1/13**

**Verses 9-12: (Verse 9a)** "A young man" who sins can become an old man who sins, so to enjoy our "golden years" we must clean up our act when "young." "Cleanse" indicates a life that has become "dirty," not one that needs no clean-up! Also note that each individual is responsible for cleaning up one's own life, not blame others (parents, teachers, employers, friends, family) for failings. The cleansing comes by: **(Verse 9b)** "heeding" God's "word;" **(verse 10)** whole **heartily** seeking God; holding to God's "commandments;" **(verse 11)** **hiding** God's "word" in one's "heart." **(Verse 11)** Hiding God's Word in our heart simply means we have embedded its teachings in our thinking. God never promises that we cannot sin, but that we will find the continual practice of sin inconsistent with obeying His Word. "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness;" "Whoever abides in Him does not sin;" "Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God" (1 John 3:4, 6, 9). It is impossible for a child of God to consistently practice sin, and at the same time, consistently practice righteousness: "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:6). **(Verse 12)** God "teaches" through "statutes" (lines showing limits of what is acceptable to God). He is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

**Verses 13-16:** One who is obedient: **(verse 13)** cannot keep silent, but vocally teach and acknowledge the "judgments" (right or wrong decisions) from God's "mouth;" **(verse 14)** must "rejoice" (be happy with life's new direction) in God's "testimonies" (witnesses to God's character and concern), considering them "riches;" **(verse 15)** "meditate" (focus upon) on God's "precepts" (notice or care about one's conduct); "contemplate" (center attention upon) God's "ways" (direction); **(verse 16)** "delight" (take pleasure, leap for joy) in God's "statutes" (clear lines proscribing what is pleasing to God); making it such a part of one's thought and conduct will make it impossible to "forget" God's "word" (language which conveys exactly what God desires us to do).

**Thought:** Isn't this exactly what the New Testament shows happened in Acts 2:38-41? "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.' 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation.' 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them."

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Gimel Psalm 119:17-24:

"Finding One's Way"

3/4/13

Verses 17-20: (Verse 17) This is a request for God's blessings that they may give long life for keeping God's word, a thought later taught by Paul (2 Corinthians 9:8-11). **(Verse 18)** This is a desire to be "wide awake" and not miss "wondrous

things." All of God's miracles and might cause "wonder" (the impression on a human mind of "marvel"), so Jesus was to be called "Wonderful" (Isaiah 9:6) for His works. (**Verse 19**) To be "a stranger" is to be in an unfamiliar place, and need to know what to do, instructions which God's "commandments" provide. Peter will use this term to help Christians know they must rely upon God's Word (1 Peter 2:11-12). (**Verse 20**) The person whose heart bursts "with longing," desire to know God's decisions about right and wrong ("judgments") "at all times," makes it passionate, indeed.

Verses 21-23: (**Verse 21**) Recognizes God as unwavering because He doesn't lower His standards to stroke the ego of those too "proud" to humbly obey Him! (**Verse 22**) States the other side of verse 21, and that is that God would "remove" the "reproach and contempt" the disobedient people would heap upon someone who obeys God. God's "testimonies" are the proofs that God's character is not tainted nor afraid of the wicked, which is His provision for one who has "kept" to God's side of life. (**Verse 23**) "Princes" (the "proud" in possession of wealth and power, a.k.a. "government") "sit and speak against me" (government laws never hold sway over God's "statutes" (lines marking out the "playing field"), thus it is profitable to "meditate" on what is meaningful. This is echoed by the Apostles of Christ (Acts 4:4-20; 5:27-29; 12:1-5).

Verse 24: No matter what indignities may be brought upon one of God's servants who now has become a "stranger" in any land (Matthew 28:18-20), no human can remove the "delight" of studying God's "testimonies," for in a confused, immoral, ungodly world, His Bible becomes "counselor" ("advisor, confidante, friend").

Thought: The Bible is the only safe, proper, and true guide through life, and it is also much cheaper than psychologists, psychiatrists, prescriptions, friends' free advice, or faux families!

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**Daleth Psalm 119:25-32**

**Receiving New Life**

**3/5/13**

Verse 25 shows how low we fall on our own;  
Verses 26-29 give the determination it will take to change;  
Verses 30-32 give the will to live.

**Verse 25:** When our life ("soul") bottoms out ("clings to the dust"), if we are looking for a remedy, we should look up to God's "word" (instruction, explanation). Sinners who try every way but God's way either end up in prison, rehab, court, suicide, or slavery, and eventually—Hell! But that's what it takes before we hurt so much we can't take it anymore. How many people, and how often, have their lives turned around that have "crashed" first. It's those who realize they have a "soul" who know their lives must be changed, not only for life here but hereafter. "Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day; For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off" (Proverbs 23:17- 18). "Revival" occurs only by a sinner's acceptance of the Word of God, as Jesus said, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

**Verses 26-29:** (**Verse 26**) To "declare my ways" is prayerful confession of the life-style that brought one down to dirt, morally, but God's answers were in His Bible all along. Such a person becomes "teachable" to God's "statutes" (lines marking limits). (**Verse 27**) "Make me" is not asking God to force faith into a person's heart, for He never has, but is an expression that shows the determination in the person's heart to "understand" God's "precepts" (things to notice). Since it is from "out of the



abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34), there is little difference in "meditating" or "speaking" about God's "wonderful works" recorded in the Bible. (**Verse 28**) The Gospel of Christ is God's invitation to all who would be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29), and the "melting" process stems from "heaviness," as life fills with "sorrows" (Job 14:1), then we need the "strength" that can only come from faith produced by and with the Word of God. (**Verse 29**) God truthfully speaks, and so must someone who would learn from God's "law." Lying to ourselves, others, or especially to God, fools no one, but destroys ourselves now and forever (Ephesians 4:20-25).

**Verses 30-32:** Notice the will to live: "I have chosen;" "I cling to;" "I will run;" AND notice the new rules that will make it so: "the way of truth;" "Your judgments;" "Your testimonies;" "Your commandments." AND notice how much better the servant of God becomes, "You shall enlarge my heart." People whose heart has become embittered, hateful, spiteful, twisted, deceitful, perverse, and coldly calculating have so shrunk their heart's capacity that it cannot live life to the fullest. As one obeys God, that stretching sound may be scary, but when love for God tumbles in, the poison is driven out. No one ever died from this kind of "enlarged heart" (2 Corinthians 6:11). "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

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He Psalm 119:33-40 Living Faithfully "To The End"

3/6/13

Verses 33-35 picture a heart open to God's Word;
Verses 36-37 mention some pitfalls to be avoided;
Verses 38-40 express the on-going need of help from God.

Verses 33-35: (Verse 33) Any education must begin with a student who realizes the need for information, and "statutes" (lines laid down to mark-off life's limits) make the way of knowledge clear. There is no degree or graduation in this education, only obedience "to the end," presumably, of life. (**Verse 34**) God gives more "understanding" as we study and "keep" His "law" (direction) with our "whole heart," a desire to learn, for knowledge cannot be forced. "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20). (**Verse 35**) If we have been taught, and understand what God wants, the "Make me" simply shows an eagerness to put it into practice, because the student sees the "delight in it."

Verses 36-37: (Verse 36) The heart must remain tilted ("inclined") toward God's "testimonies" (words about the beyond, God's part in our salvation), and not lean toward "covetousness" (desire for the forbidden stronger than faith in God's way). Jesus said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15). The best person is NOT the one who dies with the most: clothing, sexual partners, fame, lands, money, power, "gods," fans, or bastard children! Notice, the medicine for a covetous heart is leaning away from such toward God's Bible! (**Verse 37**) Whatever becomes the heart's ambition that points away from God's "way" is defined as "worthless things." A worthless person is described in Proverbs 6:12- 15. "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8). This lapse back into nothingness is cured by being "Revived" (brought back to life), or returning to God's "way."

Verses 38-40: (Verse 38) To be "established" means placed back upon the firm ground of Bible study, and will be done by one who will "fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). **(Verse 39)** The false condemnation from others can be discouraging, but is cancelled by returning to God's "good" "judgments" (decisions about the obedient and the disobedient!). **(Verse 40)** One "longs for" (desires to live with) God's "precepts" (clarifications or descriptions designed to help), which are "righteousness" (always right, clean, holy, wholesome).

Thought: People who expect God to miraculously intervene, the Holy Spirit to spiritually overwhelm, or Jesus Christ to immediately change their heart and make it better should re-read this section many times. God has placed all such transforming power within His Word, and it works only in those who are "diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

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**Waw Psalm 119:41-48**

**Living A Life "Prepared"**

**3/7/13**

Verses 41-44 speak of a person's covenant with God;  
Verses 45-48 list blessings and responsibilities that accompany God's salvation.

**Verses 41-44: (Verse 41)** God gives "mercies" (plural, because we always need them) which are the only means for which we should receive "salvation." Jacob spoke to God for all of us when he said: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant" (Genesis 32:10). Paul tells Christians, it is "by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (Romans 12:1). These "mercies" are revealed through His "word," even today (Titus 3:1-8). **(Verse 42)** "So" (in this way) "shall I have an answer" (can make response, give a reason) to enemies "who reproaches," whose verbal attacks cannot weaken my "trust in Your word" (also known as "faith," Romans 10:17). **(Verse 43)** As long as "the word of truth" (Scriptural reply, as in 1 Peter 3:15) comes from our mouths, we have "hope" based upon God's "ordinances" (limits in place for our protection from others). **(Verse 44)** "So" (in this manner) "shall I keep" (obey) God's "law" (guide, direction), "forever and ever" (from now on).

**Verses 45-48: (Verse 45)** To have freedom to "walk at liberty" one must stay within God's "precepts" (instructions regarding conduct). The "unfasten your seatbelt" sign in an airplane does not free one to walk outside the airplane! "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1). **(Verse 46)** The boldness to "speak" comes from confidence in God's "testimonies" (bearing witness), whether the audience consists of family, friends, or government representatives! **(Verse 47)** Personal "delight" (satisfaction) comes from a heart of "love" (caring what's best) for God's "commandments" (orders to obey). There is no "ego-stroking" or build-up, without loving and keeping God's commandments. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). **(Verse 48)** Waving hands in the air is not what is referred to here, but rather obeying God by making our hands meet up with what God commands, thus to "lift up to Your commandments." Love of God produces obedience because we "meditate" (focus thoughts) on God's "statutes" (lines marking out our field of play).

**Thought:** The more we fill our hearts with God's Bible, the more prepared we are for whatever we must do, whatever reproach others may say, and where we intend to be

in eternity! Jesus said, "blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:28)

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Zayin Psalm 119:49-56

Finding Comfort In Affliction

3/8/2013

Verses 49-50 show our hope is founded upon God's fulfilled promises;
Verses 51-54 show how this helps us;
Verses 55-56 show how this makes God's Law our own.

Verses 49-50: (Verse 49) The "hope" of a lover is that the one loved will remember the "word" (covenant, commitment) they have made. God does not forget (2 Peter 3:9), but "remember" lets us know that enough time may have passed from the promise to the fulfillment that we have become edgy. This is why the phrase is used, for God "remembered" his covenant with Noah (Genesis 8:1), Abraham (Genesis 19:29), Rachel (Genesis 30:22), and the Israelites (Exodus 2:24). **(Verse 50)** When "affliction" (troubles, distresses) attacks us, our "comfort" (ease of mind, confidence) comes from remembering God's help in the past. "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). God's Word gives us "life" (vitalizes, refreshes our spirit), Jesus said, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

Verses 51-54: (Verse 51) The believer is comfortable to remain in the life set forth in God's "law" (guide, make straight), so the "great derision" of the "proud" cannot affect me. We may be taunted for our faith, but we will never be taunted out of our faith! "For consider Him [Jesus Christ] who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls" (Hebrews 12:3). **(Verse 52)** The record of God's "judgments of old" (decisions, actions for the "good" and punishments against the "bad") is the written Word of God, which when studied, brings comfort to the reader. God will not miraculously give comfort to us, but has Christians who may come for aid and assistance with the proper passages (2 Corinthians 1:3-4) that we may "comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:18). **(Verse 53)** The believer may be provoked by the "wicked, who forsake" God's law, as Solomon observed: "Moreover I saw under the sun: In the place of judgment, Wickedness was there; And in the place of righteousness, Iniquity was there. I said in my heart, 'God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, For there is a time there for every purpose and for every work'" (Ecclesiastes 3:16-17). **(Verse 54)** Reminding ourselves of God's "statutes" (definite lines marking the difference between good and evil) become our "songs" while we are in our "house of my pilgrimage" (living on earth in our bodies, 2 Corinthians 5:1-4).

Verses 55-56: (Verse 55) God's "name" gives comfort and confidence through "the night" (those dreary days, troublesome times, depressions, dreads) as long as we "keep" (observe, obey) God's "law" and "precepts" (things to notice, directions for conduct). **(Verse 56)** The comfort of the word of God "has become mine" for it has guided one through "affliction" and maintained "hope." These personal experiences are what "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5).

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**Heth Psalm 119:57-64**

**Life of Self-Examination**

**3/11/13**

Verses 57-60 list ways people uphold their part of their covenant with God;  
Verses 61-64 describe how completely this agreement affects their lives.

**Verses 57-60:** (**Verse 57**) Jehovah is the "portion" (inheritance, benefit) of anyone who commits to keeping God's "words" (what He has said). (**Verse 58**) The "entreaty" (prayer) for God's "favor" (grace) is with the "whole heart" (totally behind the prayer). (**Verse 59**) To "think" about ones on "ways" simply states the self-examination required for God to bless, and the direction of feet determines the extent of obedience to God's "testimonies" (commands indicating God's intent). "But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another" (Galatians 6:4). We must understand we are the ones who need new direction to our lives, not for God to change His! (**Verse 60**) "Haste" does NOT make waste when it is used to create prompt obedience, and "haste" without "delay" means obedience to God's "commands" (determined limits to be followed) should be immediate.

**Verses 61-64:** (**Verse 61**) Though we may be hampered by enemies, worldly interests, or family miscues, we renew our resolve to keep God's "law" (instructions describing the way to go). (**Verse 62**) When it seems darkest ("at midnight") we can take advantage of the quiet to "rise" and thank God. In other words, 24/7 is always a good time to thank God. "Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18). (**Verse 63**) There is a community attitude in those who "fear God" (respect) and follow His "precepts" (that call attention to what is important), for they share a common faith, common love for God, common bond. "But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful" (Colossians 3:14-15). (**Verse 64**) There is abundant proof ("the earth" and its history in the Bible) of God's "mercy" (pity toward our situations), therefore we are ready to be taught His "statutes" (lines showing what is right and what is wrong).

