

BLESSED IS THE MAN!

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm stands as the introduction to the entire book of Psalms. It calls attention to the fact that there are two classes of men: the good and the bad, the righteous and the wicked. It shows: (1) that God's favor is upon the righteous, (2) the means of righteousness, and (3) God's condemnation of the wicked. It has as its objective the production of righteousness.

In these verses we have--

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| I. FACT
1 | The Psalmist declares the fact that someone is blessed.
1. "Blessed" means "happy--with divine favor."
2. The word "man" is generic, and applies to all of whom what the Psalmist says is true.
3. It is implied that being blessed of God is possible, is important, and is desirable. |
| II. NEGATIVE IDENTIFICATION
1 | The Psalmist gives the <u>negative</u> identification of the one who is blessed.
1. He does not <u>walk</u> according to the counsel of the wicked.
2. He does not <u>stand</u> in the way of sinners.
3. He does not <u>sit</u> in the seat of the scornful. |
| III. POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION
2 | The Psalmist gives the <u>positive</u> identification of the one who is blessed.
1. He delights in the law of Jehovah.
2. He "meditates" upon the law day and night. |
| IV. MANNER
3 | The Psalmist discusses the <u>manner</u> of the blessedness. He describes the blessedness. This one who is blessed--who meditates day and night in the law of Jehovah--
1. Will be like a tree
(1) Planted;
(2) Planted by the rivers (streams) of water;
(3) That brings forth fruit;
(4) That brings forth fruit in its season;
(5) Whose leaf does not wither;
2. Will prosper--"...and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." |
| V. CONTRAST
4-6 | The Psalmist contrasts the blessed with the wicked.
1. The wicked are not blessed as are the righteous;
2. The wicked are like the chaff which the wind driveth away;
3. They shall not be successful in the judgment;
4. They shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous;
5. God is mindful of (and approves) the way of the righteous;
6. God is mindful of (and condemns) the way of the wicked. |

Recorded under Psalm

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: It is possible, necessary, and desirable that one have upon his life divine favor. One can have this divine favor only if he is righteous. One can become and remain righteous only as a consequence of deep love for and constant meditation upon God's law, God's word.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

- I. BLESSED. This Psalm shows several thoughts regarding being "blessed."
 1. It implies the importance of one's being blessed.
 2. It identifies the blessed.
 3. It describes the blessed.
 4. It shows the means to being blessed.
 5. It shows the rewards of being blessed--present and eternal.
- II. PROGRESSIVENESS. This Psalm calls attention to the the progressiveness of sin.
 1. Note the reading, verse 1.
 2. Note: "walks not...stands not...sits not."
 3. One does not become a hardened sinner all at once.
 4. Consider the drunkard.
 5. Consider Demas.
 6. One first allows himself to become interested. He then engages in that which violates his own conscience. But, through practice and persistence he is able to overcome the compunctions of conscience. He becomes a hardened sinner.
 7. Blessed is the man who does NOT TAKE THE FIRST STEP in the wrong direction!
- III. TERMS. This Psalm presents several related terms and thoughts.
 1. The Psalmist uses two sets of words which refer to three situations.
 2. The words are:
 - (1) Walk, Stand, Sit.
 - (2) Counsel, Way, Seat.
 3. These terms relate to--
 - (1) Standard,
 - (2) Actions, and
 - (3) Settled manner of life.
 4. The wrong standard produces the wrong actions and the wrong settled manner of life.
 5. The right standard produces the right actions and the right settled manner of life.
- IV. KINDS. This Psalm calls attention to the fact that there are two basic classifications of people.
 1. Before God, people are either good or bad, righteous or wicked.
 2. This is a basic factor in all of the scheme of redemption.
 3. In the judgment there will be these two classes of people (Cf. Mt. 25).
 4. In the judgment there will be two kinds of works considered--good and bad. (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:10).

Recorded as in Psalm 1

V. TWO'S. This Psalm refers to several things of which there are two.

1. There are two positions with reference to God's favor;
2. There are two kinds of people;
3. There are two standards;
4. There are two kinds of actions;
5. There are two kinds of settled manners of life;
6. There are two destinies.

IV. CONTRAST. This Psalm presents a definite contrast of the righteous with the wicked.

1. The wicked--

- (1) Has the wrong standard;
- (2) Engages in sinful actions;
- (3) Lives a sinful life;
- (4) Delights in evil;
- (5) Is like chaff;
- (6) Shall not stand in the judgment;
- (7) Shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous;
- (8) His way shall perish.

2. The righteous--

- (1) Is blessed of God;
- (2) Has the right standard;
- (3) Engages in proper actions;
- (4) Lives a proper life;
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- (6) Is like a tree;
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VII. TREE. This Psalm compares the righteous to a tree.

1. A tree that is planted;
2. A tree planted by the rivers (~~streams~~) of water;
3. A tree that brings forth fruit;
4. A tree that brings forth fruit in its season;
5. A tree whose leaf does not wither;
6. Cf. Ps. 92:12.

SOME GENERAL LESSONS.

1. Every accountable human being has the basic responsibilities of (1) coming to have God's favor, and (2) maintaining that favor. Cf. 2 Tim. 2:15.
2. Every life is directed by some basic concept or standard. We may walk by standard of men, or we may walk by the standard of God. The wicked counsel: (1) Might makes right; (2) Gratify the unlawful desires of the flesh; (3) Do anything and every thing that pleases you; (4) Eat, drink, and be merry--for tomorrow we die; (5) the end justifies the means; (6) Do whatever seems right to you. The "blessed" person does not walk according to the advice of the wicked. Rather, he seeks proper counsel from the proper source.

3. The blessed person "...stands not in the way of sinners." Refusing to follow their standards, the blessed does not act as they act. He does not participate with them in their action. He does not become a companion with them. Cf. Prov. 13:20; 1 Cor. 15:33.
4. The blessed "...sits not in the seat of the scornful." "Wicked," "sinners," and "scornful" are all the same people. "Sitteth" refers to a settled manner of life. The "blessed" does not follow wicked standards, consequently does not engage in wicked actions, and consequently does not settle in a wicked manner of life.
5. The person "blessed of God" is one who "delights" in the law of God. This is his standard (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6). He knows the importance of truth. Cf. Jno. 8:32. He loves the truth. Cf. 2 Thess. 2:10. His delight involves (1) learning the truth, (2) living the truth, and (3) teaching the truth. He appreciates his obligation to contend earnestly for the faith. His study is not burdensome. He does not just read the word. He works hard to learn it and to know it. It never grows old. It is always fresh and is always refreshing.
6. Careful, prayerful, study is our obligation and our sacred privilege. Cf. Mt. 7:7; Jno. 7:17; Jno. 17:3; Acts 17:11.
7. The person blessed of God is like a tree which is "planted." He is not like a tree which grew up voluntarily. He is like the tree in connection with which there was deliberate care and choice. We have the power of choice. We may plant ourselves in God's service, or in the service of satan.
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9. The righteous person (blessed of God) must bear fruit. Consider: Jno. 15:1,2; Rom. 7:4. The righteous must produce the fruits of "good works." The righteous must work to lead others to the Christ.
10. The righteous person (blessed of God) not only brings forth fruit, but brings forth fruit "in its season." That is, the righteous person does that which is expected of him, and he does it when it is expected of him. He does not attend services just on "easter" Sunday, or during the gospel meeting. He is not a seasonal tree, but is an evergreen tree. He is faithful, loyal, devoted.
11. "And whatever he does shall prosper." This is the case because he is putting first things first. Cf. Mt. 6:33.

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11. "And whatever he does shall prosper." This is the case because he is putting first things first. Cf. Mt. 6:33.

PSALM 2

GOD OUR RULER--THE CHRIST OUR KING!

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: We have (in Acts 4:24-28) specific reference to the Holy Spirit and to David, in connection with this Psalm. The Holy Spirit, through Paul (Acts 13:32,33) connects this Psalm with the Lord's resurrection. The Psalm is definitely Messianic.

In these verses we have--

I. QUESTION 1

The Psalmist asks a question about opposition to Jehovah's King.

1. Why do the heathen rage?
2. Why do the people imagine a vain thing?

II. FACT 2

The Psalmist stresses the fact that earthly rulers oppose God and His anointed.

1. The kings of the earth set themselves against God, and against His anointed.
2. The rulers take counsel together against God, and against His anointed.

III. ATTITUDE 3

The Psalmist sets forth the attitude of the opposers.

The opposers say:

1. Let us break their bands asunder;
2. Let us cast away their cords from us.

IV. ATTITUDE 4-6

The Psalmist sets forth God's attitude toward the opposers.

1. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh.
2. The Lord shall have them in derision.
3. He shall speak unto them in His wrath.
4. He shall vex them in His sore displeasure.
5. He will say: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill in Zion."

V. THE KING
6-9

The King Himself speaks regarding His Kingship.

1. I will declare the decree.
2. The Lord hath said unto me--
 - (1) Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee;
 - (2) Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance;
 - (3) Ask of me, and I shall give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;
 - (4) Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;
 - (5) Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

VI. APPEAL
10-12a

The Psalmist appeals to the rulers of the earth to manifest their wisdom by submitting to him.

1. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings.
2. Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
3. Serve the Lord with fear.
4. Rejoice with trembling.
5. Kiss the Son--lest he be angry, and lest ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.

VII. PRONOUNCEMENT
12b

The Psalmist pronounces a blessing:

"Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God is our Ruler, and He has always retained to himself the right to govern man. In our day, He rules through Jesus Christ, Our King. The sacred rule-book is the Word of the Christ, the New Testament. The fact of opposition to the King does not destroy the fact that He IS King!