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Teth Psalm 119:65-72 Learning Good From Affliction

3/12/13

Verses 65-66 say experience teaches;
Verses 67-72 show how God gives good lessons.

Verses 65-66: (**Verse 65**) Based upon what God has said He would do, no one can say God has done them wrong! Many misrepresent what God has promised; or become impatient before He has acted in their lives; or misunderstand His promises; but God has never failed His servants! (**Verse 66**) By following His "commandments" (precise obedience), we develop "good judgment and knowledge." By diligent application of God's commandments, we learn that "solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14).

Verses 67-72: (**Verse 67**) It's easy to run wild until we learn where the brick walls are. This is why, for many, it takes: drug addiction before desiring to dry out; pre-marital abuse and parenthood before trying marriage; rejecting parents before acknowledging their contributions to life; failing at jobs before learning good work habits; dented fenders before driving caution; facing loneliness before finding Christians; despairing at personal sins before obeying Jesus' Gospel and being added to the church of Christ. Unfortunately, only then do people discover God's Word—but at last, they do that! (**Verse 68**) God's "statutes" (lines marking proper behavior), when learned, are always "good, and do good." Jesus said only God is the source of "good" (Matthew 19:17), Jesus is the "good Teacher" (Mark 10:17), whose disciples do "good works" (Matthew 5:16), even for their enemies (Matthew 5:44-45), and are

"zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14). (**Verse 69**) Those ruled by their own pride create lies against do-gooders, but whole-hearted obedience of God's "precepts" (words which make things clear) will keep us faithful to Him. (**Verse 70**) God's "law" (words marking the straight path) keeps us on track, instead of following those whose hearts are "fat as grease" (dull, insensitive, sated by sin instead of righteousness). Isaiah's prophecy spoke of Jews in his day (Isaiah 6:9-10), Jews in Jesus' day (Mark 4:11-12), and Jews in Paul's time (Acts 28:23-29). This very attitude should be avoided by all who obey Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:17-20). (**Verse 71**) "Affliction" is oftentimes, not always, only a reminder that we need to re-learn and return to God's "statutes" (words defining lines of proper conduct). (**Verse 72**) God's "law" (words guiding conduct), therefore, is worth more than any "gold and silver" (valuable metals).

Lessons in life through experience are costly, lessons learned through God's Word are priceless!

Thought: Living life gives all of us ample opportunity and time to see that we need to learn what God is trying to tell us in the Bible! Life is "discipline" designed to force, even the dull-hearted and hard-headed, to see truth in God's Word (Hebrews 12:1-11). Whether they accept it or not, they cannot plead ignorance.

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**Yod Psalm 119:73-80 "Keeping Faith Through Affliction" 3/13/13**

Vs. 73-74 confess the faith that God knows me;  
Vs. 75-77 attribute to God good qualities that show through His ways;  
Vs. 78 shows why the believer does not turn to unbelievers in troublesome times;  
Vs. 79-80 state the faith of a believer who remains faithful throughout all.

**Verses 73-74: (Verse 73)** Begins with a quotation from Job 10:18: "Your hands have made me and fashioned me," but Job added, "An intricate unity." Every human is complex in working, but it works as a unity. The only thing missing from a person is the "understanding" to connect with, and use, God's "commandments" (words showing what should and shouldn't be done). (**Verse 74**) All who "fear God" are "glad" to know there's another who has "hoped" in God's "word" (communication of His way).

**Verses 75-77: (Verse 75)** "I know" (certainty based upon experience) the evidence proves that Jehovah's "judgments" (decisions) are the standard of "right." Abraham asked the question: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25) God's character is without a wrong. When "affliction" occurs, we know God wants us to emerge with a yield of "the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11). "God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone" (James 1:13). (**Verse 76**) Afflictions are times to see God's "merciful kindness" (attempts to help) as "comfort," according to His "word" (what He actually has said). He is the "God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). (**Verse 77**) Affliction can help us see God's "tender mercies" (reminders of His love for us) "that I may live" (still have purpose, knowing God cares for me). Through it all, we see God's "law" (words guiding the straight path) is the only thing that brings "delight" (satisfaction at progress).

**Verse 78:** "The proud" have not triumphed by their wrongful mistreatment "with falsehood," for the believer has survived their false attacks, seeing truth in God's Word and ways. After the affliction and false attacks, experience gives even more reason to "meditate" (give slow, thoughtful consideration of) God's "precepts" (what God has emphasized or pointed out).

**Verses 79-80: (Verse 79)** The believer who endures with faith becomes an encouragement to all others who "fear God." Everyone who "knows God" has combined "testimonies" (words pointing beyond to God) with experiences. "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). **(Verse 80)** Our prayer should be to survive, knowing "the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5). We must never be "ashamed" of God's "statutes" (words outlining proper actions), for we need them to remain in "the way," for Jesus said: "where I go you know, and the way you know" (John 14:4).

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Kaph: Psalm 119:81-88 "Finding Strength In Weakness" 3/14/13

Verses 81-83 describe our weakened condition;
Verses 84-87 show how much worse it gets;
Verse 88 make an appeal for strength.

Verses 81-83: (Verse 81) A soul may "faint" (grow weaker, dims) waiting for God's salvation, but nothing else will do, for "hope" (anticipation) is still in God's "word" (actual statements). **(Verse 82)** Eyes "fail" (strain, ache) from constant peering into God's "word," searching for God's answer to: "When will You comfort me?" Under stress, strain, duress, distress, pain, or anguish, we can only tolerate so much. We ask God, not whether or not He will help, but "When." **(Verse 83)** "A wineskin in smoke" dries out, becomes brittle, and useless as a liquid container. Before we become useless, we continue to remember God's "statutes" (words defining proper conduct, lines marking out what we must do).

Verses 84-87: (Verse 84) We ask, "how long will we live," and "when will God payback our persecutors?" The souls of those who died in the Jewish persecution of the churches of Christ (Acts 8:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16) asked the same question: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" (Revelation 6:9-10). That answer came back in Revelation 19:1-2. **(Verse 85)** "The proud" (those lifted in their own minds above God and His word) create pitfalls (or problems) for those who serve God. "The proud" are mentioned 5 times just in this Psalm (verses 51, 69, 78, 85, 122) as representing all who disobey God's "law" (words that guide in a straight path). **(Verse 86)** Dangers are not caused by God's "commandments" (words that tell us what we should and should not do), all of which are "faithful" (producing faith), but are caused by "wrongful persecution" (undeserved, unprovoked, uncaused). "Help me!" is our appeal to our God who cares, can help, and considers our immediate plight. Christians may "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). The help we need always comes from the Lord, and His way to help is revealed in His word. **(Verse 87)** Though oppressed near death, we should never "forsake" (give up, quit) on God's "precepts" (words that highlight or point out what is important).

Verse 88: With fainting soul, strained eyes, strength drying up, problems caused by "the proud," we ask to be "revived" (have our spirit refreshed, renewed vigor, restored ability) that we may finish our task of keeping His "testimony" (words of His character and will), not that God would take over and finish what we are capable of doing. Paul said of Philemon, "For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother" (Philemon 7).

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**Lamed Psalm 119:89-96      God's Established Word Works!      3/15/13**

Verses 89-91 remind us to look around at God's Word still at working successfully; Verses 92-96 show how complete life is when based upon God's Word.

**Verses 89-91: (Verse 89)** Halfway through this chapter emphasizing the importance of God's Word to deal with life, we might ask: "How certain is this Word, itself?" God's Word is "settled in heaven," which means, nothing on earth can, has, or ever will, change it. In our world of public opinion polls, political winds, ignored constitutions, blurred or absent morals, and compromised principles, it is comforting to know God's Word stays the same! Solomon said: "I know that whatever God does, It shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him" (Ecclesiastes 3:14). Jesus practically quoted this verse in Matthew 24:35, and also said: not "one jot or one tittle" (Matthew 5:18) of what God promises to do would change before its fulfillment; the Apostles of Christ (not Peter only!) were told whatever they bound on earth was already bound in heaven (Matthew 16:19); Peter taught obedience to "the word of God which lives and abides forever" (1 Peter 1:22-25); and John said, "he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:17). God's Word is NOT settled on earth: by council votes, decrees, traditions, human creeds, smoke, ignorance, or gross immorality! **(Verse 90)** This is why God's "faithfulness" (abiding characteristic) "endures to all generations." God's dealings with mankind is written in the Bible for all to examine. It is "the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them" (Acts 14:15), who rules in men's "nations" (Acts 14:16), but established the rules of Earth since the creation (Acts 14:17; Genesis 1), which **(verse 91)** "continue this day according to" God's "ordinances" (otherwise translated as "statutes"). Since the Creation, God's Rules rule; in mankind's history, God's Rules rule; in the present-day, God's Rules rule.

**Verses 92-96: (Verse 92)** Through the tossing sea of "affliction" God's "law" (words showing the straight path) prevents "perishing." **(Verse 93)** Without God's "precepts" (words calling attention to the right way) one would not have "live." **(Verse 94)** Without God's "precepts," to whom would we know to flee for refuge? "Then Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you also want to go away?' But Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life'" (John 6:67-68). Belonging to God by obeying the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16) permits the Christian, with full confidence, to call: "Save me." **(Verse 95)** God's "testimonies" (words demonstrating His character) allow a saint (a.k.a. Christian) to look past the "wicked" who lie in "wait" to destroy. **(Verse 96)** We see the frailty of human "perfections," but must also notice God's "commandment is exceedingly broad" (His orders to be followed extend over anything established by people). In other words, "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Daniel 4:25).

**Thought:** People have butchered the Bible, misrepresented its truth, ignored its teaching, altered its doctrine, refused its improvements, questioned its truthfulness,

doubted its heavenly origin – BUT NO ONE HAS EVER PROVEN THAT IT IS NOT RIGHT, NOR THAT IT HAS NOT COME FROM GOD! If not – why not?

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Mem Psalm 119:97-104

Wisdom From The Word

3/18/13

Verse 97 expresses total devotion to God's Word;
Verses 98-102 give advantages from learning God's Word;
Verses 103-104 show the blessings keep coming.

Verse 97: The love of our life cannot be shunted aside. "Oh, how I love" (the extent of love); God's "law" (words showing the right way)—object of love; it has become our "meditation" (main thought)—evidence of love. The "love of the truth" saves our soul (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).

Verses 98-102: (**Verse 98**) God's "commandments" (words to obey) "make me wiser than my enemies" because obeying God shows a greater grasp of what life should be. (**Verse 99**) "Meditating" (thinking through) upon God's "testimonies" (words witnessing God's character) gives more "understanding" (practical explanation) than "all my teachers." Jesus had it (Luke 2:41-47). Teachers may convey information; God's Word explains how that impacts our own hearts. (**Verse 100**) God's "precepts" (instructions to govern conduct) can guide us better than "ancients" (older people) can with their experiences. We may learn from others' mistakes, but God's Word can help us see those mistakes coming up in our lives. (**Verse 101**) To "keep" (obey) God's "word" (expressions of His Will), we steer clear away from "every evil way." "I have restrained" shows that it is a personal decision of will to avoid sin, hence, John wrote: "We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18). (**Verse 102**) God's "judgments" (decisions about right and wrong) are so impressive, that one who loves them would not want to depart from them. "Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4:1-2).

Verses 103-104: (**Verse 103**) To know, understand, and obey God's Word, is to know, understand, and accept the sweetest flavor that can be given to a life. It's sweeter to a soul than honey is to the mouth! (**Verse 104**) It is through (and only through) God's "precepts" (words that point out, highlight, the right way) we gain "understanding" (a grasp of life, breath, all things), and that no "false way" is for good. One cannot love God's Word without hating everything that would adversely affect that love.

Thought: By thoroughly immersing oneself into the Word of God (the Bible), one has more: understanding than one's enemies, teachers, or elders; control over sin(s); and the greatest happiness life can give. Nothing known to mankind offers better.

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**Nun: Psalm 119:105-112**

**The Light In The Tunnel**

**3/19/12**

Verse 105 shows what God's Word provides;  
Verses 106-112 show how God's Word helps.

**Verse 105:** God's "word" (message of instruction) provides "a lamp" for "my feet"



(which represents specific action). Lamps usually provide illumination in dark situations. "A light" (usually associated with day) to "my path" (which represents constant course of conduct).

**Verses 106-112: GOD'S WORD HELPS US: (Verse 106) KEEP OUR PROMISES.** With the respect as in a court of law, God's "righteous judgments" (always right decisions) prevail, and people must swear and confirm to keep them. "For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute" (Hebrews 6:16), but God accepts a person's oath seriously: "Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few" (Ecclesiastes 5:2). **(Verse 107) RENEW EFFORTS IN AFFLICTION.** When "affliction" (stress, depression, strife, conflict, pain) grows in effect to "very much," we need to be "revived" (by reconsidering our responsibility before God). **(Verse 108) GIVE FERVENT WORSHIP.** "Freewill offerings of my mouth" are our prayers, songs, and teaching centered upon God and His Will for us. If worship is begrudging, forced, intimidated, or coerced, it is NOT "freewill." "Therefore by Him [Jesus] let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Hebrews 13:15-16). **(Verse 109) MAKE GOD'S WILL MY WILL.** No plainer statement is ever made about the freewill nature of humans than: "My life is continually in my hand." That means no one makes us do anything we do not choose to do, for our decisions come from within our hearts (Proverbs 4:3; Matthew 5:8; Mark 7:20-23). Since God's "law" (words showing the straight path) must always govern our way, we must never "forget" it. **(Verse 110) STAY ON COURSE.** The "wicked" are all who "have laid a snare for me," but the faithful are those who "have not strayed from" God's "precepts" (words highlighting what is pure). "Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes; For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught" (Proverbs 3:25-26). **(Verse 111) ENJOY GOD'S CHARACTER.** "Testimonies" about God are His dealings with mankind from His Word, and the promise of Heaven is "a heritage forever." In Christ, we are "giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light" (Ephesians 1:12). We are "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). **(Verse 112) KEEP LOOKING UP.** An "incline" is designed to go upward, so God's "statutes" (words marking out our limits) lift us heavenward if we "perform" them. "Forever, to the very end" shows we should leave this life actively serving God. Eternity is determined, not by the height of the pile of good works or absolute purity we have attained, but the direction we are going when we die! "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me" (Philippians 3:12).

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Samek: Psalm 119:113-120 The Certainty of the Word

3/20/13

Verses 113-114 tell why God is our choice;
Verse 115 tells which direction we are going;
Verses 116-117 describe how God helps;
Verses 118-119 show how certain God is of the outcome;
Verse 120 describes how this certainty should affect us.

Verses 113-114: (Verse 113) "The double-minded" are people who are torn between two opinions, skeptical of truth, and can't decide which to follow. Elijah,

the prophet, called for people to make up their minds: "And Elijah came to all the people, and said, 'How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.' But the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18:21). Faith is to be "with no doubting," or else we are "a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways" (James 1:5-8). To love God's "law" (words that make straight) means we have made a definite decision. (**Verse 114**) God's "word" (what God actually has said) keeps our "hope" alive, so that we know God is our "hiding place" and our "shield."

Verse 115: Once we have decided whose "commandments" (authoritative orders) we "will keep," it is easier to reject the "evil doers." Jesus will, on the Judgment Day, say these very words (Matthew 7:21-23).

Verses 116-117: (Verse 116) We need to be upheld (propped up) by God's "word," "that I may live" (the believer knows life begins with faith) without "shame" (timidity). "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3). (**Verse 117**) We need for God to "hold [us] up" (above evil) that we may be "safe." But this requires "observing" God's "statutes" (words marking out proper conduct) "continually" (cannot dismiss it from thought).

Verses 118-119: (Verse 118) God has made His decision, not about individual names, but of whoever follows "deceit" and "falsehood." They have made a definite decision to "stray" from God's "statutes," and God has decided He will "reject" them "all." (**Verse 119**) God definitely will "put away all the wicked of the earth" (which He has before, in Noah's day, Genesis 6:5-7), as if they were "dross" (rejected impurities of melted metal, Ezekiel 22:18-22). The obedient believer decides to "love" God's "testimonies" (words proving God's character to be true) because His decision is final.

Verse 120: This verse glimpses into the Judgment Day, as described by the Apostle Paul: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences" (2 Corinthians 5:10-11).

Thought: Every believer should be certain in knowing what way to go, and what way God will reject. "Have I not written to you excellent things Of counsels and knowledge, That I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth, That you may answer words of truth To those who send to you?" (Proverbs 22:20-21)

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**Ayin Psalm 119:121-128**

**Justice In The Word**

**3/21/13**

Verses 121-123 describe a righteous person before God;  
Verses 124-125 make a request of God;  
Verse 126 asks God to help with the godless;  
Verses 127-128 mention good things God's Word does for the obedient.

**Verses 121-123: (Verse 121)** Keeping covenant with God, man's part is not a statement from pride (Luke 18:9-14), but from a clear conscience (1 John 3:21), and asks God to keep His part: not to abandon the obedient among "oppressors;" (**Verse 122**) guarantee His "servant's" goodness; relief from the oppression of the

"proud." (**Verse 123**) Mention is made of a servant's diligence with tired eyes searching God's "righteous word" (statements which make clear what God expects).

**Verse 124-125:** (**Verse 124**) Obedience to God justly brings the hope of "mercy" in one willing to be taught God's "statutes" (words that trace around to make clear).

(**Verse 125**) A "servant" of God will be given "understanding" (insight, comprehension) "to know" God's "testimonies" (proof of His good character).

"Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things" (2 Timothy 2:7). "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).

**Verse 126:** The "proud" are those who think God's "law" (words that make a straight path) is empty of force. Maybe God will choose to do something promptly that turns the godless back to the Bible.

**Verses 127-128:** (**Verse 127**) Because of the straight path, clear law, hopeful promises, and God's character, His "commandments" (words authorizing or forbidding conduct) deserve: our greatest bond ("love"), our highest esteem ("more than fine gold"), and (**Verse 128**) our purest judgment ("all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right"). We, therefore, accept God's justice and "hate every false way." God's command to "Hate evil, love good" (Amos 5:15) is repeated for Christians in Romans 12:9: "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good." Thanks to God and His Word, there is no confusion as to which is which!

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Pe Psalm 119:129-136

Why The Word Is Wonderful

3/22/13

Verses 129-131 give admiration for God's Word;

Verses 132-135 make humble requests for God's help;

Verse 136 shows concern for those who haven't appreciated God's Word.

Verses 129-131: (**Verse 129**) God's "testimonies" (words describing and manifesting God's character) are "wonderful" (wonder-full, brilliant, captivating), therefore "my soul keeps them." We are drawn to that which fascinates us: Moses to a burning bush (Exodus 3:1-3); Jesus' power over afflictions (Matthew 15:29-38); multitude on Pentecost hearing Jesus preached in their own languages by the Holy Spirit's power (Acts 2:1-11); the man born lame "walking, leaping and praising God" (Acts 3:1-11); Peter's vision of life without prejudice (Acts 10:9-17). Our rapt attention should be centered in God's Word. (**Verse 130**) The Bible is the gradual unfolding of the revelation of God. A light turned on in the darkness draws attention not to the light, but to what can now be seen. There is no surprise, therefore, when Scripture's "light" enters the darkened soul, and gives "understanding to the simple." (**Verse 131**) A soul struggling to be free from the entanglements of sin, trying to be distant from temptations, fighting the influence of ungodliness, "pants" (gasps, gulps) for God's "commandments" (words authorizing the path to follow).

Verses 132-135: Having expressed how much God's Word means, it is appropriate to ask for help from God. It is in His Word we learn that: (**Verse 132**) He looks mercifully as His "custom is toward those who love" His "name." God's habit is always to be merciful to lovers of His name. (**Verse 133**) His Word "directs" (guides, leads) our "steps," so that "iniquity" (having no right value) has no "dominion" over us. Obeying God's Word does not keep on from single sins, but from sinful practices

becoming habitual, the thoughts of Jesus (John 8:34) and John (1 John 3:4-8). (**Verse 134**) He "redeems" (frees, ransoms) the obedient "from the oppression" that comes from "man," so that we "may keep Your precepts" (words highlighting what is right). Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14). "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons" (Galatians 4:4-5). (**Verse 135**) Since "God is light" (1 John 1:5) He brightens the way of all who are willing to be taught His "statutes" (words marking the right and the wrong way).

Verse 136: The Word of God is so full of wonder, the obedient weep because the God of love, mercy, salvation, and comfort is ignored by those who need Him most; and because the souls yet burdened down with the toils, tears, troubles, and terrors of sin haven't seen the wonders of The Word, The God, The Christ. "Jesus wept" (John 11:35) for you and me, and so should every Christian.

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**Tsade: Psalm 119:137-144**

**Keeping Right**

**3/25/2013**

Verses 137-138 say, "God is always right;"  
Verses 139-141 teach that God's Word shows what's right;  
Verses 142-144 show one pleased to be forever right;

**Verses 137-138:** (**Verse 137**) God, Himself, is "righteous" (upright, unwavering). "Right" can variously be used of: direction (or "left"); morals (or "wrong"); truth (or "lie"), but God is always correct. God's character is the absolute definition of "righteous," just as He is "true" (John 3:33), "faithful" (1 Corinthians 1:9), "light" (1 John 1:5), "love" (1 John 4:16). His "judgments" (decisions) are "upright" (not slanted or varied). (**Verse 138**) God's "testimonies" (words about His character) are "righteous" and "very faithful" (which isn't describing an amount, but extent). "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Timothy 2:13).

**Verses 139-141:** (**Verse 139**) "Zeal" is passion, but needs to be for the right if "consuming." This thought is completely given in Psalm 69:9 and there predicted Jesus' cleansing of the temple (John 2:13-17). Believers should be "zealous" to correct the ignorance of those without God's Word. (**Verse 140**) Just as metals are highly valued when refined or purified, God's servants highly value God's Word because of its purity. (**Verse 141**) A person who is "small" (in stature) and "despised" (in popularity) gains self-esteem by remembering God's "precepts" (words highlighting or supervising the right way).

**Verses 142-144:** (**Verse 142**) God's "right-ness" is "everlasting" (always right), and His "law" (defining the proper direction) is "truth" (accurate, factual). (**Verse 143**) Though "trouble and anguish" find us, we may always turn to God's "commandments" (words urging, ordering what is right) which give pleasure and restore confidence in ourselves that we at least please God. (**Verse 144**) The absolute confidence in life is that God's "testimonies" are always "right," thus we live better now and forever when we "understand" them.

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Qoph: Psalm 119:145-152

Whose Prayers Are Heard

3/26/2013

Verses 145-148 tell who is praying;

Verses 149-152 tell what to expect.

Verses 145-148: (**Verse 145**) To "cry" out indicates the sincerity from a "whole heart." Answered prayer comes from those who "keep" His "statutes" (words marking out the right way). God knows whether His people approached Him with their "whole heart" or "in pretense" (Jeremiah 3:10), and planned for them to return to Him "with their whole heart" (Jeremiah 24:7). The first and greatest commandment under Moses and Jesus Christ is to love God "with all your heart" (Deuteronomy 6:5; Mark 12:30; Acts 8:37). (**Verse 146**) The appeal for God to "hear" is followed by "save me" for the purpose of keeping His "testimonies" (words showing God's character in dealing with people). (**Verses 147-148**) Because "hope" (anticipation, expectation of faith) springs from God's "word," prayer begins before sunrise and can extend throughout the night. Not one long prayer, but continually, as Jesus "spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart" (John 18:1). Paul taught: "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2). It is the "meditation" (a lost capability in this electronic age!) upon His "word" that helps one approach God with boldness. It takes time and concentration to "meditate," not distraction, illusion, fantasy. Prayer is approaching God when one has approached God's Word.

Verses 149-152: (**Verse 149**) When God "hears" (gives attention to), it is because of His "lovingkindness" (used 22 times in Psalms). "I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm" (Jonah 4:2). "Loving" and "kindness" go hand-in-hand, whether in dating, marriage, or devotion! Knowing God's "justice" (Deuteronomy 10:17-20), we are "revived" (ready for another effort). (**Verse 150**) Through God's Word, we know He recognizes people who "are far from" His "law" are following "wickedness." "The righteous God wisely considers the house of the wicked, Overthrowing the wicked for their wickedness" (Proverbs 21:12). (**Verse 151**) The "wicked" are far from God's Word, but the faithful find God "near" because they regard "all" His "commandments" as "truth." NO commandment of God is "burdensome" (1 John 5:3). (**Verse 152**) God's "testimonies" have always proved to be accurate throughout every person's lifetime. Those who have the privilege of knowing the Holy Scriptures "from childhood" will have little difficulty accepting them as having been "given by inspiration of God" and making one "complete" (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

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**Resh: Psalm 119:153-160**

**"Considerate Faith"**

**3/27/13**

Verses 153-155 appeal for God to consider a believers' personal effort;  
Verses 156-158 appeal for God to recognize a believer's personal devotion;  
Verses 159-160 appeal for God to see a believer's personal heart.

**Verses 153-155:** (**Verse 153**) God is considerate (Nehemiah 9:32-33). "Deliver those who are drawn toward death, And hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, 'Surely we did not know this,' Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?" (Proverbs 24:11-12) God "considers" both the obedient and the disobedient. God considers the "affliction" of one who does "not forget" His "law" (words pointing the straight path), and "delivers." (**Verse 154**) Believers who sin (1 John 1:6-2:3) must have representation before God, Who will "redeem" (apply the price for) and "revive" (refresh, renew the effort) them. (**Verse 155**) "Statutes" (words tracing out right) keep clear who is "wicked," because they do not

seek them, but the "righteous" are mindful of them. "Salvation" is kept far from "the wicked" (Mark 16:15-16).

**Verses 156-158:** (**Verse 156**) God is the Father of "mercies" (2 Corinthians 1:3) which motivate Christians to become living sacrifices (Romans 12:1). His "mercies" (plural) are both "Great" (in forgiving the penitent) and "tender" (in helping the penitent), and Christians should imbed these (Colossians 4:12). (**Verse 157**) Christians cannot expect the same from "the wicked," who become "persecutors" (with verbal taunting, physical abuse, or social ostracizing) and "enemies" (adversaries like Satan). "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (1 Peter 4:3-5). (**Verse 158**) Those who "do not keep" God's Word become "treacherous" (and should be avoided, Ephesians 5:11-13) and are "disgusted" (abhorred, loathed, like Lot, 2 Peter 2:7-8) by the faithful.

**Verses 159-160:** (**Verse 159**) While God is "considering" wicked hearts, His "precepts" (words that highlight what's right) also "revive" a loving heart with His "lovingkindness." "Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,' says the LORD" (Jeremiah 9:23-24). (**Verse 160**) Total confidence in God is produced by studying "the entirety" of God's Word, for it is always "truth" and "every one" of His "judgments" are right, "forever."

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***Shin:* Psalm 119:161-168 God's Awesome Word**

3/28/2021

Verses 161-165 show what effect God's awesome Word has;
Verses 166-168 show what a soul does who sees how awesome God's Word is.

Verses 161-165: (**Verse 161**) Those in authority may persecute a believer "without a cause," otherwise known as religious persecution. The "higher ups" may include governments, judges, presidents, dictators, teachers, professors, or bosses, but the heart that "stands in awe of" God's "word" cannot be downcast. (**Verse 162**) The believer "rejoices" (delights, thrills) in God's Word, as if finding "great treasure." Solomon used this point: "My son, keep my words, And treasure my commands within you" (Proverbs 7:1). Jesus used this point: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field" (Matthew 13:44). (**Verse 163**) When we "love" God's "law" (which truthfully points to the straightway), then we "hate and abhor lying," whether it comes through hypocrisy, false doctrines, lack of integrity, business, politics or conversation. (**Verse 164**) "Seven times a day" doesn't refer to a specific number, but symbolizes how completely one is willing to "praise" God because of His "righteous judgments" (all His decisions are absolutely right!). (**Verse 165**) Those who love God's "law" (as in verse 163) have "great peace" (serenity, calmness, Philippians 4:6-7) and "nothing" can make them "stumble." "I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, And when you run, you will not stumble" (Proverbs 4:11-12).