SPECIAL LESSONS:

- I. INSPIRATION. This Psalm gives us a wonderful illustration of the Bible doctrine of inspiration.
1. God gave the Psalm.
 2. He gave it by the Holy Spirit.
 3. He gave it by the Holy Spirit to and by His servant David.
 4. David spake it (and wrote it) under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- II. PENTECOST. This Psalm is definitely a Pentecost pointer. That is, it points to the great Pentecost of Acts 2.
1. The fact of its Messianic nature is clearly set forth in Acts 4:24-28; Acts 13:32,33; Heb. 1:5; and Heb. 5:5.
 2. Christ rose from the dead; ascended upon the wings of the cloud; and the cloud brought Him to God; He entered into the holy of holies; He was crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And Upon Pentecost of Acts 2 the Holy Spirit (as promised) was sent forth to the apostles in order that the announcement might be made: Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 3. It was upon this memorable Pentecost that the announcement was made that the one rejected upon the earth had been accepted in heaven--that the crown of thorns had been exchanged for a crown of glory.
 4. It was upon this memorable Pentecost that (1) the Kingdom of the Christ was established among men; (2) the first gospel sermon under the Great Commission was preached; (3) men learned for the first time since the tragedy in Eden the possibility of and the means of actual forgiveness of sins.

III. REBELLION. Wicked men involve themselves in rebellion against God, against His word, against His Church.

1. They rage.
2. They devise empty schemes.
3. The wicked counsel with the wicked.
4. The wicked say: Let us make it clear that we are not under any law from God on any subject!
5. God will (1) laugh at them; (2) hold them in derision; (3) make known His wrath; (4) vex them in His sore displeasure.

IV. THE KING.

1. Is the Son of God;
2. Is anointed by God;
3. Is the "begotten" of God;
4. Is in position to "ask" of God;
5. Is heir of God;
6. Is the Victorious King.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. God said to the King: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." This reminds us of the Great Commission: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). It reminds us also of the Lord's statement to the apostles: "...and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

2. Men often try to "break" the bands of God--the bands with which God holds them accountable to Himself. But in reality they simply "break" themselves in their efforts to get away from God's law.
3. The earthly Ruler is obligated to be wise. He will receive instructions from God's law. He will serve the Lord with reverence. He will "rejoice with trembling." He will seek to please the Heavenly King.
4. Blessed is the person--Who does not walk in the ways of the wicked; who does know and does walk according to the law of God: who does put his trust in God.

PSALM 3

GOD--OUR DELIVERER

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: It is commonly held that this Psalm was written by David ". . . when he fled from Absalom." Absalom, David's son, led a fierce and powerful rebellion against his own father, seeking to take the Kingdom from David. In this connection it is helpful to read 2 Samuel, chapters 13 through 15.

In this Psalm we have--

I. CHARGE 1,2

David refers to his many foes, and to their foolish charge.

O Lord, how many are my foes!

Many are rising against me;

Many are saying of me,

There is no help for him in God.

II. ASSURANCE 3,4

David stresses the believer's assurance.

But thou, O Lord, are a shield about me,
my glory, and the lifter of my head.

I cry aloud to the Lord,

and he answers me from his holy hill.

III. BLESSINGS 5,6

The Psalmist mentions consequent blessings.

I lie down and sleep;

I wake again, for the Lord sustains me.

I am not afraid of ten thousands of people

who have set themselves against me round about.

IV. DELIVERANCE 7

The Psalmist prays for deliverance from his enemies.

Arise, O Lord!

Deliver me, O my God!

For thou dost smite all my enemies on the cheek,
thou dost break the teeth of the wicked.

V. SOURCE
8

David emphasizes that God is the source of
deliverance.

Deliverance belongs to the Lord;
thy blessing be upon thy people!

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: True deliverance comes from God. Let us be careful to depend upon Him. Let us be careful to maintain confidence in Him, even in times of peril.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Some Great Things About God.

1. He is my shield;
2. He is my glory;
3. He is the lifter up of my head;
4. He is the one who hears and answers;
5. He is my sustainer;
6. He is the remover of fear;
7. He is the deliverer.

II. The Psalm stresses David's--

1. Complaint (verses 1,2);
2. Confidence (verses 3,4);
3. Comfort (verses 5,6);
4. Conviction (verses 7,8).

III. A Marvelous Similarity.

1. There was rebellion against David.

There was rebellion against the Lord.

2. David said: "Arise, and let us flee..." (2 Sam. 15:14).

The Lord said: "Arise, let us go hence" (Jno. 14:31).

III. Continued.

3. David "...passed over the brook Kidron..." (2 Sam. 15:23).

The Lord passed over the brook Kidron (Jno. 18:1).

4. David said about God: "....let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him" (2 Sam. 15:26).

The Lord said to the Father: "...nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Mt. 26:39).

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The fact that others may say that God has turned away from us does not mean or does not prove that He has turned away from us.
2. Regardless of how many foes or problems we may have, we can turn to God and we ought to turn to God.
3. Our problems should drive us TO God--not AWAY FROM God!
4. One man--with God--is a majority anywhere.
5. Our difficulties with our children should be dealt with on the basis of taking the matter to God. David cried aloud to God.
6. The "Blessed Assurance" is to be found in proper relationship with God.
7. When we are right with God, there is no reason to be afraid of men.
 "...for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say: The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Heb. 13:5,6).
8. As we contemplate instances of divine deliverance we think not only of David, but also of (1) Noah, (2) Joseph, (3) the Hebrew men--Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego), (4) Daniel, (5) Paul.
9. Paul says: "At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed,

9. Continued.

and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen." (2 Tim. 4:16-18).

10. G. Campbel Morgan says: "A consciousness of the constancy of the Divine Love has always been the strength of a trusting soul amid circumstances of the greatest peril. If that is lost, all is lost.. If that be maintained no great waters can overwhelm."

11. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35-39).

PSALM 4

GOD--OUR SECURITY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This is a Psalm of David, and in metrical structure it is very similar to the third Psalm. The historical background is likely the same as that for the third Psalm--that is, the time of the rebellion led by Absalom. Some hold that it was written "on the eve of the battle which is described in 2 Samuel 18:1-8."

In these verses we have--

I. CALL

1

David calls upon God in prayer.

Answer me when I call, O god of my right!

Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

II. REMONSTRATION

2

He remonstrates with his enemies.

O men, how long shall my honor suffer shame?

How long will you love vain words, and seek after
lies? Selah.

III. ADMONITION

3-5

David Admonishes his enemies.

But know that the lord has set apart the godly
for himself;

the Lord hears when I call to him.

Be angry, but sin not;

commune with your own hearts on your beds, and
be silent.

Offer right sacrifices,

and put your trust in the Lord.

IV. SKEPTICISM

6

David refers to the cry of the skeptic.

There are many who say, "O that we might see
some good!

Lift up the light of thy countenance upon us,
O Lord!"

V. PRAYER

7,8

David again prays to God, expressing joy for
blessings received.

Thou hast put more joy in my heart
than they have when their grain and wine
abound.

In peace I will both lie down and sleep;
for thou alone, O Lord, makest me dwell in
safety.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God is our real safety and security. We must place
our trust in him.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Some great lessons about God.

1. God is the source of human righteousness.
2. He is our deliverer.
3. He is the source of mercy.
4. He is the one who hears and who answers prayers.
5. He sets apart the godly unto himself.
6. He is the one who shows good.
7. He is the giver of gladness.
8. He is the source of peace.
9. He is the source of security.

II. Some things about rebels.

1. They sought to dishonor David.
2. They were in opposition to God's anointed, God's king.
3. They loved vanity.
4. They sought after falsehood.
5. They were skeptical--they scoffed at God.

III. David's admonition to the rebels. He said:

1. I know that the Lord has set apart the godly for himself;
2. Know that the Lord hears the righteous when they call;
3. Be angry, but do not sin;
4. Think seriously about your attitude and your conduct;
5. Get yourselves right with God;
6. Put your trust in the Lord.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. It is amazing that David--under the circumstances, surrounded by foes involved in rebellion led by his own son--could speak in such glowing terms of the wonderful joy which comes from God. Let us learn to rejoice, even in tribulation. Cf. Rom. 5:3; Phil. 4:4.
2. To rebel against God's arrangements is to rebel against God.
3. It is right to be "spiritually indignant," but we must not allow this indignation to lead us to sin. Paul quotes this portion of this Psalm, Eph. 4:26.
4. The rebellion was serious. The foes were numerous. But, David placed his trust in Jehovah. Let us learn to cast our cares upon Him, in the full assurance that He cares for us. Cf. 1 Pet. 5:7.
5. In the quietness of the night, we should reflect often upon our attitude and conduct. So much is revealed to us about ourselves when we are alone with God.

6. It was not enough to offer sacrifices. The sacrifices has to be "right sacrifices." It is not enough just to be religious. One must be religiously right.
7. Scoffers and skeptics abound on every hand, demanding an immediate, miraculous demonstration or evidence of God. Only the beleiver knows the indescribable joy which comes by proper relationship with God.
8. The true joy which comes to the righteous is "more" than the superficial joy of worldly pleasures.
9. Get right with God--then you won't need a tranquilizer in order to sleep. He delivers from distress. He bestows mercy. He hears and answers prayers. He holds the godly close to himself. He provides joy, peace, safety, and blessed, refreshing sleep.
10. In the third Psalm, verse 5, according to the King James reading, David said: "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." Then, in the fourth Psalm, verse 8, David says: "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety." David says: That is what I did, and I will do it again!

PSALM 5

GOD, OUR PROTECTOR AND VICTOR

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm is definitely Davidic in style, and it is probable that David is the writer. The time and circumstances of its composition are uncertain. It may have been written immediately prior to Absalom's revolt. The writer is beset with enemies all about him, but his confidence in God is abundantly clear. It is a morning prayer.

In these verses we have--

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| I. PLEA
1,2 | David Pleads for God to hear his prayer.

1. Give ear to my words, O Lord;

2. Give heed to my groaning.

3. Hearken to the sound of my cry,

my King and my God,

4. For to thee do I pray. |
| II. CONSISTENCY
3 | David stresses his consistency in prayer.

1. In the morning thou dost hear my voice;

2. In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for thee,

and watch. |
| III. OPPOSITION
4-6 | The Psalmist emphasizes God's opposition to the wicked.