Verses 166-168: (**Verse 166**) Because of the awesome contents of God's Word, we know we are able to "do" His "commandments," and "hope for" His "salvation."
(**Verse 167**) God's "testimonies" (history of His dealing with man) make it plain that what He expects of us is do-able, and loveable. God's awesome Word demonstrates His love for us, and can produce love from us in return. "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Romans 5:8-9). This is between "my soul" and God because His Word does open heart surgery (Hebrews 4:12). (**Verse 168**) God's "precepts" highlight what is right, His "testimonies" show that He has always been right, therefore we may safely place our lives in His hands. "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13).

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### **Tau: Psalm 119:169-176 Speaking to God – Hearing His Word 3/29/13**

Verses 169-172 give the connection from my mouth to God's ear;  
Verses 173-176 summarize God's blessings from the Word.

**Verses 169-172:** (**Verse 169**) The only concern expressed is that the believer will be heard; the only thing asked for with this "cry" is for "understanding," is this not what Solomon later will do? (1 Kings 3:5-14) (**Verse 170**) "Supplication" is presenting sincere needs and asking that something be done; "deliverance" is the blessing asked for that is described in God's Word. (**Verse 171**) Coming from "my lips" indicates a heart full of lessons from God's "statutes" (words marking out the right way). Jesus later would say: "Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things" (Matthew 12:34-35). (**Verse 172**) Just as a healthy tree bursts forth with signs of life; a bird sings when it shares its life; a flower shares its color and fragrance; a believer full of the "righteousness" of God's "commands" cannot be silent. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Colossians 3:16-17).

**Verses 173-176:** (**Verse 173**) Choosing God's "precepts" (words that superintend our way) will cause a believer to reach out for God's leadership. (**Verse 174**) "Longing" (continuing desire) for God's "salvation," means the method of obtaining it is a "delight." Wanting to be saved is not enough, a person must enjoy obeying God to reach for it. "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:21-22). Since baptism into Christ is the moment of salvation (1 Peter 3:21), it is a delightful response for one who longs to be saved. (**Verse 175**) Knowing how perfect God's "judgments" have always been, the soul blessed by God with physical and spiritual life "praises" God for all of these. (**Verse 176**) All of us can, and probably will, "go astray" by wandering off "like a lost sheep." Most of us sin without intending to violate God's Will, but by simply becoming too focused upon what we are doing at the time, and not paying attention to what should be important. God "seeks" "servants," in other words, those who seek Him. "The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him"

(Lamentations 3:25). "Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7).

**Thought:** By using different words to convey facets of God's Word, its brilliance is better than any gemstone, diamond, or other precious jewelry. Psalm 119 shows that the Word of God is not a "dead book," but bursting with life that brings to life any soul that has been numbed, deadened, or abused by the world. God's Word brings from us a zest for life, enjoyment of life, and praise for the Giver of life!

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Psalm 120 God Hears When the World is Saying Wrong Things 4/1/13

There is uncertainty regarding the author, time, or circumstances of these Psalms, but it is apparent Psalms 120-134 work together, and are called the "Songs of Degrees," and sometimes "Songs of Ascension."

Verses 1-4 contrast God's listening to help, and our having to listen to others; Verses 5-7 state how hard it is to live among war-mongers.

Verses 1-4: (Verse 1) God hears our cries from distress. Jacob said God had done so (Genesis 35:3); David said God had (2 Samuel 22:7); Paul said distress cannot "separate us from the love of Christ" (Romans 8:35). **(Verse 2)** Integrity, trust, faith, dependability all are ruined by "lying lips" and a "deceitful tongue." "Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight" (Proverbs 12:22). Having a "deceitful tongue" is responsible for destroying the credibility of gossips, talebearers, editorial writers, propaganda press, factory fables, and many others. **(Verse 3)** There will be a judgment against a "false tongue." "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). **(Verse 4)** Whoever said "words can never hurt me" wasn't familiar with this verse. Words can pierce like "sharp arrows of the warrior," and burn like "coals of the broom tree."

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. (James 3:2-8)

Verses 5-7: (Verse 5) Little is certain of these places, "Meshech" (slave traders, Ezekiel 27:13) and "Kedar" (wanderers, Isaiah 21:16-17), but they represent the hostile environment many people experience, even today. **(Verses 6-7)** Patience and longsuffering can wear us down or wear us out when we are mis-matched with polar opposites on a subject like "war" and "peace." There is "a time of war, And a time of peace" (Ecclesiastes 3:8), however "wisdom is better than weapons

of war; But one sinner destroys much good" (Ecclesiastes 9:18). The wise can avoid war, but the foolish advocate it and their foreign policies depend upon it! Christians are not waging carnal war against their enemies (2 Corinthians 10:2-6). "When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Proverbs 16:7).

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**Psalm 121 Who Is Our "Keeper?"**

**4/2/13**

Verses 1-2 raise a cardinal point of faith;  
Verses 3-8 reassure the believer that God is the Keeper.

**Verses 1-2: (Verse 1)** The Temple in Jerusalem was on "the hills," so it would be natural for an Israelite to look that way for help. So commonly was this believed, even the Syrians said: "The LORD is God of the hills, but He is not God of the valleys" (1 Kings 20:28). Then the question is asked: "From whence comes my help?" **(Verse 2)** The believer knew then (as now) that "my help" is "from the LORD" and no one else! "LORD" represents the Hebrew name "Jehovah" who identified Himself to Moses (Exodus 3:11-15), and also was the Creator of "heaven and earth" (Genesis 1:1). The belief that the Creator and the Israelite God are different is a false belief.

**Verses 3-8: (Verse 3)** God doesn't allow the foot to slip back into continuous sin as the believer obeys His Word (1 John 3:6). That God provides for believers to falter from time to time is evident from 1 John 1:6-2:5. **(Verse 4)** The Keeper of Israel (under Moses' Law) will not "slumber" nor "sleep," there being little, if any, difference in the two. God is clearly not a sluggard (Proverbs 6:9-11)! **(Verses 5-6)** God is the cooling "shade," protecting from harsh rays of the sun and dangers that come under the "moon." God works 24/7 on behalf of His people. Today He calls His people "Christians" (Acts 11:26) who have been baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26-29). **(Verse 7)** God "keeps" His people from "evil." This is not a promise to protect them from what evil-doers may do to them, but keep them from regular evil desires and practices. By their obedience to His Word, He keeps their "souls" from being lost (today is through Jesus' death, Romans 6:1-14), **(Verse 8)** God "keeps" the way the obedient will go free for coming and going (daily life) "from this time forth." Jesus echoed this promise of security in the incident in Luke 11:27-28: "And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!' But He said, 'More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!'" (Luke 11:27-28)

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Psalm 122

Jerusalem, the Holy City

4/3/13

This Psalm appears to have been written by David, and sung when Israelites went to Jerusalem 3 times a year (Deuteronomy 16:16).

Verses 1-5 show why Jerusalem is the Royal City;
Verses 6-9 show how Jerusalem is the Holy City.

Verses 1-5: (Verse 1) True worshippers are "glad" to "go into the house of the LORD." The "house of the LORD" under Moses was the Tabernacle, until Solomon built the Temple where sacrifices were offered to God in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 3:1).

Before the Temple was built, David, when his child died, "went into the house of the LORD and worshiped" (2 Samuel 12:20). In the New Testament, the "house of God" is "the church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3:15), "the temple" "having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:19-22). **(Verse 2)** How privileged worshippers were to be in that city. In the New Testament, how privileged worshippers are to be in "the heavenly Jerusalem." "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:22-24). **(Verse 3)** Jerusalem was fortified when built (2 Samuel 5:7-9), and walled when rebuilt (Nehemiah 12:27). The church of Christ, as the "new Jerusalem" (Revelation 21:2), is walled by obedience which keeps the corrupt people out of it until they repent and are baptized into Jesus Christ (Revelation 21:9-27; Acts 2:38). **(Verse 4)** Jerusalem was a place for uniting the "tribes" of Israel who obeyed the "Testimony of Israel" and gave "thanks to the name of the LORD." The people were one as a people, in obedience, at worship. Isaiah prophesied about the church of Christ in Isaiah 2:2-3: "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:2-3). **(Verse 5)** Jerusalem was the place for "the thrones of the house of David." Solomon was on that throne (1 Kings 2:24); and other Kings of Judah, until Coniah to whom God promised "none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah" (Jeremiah 22:24-30). Jesus Christ was preached on Pentecost, in Jerusalem, by the Apostles: "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption" (Acts 2:29-31).

Verses 6-9: (Verses 6-7) Jerusalem was to have been ruled by "peace," they "prayed" for, "prospered" under, and were ruled by in their "walls" and "palaces." The church of Christ must "let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful" (Colossians 3:15). **(Verse 8)** The customary greeting from the Jews is "Shalom" (Peace to you). The Apostle Paul in the New Testament repeated this constant desire for brethren (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3). **(Verse 9)** "Because" God's House could draw His people together at times, they were able to "seek" each other's "good." The church of Christ assembles to "hold fast the confession of our hope," and "consider one another" (Hebrews 10:23-25). When this is not the case, the Devil has prevailed, just as he did in the Old Testament.

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Verse 1 directs our eyes;  
Verse 2 directs our obedience;  
Verse 3 directs our hearts;  
Verse 4 directs our pleas.

**Verse 1:** Since "heavens" means upper expanse, whenever we need to look for God, we must "lift up our eyes." Jesus, as God, now is "dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see" (1 Timothy 6:16). Morally, to "see God" is to see the effects of His Will in the obedient heart. Jesus said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). Peter taught how a heart becomes pure: "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever" (1 Peter 1:22-23). John added: "He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God" (3 John 11).

**Verse 2:** It is not enough just to "look" for God, but it must be with a humble heart: "as" the servant's eyes look in anticipation of what the master desires to be done; "as" the maid looks for whatever detail she may provide for her mistress's satisfaction; "so" we look toward God for instruction. Our eagerness to obey Him prompts His willingness to extend "mercy" to us! He, however, has already given all of His instruction in His Book "once for all" (Jude 3). No one should look toward God without seeing Jesus in His Word: "Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works" (John 14:9- 10).

**Verses 3-4:** We keenly feel the need for God's "mercy" because we are "exceedingly filled" with "the contempt of the proud." These are the people who, Jesus said, "this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause'" (John 15:25). Jesus had also taught: "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also" (John 15:20).

**Thought:** It is pitiful to see people "look up to:" Gandhi, Marx, Einstein, Darwin, Mohammed, "the Pope," a pastor, ancestors, a teacher, philosophers, or gurus but look down on (denigrate) Jesus Christ! Truth is entirely the other way: "we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Corinthians 1:23-25). We quote the statements that have influenced us the most: Do we quote Jesus Christ above all?



This one is attributed to David.  
Verses 1-5 answer the question: "What would have happened without God?"  
Verses 6-8 praise what God did do to help.

**Verses 1-5:** (**Verse 1**) God is on the "side" of those who do His will (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 18:9-11). Surely in David's life, we can see how narrowly he and Israel escaped from much worse than actually did happen. History and our individual lives hinge on a moment, an event, a time in our lives when we made decisions that decided our present life. Hindsight is always 20/20, and looking back is a sure way to "see God" in our lives. David is raising the issue of hindsight for his people. (**Verse 2**) Could they not see what God had done "when men rose up against us?" (**Verse 3**) Israelites would have had no victories but been "swallowed" "alive" and suffered "wrath" "kindled against us." (**Verse 4**) It would have been overwhelming losses like a tidal wave, to the loss of their "soul." They, as a people, would have been exterminated, had not God intervened on their behalf. (**Verse 5**) "Then," whenever these incidents had occurred, the sheer force of wrathful people against them would have removed them from history.

**Verses 6-8:** (**Verse 6**) Praise God who stopped the crushing mouths of the attackers. (**Verse 7**) This deliverance is akin to a "bird" caught in the "snare of the fowlers," that is, Israel had been trapped, but God broke the snare and they could escape. (**Verse 8**) The God who "made heaven and earth" (Creator) is the LORD (Jehovah) with whom the promise of Abraham and the Law through Moses were being honored by the God who gave both.

**Thought:** God's promise to Abraham included "I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you" (Genesis 12:3), which He still follows today. Christians are those whose faith had led them to saving baptism (Galatians 3:26- 29; 1 Peter 3:21), and they are "Abraham's seed," not the physical Jewish people. Paul wrote to some and said: "For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16). All who persecute Christians will know the wrath of God upon them: "After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, 'Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.'" (Revelation 19:1-2)

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Psalm 125 **"Limits of Evil"** **4/8/13**

Verses 1-2 show the security of saints;
 Verse 3 shows the limit of wickedness;
 Verses 4-5 show the distinction between the two.

Verses 1-2: (**Verse 1**) To "trust in the LORD" is to "lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5), nor on "men" nor on "princes" (Psalm 118:8-9), but to leave God in charge. "In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: 'We have a strong city; God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks. Open the gates, That the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD

forever, For in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength"" (Isaiah 26:1-4). Until God changed from the Law of Moses, "the LORD of hosts will reign On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem (Jeremiah 23:24). After the change to the Law of Christ, "you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22). (**Verse 2**) So, as the mountains of Jerusalem give protection, "so the LORD surrounds His people." "From this time forth and forever" applies even today because God's vigilance is upon the "heavenly Jerusalem" His church (2 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 6:16).

Verse 3: "The scepter" (rod signifying rule, dominance) of "wickedness" would not be allowed to "rest" on the land of the "righteous" to avoid their being beaten down to submission of evil. "He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, And the rod of his anger will fail" (Proverbs 22:8). Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D., Jesus prophesied, "then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matthew 24:21-22). God knows when and how to stop sinners.

Verses 4-5: (Verse 4) The LORD knows whom to reward, those who are "good" and "upright in their hearts." Jesus said, "No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). He had been asked, "what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" (Matthew 19:16. To Jesus, keeping the commandments of God is the "good thing" that makes one good enough to have eternal life. (**Verse 5**) The "wicked" are those who "turn aside to their crooked ways," that is, do not obey God's "strait" and "narrow" way (Matthew 7:13-14). "Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and, 'Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity'" (2 Timothy 2:19). Since God will help the good, and limit and "lead away" the wicked, good judgment would be to walk on God's side.

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**Psalms 126 "Bring Back Our Captivity" 4/9/13**

Verses 1-3 say even the world can see the effect of freedom;  
 Verses 4-6 declare how fun life can be that's free.

**Verses 1-3: (Verse 1)** God had caused Israel/Judah to be removed from their Promised Land because of their gross sins (2 Chronicles 36:15-21), and when the promised time (70 years) was over, God caused Cyrus, king of Persia, to send them home (Jeremiah 25:1-14; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-11), and it was too good to believe. (Verses 2-3) When they came around, their rejoicing was heard throughout the countries where they had ended up. They were praising God for He "has done great things for us." How great is seen in that God had three kings who worshipped idols do His bidding: Shalmaneser king of Assyria; Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; Cyrus king of Persia!

**Verses 4-6: (Verse 4)** People often need the motivation given by remembering their former way and how much progress they have made from then. "Bring back our captivity" is simply saying, "Remind us of how bad our fathers were and what blessings are ours today." When torrential rains fall, "the streams in the South" are filled to overflowing, and so it is when God blesses, like those filled banks, its often more than we can stand. (**Verses 5-6**) Through the pains of punishment, the harvest is joy; so the plagued consciences "sow in tears," or don't think their labors will find

reward, only to be abundantly blessed by God with "seed for sowing." Every harvest has the seeds of the next crop in it. To have been restored to their land after 70 years, prompted their faith to harvest the "sheaves," once planted. Christians were taught this when Paul wrote: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: 'He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.' Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness" (2 Corinthians 9:8-10).

**Thought:** The sinners who don't believe God can save them have greater joy when finally humbled at the cross of Jesus Christ: Jesus on earth spoke them forgiven (Luke 7:36-50), but since He returned to Heaven, He authorizes their forgiveness upon proper obedience (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-41). There is reason to rejoice when sins are forgiven: in heaven (Luke 15:7, 10, 32), and on earth (Acts 8:35-39).

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Psalm 127

Living in a Safe House

4/10/13

This one is attributed to Solomon.
Verses 1-2 describe a Safe House is the Lord's House;
Verses 3-5 describe a family in a Safe House.

Verses 1-2: (Verse 1) Since this is credited to Solomon who had built God's House (the Temple in Jerusalem, 1 Kings 5:1-5), this naturally fits. Moses' "house" was the family of Israelites under Moses' Law: "And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end" (Hebrews 3:5-6). Today the "household of God" (1 Timothy 3:15) is the church of Christ, thus the application would be that it is useless to establish any other church, or claim to be a part of the church of Christ, unless one goes all the way by obeying all of what God demands (Acts 2:36-47). Jesus said: "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men'" (Matthew 15:7-9). Since the "home" must be established upon the heterosexual love relationship in a marriage (Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-6), then all attempts to build a family (house) based upon homosexuality, bisexuality, transsexuality is "in vain." The same applies to Solomon's Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:7-9), and every other city that has no foundation of faith in God! There is no purpose in building a house without God, and the sleepless watchman of a city is useless "unless the LORD guards the city." There is no security in a church, home, or city, without God's blessing. **(Verse 2)** It is "vain" (useless) to get up for work early, sit up late, suffering for food, when God is blessing. Diligence is good, as Solomon said: "He who has a slack hand becomes poor, But the hand of the diligent makes rich" (Proverbs 10:4). Solomon also said: "The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it" (Proverbs 10:22). Jesus, the wisest Man of all, said: "The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it" (Proverbs 10:22).

Verses 3-5: (Verse 3) There is no greater tribute to the blessing of a child than these verses. First, children are a "heritage" (inheritance) from God. There is no godly way to decide to have an abortion. The miniscule percentage of women whose lives would be in jeopardy should they birth the baby inside them in no way justifies the bloodthirsty, murderous, savage, brutal, sacrificing of human lives called "abortion." (Verse 4) Second, children of our youthful years become a parent's strength to endure, like arrows arming a warrior. Parents are people God is preparing to "take on" the struggle of life. (Verse 5) Third, the man should be "happy" because of his responsibility of fatherhood. His children, unashamed by his duties common to man have his guidance that helps them to be able to take leadership in civic matters, as well. Good parenting affects the future, also.

Thought: Males who won't commit to the responsibility of producing a child with their own marriage spouse, should never be given the opportunity by any female. Females who encourage or accept males as sires and not permanently married mates, are reducing child-bearing to an animal level. Having children without marriage is ugly, degrading, deceptive, and destructive, and should never be judged lightly.

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**Psalm 128**

**What's In It For Me?**

**4/11/13**

Verses 1-4 show wonderful blessings of a family that fears God;  
Verses 5-6 show their hope for the future.

**Verses 1-4: (Verse 1)** The rule is "everyone who fears the LORD" is "blessed" (happy, contented), regardless of skin, salary, or social status. "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin" (Romans 4:7-8). "The memory of the righteous is blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot" (Proverbs 10:7).

"Though a sinner does evil a hundred times, and his days are prolonged, yet I surely know that it will be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him" (Ecclesiastes 8:12). Everyone who "fears God" walks in His ways. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). **(Verse 2)** Honest work is rewarding, supporting, and satisfying. "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, Whether he eats little or much; But the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep" (Ecclesiastes 5:12). "He who is slothful in his work Is a brother to him who is a great destroyer" (Proverbs 18:9). Those who live on government give-aways never know the true wealth of health that comes to those who earn their rewards. It is repeated of those who "will not work, neither shall he eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10). **(Verse 3)** "A fruitful vine" is one that produces something good, and is a good description of a good wife. She is considered the "very heart of your house." It is in husbands best interest to "to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself" (Ephesians 5:28). "An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who causes shame is like rottenness in his bones" (Proverbs 12:4). "Olive plants" produce very useful oil, capable of many applications, so children add many moments of pleasure and happiness. A man whose wife and children sit around his table cannot be more satisfying. **(Verse 4)** A home that "fears God" cannot be improved upon for sheer joy.

**Verses 5-6: (Verse 5)** For Israelites under Moses, "Zion" was the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, the center of their worship, and from which their blessings originated. When individuals "fear God" and "walk in His ways," it benefits their

city for all of their lives. Obeying God is always good for our country, city, community. (**Verse 6**) Those who serve God not only are blessed themselves, and their families, and their neighbors, but into the next generations, "children's children."

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Psalm 129

Scars of Youth

4/12/13

Psalm 129

Verses 1-4 mention scars from youth while prevailing;
Verses 5-8 describe uselessness in life for God's enemies.

Verses 1-4: (**Verses 1-2**) The "afflictions" from "youth" are what shape us as adults. Since this appeal is for "Israel" to say this seems to indicate the "afflictions" were what was happening to them in Egypt when they started as a nation (Exodus 1:8-14). Much later, God said: "I will give her her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt" (Hosea 2:15). Those who did the afflicting "have not prevailed." (**Verse 3**) Egyptian slave masters scarred Israelite backs just as if plows had left the scars! (**Verse 4**) The righteous (upright, responsive to truth) LORD "cut" them free from "the cords of the wicked" (Exodus 2-15).

Verses 5-8: (**Verse 5**) Leave it in the hands of the LORD. To "hate Zion" in the Old Testament, meant to despise God's Temple on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and the Israelites who worshiped there (Psalm 68:16; 87:1-3). The other side of God's promise to bless His people who obeyed, was that He "will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you" (Deuteronomy 30:7). (**Verses 6-8**) This recognition of what God could do to enemies is based upon a frequent practice in the Mid-East, that is, to cover their roofs with dirt, plant grass which grew quickly with rain, but then as quickly dried out before it could be mowed or harvested. In other words, it would be worthless as to its usefulness and quickly forgotten. And the punishment from the LORD for His enemies should include no future blessing because of a good harvest, such as was used in Ruth 2:4. The desire is that God would make enemies suffer because of their own unworthiness.

Thought: When Jesus came, "though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). It was prophesied of Him: "Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4-5). He took the scars of sin upon Himself to establish the church of Christ in its youth (Acts 2:22- 41; 20:28). Becoming a Christian means casting our sins on Him in repentance (1 Corinthians 6:9-11), and being baptized for salvation from those sins (Acts 18:8; 1 Peter 3:21). Then God will render enemies useless (Proverbs 6:12-15; 1 Timothy 6:3-5).

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**Psalm 130**

**Are We "In" Too Deep?**

**4/15/13**

Verses 1-2 give a personal appeal to God;  
Verses 3-4 give a personal trust in God;  
Verses 5-6 give a personal patience in God;



Verses 7-8 give a national call upon God.

**Verses 1-2: (Verse 1)** From deep places come the greatest devotions. Some people must plumb the depths of sin before they become alarmed at their condition, and repent. No one can be so deep in sin but that their cry to the LORD cannot be heard. "The spirit of a man is the lamp of the LORD, Searching all the inner depths of his heart" (Proverbs 20:27). Some MAY be so committed to sin that THEY REFUSE to cry out for help from the LORD (Ephesians 4:17-20)! **(Verse 2)** The change from "LORD" (Jehovah) to "Lord" (Authority) sets the tone to approach Him with "supplication" (request), and not commands! The Jewish request, "From my mouth to God's ears" is expressed in this verse.

**Verses 3-4: (Verse 3)** God's "data bank" is greater than any Government ever envisioned, for every thought (Hebrews 4:12), sight (Matthew 5:28), word (Matthew 12:37), and deed (2 Corinthians 5:10), is recorded by God – in the other book compared with "the book of life" (Revelation 20:12). **(Verse 4)** If it was not for God's promise to forgive sin, no one would survive! This forgiveness is only offered through Jesus Christ (Acts 5:30-31), and only given to those who obey Him (Matthew 7:21-27; Mark 16:15-16).

**Verses 5-6:** The hopeful expectation of morning light illustrates the soul's "hope." It is because of God's laws that we hope for each morning, and it is in God's Word that a soul "hopes" to find a new day of salvation.

**Verses 7-8: (Verse 7)** The Nation of Israel, individually, should turn back to God in "hope" (anticipation) of receiving His "mercy" and "abundant redemption" (ransom required to be re-possessed). (Verse 8) The absolute promise of God is that "He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

**Thought:** That this was true for those living under Moses' Law, now that Jesus' Law is in force, His blood has purchased the church of Christ (Acts 20:28) and God adds those saved by the Gospel to His church (Acts 2:38, 41, 47).

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Psalm 131

What It Means To "Grow Up"

4/16/13

This Psalm is attributed to David, but also could have been written about David, for it seems to express his child-like humility before God.

Verse 1 defines humility;
Verse 2 describes contentment;
Verse 3 distributes this among his countrymen.

Verse 1: "LORD, my heart is not haughty." Humility is not downgrading oneself, but accepting oneself in view of God. "Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor is humility" (Proverbs 18:12). "By humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches and honor and life" (Proverbs 22:4).

"Nor my eyes lofty." The way up is down, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). Paul taught Christians "to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men" (Titus 3:2). Moses was humble (Numbers 12:3), but God can: "Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted" (Ezekiel 21:26). Every person is a "creature" needing the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16).

“into His tabernacle” (or temporary tent, then Solomon built a Temple, then Jesus Christ build the church of Christ, Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:38, 41, 47; 2 Corinthians 6:16), secondly, “worship at His footstool.” Proper worship may only be done in the tabernacle, or today, the church of Christ. **(Verse 8)** God will respond to proper worship from the proper place, as His “ark” represents His presence. Jesus Christ is the “propitiation” (mercy seat, or cover of the ark) “for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2). **(Verse 9)** God’s priests were to be properly clothed to perform their duties (Exodus 40:1- 16). Today, God’s priests are Christians who were baptized into Jesus Christ to put Him on as their proper garment (1 Peter 2:4-5; Galatians 3:26-29).

Verses 10-18: **(Verse 10)** God’s promise for his son to build God’s house seemed to point to Solomon (2 Samuel 7:4-14), but David’s throne is now occupied by Jesus Christ (Acts 2:29-32), and Jesus built God’s spiritual house, the church of Christ (Hebrews 3:1-6). **(Verses 11-12)** Faithfulness was the requirement for David’s “sons” to sit on his throne, which failed with Solomon (1 Kings 11:9-40). **(Verses 13-18)** Since “the LORD has chosen Zion” for His “resting place forever,” Jerusalem lasted until Jesus Christ came, lived and died on the cross (Romans 9:30-33). After God destroyed Jerusalem in A.D.70, it had been made clear that it is spiritual Israel and spiritual Zion who represent God’s people today (Hebrews 12:22-25; Galatians 6:14-16). Christians are provided blessings (1 Peter 4:12-14), the bread of life (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), priestly garment of Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:27), joyful singing because of the Word of Christ (Colossians 3:16).

Thought: The prayer for David has been answered, for his obedience certainly paved the way for Jesus Christ to sit on David’s throne forever.

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**Psalm 133**

**Unity of Brethren**

**4/18/13**

This Psalm is attributed to David.  
Verse 1 pictures a “good” thing;  
Verses 2-3 illustrate what it is “like.”

**Verse 1:** It is “good and pleasant” “For brethren to dwell together in unity!” One of the most satisfying sights is to see “unity” form from many, the very Latin phrase for the United States (e pluribus unum). Every hyphenated American has rejected this motto. All hyphenated “Christians” have missed entirely the New Testament teaching. Those who obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Mark 16:15-16) are “baptized into one body” (1 Corinthians 12:13), and are called “Christians” (Acts 11:26). There are no kinds of Christians in the New Testament. When Paul and Barnabas went their separate ways, it was because of a conflict of judgment, not over doctrine (Acts 15:36-40). “Unity,” however, doesn’t mean brethren must stay on top of each other, for there are plenty in the world who need the Gospel. “The unity of the Spirit” includes “the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:1-3), and narrowness in doctrine (Ephesians 4:4-6).

**Verse 2:** Brethren’s “unity” shows how obedience to God’s teaching sanctifies (devotes, dedicates), just like, under Moses’ Law, Aaron was dedicated with anointing oil (Leviticus 8:10-12).

**Verse 3:** "Unity" of brethren reminds us that the unifying doctrine originates with God, not men (James 3:13-18), just like looking at Mount Hermon's "dew" which settles "upon the mountains of Zion."

**Thought:** "Unity" is not a goal, it is a product of obeying the same doctrine (Galatians 3:26-29; 1 John 1:5-7). No "Unity Forum" can unite better than, or equally with, plain preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



**Psalm 134** **What Worship Is For** **4/19/13**

Verses 1-2 call for worship of the LORD;  
Verse 3 gives a blessing of worship.