1. God does not delight in wickedness;

2. Evil may not sojourn with Him;

3. The boastful may not stand before His eyes;

4. He hates all evildoers;

5. He destroys those who speak lies;

6. He abhors bloodthirsty and deceitful men. |
| IV. FAVOR
7,8 | The Psalmist stresses God's favor toward the righteous.

1. Because of the abundance of thy love I will enter thy
house;

2. I will worship toward thy holy temple in the fear of
thee;

3. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness; |

V. DESCRIPTION/
PLEA
9,10 David describes his enemies and pleads for God to
deal with them.

1. There is no truth in their mouth;
2. Their heart is destruction;
3. Their throat is an open sepulchre;
4. They flatter with their tongue;
5. Make them bear their guilt, O God;
6. Let them fall by their own counsels;
7. Cast them out because of their transgressions;
8. They have rebelled against thee.

VI. PRAYER
11,12 David prays for protection and victory for the righteous.

1. Let all who take refuge in thee rejoice;
2. Let them sing for joy;
3. Do thou defend them;
4. Let those who love thy name exult in thee;
5. Thou dost bless the righteous, O Lord--thou dost cover
him with favor as with a shield.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God provides protection and victory for the righteous.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. About God.

1. He listens to prayers;
2. He answers prayers;
3. He is Lord, King, and God;
4. He expects constancy and persistence in prayer. Cf. Lk. 18:1-7;
5. He has no delight in wickedness;
6. Evil does not and cannot dwell with Him;
7. The arrogant shall not stand before Him;

8. He hates all evildoers;
9. He destroys those who speak lies;
10. He abhors bloodthirsty and deceitful men;
11. He is characterized by an abundance of steadfast love;
12. He is the proper object of worship;
13. He is to be revered;
14. He can and does lead men in paths of righteousness.
15. He deals justly with the wicked;
16. He is the place of refuge for those who will take refuge in Him;
17. He is the source of joy for the righteous;
18. He is the defender of those who love Him;
19. He blesses the righteous with favor "as with a shield."

II. The Psalmist describes his wicked enemies.

1. They are bent on doing evil.
2. They are liars;
3. They are destroyers;
4. Their speech is filthy;
5. They are transgressors;
6. They are rebels against God.

III. God's attitude toward the wicked.

1. He has no pleasure in wickedness;
2. Evil cannot dwell with Him;
3. He hates haughtiness;
4. He hates all evildoers;
5. He destroys liars;
6. He abhors bloodthirsty men;
7. He abhors deceitful men.

IV. God's attitude toward the righteous.

1. He will hear their prayers;
2. He showers His love upon them;
3. He leads them in righteousness;
4. He protects them;
5. He enables them to rejoice;
6. He defends them;
7. He enables them to be victorious.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Like David, we must know and must respect the power of prayer.
2. The Lord "...spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray" (Lk. 18:1).
3. It is right for us to pray that God will deal justly with the wicked-- that He will destroy the efforts of those who are opposed to righteousness.
4. God hates lying. "...and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).
5. In Romans 3 Paul quotes from this Psalm (as well as from several Psalms) and says in verse 19: "Now we know that whatsoever the law saith it speaketh to them that are under the law..." Clearly, therefore, we are to regard the Psalms as being a part of the law.

PSALM 6

GOD, OUR MERCIFUL FORGIVER

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm is generally regarded as having been written by David. The Psalmist is sorely troubled. He is encompassed by enemies; his heart is filled with grief. He regards his condition as chastisement from the Lord. He stresses his confidence in deliverance.

In these verses we have--

I. APPEAL 1-5

David pleads for deliverance from chastisement.

1. Rebuke me not in thy anger;
2. Do not chasten me in thy wrath;
3. Be gracious to me;
4. Heal me;
5. Turn, O Lord, save my life;
6. Deliver me for the sake of thy steadfast love.

II. ATTRITION 6,7

David describes the pitiable condition of the chastened.

1. I am weary with my moaning;
2. Every night I flood my bed with tears;
3. My eye wastes away because of grief;
4. My eye grows weak because of all my foes.

III. ASSURANCE 8-10

David emphasizes that God is willing to hear and to forgive.

1. Depart from me, all you workers of evil;
2. The Lord has heard the sound of my weeping;
3. He has heard my supplication;
4. The Lord accepts my prayer;
5. All my enemies shall be ashamed and sorely troubled;
6. My enemies shall turn back, and be put to shame in
a moment.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God, in love and mercy, forgives the penitent.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. TERMS expressive of the plea.

1. Rebuke me not;
2. Nor chasten me;
3. Be gracious to me;
4. Heal me;
5. How long?
6. Turn, O Lord;
7. Save my life;
8. Deliver me.

II. TERMS describing the conscience-stricken.

1. I am languishing;
2. My bones are troubled;
3. My soul is sorely troubled;
4. I am approaching death and the grave;
5. I am weary with my moaning;
6. I flood my bed with tears;
7. I drench my couch with my weeping;
8. My eye wastes away because of grief;
9. My eye grows weak because of all my foes.

III. TERMS expressive of forgiveness and victory.

1. Depart from me, all you workers of evil;
2. The Lord has heard the sound of my weeping;
3. The Lord has heard my supplication;
4. The Lord accepts my prayer;
5. All my enemies shall be ashamed and sorely troubled;

6. They (the enemies) shall turn back, and be put to shame in a moment.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. "My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, Nor faint when thou art reprov'd of him; For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, And scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6,7).
2. Sin brings indescribable grief and sorrow to the person whose conscience is rooted in God.
3. The Psalmist speaks at length of his pain. There is no pain like that of being conscious of sin in one's life--pain that comes in knowing that God has turned away.
4. Paul says to the Corinthian brethren: "I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation . . ." (2 Cor. 7:9,10).
5. May God help us always to have a conscience that can be pricked.
6. Sin causes God to turn away. Repentance will cause Him to turn toward the penitent.
7. If the pain and agony of the stricken conscience is great, how much greater the joy of forgiveness.
8. In life we are to remember God, and to praise God.
9. Thank God for the joy that comes in realization of the fact that when God "turns" toward us, our troubles turn from us.
10. How great and wonderful the assurance that God hears our prayers and forgives our sins.
11. We must be weak in ourselves in order to become strong in God. " . . . for when I am weak, then am I strong: (2 Cor. 12:10); "Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might" (Eph. 6:10).

12. David speaks of pain--pain that comes (1) from knowing that one has sinned against God; (2) from a conscience guilty of offense; (3) from knowing that God has turned away; (4) from facing problems and troubles when God has turned away.
13. Consider: The night and the day of the soul. Verses 1-7 describe the soul, conscience stricken, in the darkness of the night of sin. Verses 8-10 picture the dawn, and picture the blessings and joy of the day of forgiveness.

PSALM 7

GOD, OUR RIGHTEOUS JUDGE

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: The title note says that this is a Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush, the Benjamite. Adam Clark says that "Shiggaion" means "to wander." He concludes that this Psalm is a Psalm of David, written while he was "wandering" in efforts to get away from King Saul. He suggests that Cush the Benjamite was close to King Saul, and had told Saul evil things about David. The Psalm was possibly written by David, in the wilderness, when King Saul was seeking to take his life.

In these verses we have--

I. PRAYER 1,2

David prays for deliverance from his pursuers.

1. O Lord my God, in thee do I take refuge;
2. Save me from all my pursuers;
3. Deliver me, lest like a lion they rend me.

II. PROTEST 3-5

David protests the charges of his enemies.

1. If--
 - (1) I have done as they say;
 - (2) There is wrong in my hand;
 - (3) I have requited my friend with evil;
 - (4) I have plundered my enemy without cause--
2. Then--
 - (1) Let the enemy pursue me and overtake me;
 - (2) Let the enemy trample my life to the ground;
 - (3) Let the enemy lay my soul in the dust.

III. PLEA 6-8

David pleads with God, the Judge, to deal with him (David) justly.

1. Lift thyself up against the fury of my enemies;
2. Take thy position as judge;
3. Let the people be assembled about thee;

4. Judge me, O lord, according to my righteousness;
5. Judge me according to the integrity that is in me.

IV. PROCLAMATION
9-11

David proclaims that God is a righteous judge.

1. O let the evil of the wicked come to an end;
2. Establish thou the righteous;
3. Thou righteous God triest the minds and hearts;
4. My shield is with God who saves the upright in heart;
5. God is a righteous judge;
6. He is one who hates sin.

V. PUNISHMENT
12-16

David stresses that God punishes the wicked.

1. If a man does not repent, God will whet His sword;
2. God has bent and strung His bow;
3. God is ready to punish the wicked person;
4. The wicked man conceives evil, is filled with mischief,
and brings forth lies;
5. The wicked man makes a pit and falls into it;
6. His evil returns upon his own head.

IV. PRAISE
17

David expresses praise rightly due to God.

1. I will give to the Lord the thanks due to His
righteousness;
2. I will sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most
High.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God is our righteous judge.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. About God.

1. He is the one in whom we should take refuge;
2. He is the one who delivers us;
3. He is the one who rules in the affairs of men;
4. He is the righteous judge;

I. Continued.

5. He punishes the wicked, but establishes the righteous;
6. He tries (tests) the minds of men;
7. He is the shield and savior of the righteous;
8. He demands repentance of the sinner;
9. He is worthy of praise and thanksgiving;
10. He is displeased when false charges are made against the righteous.