**Verses 1-2:** "Behold" is often useful in calling attention to: God's covenant with earth (Genesis 9:9-11); God's presence in the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-3); God's sweeping judgment against Egypt (Isaiah 19:1-4); God placing the foundation stone "in Zion" (Isaiah 28:16) which was Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10-12); and John the Baptist's identification of Jesus as the Christ (John 1:19-36). (**Verse 1**) It points to the purpose of worship: to "bless the LORD." "Then David said to all the assembly, 'Now bless the LORD your God.' So all the assembly blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king" (1 Chronicles 29:20). True worship is "in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24), offered by "servants of the LORD" who are diligent to see that worship continues even "by night." (**Verse 2**) Lifting up our hands before God, whether physically or mentally, signifies our openness of heart for His "glory" (Psalm 28:2; 63:4; 119:48; 134:2; 1 Timothy 2:8). "The sanctuary" was the sacred building used for worshipping God (Tabernacle, Numbers 3:38, then the Temple, 1 Chronicles 22:7-9). Today, it is the church of Christ: "Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man" (Hebrews 8:1-2); "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation" (Hebrews 9:11). A physical building is not a "sanctuary" today, but the sacred assembly is!

**Verse 3:** "The LORD" (called *Jehovah*, Exodus 6:1-7) is also the Creator of "heaven and earth" (called *Elohim*, Genesis 1:1), and was known in Genesis as "Almighty God" (Genesis 17:1-2, *El Shaddai*; 2 Corinthians 6:18, *Kurios Pantokrator*), The All-sufficient One, source of all blessings. God blesses "from Zion," then to the faithful worshippers under Moses, today through Jesus Christ: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:13-14).



**Psalm 135** **Which God Should We Worship?** **4/22/13**

There is no assigned author, time, or place for this Psalm, but it certainly brings together elements from a few other Psalms to show God is above all "gods!"  
Verses 1-4 call for God's People to praise Him;

Verses 5-18 mention why God is Supreme;  
Verses 19-21 make a second call for God's People to praise Him.

**Verses 1-4:** Look at what the LORD has done to distinguish His Name:  
(1 His "Servants" in "the house of the LORD" know He is "good" (Jesus said, "No one is good but One, that is, God," Matthew 19:17);  
(2 "Praises to His Name" are to be sung, "for it is pleasant" (that is, it is a joyful response to His Name);  
(3 God chose "Jacob" (whose name was changed to) "Israel" (not Ishmael!) "for His special treasure," through whom will come Jesus Christ (Luke 1:26-33).

**Verses 5-18:** The LORD is "great," and "above all gods," because: (**Verses 5-7**) He is All-Powerful (does as He pleases); Creator and Ruler of Earth (including heaven, earth, seas, deep places, water cycle, lightning in rain, wind from His "treasuries"). One God over all Creation, unlike idolaters who need many "gods" for one Creation! (**Verses 8-12**) He created and blessed the Israelite Nation by "signs and wonders" ending in the death of "the firstborn of Egypt" (man and beast! Exodus 9-12); defeated all the Canaanite nations for Israel to have the "Promised Land" (Book of Joshua); gave Canaan to Israelites as long as they obeyed Him (Deuteronomy 29). (**Verses 13-18**) NO idol has begun to accomplish as much for their people as God has for His! Idols are the product of human planning and carving, made in the image of a human (mouths, eyes, ears, none of which work because there is no breath of life!). God made humans in His own image (Genesis 1:26). Humans may become godly, but idolaters, those who trust idols, become cold, unfeeling, and blind, deaf, and dumb (or speechless).

**Verses 19-21:** Because God is Creator, All-Powerful, Ruler over human history, He deserves the praise and blessing from the "house of Israel," "house of Aaron," "house of Levi," and all "who fear the Lord" should "bless the LORD." The living God deserves, and should receive, all praise and blessing from those whom He has helped.

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Psalm 136 Why Worship God? "For His Mercy Endures Forever" 4/23/13

This is almost a repetition of Psalm 135, but with the phrase "For His mercy endures forever" added to each verse (26 times). That phrase was ordered at the dedication of the tabernacle by David (1 Chronicles 16:41), at the dedication of Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 7:1-6), and before battle by Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20:20-22). It means without God's guiding "mercy," they would not be a nation.

"Mercy" (willingness to relieve the price of sins) is mentioned in 129 verses in the Book of Psalms. The "mercy of God" kept Israelites together until Jesus Christ came, and now God's "mercy" is for both Jews and Gentiles through Jesus Christ (Romans 11:30-32; Galatians 3:22-29). To illustrate God's "mercy," evidence is drawn from the written history of God's Word. AND for those misguided commentators who think the Old Testament God is hateful and violent, His motive for providing and protecting Israel as a nation was so that He could provide mercy for all who will obey Jesus Christ today (Ephesians 2:1-7)!

Verses 1-3: "Give thanks to the LORD" for: "He is good;" He is above all "gods;" He is "the Lord of lords!"

Verses 4-9: True science is the uncovering of the "wisdom" God used in the Creation. His orderliness precisely designed the "heavens." And, He has done

these "great wonders" "alone!" This is detailed in Genesis 1-2.

Verses 10-15: God broke Egypt as a dominating power when He "brought out Israel from among them" in establishing them as His Nation. This is detailed in Exodus 1-14.

Verses 16-22: God destroyed all nations in Canaan that Israel might be given the land He had promised Abraham. This is detailed in the Book of Joshua.

Verses 23-24: In the Promised Land, when Israelites repented of their sins, God continued to lead them to victories over their enemies by raising up a "judge." This is detailed in the Book of Judges.

Verse 25: All food is produced because God's mercy gives orderly seasons (Genesis 8:22; Acts 14:15-17). Solomon will acknowledge: "Moreover the profit of the land is for all; even the king is served from the field" (Ecclesiastes 5:9). It is pathetic poverty of spirit when people are taught to forget this fact!

Verse 26: We must never cease thanking "the God of heaven" (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).

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**Psalm 137                                          What 70 Years of Regret Did                                          4/24/13**

Because of their horrendous sins, God's people (both Northern Israel and Southern Judah) were violently removed from their Promised Land for 70 years (2 Kings 17:5-23; 2 Chronicles 36:15-23). This Psalm was clearly written to express the Israelites' sense of loss and regret while in Babylon, and their anticipation of revenge which God would bring against the Babylonians. That "payback" came at the hands of Cyrus, king of Persia, who then caused the Israelites to return and rebuild their Holy City, Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Jeremiah 50:18-32).

Verses 1-6 state the woeful lesson learned;  
Verses 7-9 give the somber belief that God repays "in kind" (Jeremiah 50:29).

**Verses 1-6:** Being "by the rivers of Babylon" instead of their Jordan River was a constant reminder of why they were in Babylon. Those rivers included the Tigris and Euphrates, Chebar (Ezekiel 1:3), and the Ulai (Daniel 8:2). Israelite sorrow was so deep they "wept" when they thought about destroyed Jerusalem; "hung [their] harps" because there was nothing to sing about, even though their captors requested a song; and prayed for their "right hand" become useless and "tongue" stick to the "roof of" their mouth, if they tried to forget their "chief joy" should be in Jerusalem.

**Verses 7-9:** Israel was descended from Jacob, and his twin, Esau, became known as "Edom" (Genesis 25:30; 36:1). "Edom," thus was a name for non-Israelites, or "nations" in the Old Testament and "Gentiles" in the New Testament. The Babylonians who had destroyed Jerusalem are represented by the term "sons of Edom" and specifically, "daughter of Babylon" whom God was going to destroy at the time of this Psalm. That destruction has already taken place, and a lingering prophecy still affects that place today. "Babylon" is modern Iraq, and the first "Gulf War" was fought when Saddam Hussein declared he would excavate ancient Babylon and bring it back to its former glory. God had decreed otherwise: "'Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the LORD; 'and I will make it a perpetual

desolation" (Jeremiah 25:12; also see Jeremiah 51:24-26, 59-64). (**Psalm 137: 8-9**) These verses reflect what God promised would happen to Babylon: "Let the violence done to me and my flesh be upon Babylon, The inhabitant of Zion will say; 'And my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea!' Jerusalem will say" (Jeremiah 51:35). Babylon's bloodshed of innocent children in Jerusalem was repaid in kind when the Persians did the same to Babylonian babies.

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Psalm 138 **God's Name Works** **4/25/13**

A Psalm of David that is so typical of David's other Psalms, full of praise to God.

- Verses 1-2 God's Name is worshiped above all gods;
- Verses 3-5 God's Name is glorified above all kings;
- Verses 6-8: God's Name reaches to all people.

Verses 1-2: (Verse 1) Praise to God should include the "whole heart" out of which we "sing praises." David, with all the musical instruments introduced by him into worship, felt praise involved singing from the heart, in spite of others' "gods." In the New Testament, Christians should, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16). (**Verse 2**) What God has done in "lovingkindness" and "truth" distinguish Him above all.

Verses 3-5: (Verse 3) David's boldness came from God's answering His pleas. No proof of God's care is better than experience, and hindsight is always 20/20! (**Verse 4**) "Kings of the earth" quickly learn Jehovah God is mightier than they are. (**Verse 5**) When defeated, even they join in God's praises (Example Daniel 4).

Verses 6-8: (Verse 6) God never loses sight of, or sensitivity toward, "the lowly." No one is too minute or insignificant but that God will hear. But "the proud" God recognizes from "afar," that is, God doesn't need to have them close to know how to deal with them. "Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.' Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Peter 5:5-6). (**Verse 7**) "In the midst of trouble" God "revives" (refreshes), extends a protecting "hand," offers His "right hand" to "save." Since Jesus said God is "spirit" (John 4:24) which has no "flesh and bones" (Luke 24:39), then all references to God's "body" of physical characteristics obviously are figures of speech designed to help us understand Him. (**Verse 8**) God looks better to our cares than we can, which is why we should cast "all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). He does this out of His "mercy" which "endures forever." "Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'" (Hebrews 13:5).

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**Psalm 139** **Father Knows Us Best** **4/26/13**

This Psalm of David gives a picture of how thoroughly God knows us. We should seek to know Him as completely as we can, for "when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods" (Galatians 4:8); "the world through wisdom did

not know God" (1 Corinthians 1:21); "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8); Jesus Christ will be "taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

Verses 1-6 show how completely God knows about our individual lives;  
Verses 7-12 show how useless it is for anyone to try to flee from God;  
Verses 13-16 show when God begins to know us;  
Verses 17-18 show how completely we should know God;  
Verses 19-22 show how completely we should side with God;  
Verses 23-24 show how completely open we should be with ourselves and God.

**Verses 1-6:** There is no one who knows and understands us like God does: not Mother, Father, Children, Husband or Wife, close friend. God interacts with individual lives by examination, constant monitoring, complete understanding of our thinking, hearing all our words, protecting and guiding at times, all exceeding our own understanding of ourselves!

**Verses 7-12:** As Adam and Eve discovered in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:6-8), there is nowhere God cannot find us: Heaven (as if we could!)? He is there; "Hell" (Sheol, the place beyond the body's grave, where departed spirits dwell)? He is there; fly as fast as the light of a new day (as if we could!)? dive as deep as the sea goes? He still could guide and hold us; be surrounded by total darkness? God sees as if it was still light. God is everywhere, but He is NOT everything! God is Creator NOT the Creation! Pantheism is totally wrong in this concept.

**Verses 13-16:** God designs, develops, and delivers each and every human baby ever born! For each and every human baby, while in the womb, God "covered" (intricately weaves together) our organs; "fearfully and wonderfully" develops the baby; makes the skeleton support structure; begins His work on "unformed" "substance" (Hebrew term for embryo), prepared the baby to live "the days fashioned for me" (plans for the baby to live its life on earth). Abortion is the destroying of the work of God, and wise Solomon said: "I know that whatever God does, It shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him" (Ecclesiastes 3:14). Abortion is taking from the work of God!

**Verses 17-18:** There is much more about God than we can grasp, but we should learn all we can while we can. The Word of God is the gradual unfolding of the revelation of God.

**Verses 19-22:** Instead of demanding God to "side" with us, we should get on God's "side." There should be no evil work a Christian would practice, plan, or proceed to do: terrorism, abortion, self-centeredness, drunkenness/drug abuse, divisiveness, fornication/adultery, lust, or anything else contrary to "sound doctrine." Whatever God condemns, Christians should condemn. Whatever God hates, Christians should hate. Whoever is an enemy of God, should be an enemy to a Christian. No Christian should compromise this commitment to God for any political platform, union slogan, or gang fidelity!

**Verses 23-24:** An open heart asks for God to check it out, and is willing for Him to "lead me in the way everlasting." Why wait? God provides for Christians to "examine themselves" (2 Corinthians 13:5). "For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world" (1 Corinthians 11:31-32).



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Psalm 140

Deliver Me From Evil

4/29/13

A Psalm of David that recognizes how evil surrounds someone trying to live right. Paranoia involves fear without facts – this Psalm, however, deals with facts that give ample reason to be aware and careful! “You therefore, beloved, since you *know* this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked” (2 Peter 3:17).

Verses 1-5 pray for preservation from evil men;
Verses 6-7 reassert confidence in God;
Verses 8-11 pray for persecution on the wicked;
Verses 12-13 remind the upright of their reward.

Verses 1-5: God is asked to “Deliver me” “from evil men; “Preserve me from violent men;” “Keep me” “from the hands of the wicked.” Jesus taught His disciples to pray “do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” (Matthew 6:13). “Evil men” are those who: plan it in their hearts; gather for war; hone their tongues like serpents; speak venomously. Psalm 140:3 is quoted in Romans 3:13 to help describe sinners in need of Jesus Christ. Little wonder that John the Baptist (Luke 3:7), then Jesus (Matthew 12:34; 23:33), called their generation of Jews a “brood of vipers.” “The wicked” are those determined to “make my steps stumble;” hidden a snare to tie me up; “spread a net;” “set traps;” all designed to stop a faithful person from being faithful!

Verses 6-7: David’s God hears his supplication, provides strength to save, and protects his head in battle.

Verses 8-11: If the wicked are unpunished, their pride swells. Solomon would later say: “Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecclesiastes 8:11). David’s prayer is that: their evil words are turned back upon them; they are consumed by fire; their slander goes unproven; evil men fight it out with the violent men! Worldly people “slander” the message of salvation: “For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? And why not say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come?’--as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just” (Romans 3:7-8). “Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, And whoever spreads slander is a fool” (Proverbs 10:18).

Verses 12-13: Regardless of the opposition, God will prevail on behalf of the “afflicted,” giving “justice for the poor,” being thanked by the righteous, and receiving the upright to “dwell” in His presence.

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**Psalm 141**

**Shut My Mouth**

**4/30/13**

This Psalm of David could have originated at one of several times in his life, so the historical background is not definitely set, but it clearly is similar to other of his Psalms.

Verses 1-2 appeal to God to hear this prayer;  
Verses 3-4 concerned with one’s words;

Verse 5-concerned with one's thoughts;  
Verses 5c-7 concerned with one's bones;  
Verses 8-10 concerned with one's eyes.

**Verses 1-2:** To "cry out" expresses immediate need(s). For prayer to be "set before" God "as incense" (Exodus 30:1-10), helps us see that when Moses' Law was taken out of the way by the cross of Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:14-16), Christian prayers ascend before God instead of incense (Revelation 5:8).

**Verses 3-4:** It is not asking for God to choose our words, but knowing we have called attention to the problem we have with wrong words should keep us more keenly aware (Matthew 12:34-37). "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless" (James 1:26). "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body" (James 3:2). In fact, David realizes, to avoid sin, we must not lean toward "any evil thing," "practice wicked works," associate with evil workers, or commonly associate with sinners. This progression into sin is similar to Psalm 1.

**Verse 5:** If we find ourselves heading in the wrong direction, the rebuke of a righteous person should bring us back to spirituality. "Open rebuke is better Than love carefully concealed" (Proverbs 27:5). "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).

**Verses 5c-7:** Our prayers should be not only for us to be strong, but for the wicked to be blunted and weakened. "Judges" are their leaders, but "sweet" "words" of a prayerful appeal to God can see them taken down. Their damage, however, may break up God's people as if physical bodies had been plowed under!

**Verses 8-10:** "Eyes," rightly focused on the goal, must not be misled. Once a person has been buried in the water of baptism into Jesus' death (and not before), and raised to a new life with Him (Romans 6:3-5), they are saved (1 Peter 3:21). "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:1-3). By obeying God and following Jesus Christ, God will "keep" (avoid sin, 1 John 3:6) a Christian from the "snares" and "traps" the wicked continually provide. It was the partial obedience of the Israelites in cleaning the wicked nations out of the Promised Land, that God warned they would become "snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you" (Joshua 23:13). "Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; He who guards his soul will be far from them" (Proverbs 22:5). David did not pray out of vengeance or hatred, but simply that God let "the wicked fall into their own nets" and he be allowed to "escape." When the wicked are treated with their own wickedness is not only just, it is fair for the righteous. "Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him" (Proverbs 26:27). A rolling stone may not gather moss, but often it punishes the ones who started it rolling!

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This Psalm of David may well have been written from the cave of Adullam, while King Saul pursued him to kill him (1 Samuel 22:1).

Verses 1-3 picture the "caveman" mindset;
Verses 4-7 show the difference between refuge and prison.

Verses 1-3: "Cry out" indicates his desperate situation, "supplication" is a prayer presenting a problem to God, but asking for help with it. David's "complaint" is not with God, but a presentation of his "trouble" that he would "pour out." David's "spirit was overwhelmed within" him, more than once (**Psalm 61:2; 77:3; 143:4**). This perfectly expresses what we all feel like sometimes when life is too much to handle! Jesus shows how not to let this get to us. "For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls" (Hebrews 12:3).

Verses 4-7: Before David's men gathered to him, he knew "no one who acknowledges" him, his insecurity noted that "refuge has failed" him. In complete despair, he said: "No one cares for my soul." Jesus reached this moment, for on His way to the cross, "they all forsook Him and fled" (Mark 14:50). Paul had this moment, for he said: "At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me" (2 Timothy 4:16). The common thread woven through these faithful men is the LORD never left them: David "cried out to You, O LORD" (**Psalm 142:5**); "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46); "the Lord stood with me and strengthened me" (2 Timothy 4:17). God was David's "portion in the land of the living." As long as David was alive, God was with him. When "persecutors" seem "stronger than I," never forget God, for He never forgets us. Life can become our "prison," but once released from this "very low" time, we are freed to "praise" God, and enjoy the fellowship of the "righteous" who "shall surround" us. God abundantly blesses those faithful to Him. Joseph was released from a dungeon through God's gift of interpretation of dreams (Genesis 39-41); Samson through his renewed covenant strength (Judges 16:21-31); Jesus releases people from their prison of sin (Isaiah 42:5-7; Luke 4:14-21); the Apostles were set free to preach Jesus (Acts 5:17-25). Everyone who remains faithful to God in whatever prison they find themselves, must learn they are not alone.

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This Psalm of David tells us what to expect of life before death! Living for God in a hostile world is not easy but requires trust in God and a strong faith in His Word.

Verses 1-2 give the plea;  
Verses 3-8 detail the spiritual struggle within;  
Verses 9-12 ask for spiritual awakening.

**Verses 1-2:** "Prayer" is speaking to God, "supplication" is to ask of God. "Prayer and supplication" are often connected in Scripture (1 Kings 8:37-40; Philippians 4:6). Without repentance and forgiveness, no human would be acceptable to God. No one is acceptable to God who: says they are (Luke 18:9-14); thinks they obey (Matthew 7:21-23); confesses no sin (1 John 1:8-10); works wickedness (**Psalm 101:3-4**); hold to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (Revelation 2:15).

**Verses 3-8:** Enemies, in persecuting our souls, may make us feel "crushed," surrounded in darkness, lifeless and overwhelmed. Reading and meditating on the Word of God helps us "remember" God's help in the past. "Meditate" is the focus on God's "Works," "musing" is thinking through His Way, spreading out one's hands is to show God we hold nothing back from our obedience. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). When we feel our spirit fail, an alarming thought is that God would turn away from us, thus Jesus cried out from the cross: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). Jesus was taking our place on the cross (1 Peter 3:18). If we will remember God's "lovingkindness," then our "trust" in Him who has shown us "the way in which I should walk" will "lift up my soul to You."

**Verses 9-12:** David asks God to "deliver" him from enemies, "teach" him to do God's will, and "lead" all the way into "the land of uprightness." God's "Spirit is good," so Christians should "Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). A soul delivered from trouble is a soul "revived." God is merciful to His Servants – anyone may become a "servant of God." Daniel was spared in a den of lions because he was a "servant of the living God" (Daniel 6:20).

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Psalm 144

How To Live In A Happy State

5/3/13

This Psalm of David shows why God saw David as "a man after My own heart, who will do all My will" (Acts 13:22). This Psalm is from a heart that knows what God's grace and mercy is all about!

Verses 1-2 acknowledge who is with David on his throne over Israel;
Verses 3-4 recognize how short the rule of a man is compared to God's reign;
Verses 5-10 show who really deserves praise for victory over enemies;
Verses 11-15 summarize where a nation's blessings and strengths come from.

Verses 1-2: "The LORD" was David's "Rock" not a castle. God guided David's conquests; God showed what "lovingkindness" was like in between battles; David's "fortress" (protective dwelling), "high tower" (lofty position above the enemy), "shield" (protection against soldiers' attacks) and "refuge" (safe haven), were all in God. Thus if David's "people" didn't obey God, David wouldn't be king of a nation. Would that Governments recognized this today (John 19:10-11)!

Verses 3-4: "What is man" is the question David asks that shows great humility (**Psalm 8:4**). What makes us think we are so important that God would notice us? We are important not because of what we have done, but what God has done (Hebrews 2:17-18)! We do not live long enough to be impressive (James 4:13-15).

Verses 5-10: God, however, is so impressive that He can "come down" over the Earth; make mountains smoke; use lightning strikes; all as weapons of war "from above." It is God "from above" who "rescues" the righteous from a flood of "foreigners" hurling "lying words" and lying handshakes. Those who serve God cannot expect those who do not to be following the same rules in the same way! Christian behavior is not universal, but should be (Ephesians 5:1-17)! It is God who deserves praise for our salvation and daily life. The "harp of ten strings" was an instrument of David (1 Chronicles 23:5) which appealed to the spiritually lazy (Amos 6:3-7) and was condemned. No man-made musical instrument was authorized by Moses' Law.

Verses 11-15: It would be by God's rescue that the Nation of Israel would have: sturdy "sons" and "daughters;" plentiful "produce" and "sheep" and "oxen;" and no external raids nor internal struggles. A nation of people who respect God, will have "sons" who mature like plants and know their work to be done; "daughters" who accept their role of "pillars" as wife and mother; "produce" for people who know how to save for the next crop; fertile "sheep;" "oxen" useful for burdens; peaceful living without disruptiveness. Truly such a nation is "happy," for "Happy are the people whose God is the LORD!" The plague of America is unhappiness, and it has become pandemic because people do not have the LORD God. "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:1-3). "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:11). "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). DO YOU KNOW GOD?

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Psalm 145 **The God Who Cannot Be Hidden** **5/6/13**

This Psalm of David is the last of the "alphabetical" Psalms that is written in acrostic style. Each verse begins with the next letter in the 22-letter Hebrew alphabet, except for the letter nun. Thus, instead of 22 verses, it only has 21. It easily divides into thirds, each a 7-letter section.

Verses 1-7 emphasize that God is Awesome;
Verses 8-14 emphasize that God is Gracious;
Verses 15-21 emphasize that God is For All.

Verses 1-7: People who know God have reason to "praise His name," "forever and ever," for "His greatness is unsearchable." Passing praise for God from one generation to another is a most effective way to influence the future. Godly Fathers, Mothers, Grandparents who "meditate on" God's "majesty" and "wondrous works" make the best teachers. Moses taught Israel: "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren" (Deuteronomy 4:9). Timothy had "genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also" (2 Timothy 1:4-5). If the truth about God skips even one generation, "the memory of Your great goodness" can be lost.

Verses 8-15: Among God's perfection in characteristics, He is "good to all." He truly "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). Indeed, His works speak for themselves, and when discussed His saints bless Him and make them know to "the sons of men," an expression that refers to those who are not yet "saints." Living in a country whose government does everything in its power to ban mention of God in its schools, agencies, and workers, we can see that **Psalm 145:10-13** are a clarion call for all "saints" to get busy "making known" to "the sons of men" God's "mighty acts!" If we do not, NO ONE WILL! To a world of skeptics, agnostics, and atheists, "The LORD upholds all who fall" should be our marquee. God not only IS, but CARES, and HELPS in our salvation.

Verses 16-21: People hopefully expect God to provide, which He does, "in due season." It is from His "opened Hand" blessings come. The LORD is "righteous" (upright, principled) "in all His ways," "gracious" (thoughtful, helpful) "in all His works," and "near" (not distant, aloof) "to all who call upon Him." Paul's appeal to idolaters said this in Acts 17:25-28. God is bountiful in His care for "those who fear Him" and promises to "destroy" "all the wicked." The amazing thing about the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that it enables "the wicked" to become "saints" when they "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Because God treats everyone right, why wouldn't our mouths "speak the praise of the LORD," and "all flesh" "bless His holy name" "forever and ever?"

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**These last 5 Psalms are called "Hallelujah Psalms" because they begin and end with that expression: "Praise – Jehovah," or "Hallelujah." The author, date, and setting of each Psalm are undetermined, but their acceptance is unquestioned.**

**Psalm 146                      What Has God Done For Me, Lately?                      5/7/13**

Verses 1-4 urge when God should be praised;  
Verses 5-10 explain why God should be praised.

**Verses 1-4:** Praise should be given to God "while I live." Duh! This is a statement of the obvious. The Word of God nowhere encourages anyone to not praise God until after death. Trust should not be transferred from God to "princes" (government leaders) or "a son of man" (humans in general), for deliverance. The middle verse of the entire Word of God says this: "It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8). Humans die when the spirit goes back to God and the body is left on earth (Ecclesiastes 12:7), so that "in that very day his plans perish."

- Verses 5-10:** "Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, because He:
- 1.** Is The God over History (verse 5), Jacob's name was changed to "Israel" (Genesis 32:24-30), and God watched over those people (Isaiah 48) through the coming of Jesus Christ in the New Testament (Galatians 3:5-29);
  - 2.** Is The God over Creation (verse 6), which shows absolute, total wisdom in its very existence and orderliness (Proverbs 8:12, 22-31). All scientific factual discoveries, whether in Physics, Biology, or Chemistry are simply the uncovering of God's Wisdom behind this World's constitution;
  - 3.** Is The God over Justice (**verse 7**), evening the suppression or oppression of the hungry and imprisoned (Luke 4:16-41);
  - 4.** Is The God over Perfecting the Needy (**verse 8**), with physical healing through Jesus Christ (Matthew 15:30; Luke 13:11-13), then spiritually through His Word (Acts 26:12-19). God loves the righteous, those who do His will (1 Peter 3:8-12);
  - 5.** Is The God over Benevolence (**verse 9**), for He has always made rules for His people to help strangers, orphans, and widows (Exodus 22:21; Hebrews 13:2; **Psalm 68:4-5**; James 1:27);
  - 6.** Is The God over Eternity (verse 10, a quotation of Exodus 15:18), Who is timeless (Isaiah 57:15; Acts 15:18).
- "Praise the LORD."**

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Verse 1 calls for praise;
 Verses 2-6 give Israelite outcasts reasons to praise God;
 Verse 7 calls for praise;
 Verses 8-11 give those who fear Him reasons to praise God;
 Verse 12 calls for Israelites to praise God;
 Verses 13-18 call attention to God's absolute Power;
 Verses 19-20 call Israelites' attention to God's special Word to them.

Verse 1: Sing "Hallelujah" because it is "good," "pleasant," "beautiful."

Verses 2-6: Jehovah "builds up Jerusalem" by making sure the "outcasts" are included. These are people who might be rejected by the religious snobs and overlooked for blessings. **Verses 2-3** describe the work of Jesus Christ when He came (Jeremiah 30:10-17; Luke 4:16-20). God can account for all of Israel's "outcasts" because only He knows the number, but also the name, of the stars. With all of today's technologies, humans haven't even seen all of the stars, yet! Although God is "great," "mighty in power," infinite in "understanding," He compassionately "lifts up the humble," but does not do the same for "the wicked."