II. About the wicked man:

1. His life and conduct occasion the wrath of God;
2. His evil will come to an end;
3. He will stand in judgment before God;
4. He is called upon to repent;
5. He follows a course of self-destruction.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The fact that charges are made against us does not prove that the charges are true.
2. We must live so as to be completely confident of being right with God, regardless of the charges which may be made against us.
3. If we walk in sin, then God will not be with us as we face the problems and difficulties of life.
4. God is the righteous Judge. There is a final judgment, at which all will be present. All will be judged according to the deeds done while in the body, whether they be good or bad.
5. God is against the person who will not repent.
6. The wicked follows a course of self-destruction.
7. We must constantly thank God and praise Him because of His righteousness.

PSALM 8

GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm is a beautiful song of worship. It opens and closes with the same words of praise. Such is the glory of God's divinity, power, and goodness that it fills not only the earth, but transcends the very heavens. This Psalm is definitely Messianic in nature, and is quoted by the Holy Spirit (in reference to the Christ) in Heb. 2:6-9.

In this Psalm we have---

I. EXCLAMATION The Psalmist gives an exclamation of praise.

1

1. He is Jehovah, Our Lord;
2. His name is excellent in all the earth!

II. DECLARATION

2

The Psalmist declares that God's glory is made known even by babes and infants, and this to the consternation of God's enemies.

1. Thy glory is chanted even by the mouths of babes and infants;
2. Thou hast founded a bulwark because of thy foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.

III. INTERROGATION

3,4

The Psalmist asks a significantly profound question:

1. When I look at--
 - (1) The heavens, the work of thy fingers;
 - (2) The moon and the stars which thou hast established;
2. I have this question come to mind--
 - (1) What is man that thou are mindful of him?
 - (2) What is the son of man that thou dost care for him?

IV. EXULTATION

5-8

The Psalmist describes man's honor and position:

1. Thou hast made man a little lower than heavenly beings;
2. Thou dost crown him with glory and honor;

3. Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands;
4. Thou hast put all things under his feet--
 - (1) All sheep and oxen;
 - (2) The beasts of the field;
 - (3) The birds of the air;
 - (4) The fish of the sea;
 - (5) All things that pass along the paths of the sea.

V. EXCLAMATION
9

The Psalmist repeats the wonderful exclamation of praise:

1. He is Jehovah, Our Lord;
2. His name is excellent (glorious) in all the earth!

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: This beautiful Psalm stresses the condescending love and goodness of God toward man. It exemplifies the natural response of man to God: gratitude and praise.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. About God.

1. His name is excellent (glorious, majestic) in all the earth;
2. He has set his glory above and upon the heavens;
3. His praise and glory are proclaimed--even by the mouths of babes;
4. By the testimony of babes and infants he confounds His enemies.
5. The heavens--the moon and the stars--are the work of His fingers.
6. His condescending love for man is such as to cause man to ask, "Why?"
7. He is the maker of man. He made man a "little lower than the angels" and "...crowned him with glory and honor."
8. He has given man dominion over His creation.

II. About Man.

1. He is the product of God's creation;
2. He is the object of God's concern and affection;
3. He was made a "little lower than the angels";
4. He was crowned with glory and honor;
5. He has been given dominion over the works of God's hands;
6. He has the obligation to be thankful and grateful, and constantly to praise God for the divine love and blessings.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. This is a beautiful prayer of praise. Not a single petition. It is possible for one to pray to God without asking Him for something.
2. Let us do our part in praising the name of God in all the earth.
3. If the "heavens declare the glory of God" so does the very existence of a baby.
4. The heavens, the moon, the stars, the sheep, the oxen, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea--are the works of God's hands. Not the work of spontaneous generation and the evolutionary process.
5. There are "paths of the seas." Inspired by this passage, the great Oceanographer Matthew Montain Maury charted the paths of the seas, which paths are followed by ocean vessels today. The bible is scientifically accurate!
6. The following analysis is from the CAMBRIDGE BIBLE. "It is the marvel of God's choice of man to be the chief revelation of himself and His representative on earth that is the theme of this Psalm. (1) Although God's glory is so conspicuously stamped upon the heavens, He makes infants the defenders of His Cause (verses 1,2); (2) The infinite vastness of the

heavens would seem to make a puny creature like man beneath God's notice (verses 3,4); (3) no so, for He made him in His own image, and appointed him His viceroy over creation (verses 5,6); (4) in all its varied forms of life (verses 7,8).

7. While the chief priests and the scribes were moved with indignation, the children were praising the Lord (Mt. 21:15). The Lord quoted verse 8 of the eighth Psalm (Mt. 21:16). Inspiration also quotes the Psalm in Heb. 2:6-8.

PSALM 9

GOD IN RIGHTEOUSNESS JUDGES THE NATIONS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This may be a Psalm of David, and it may have been written--perhaps many years after the actual event--in celebration of the great victory over Goliath. It is without doubt a Psalm of Thanksgiving--especially thanks giving to God for victories given.

In these verses we have--

I. PROCLAMATION

1,2

The Psalmist proclaims that he will praise the Lord.

1. I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart;
2. I will tell of all thy wondrous deeds;
3. I will be glad and exult in thee;
4. I will sing praise to thy name, O Most High.

II. PRAISE

3-12

He proceeds to praise God;

1. For personal deliverance--
 - (1) My enemies stumbled and perished before thee;
 - (2) Thou hast maintained my just cause;
 - (3) Thou hast sat on thy throne giving righteous judgment.
2. For the destruction of wicked nations--
 - (1) Thou hast destroyed the wicked nations;
 - (2) Thou has blotted out their name for ever and ever;
 - (3) Thou has rooted out their cities;
 - (4) The very memory of them has perished.
3. For righteous judgment--
 - (1) The Lord sits enthroned for ever;
 - (2) He has established His throne for judgment;
 - (3) He judges the world with righteousness;

4. For His protection and compassion--

(1) The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed;

(2) He is a stronghold in times of trouble;

(3) Those who know His name put their trust in
Him;

(4) He does not forsake those who seek Him.

5. Inviting others to join with him in praising
God--

(1) Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in
Zion!

(3) He who avenges blood is mindful of them;

(4) He does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

III. PRAYER
13,14

The Psalmist prays for deliverance from his enemies.

1. Be gracious to me, O Lord!

2. Behold what I suffer from those who hate me;

3. Lift me up from the gates of death--

(1) That I may recount all thy praises;

(2) That I may rejoice in thy deliverance.

IV. PRONOUNCEMENT
15-18

The Psalmist pronounces the fact that God will
destroy the wicked nations.

1. The nations have sunk in the pit which they
have made;

2. They have become ensnared in their own nets;

3. The Lord has made Himself known;

4. He has executed judgement;

5. All the nations that forget God shall depart to
Sheol;

6. The needy shall not always be forgotten, and
the hope of the poor shall not perish for ever.

V. PLEA
19,20

The Psalmist pleads that the nations might know
that they stand before Him:

1. Let not man prevail;
 2. Let the nations be judged before thee!
 3. Put them in fear, O Lord;
 4. Let the nations know that they are but men!
-

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: All men and all nations stand before God. God blesses those men and those nations which fear Him. God punished (and will punish) wicked men; He brings wicked nations to destruction. God will not bless any nation that turns away from Him.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. On Praising God.

1. Should be with the whole heart;
2. Should be in consideration of His wonderful deeds;
3. Should be included in our singing;
4. We should praise God--
 - (1) For personal deliverance;
 - (2) For His righteous judgment;
 - (3) For His protecting providence;
 - (4) For His compassion.
5. We should invite others to join in our praise to Jehovah (work to bring men into a proper relationship with Jehovah).

II. About God.

1. Is to be praised by His people;
2. Is the doer of wonderful deeds;
3. Is the Deliverer;
4. Is the righteous judge of men and of nations;

5. Is our stronghold in times of trouble;
6. Requires our seeking after Him;
7. Dwells in Zion;
8. Is the avenger of blood;
9. Is the one in whom we must place our trust;
10. Remembers the cry of the afflicted;
11. Is the destroyer of wicked nations;
12. Is concerned about the needy;
13. Wants the poor to have hope;
14. Is the one before whom all men and all nations stand.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Let us be careful to be mindful of the wonderful deeds of Jehovah.
2. Let us be careful to be thankful, and to express our thankfulness to God.
3. Let us be careful always to praise God--in our words and in our conduct.
4. Let us be careful always to do what we can to get the gospel message to all men in every nation.
5. God will not maintain a person in just any cause--but He will maintain His people in a just cause.
6. God completely roots out the wicked nations.
7. We must live day by day in view of the judgment to come.
8. The church of our Lord is the very dwelling place of God (Cf. Eph. 2:22).
9. Men and nations, in involving themselves in wickedness, are following the course of self-destruction.
10. In Biblical compassion, let us be meaningfully concerned about the poor and the needy.

PSALM 10

CALL FOR JUDGMENT UPON THE WICKED

In this Psalm we have--

I. COMPLAINT

1,2

The Psalmist asks a question, states the problem, and makes a plea.

1. Why dost thou--

(1) Stand afar off, O Lord?

(2) Hide thyself in times of trouble?

2. In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor;

3. Let them be caught in their own schemes.

II. CHARACTER

3-11

The Psalmist describes the character of the wicked, with particular emphasis upon heart, attitude, speech, and conduct.

1. They desire the wrong things--are greedy for gain;

2. They curse and renounce the Lord;

3. They are characterized by sinful pride;

4. They do not seek the Lord;

5. Their thoughts are: "There is no God."

6. His ways prosper at all times.

7. He is not concerned about thy judgments;

8. He is not afraid of his foes;

9. He thinks: "I shall not meet with adversity;

10. He plots and schemes in wicked endeavors;

11. He takes advantage of the poor;

12. He thinks that God never sees his wicked deeds.

III. CALL

12-16

The Psalmist calls to God for divine action upon the wicked.

1. Thou art mindful of the trouble and vexation;

2. The unfortunate commits himself to thee;

3. Thou hast been the helper of the fatherless;
4. Pour out thy wrath upon the wicked;
5. As King--drive out the wicked nations.

IV. CONFIDENCE
17-18

The Psalmist expresses confidence that God will hear and will do justice.

1. Thou wilt hear the desire of the meek;
2. Thou wilt strengthen their heart and hear their pleas;
3. Thou wilt do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed;
4. Thou wilt deliver the persecuted from fear.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God does and will deal justly, and has a special concern about His people. In spite of the way things may seem to be, God sees and knows and cares.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Heart of the Wicked--

1. Is boastful;
2. Desires the wrong things;
3. Is greedy;
4. Produces profane speech;
5. Renounces the Lord;
6. Is filled with sinful pride;
7. Does not foresee trouble or problems;
8. Contemplates wicked schemes;
9. Seeks to take advantage of others;
10. Thinks God will not see;
11. Thinks he will not be called to account.

II. God--

1. May seem to stand afar off, and to hide His face.
2. May allow the wicked to prosper.
3. Does see and does know what is going on in this world.
4. Does hold all men accountable.
5. Is concerned about the unfortunate.
6. Is the helper of the fatherless.
7. Will deal justly with all men.
8. Is King for ever and ever.
9. Will hear the meek and will strengthen their hearts.
10. Delivers from fear.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Prov. 4:23. If the heart is wrong the attitude will be wrong, the thinking will be wrong, the speech will be wrong, and the conduct will be wrong. If the heart is right, the attitude will be right, the speech will be right, and the conduct will be right.
2. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked."
3. The fact that God does not do what we think He ought to do, when we think he ought to do it, does not mean that He does not know or does not care.
4. The skeptic was arguing with the preacher that there is no real practical value in one's being a Christian. In trying to prove his point he referred to his own farming and to his own crops. He declared arrogantly: "Now, my neighbor down the road is a Christian. We both farm. We plant the same crops. We plant at about the same time. We work our land about the same way. But, come next October, I will probably have better crops than he has." With a smile of complete satisfaction the skeptic said, "Now, preacher, how do you explain that? The preacher said: "Sir, the Lord does not settle His accounts in October."

PSALM 11

THE ANSWER OF FAITH TO THE COUNSEL OF FEAR

In these verses we have--

I. DECLARATION 1a

The Psalmist declares his place of refuge.

1. In the Lord I take refuge;
2. Therefore (implication) I will not listen to the counsel of fear.

II. COUNSEL 1b-3

The Psalmist discusses the counsel that comes out of fear.

1. Flee like a bird to the mountains;
2. The wicked bend the bow;
3. They have fitted their arrow to the string;
4. They will shoot in the dark at the upright in heart;
5. If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?

III. RESPONSE 4-7

The Psalmist sets forth the response of faith.

1. The Lord is in His holy temple;
2. The Lord's throne is in heaven;
3. God sees and God tests the children of men;
4. He tests the righteous and the wicked, and He hates those who love violence;
5. God will pour out His wrath upon the wicked;
6. He is righteous, and He loves righteous deeds;
7. The upright shall behold His face.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: We must not listen to the counsel of fear, but must take refuge in God

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Peril which produces fear--

1. Is wicked;
2. Is imminent;
3. Is subtle;
4. Is pessimistic;
5. Is not mindful of God;
6. Causes one to react in the wrong way.

II. Faith which nullifies fear--

1. Sees the Lord in His temple;
2. Recognizes that God rules in the affairs of men;
3. Realizes that God sees and knows;
4. Understands that God tests men;
5. Knows that God hates wickedness;
6. Knows that God will punish wickedness;
7. Knows that God loves and approves righteousness.

III. The Lord and Righteousness (v. 7)--

1. The Lord is righteous;
 2. He loves righteous deeds;
 3. He approves the righteous;
 4. He rewards righteousness.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The Lord is the great remover of fear. "But he saith unto them, it is I; be not afraid" (Jno. 6:20). "And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace" (Acts 18:9).
2. Fear often causes one to do that which he ought not to do--or to refuse to do what he ought to do. Cf. Mt. 25:25. "...and I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own."
3. Fear knocked on the door. Faith answered. There was no one there!
4. Fear comes in if and when God is left out of the thinking. Note that in the counsel of fear there is no thought of God.
5. Faith produces love. Perfect love casteth out fear (1 Jno. 4:18).
6. Cf. Isa. 6:1. "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." The man who sees Jehovah enthroned in heaven does not panic, does not fear, does not flee.
7. Courage is not the absence of fear--but the conquest of it!
8. "...for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Heb. 13:5,6).

PSALM 12

CRY AND CONFIDENCE--IN THE MIDST OF WICKEDNESS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: A Psalm of David. Probably written during the time of his fleeing from King Saul. Unscrupulous enemies were in positions of authority, and were busily engaged in poisoning King Saul's mind against him. "The ungrateful citizens of Keilah were ready to betray their deliverer" (1 Sam. 23:11). The Ziphites deliberately meditated treachery (1 Sam. 23:19ff).

In these verses we have--

I. CRY 1

In View of the scarcity of godly men, David cries to God for help.

1. Help, Jehovah; for the godly man ceaseth;
2. The faithful fail from among the children of men.

II. COMPLAINT 2

David describes the wicked speech of the ungodly.

1. They speak falsehood every one with his neighbor;
2. They speak with flattering lips and deceitful hearts.

III. CONFIDENCE 3,4

The Psalmist stresses that God will destroy those who speak wickedly.

1. Jehovah will cut off all flattering lips;
2. He will destroy the boastful tongue;
3. He will destroy those who say: our speech is our own business; we are accountable to no one!

IV. CARE 5

The Psalmist stresses God's response to the call of the needy.

1. God will arise to respond to the calls of the poor and needy;
2. God will give them the safety for which they long.

V. CHARACTER
6,7

The Psalmist describes the words of the Lord.

1. The words of the Lord are pure words;
2. They are as silver purified in an earthen furnace, refined seven times;
3. God will keep His words;
4. He will guard them (each one) from generation to generation.

VI. CORRUPTION
8

The Psalmist speaks of the source of vileness.

1. Godless men strut around;
2. As baseness (vileness) is given high rating among men--as vileness is exalted among the sons of men.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Because of the power and providence of God, wickedness shall not prevail.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. God--

1. Is our helper;
2. Is the avenger;
3. Is the one to whom we cry in time of need;
4. Is our protector.

II. Don't give up!

Note the conditions out of which David wrote. There was a dearth of righteousness: "The godly ceaseth"; "the faithful fail from among the children of men." There was an abundance of wickedness. There was wickedness of speech. There was oppression of the poor and the needy. The wicked walked on every side. Vileness (vile men) was exalted. Yet, the situation was not one of hopelessness. Regardless of the wickedness of the world, we must not give up. We must not despair. We must not fail to cry out to God.

III. The speech of the wicked.

1. There was vanity (falsehood);
2. There was flattery;
3. There was insincerity (hypocrisy);
4. There was boasting;
5. There was no sense of accountability;
6. There was misdirection.

IV. The speech of the Lord.

1. Is in contrast to the speech of the wicked;
2. His words are pure words;
3. His words are refined words;
4. They are words which He Himself does and will preserve.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. When there is a dearth of righteousness, and wickedness abounds, the godly man can and must call upon God for strength and help.
2. Wickedness of speech is the result of wickedness of heart. Pure speech comes from a pure heart. "...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Mt. 12:34). If the heart is right the attitude will be right, the speech will be right, the conduct will be right, the dress will be right.
3. Identifying marks of impure speech: vanity (lying), flattery, insincerity, boasting, no regard for the Lord's will, lack of sense of accountability, directed against that about which the Lord is concerned.
4. When "the vilest men are exalted" wickedness abounds.
5. Regardless of how wicked the surroundings may be, it is still possible for one to remain faithful to God.

6. Regardless of how wicked and how unfavorable the place might be, righteousness can be established there. A church of the Lord was established in wicked Corinth.
7. The presence of an abundance of wickedness does not mean that god has forgotten, or that He does not care, or that He will not hear.
8. God is opposed to all who oppress the poor, and to all who fail to care for the needy.

PSALM 13
A MATTER OF TIME

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This, too, is a Psalm of David, written in a time of his almost utter despair. He is severely persecuted, and it seems to him that God has turned away. Yet, he has the faith, the confidence, and the courage to pray to Him who is able to help. It was probably written when he was being pursued by King Saul (Cf. 1 Sam. 26:20).

In these verses we have--

I. CRY
1,2

The Cry of despair:

1. How long, O Lord?
2. Wilt thou forget me for ever?
3. How long must I bear pain in my soul?
4. How long must I have sorrow in my heart all the day?
5. How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

II. CALL
3,4

The Call of hope:

1. Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;
2. Lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;
3. Hear me, lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him";
4. Hear me, lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

III. COMFORT
5,6

The comfort of faith:

1. But I have trusted in thy steadfast love;
2. My heart shall rejoice in thy salvation;
3. I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Even when problems are almost overwhelming, the situation is not hopeless. In magnificent confidence the man of faith calls upon God.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. There are times when--

1. There seems to be no help from Jehovah;
2. He seems to be waiting too long to respond to our pleas;
3. He seems to have turned his face from us;
4. The pain of soul and sorrow of heart seems to overwhelm us;
5. Our enemies seem to have prevailed over us.

II. But, our faith and our confidence must not waver--

1. We can still cry out to God in prayer;
2. We can pray--
 - (1) Consider me;
 - (2) Answer me;
 - (3) "Lighten my eyes"--give me joy;
 - (4) Preserve my life;
 - (5) Deliver me from my enemies.
3. We can be certain that God will hear--
 - (1) We know His steadfast love;
 - (2) We trust His steadfast love;
 - (3) He will enable us to rejoice;
 - (4) We will be able to sing His praises.