Verse 7: Praise should be sung, and the instruments of David left behind, for the only instrument that should accompany worship singing today is "your heart" (Ephesians 5:19).

Verses 8-11: The Earth follows God's physical rules, as those who "fear Him" follow His spiritual rules: from cloud coverings come rain; from rain comes grass on mountains; from grass (greenery) comes food for beasts and ravens asking. God's pleasure is not in the strength of horses or men's legs, but "in those who hope in His mercy."

Verse 12: Israel, whose capital of Jerusalem, was also its' worship center, Zion, is alerted to "praise your God."

Verses 13-18: A God-blessed nation has:

- 1)** strong "bars" of its "gates." Aren't we talking about keeping out illegal immigrants, outsiders who corrupt, and disguised terrorists? A godless society has no limits!
- 2)** blessed "children," and this is not discussing their toys, games, sports, or other distractions, but genuine faith.
- 3)** internal "peace," and this is not with martial law, or a police state, but citizens with faithful obedience to God's moral Law;
- 4)** abundant harvest, because God has made the land cooperate and bless (Acts 14:14-17). It is by God's Command that the Earth is blessed with: "snow," "frost," "hail," "cold," "melting," blowing wind, and flowing water!

Verses 19-20: God gave the Israelites (including Jews!) the advantage of "His Word," including His "statutes" and "judgments." That Word should have lead them all the way to Jesus Christ (Deuteronomy 4:5; Leviticus 26:40-46; Malachi 4:4; Galatians 3:7-29). No other nation ever had that advantage of specific written revelation through prophets, and yet when Jesus came, "although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him" (John 12:37). Paul asked the question: "What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?"

Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar" (Romans 3:1-4). God had given the Jews the advantage of having His Word first. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16). Having God's Word, knowing it, and obeying it is our advantage, today. Jesus said: "For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother" (Mark 3:35).

"Praise the LORD" or "Hallelujah!"

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**Psalm 148**

**The God Who Will Be Heard**

**5/9/13**

**Psalm 148** is the basis of the lyric for the hymn, "Praise the Lord, Ye Heavens Adore Him" with a tune written by Franz J. Haydn. "Praise the Lord" is used some 12 times in its 14 verses.

Verses 1-2 let us know God is praised above His Creation;  
Verses 3-6 let us know God is praised in what we call "space;"  
Verses 7-13 let us know God is praised among the living creatures on the Earth;  
Verse 14 lets us know God is praised among His people.

**Verses 1-2:** Jehovah is praised in the "heights." God's praise comes from the Heavenly "host," a multitude of which announced Jesus' birth (Luke 2:13), and twelve legions of which could have kept Jesus from the cross (Matthew 26:53).

**Verses 3-6:** God spoke into existence the: "sun and moon" (Genesis 1:14-18), "stars of light" (Genesis 1:16), "heavens of heavens," "waters above the heavens" (Genesis 1:6-8). **Verse 6** says, "He made a decree which shall not pass away." Everything in space operates with such precision, timing, and position as to totally devastate any vestige of godless doctrines, such as "Evolution." It is pathetic to see minds wasted repeating the mantras of "millions and billions of years" in describing this Earth, when ALL OF THE CREATION IS PRAISING GOD!

**Verses 7-13:** Praise of God comes "From the earth," creatures below; weather above the surface; the surface itself; animals, reptiles, birds; all people "praise God." NO ONE CAN SEE WHAT HAPPENS ON THE EARTH AND FAIL TO "PRAISE GOD." Animals, reptiles, birds are different from each other, and No Scientific Fact demonstrates they came from one another! All animals of the earth are different from humans, and NO Scientific Fact demonstrates that humans came from animals! "For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God" (Hebrews 3:4). Everything God Created shouts "Hallelujah," everyone who seeks to explain that Creation by substituting Time & Chance for God profanes and degrades all of it.

**Verse 14:** God should be praised by His People whom He has "exalted" and brought "near" to Him!

**"Praise the LORD."**

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Verses 1-5 call for God’s People to praise Him for victory;
Verses 6-9 call for praise and defeat of their enemies.

Verses 1-5: (**Verse 1**) “A new song” indicates a “new heart,” celebrating a “new victory,” and a “new life.” “The assembly of the saints” is a worship service, where “God is greatly to be feared” (Psalm 89:7). In America, every time there is disaster, trouble, destruction, criminal death, or missing person, there is some candlelight “coming together.” When Peter was kept in prison with the intent of killing him, the church of Christ gathered for prayer (Acts 12:12), not candles! (**Verse 2**) The people, Israel, especially their religious center, Zion, should rejoice with (**verse 3**) “dance” and “timbrel and harp,” just as their forefathers had done when God parted the Red Sea for them to escape Egypt and be their own Nation (Exodus 14:21-15:21). (**Verse 4**) God’s “pleasure” is in His People, who develop beautiful, spiritual character. (**Verse 5**) “Saints” should be joyful, even on “their beds,” formerly places of sorrow.

Verses 6-9: (**Verse 6**) While praising God with their “mouth,” “And a two-edged sword in their hand.” This sounds like the Israelites re-building the wall of Jerusalem when they were returned to their Promised Land (Nehemiah 4:17). Apparently, there was no “gun control” then! A dis-armed people can do nothing against the enemies of God! (**Verse 7**) “Bearing the sword” in “vain” (meaninglessly), or using the power of the sword against “good works,” violates God’s intended purpose for “governing authorities” (Romans 13:1-5). Today, Christians are to praise God while Government uses the sword to be “God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil” (Romans 13:4). (**Verse 8**) God’s government, acting as His minister, defeats evil. (**Verse 9**) God’s “judgment” in writing was: “When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them” (Deuteronomy 7:1-2). Today, the “sword of the Spirit” in a Christian hand, “is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17), and the “nations,” “peoples,” “kings,” and “nobles” must be conquered by teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). Since Jesus Christ established His spiritual kingdom on Earth in the 1st Century, there has been NO “Christian carnal war” waged against Muslims, Jews, or anyone else, for that matter, and therefore NO justification for persecuting the churches of Christ! All of those who persecute Christians, even to death, are persecuting Jesus (Acts 9:1-5), and, unless they repent, He will damn them forever (2 Thessalonians 1:3-10)!

“Praise the LORD!”



Verse 1: Where to “praise God;”
Verse 2: Why “praise God;”
Verse 3-5: How to “praise God;”
Verse 6: Who is to “praise God;”

Verse 1: "Praise the LORD" is "Hallelujah," or praise Jehovah, The Self-existent Deity; the next is "Praise God," or "Halleluel," or praise Elohim, "The Power." God's "sanctuary" is the designated, set aside place as "holy" where God should be worshiped. The first in the tabernacle in the wilderness (Exodus 25:8; Hebrews 9:1-5) had a "sanctuary" where worship occurred, then "the Holiest of All" where God was represented as forgiving sins. Next, in the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 6:1-17), there was the "sanctuary" and the "inner sanctuary." Now the church of Christ (Hebrews 8:1-2; 9:6-12; 2 Corinthians 1:1; 6:16) is the "sanctuary," but Heaven, itself, is "the Most Holy Place."

Verse 2: Praise Him because of "His mighty acts," or all those miraculous or providential deeds far beyond "all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20-21). Praise Him for "His excellent greatness," realizing nothing is great without God, but that all God does is greater than men (1 Corinthians 1:18-25).

Verses 3-5: David added musical instruments to God's worship (1 Chronicles 23:5), called "instruments of David" authorized by his own authority and not God's (1 Chronicles 15:16; 2 Chronicles 7:6), and condemned by God's prophet, Amos (Amos 6:1, 5). The only musical instrument specified by God for the church of Christ is "your heart" (Ephesians 5:19), and there is no authorization in the New Testament for the bringing over and use of "instruments of music, like David." None of the instruments listed in **Psalm 150** were ever used in the church of Christ by the authority of God.

Verse 6: "Everything that has breath" means every living creature: those that are not human "praise God" because they demonstrate His Wisdom and Creative Power; those that are human praise with words and deeds from their heart: "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Hebrews 13:15-16).

"Praise the LORD!"

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### **OPTIONAL ADDENDUM (ASSORTED NOTES):**

*According to this alphabetical series of eight stanzas, the word is the source of happiness to those who walk by it (aleph), of holiness to those who give heed to it (beth), of truth to those whose eyes the Lord opens by his Spirit (gimel), of law to those whose heart he renews (daleth), begets perseverance by its promises (he), reveals the mercy and salvation of the Lord (vau), awakens the comfort of hope in God (zayin), presents the Lord as the portion of the trusting soul (cheth), makes affliction instructive and chastening (teth), begets a fellowship in the fear of God (jod), and a longing for the full peace of salvation (kaph), is faithful and immutable (lamed), commands the approval of the heart (mem), is a light to the path (nun), from which to swerve is hateful (samek), warrants the plea of innocence (ayin), is a testimony to God's character and will (pe), is a law of rectitude (tsade), warrants the cry for salvation (qoph), and prayer for deliverance from affliction (resh), and from persecution without a cause (shin), and assures of an answer in due time (tau). There is here as much order as could be expected in a long alphabetical acrostic. - James G. Murphy, in a "**Commentary on the Book of Psalms**", 1875.*

**The words which express that revelation which God had then given to men, or some particular characteristic of it, are generally reckoned to be the ten following: 1. Testimonies; 2. Commandments; 3. Precepts; 4. Word; 5. Law; 6. Ways; 7. Truth; 8. Judgments; 9. Righteousness; 10. Statutes. To these some add the following: 1. Faithfulness; 2. Judgment; 3. Name; but these are not used in the sense of the other ten words.**

**1. The Law, hrwt TORAH, from hry yarah, to direct, guide, teach, make straight, or even, point forward; because it guides, directs, and instructs in the way of righteousness; makes our path straight, shows what is even and right, and points us onward to peace, truth, and happiness. It is even our school-master to bring us to Christ, that we may be justified through faith; and by it is the knowledge of sin.**

**II. STATUTES, Myqx CHUKKIM, from qx chak, to mark, trace out, describe, and ordain; because they mark out our way describe the line of conduct we are to pursue and order or ordain what we are to observe.**

**III. PRECEPTS, Mydwqp PIKKUDIM, from dqp pakad, to take notice or care of a thing, to attend, have respect to, to appoint, to visit; because they take notice of our way, have respect to the whole of our life and conversation, superintend, overlook, and visit us in all the concerns and duties of life.**

**IV. COMMANDMENTS, twum MITSVOTH, from hwu tasvah to command, order, ordain; because they show us what we should do, and what we should leave undone, and exact our obedience.**

**V. TESTIMONIES, twde EDOTH, from de ad, denoting beyond, farther, all along, to bear witness, or testimony. The rites and ceremonies of the law; because they point out matters beyond themselves, being types and representations of the good things that were to come.**

**VI. JUDGMENTS, MyjpvM MISHPATIM, from jpv shaphat, to judge, determine, regulate, order, and discern, because they judge concerning our words and works; show the rules by which they should be regulated; and cause us to discern what is right and wrong, and decide accordingly.**

**VII. TRUTH, hnwma EMUNAH, from Nma aman, to make steady, constant, to settle, trust, believe. The law that is established steady, confirmed, and ordered in all things, and sure; which should be believed on the authority of God, and trusted to as an infallible testimony from Him who cannot lie nor deceive.**

**VIII. WORD, rbd dabar, from the same root, to discourse, utter one's sentiments, speak consecutively and intelligibly; in which it appears to differ from llm malal, to utter articulate sounds. Any prophecy or immediate communication from heaven, as well as the whole body of Divine revelation, is emphatically called hwhy rbd debar Yehovah, the word of Jehovah. On the same ground we call the whole Old and New Testament THE WORD OF THE LORD, as we term the volume in which they are contained THE BIBLE-THE BOOK. In his revelation God speaks to man; shows him, in a clear, concise, intelligible, and rational way, his interest, his duty, his privileges; and, in a word, the reasonable service that he requires of him.**

**IX. WAY, Krd DERECH, from the same root, to proceed, go on, walk, tread. The way in which God goes in order to instruct and save man; the way in which man must tread in order to be safe, holy, and happy. God's manner of acting or proceeding in providence and grace; and the way that man should take in order to answer the end of his creation and redemption.**

**X. RIGHTEOUSNESS, hqdu TSEDAKAH from qdu tsadak, to do justice, to give full weight. That which teaches a man to give to all their due; to give GOD his due, MAN his due, and HIMSELF his due; for every man has duties to God, his neighbor, and himself, to perform. This word is applied to God's judgments, testimonies, and commandments; they are all righteous, give to all their due, and require what is due from every one.**

**The three words, which some add here, are, 1. FAITHFULNESS, hnwma EMUNAH: but see this under No. VII., nor does it appear in Ps 119:90, where it occurs, to be used as a characteristic of God's law, but rather his exact fulfilment of his promises to man.**

*Pulpit Commentary The synonyms are nine in number—*

1. **TORAH**, "the Law" itself; but not merely the Law given on Mount Sinai; rather, God's law in the widest sense, all whereby he has intimated his will to man.
2. **'EDVOTH**, or **'EDOTH**, "testimonies." God's commands, considered as witnesses to his character, and as attesting his will.
3. **MISHPATIM**, "judgments." Judicial pronouncements by act or word against particular lines of conduct.
4. **KHUQQIM**, "statutes"—once translated "ordinances" (Psalms 119:91). Enactments of God as Legislator, but not confined to the written Law.
5. **DABAR** or **DEBARIM**, "God's Word" or "Words." His actual spoken or written utterances.
6. **PIQQUDIM**, "precepts." Instructions given to men to direct their conduct.
7. **MITSROTH**, "commandments." Only slightly differing from piqqudim—rather wider.
8. **IMRAH**, properly "promise," but used rather as a variant, instead of **dabar**, and extending to all God's utterances.
9. **DAREK** or **DEEKIM**, "way" Or "ways." Prescribed lines of conduct (very seldom used).

*The synonyms from 1 to 8 occur, each of them twenty times, or oftener, in the psalm. Darek (derakim) occurs only four times. Emunah, which has been called a synonym (Kay), scarcely deserves to be so considered. It is only wanted as a synonym once (Psalms 119:90). The excellence of "the Law" is considered in almost every possible aspect.*