III. Spurgeon sees the Psalm as follows:

1. The question of anxiety;
 2. The cry of prayer;
 3. The song of faith.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The Psalmist never questioned whether or not God would respond to his situations. To him, it was simply a matter of when. Those "underneath the altar" cried with a great voice: "How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:10).
2. The Lord may not come to us (in our everyday human experiences) just when we think He ought to come. But, He will always be on time!
3. In spite of trials, tribulations, heartaches, disappointments--the believer knows that God is concerned and will help.
4. Memories of past blessings and victories constitute a great source of comfort, hope, and strength. How easily we forget!
5. Old Testament Israel was slow to learn that the blessings of the past were designed by God to be assurances with regard to the future. This is a great message of the book of Numbers.
6. When one reaches the depths of despair he should--even then--have the faith and the confidence and the hope to take it to the Lord in prayer.
7. Prayer--the turning point from mourning to rejoicing.
8. Even the "man after God's own heart" had many and serious trials. We cannot expect our lives to be free from all troubles. The Christian learns to rejoice even in tribulations (Cf. Rom. 5:3).
9. The PULPIT COMMENTARY mentions that the Psalmist passes from protest to prayer, and from prayer to praise.
10. Because of what he has done, is doing, and will do, let us rejoice and sing praises unto Jehovah.

11. Let us sing the second stanza:

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness:
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The Psalmist never questioned whether or not God would respond to his situations. To him, it was simply a matter of when. Those "underneath the altar" cried with a great voice: "How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:10).
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Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness:
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

PSALM 14

SECURITY IN GODLINESS

In these verses we have--

I. DEPRAVITY
1-3

The Psalmist speaks of the depravity of the people.

1. They are "fools";
2. They say: "There is no God";
3. They are corrupt;
4. They do abominable deeds;
5. There is none that does good;
6. The Lord searches to see if there are any who
act wisely--who seek after God;
7. He finds--
 - (1) They have all gone astray;
 - (2) They are all corrupt;
 - (3) There is not one who does good.

II. DESTRUCTION
4-6

The Psalmist speaks of how the evildoers oppress
God's people:

1. They lack knowledge;
2. They exert their influence of wickedness;
3. They have no concern about hearing and obeying;
4. Their punishment is certain;
5. God blesses and protects the righteous;
6. God will defeat the schemes of the wicked;
7. The Lord is the only refuge.

III. DELIVERANCE
7

The Psalmist speaks of deliverance:

1. Prayer--"O that deliverance for Israel would
come out of Zion!

III. Continued.

2. Promise--"When the Lord restores the fortunes of His People";
3. Pronouncement--"Jacob shall rejoice, Israel shall be glad."

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: There is security in godliness; there is no security in wickedness.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The wicked person--

1. Is wrong in attitude;
2. Is wrong in proclamation;
3. Is wrong in conduct;
4. Is in a lost condition;
5. Fails to act wisely--fails to seek after God;
6. Has gone astray;
7. Is corrupt;
8. Accomplishes no good;
9. Has no true knowledge;
10. Opposes the righteous;
11. Fails to hear and to obey God;
12. Will be punished.

II. The righteous person--

1. Is right in attitude;
2. Is right in proclamation;
3. Is right in conduct;
4. Is in a saved condition;

II. Continued.

5. Acts wisely--he does seek after God;
6. Continues steadfastly in the right;
7. Is pure;
8. Accomplished good;
9. Has true knowledge;
10. Upholds the right, opposes the wrong;
11. Hears and obeys God;
12. Will be rewarded.

GENERAL LESSONS

1. When one eliminates God from his thinking, he thereby becomes a "fool."
He has no solid foundation for his thinking and conduct. His reasoning is vain (Cf. Rom. 1:21,22). He has no beginning point, no basis upon which to proceed, and no finishing point.
2. When one leaves God out, his thinking will be wrong, his attitude will be wrong, his speech will be wrong, his general conduct will be wrong, and his condition will be wrong.
3. When people reject God as the place of refuge, they themselves will be rejected by God.
4. Corruption in human conduct is the consequence of human failure to seek after God.
5. The wise person seeks after God. Those who do not seek after God are foolish indeed.
6. Those are "fools" who (1) deny the existence of God; (2) live in wickedness (cf. Titus 3:3); (3) despise instruction (Prov. 1:7); (4) leave God out of their thinking (Lk. 12:20); (5) hear the word, but fail to do it (Mt. 7:26); (6) fail to walk carefully, redeeming the time (Eph. 5:15,16); (7) fail to prepare for eternity.

THE WORTHY CITIZEN OF ZION

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: There is nothing in particular to indicate the time and the setting of this Psalm. It was evidently written after the establishment of the tabernacle upon Mt. Zion. Much has been said in previous Psalms about the privileges and blessings experienced by the righteous. But, who are the righteous? Who is the person who is a worthy citizen of Zion? This question the 15th Psalm is designed to answer.

In these verses we have--

I. QUESTION
1

The Psalmist asks a question:

1. O Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle?
2. Who shall dwell on thy holy hill?

II. ANSWER
2a

The Psalmist answers the question generally:

1. The person who walks blamelessly;
2. The person who does what is right.

III. ANSWER
2b-5

The Psalmist answers the question specifically:

1. The one who speaks the truth from his heart;
2. The one who does not slander with his tongue;
3. The one who does no evil to his friend;
4. The one who does not take up reproach against his neighbor;
5. The one who despises the reprobate;
6. The one who honors those who fear the Lord;
7. The one who is faithful to keep God's word;
8. The one who properly uses his money;
9. The one who does not take a bribe.

IV. PROMISE

5

The Psalmist promises:

1. This is the one who shall sojourn (dwell) in the
Tabernacle (Tent) of God;
2. This is the one who shall dwell on God's holy hill;
3. This is the one who shall not be moved.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: This Psalm describes the worthy citizen of Zion--the person who may come to have and to enjoy God's presence, protection, favor, and fellowship. Let us--in the light of this information--determine to be worthy citizens of Zion.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Who is the Worthy Citizen of Zion?

1. Described generally, this is a person--

- (1) Of integrity, justice, and truthfulness;
- (2) Whose actions are right, whose heart is right, and whose speech
is right.

2. Described negatively, this is a person--

- (1) Who does not slander with his tongue;
- (2) Who does no evil to his friend (He loves and respects his friends);
- (3) Who does not take up reproach against his neighbor;
- (4) Who does not misuse his money;
- (5) Who can not be bribed.

3. Described positively, this is a person--

- (1) Who walks blamelessly;
- (2) Who does that which is right;
- (3) Who speaks truth from the heart;
- (4) Who despises the reprobate;
- (5) Who honors those who fear the Lord;

I. 3. Continued.

(6) Who swears to his own hurt, and does not change--he is one who keeps his word, and who speaks the truth--regardless!

NOTE: This is the person who shall not be moved out of Zion!

II. Blessings of the Citizens of Zion. They have--

1. Access to the presence of God;
2. Divine protection;
3. Divine favor;
4. Divine fellowship.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. May God help us to understand the importance of His presence, His protection, His favor, and His fellowship.
2. "The fulfillment of man's duty to his neighbor is a primary condition of fellowship with God" (THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE, PSALMS, VOL. I, PAGE 69). Cf. Mk. 12:29,30.
3. One's attitude and conduct toward his fellowman is powerful evidence of his attitude toward God (Cf. 1 Jno. 2:9-11).
4. Being right with God involves: right standard, right actions, right thoughts, and right speech. How could one be right in these things, and be wrong with God? How could one be right toward God, and be wrong in these things?
5. The righteous person is careful to guard his tongue. He will not be a tale-bearer. He will not gossip. He will not engage in hurtful speech. He will speak the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth--without fear, favor, or compromise--but from a heart of love and compassion and concern for the souls of men.

GENERAL LESSONS (continued):

6. The righteous person despises wickedness. He honors those who honor the Lord and His will.
7. The righteous person is one who keeps his word--even when doing so brings injury to himself.
8. The righteous will steadfastly avoid taking advantage of another's misfortune.
9. The righteous person will neither seek nor accept personal gain at the expense of the innocent and the unsuspecting.

PSALM 15

THE WORTHY CITIZEN OF ZION

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: There is nothing in particular to indicate the time and the setting of this Psalm. It was evidently written after the establishment of the tabernacle upon Mt. Zion. Much has been said in previous Psalms about the privileges and blessings experienced by the righteous. But, who are the righteous? Who is the person who is a worthy citizen of Zion? This question the 15th Psalm is designed to answer.

In these verses we have--

I. QUESTION

1

The Psalmist asks a question:

1. O Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle?
2. Who shall dwell on thy holy hill?

II. ANSWER

2a

The Psalmist answers the question generally:

1. The person who walks blamelessly;
2. The person who does what is right.

III. ANSWER

2b-5

The Psalmist answers the question specifically:

1. The one who speaks the truth from his heart;
2. The one who does not slander with his tongue;
3. The one who does no evil to his friend;
4. The one who does not take up reproach against his neighbor;
5. The one who despises the reprobate;
6. The one who honors those who fear the Lord;
7. The one who is faithful to keep God's word;
8. The one who properly uses his money;
9. The one who does not take a bribe.

IV. PROMISE

5

The Psalmist promises:

1. This is the one who shall sojourn (dwell) in the Tabernacle (tent) of God;
2. This is the one who shall dwell on God's holy hill;
3. This is the one who shall not be moved.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: This Psalm describes the worthy citizen of Zion--the person who may come to have and to enjoy God's presence, protection, favor, and fellowship. Let us--in the light of this information--determine to be worthy citizens of Zion.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Who is the Worthy Citizen of Zion?

1. Described generally, this is a person--

- (1) Of integrity, justice, and truthfulness;
- (2) Whose actions are right, whose heart is right, and whose speech is right.

2. Described negatively, this is a person--

- (1) Who does not slander with his tongue;
- (2) Who does no evil to his friend (He loves and respects his friends);
- (3) Who does not take up reproach against his neighbor;
- (4) Who does not misuse his money;
- (5) Who can not be bribed.

3. Described positively, this is a person--

- (1) Who walks blamelessly;
- (2) Who does that which is right;
- (3) Who speaks truth from the heart;
- (4) Who despises the reprobate;
- (5) Who honors those who fear the Lord;

I. 3. Continued.

(6) Who swears to his own hurt, and does not change--he is one who keeps his word, and who seeks the truth--regardless!

NOTE: This is the person who shall not be moved out of Zion!

II. Blessings of the Citizens of Zion. They have--

1. Access to the presence of God;
2. Divine protection;
3. Divine favor;
4. Divine fellowship.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. May God help us to understand the importance of His presence, His protection, His favor, and His fellowship.
2. "The fulfillment of man's duty to his neighbor is a primary condition of fellowship with God" (THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE, PSALMS, VOL. I, PAGE 69). Cf. Mk. 12:29, 30.
3. One's attitude and conduct toward his fellowman is powerful evidence of his attitude toward God (Cf. 1 Jno. 2:9-11).
4. Being right with God involves: right standard, right actions, right thoughts, and right speech. How could one be right in these things, and wrong with God? How could one be right toward God, and be wrong in these things?
5. The righteous person is careful to guard his tongue. He will not be a talebearer. He will not gossip. He will not engage in hurtful speech. He will speak the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth--without fear, favor, or compromise--but from a heart of love and compassion and concern for the souls of men.

I. 3. Continued.

(6) Who swears to his own hurt, and does not change--he is one who keeps his word, and who speaks the truth--regardless!

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3. One's attitude and conduct toward his fellowman is powerful evidence of his attitude toward God (Cf. 1 Jno. 2:9-11).
4. Being right with God involves: right standard, right actions, right thoughts, and right speech. How could one be right in these things, and wrong with God? How could one be right toward God, and be wrong in these things?
5. The righteous person is careful to guard his tongue. He will not be a talebearer. He will not gossip. He will not engage in hurtful speech. He will speak the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth--without fear, favor, or compromise--but from a heart of love and compassion and concern for the souls of men.

GENERAL LESSONS (continued):

6. The righteous person despises wickedness. He honors those who honor the Lord and His will.
7. The righteous person is one who keeps his word--even when doing so brings injury to himself.
8. The righteous will steadfastly avoid taking advantage of another's misfortune.
9. The righteous person will neither seek nor accept personal gain at the expense of the innocent and the unsuspecting.

PSALM 16

OUR ALL-SUFFICIENT GOD

In these verses we have--

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <p>I. SOURCE
1,2</p> | <p>David stresses God as the Source of all blessings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To him we address our prayers;2. He is our preservation;3. He is our protection;4. He is our providence. |
| <p>II. OBJECT
3,4</p> | <p>David stresses God as the only proper object of worship.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The saints in the land--they are noble;2. My delight is in them;3. Those persons who choose another god multiply their sorrows;4. I will have nothing to do with their worship. |
| <p>III. HERITAGE
5,6</p> | <p>David stresses God as the source of his heritage.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Lord is my chosen portion (my selected place in which to dwell);2. He is the one who supplies my needs--my cup;3. The boundary lines He has set for me are excellent;4. "Yes, I have a wonderful heritage." |
| <p>IV. TEACHER
7,8</p> | <p>The Psalmist stresses God as his teacher.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. He gives me counsel;2. Even in the night He instructs me;3. I keep Him always before my face (Cf. Acts 2:25ff);4. He is at my right hand, and I shall not be moved. |

V. JOY
9,10

David stresses God as the source of joy and hope.

1. Therefore, my heart is glad;
2. My soul rejoices;
3. Thou wilt not leave my soul in the realm of the dead (Berkeley);
4. Thou wilt not let thy Holy One see corruption (Cf. Acts 2:25 ff).

VI. SALVATION
11

David stresses God as the source of salvation.

1. Thou dost show me the path of life;
2. In thy presence there is fulness of joy;
3. In thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Jehovah is our only and all-sufficient God.

SPECIAL LESSON: Jehovah is our--

1. Preserver;
 2. Refuge;
 3. Source of all good;
 4. Means of fellowship;
 5. One true and living God;
 6. Object of worship;
 7. Heritage;
 8. Counsellor;
 9. Joy;
 10. Hope;
 11. Salvation--through Jesus Christ.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Every good and perfect gift is from God (Jas. 1:17).
2. God, through His word, furnishes the man of God completely unto every good work.
3. Real nobility--the saints of God!
4. Those who turn away from God do so to their own destruction--to their own sorrow.
5. We ought to delight in the saints of God.
6. We must have nothing to do with false religions.
7. We ought to rejoice that we can make the Lord our dwelling place.
8. The "boundary lines" God has set for our lives are excellent.
9. Christians are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." We have a goodly heritage.
10. The Lord--through His word-- is our Master Teacher..
11. In running steadfastly the race set before us (Heb. 12:1,2) we must always keep our eyes upon the Lord.
12. If God is for us, who can be against us? "I shall not be moved."
13. This great Messianic Psalm has a very special relationship to the Lord's resurrection from the dead (Cf. Acts 2:25ff). David, being a prophet of God, spake of the Lord's resurrection. Because of His resurrection, we have assurance that all the dead shall be raised. In contemplation of the resurrection, Christians have wonderful joy and hope.
14. In New Testament Christianity the "path of life" is the way of the Christ--the way of Salvation. In this way there are: (1) His fellowship and presence; (2) wonderful joy; and (3) pleasures for evermore.

PSALM 18:25-50

JEHOVAH, BULWARK OF THE KING (CONTINUED)

In these verses we have--

I. PRINCIPLE
25-30

The Psalmist continues to discuss the principles of God's dealing with man:

1. With the loyal, God shows Himself loyal;
2. With the blameless He shows Himself blameless;
3. With the pure He shows Himself pure;
4. With the crooked He shows Himself opposed
(Berkeley);
5. He delivers the humble and brings down the
haughty;
6. He is the source of light;
7. He enables the righteous person to crush a
troop and to leap over a wall;
8. His way is perfect;
9. His promise proves true;
10. He is a shield for all who take refuge in Him.

II. POWER
31-45

The Psalmist sets forth God's power as the source of strength and victory;

1. He is our rock (our protection, comfort, and
refuge);
2. He is the source of strength;
3. He enables me to do what ought to be done;
4. He trains my feet, my hands and my arms;
5. He is our shield, salvation, support, and help;
6. He enables me to defeat the enemies;
7. He has made me the head of the nations.

III. PRAISE
46-48

The Psalmist extends praise to God:

1. The Lord lives;
2. Blessed be my rock;
3. Exalted be the God of my salvation--the God who
 - (1) Gave me vengeance;
 - (2) Subdued peoples under me;
 - (3) Delivered me from my enemies;
 - (4) Exalted me above my adversaries;
 - (5) Delivered me from men of violence.

IV. PROPHECY
49-50

The Psalmist (David) prophesies with regard to himself:

1. I will extol thee among the nations;
2. I will sing praises to thy name;
3. He gives great triumphs to His King;
4. He shows steadfast love to His anointed;
5. He shows steadfast love to David and to his descendants for ever.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: If the King is properly concerned about God and His will, God will abundantly bless the King and his people. God is the only right ruler of man. He intends that earthly rulers be instruments in His hand.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. As Bulwark of the King, God--

1. Deals justly with men;
2. Is the maker of Kings;
3. Provides deliverance;
4. Provides strength and power;

I. Continued.

5. Is perfect;
6. Keeps His promises;
7. Protects those who take refuge in Him;
8. Is the rock;
9. Provides victory;
10. Causes the King to be respected;
11. Gives great triumphs;
12. Is to be praised;
13. Shows the King His steadfast love.

II. God--

1. Is loyal;
2. Is blameless;
3. Is pure;
4. Is just;
5. Brings down the haughty;
6. Is the great Lamp-Lighter;
7. His way is perfect;
8. Is a shield for those who take refuge in Him;
9. Is the maker of Kings;
10. Is the Deliverer.

III. God deals with the wicked.

1. The haughty eyes God brings down;
 2. God destroys those who assail the righteous King;
 3. He makes the enemies "turn their backs" to the King;
 4. He refuses to answer the enemies of the righteous;
 5. He delivers the righteous king from men of violence.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. God deals with men according to their attitudes and conduct. If I show myself to be faithful and loyal to God, then God will be seen (by me) to be faithful and loyal to me. If I show myself to be out of harmony with God's will, then God will be seen (to me) to be opposed to me. Cf. 2 Tim. 2:15.
2. God places great value upon humility. He stands against the haughty and the arrogant. The Lord "humbled Himself," and He teaches His followers to be humble.
3. God can (and does) "light the lamp" in time of darkness.
4. By the power of God, one man can accomplish what would otherwise be impossible. "And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over against the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (1 Sam. 14:6).
5. In God there is protection, comfort, strength, and safety.
6. As Christian soldiers we must war the good warfare. It is God who gives the victory.
7. God has shown His "steadfast love" to David. Our Lord is "of the seed of David, according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3).

PSALM 16

OUR ALL-SUFFICIENT GOD

In these verses we have--

I. SOURCE

1,2

David stresses God as the Source of all blessings.

1. To him we address our prayers;
2. He is our preservation;
3. He is our protection;
4. He is our providence.

II. OBJECT

3,4

David stresses God as the only proper object of worship.

1. The saints in the land--they are noble;
2. My delight is in them;
3. Those persons who choose another god multiply their sorrows;
4. I will have nothing to do with their worship.

III. HERITAGE

5,6

David stresses God as the source of his heritage.

1. The Lord is my chosen portion (my selected place in which to dwell);
2. He is the one who supplies my needs--my cup;
3. The boundary lines He has set for me are excellent;
4. "Yes, I have a wonderful heritage."

IV. TEACHER

7,8

The Psalmist stresses God as his teacher.

1. He gives me counsel;
2. Even in the night He instructs me;
3. I keep Him always before my face (Cf. Acts 2:25ff);
4. He is at my right hand, and I shall not be moved.

V. JOY
9,10

David stresses God as the source of joy and hope.

1. Therefore, my heart is glad;
2. My soul rejoices;
3. Thou wilt not leave my soul in the realm of
the dead (Berkeley);
4. Thou wilt not let thy Holy One see corruption (Cf.
Acts 2:25ff).

VI. SALVATION
11

David stresses God as the source of salvation.

1. Thou dost show me the path of life;
2. In thy presence there is fulness of joy;
3. In thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Jehovah is our only and all-sufficient God.

SPECIAL LESSON: Jehovah is our--

1. Preserver;
 2. Refuge;
 3. Source of all good;
 4. Means of fellowship;
 5. One true and living God;
 6. Object of worship;
 7. Heritage;
 8. Counsellor;
 9. Joy;
 10. Hope;
 11. Salvation--through Jesus Christ.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Every good and perfect gift is from God (Jas. 1:17).
2. God, through His word, furnishes the man of God completely unto every good work.
3. Real nobility--the saints of God!
4. Those who turn away from God do so to their own destruction--to their own sorrow.
5. We ought to delight in the saints of God.
6. We must have nothing to do with false religions.
7. We ought to rejoice that we can make the Lord our dwelling place.
8. The "boundary lines" God has set for our lives are excellent.
9. Christians are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." We have a goodly heritage.
10. The Lord--through His word--is our Master Teacher.
11. In running steadfastly the race set before us (Heb. 12:1,2) we must always keep our eyes upon the Lord.
12. If God is for us, who can be against us? "I shall not be moved."
13. This great Messianic Psalm has a very special relationship to the Lord's resurrection from the dead (Cf. Acts 2:25ff). David, being a prophet of God, spake of the Lord's resurrection. Because of His resurrection, we have assurance that all the dead shall be raised. In contemplation of the resurrection, Christians have wonderful joy and hope.
14. In New Testament Christianity the "path of life" is the way of the Christ--the way of Salvation. In this way there are: (1) His fellowship and presence; (2) wonderful joy; and (3) pleasures for evermore.

PSALM 17

JEHOVAH--PROTECTOR OF THE RIGHTEOUS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm is a "prayer of David." It, too, was probably written during the time that King Saul was constantly pursuing David, seeking to destroy him. In this connection, it would be appropriate to read 1 Samuel 23:19-29.

In these verses we have--

I. PLEA 1,2

The Psalmist pleads with God to hear his cry and to respond to his needs:

1. Hear a just cause, O Lord!
2. Attend to my cry;
3. Listen to my sincere prayer;
4. Let my vindication come from thee;
5. Let thy eyes see the right!

II. AFFIRMATION 3-5

The Psalmist affirms his personal righteousness;

1. Thou wilt find no wickedness in me;
2. My heart is right;
3. My speech is right;
4. My conduct is right;
5. I have avoided the ways of the wicked;
6. I have been faithful to thee.

III. PRAYER 6-9

The Psalmist prays for divine blessings:

1. For God's love;
2. For God's protection;
3. For God's favor and security.

IV. DESCRIPTION 10-12

The Psalmist describes the wicked adversaries:

1. They have no compassion;
2. They speak arrogantly;
3. They constantly seek to destroy me.

V. PRAYER
13,14

The Psalmist prays for God's vengeance upon the wicked:

1. Arise, O Lord! Confront them, overthrow them!
2. Deliver me from them;
3. Deal with them--even bless them according to thy will.

VI. ASSURANCE
15

The Psalmist stresses his assurance that God will answer:

1. As for me, there is something better than the blessings of this life;
2. I shall sleep the sleep of death (Cf. 13:3);
3. When I awake--
 - (1) I shall behold thy face in righteousness;
 - (2) I shall be satisfied with beholding thy form (thy glory).

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God Himself is our Deliverer, our Protector, our Refuge.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. What David affirmed about himself:

1. His lips were free of deceit;
2. He was willing to commit his case to God;
3. There was no wickedness in him;
4. He had not fallen into the ways of wicked men;
5. He had remained faithful to God and to God's word;
6. He knew the importance of righteousness.

II. What David affirmed about the wicked adversaries:

1. They hate righteousness and persecute the righteous;

II. Continued.

2. They are unmerciful;
3. They are haughty;
4. They try to destroy all that is right;
5. Their reward is of this world;
6. They are concerned about the material things (cf. v. 14).

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Times of special trouble are (or should be) times for special prayer.
2. God is the avenger, and He will deal justly.
3. Righteousness of life gives confidence in prayer.
4. God's vengeance upon the wicked emphasizes His love for the righteous.
5. If we constantly seek God's favor He will give us His protection.
6. The wicked are wrong in heart, wrong in speech, and wrong in conduct.
7. Several figures are used in the Bible to set forth the nature of death.

One of the most comforting of these is the fact that death is sleep.

Cf. Jno. 11:11. David speaks of death as sleep--of his sleeping the sleep of death. Only that which is alive can sleep. David, by inspiration, glances at the Bible doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

8. David, likewise, by inspiration, glances at the resurrection. He speaks of the time when he shall awake! David says: "When I awake, I shall behold His face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied with beholding His form." What a contrast between what the worldly man seeks for, and that for which the godly person seeks.

9. The word here translated "form" and "likeness" is the Hebrew word temunah. This is the word used in Num. 12:8. God said, about Moses, " . . . and the form of Jehovah shall he behold . . ." "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is" (1 Jno. 3:2).

PSALM 18:1-24

JEHOVAH--BULWARK OF THE KING

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This is a Psalm of David. "And David spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul" (2 Sam. 22:1). 2 Samuel 22 seems to be another edition of this Psalm.

In these verses we have--

I. PRAISE
1-3

The Psalmist praises God for what He is to him personally.

1. He is the object of my love;
2. He is the source of my strength;
3. He is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer;
4. He is the one in whom I take refuge;
5. He is my shield;
6. He is the horn of my salvation, my stronghold;
7. He is the one who is worthy to be praised;
8. He is the one who saves me from my enemies.

II. PERIL
4,5

David describes his perilous condition.

1. The cords of death encompassed me;
2. The torrents of perdition assailed me;
3. The cords of sheol entangled me;
4. The snares of death confronted me;

III. PRAYER
6

The Psalmist prays to God for deliverance.

1. In my distress I called upon the Lord;
2. To my God I cried for help;
3. He heard my voice;
4. My cry to Him reached His ears.

IV. POWER
7-15

The Psalmist vividly describes God's powerful answer to prayer.

1. The earth reeled and rocked;
2. The foundations of the mountains trembled and quaked;
3. He was angry;
4. Smoke went up from his nostrils;
5. There was devouring fire from His mouth;
6. Glowing coals flamed forth from Him;
7. He bowed the heavens, and came down;
8. Thick darkness was under His feet;
9. He rode upon a cherub, and flew;
10. He came swiftly upon the wings of the wind;
11. He made darkness His covering around Him;
12. His canopy was thick clouds dark with water;
13. Hailstones and coals of fire broke through His clouds;
14. He thundered in the heavens--the Most High uttered His voice;
15. He sent out His arrows and scattered them;
16. He sent out His lightnings;
17. At His rebuke--at the blast of the breath of His nostrils--the foundations of the world were laid bare.

V. PROVISIONS
16-19

The Psalmist proclaims that God provided for him.

1. He reached down and took me;
2. He drew me out of many waters;

V. Continued.

3. He delivered me from my strong enemy--from those who hated me and were too mighty for me;
4. He brought me forth into a broad place;
5. He delivered me, because he delighted in me.

VI. PRINCIPLE
20-24

The Psalmist sets forth the principle involved in God's deliverance.

1. He rewarded me according to my righteousness;
2. For I have kept the ways of the Lord;
3. I have not wickedly departed from my God;
4. All His ordinances were before me;
5. His statutes I did not put away from me;
6. I was blameless, and kept myself from guilt;
7. Therefore, the Lord recompensed me according to--
 - (1) My righteousness;
 - (2) The cleanness of my hands in His sight.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: May God help us to know and to appreciate as we ought the great power of God available to those who believe. Cf. Eph. 1:19ff; Eph. 3:20,21; Eph. 6:10.

SPECIAL LESSON: This beautiful Psalm says a great deal about God Himself: His PERSON; His POWER, His PROVISIONS; His PRINCIPLE, and His PRAISE.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The Lord is the protector and the deliverer of those who love Him.
2. Because of WHO He is, WHAT He is, and what He DOES--He is to be praised.

3. Regardless of how terrible the condition or how complicated the problem,
nothing is "too hard" for God (Cf. Gen. 18:14).
4. "Satan trembles when he sees,
A faithful Christian upon his knees."
5. One man, with God, is a majority anywhere!
6. God works all things together for good to those who love Him, and who
are called according to His purpose.

PSALM 19

GOD REVEALED

In these verses we have--

I. NATURE 1-6

The Psalmist stresses that God is revealed in nature:

1. The heavens are telling the glory of God;
2. The firmament proclaims His handiwork;
3. Day to day pours forth speech;
4. Night to night declares knowledge;
5. There is no articulation--their voice is not heard;
6. Yet, their message is declared through all the
earth and to the end of the world;
7. In them He has set the sun--
 - (1) It comes forth like a bridegroom;
 - (2) Like a strong man, it runs its course with joy;
 - (3) Its rising is from the end of the heavens;
 - (4) Its circuit is to the end of the heavens;
 - (5) Nothing is hid from its heat.

II. LAW 7-11

The Psalmist stresses that God is revealed in His law:

1. The law of the Lord is perfect--reviving the soul;
2. The testimony of the Lord is sure--making wise the
simple;
3. The precepts of the Lord are right--rejoicing the
heart;
4. The commandments of the Lord is pure--enlightening
the eyes;
5. The fear of the Lord is clean--enduring forever;
6. The ordinances of the Lord are true--and righteous
altogether;

II. Continued.

7. This law is to be desired more than gold--even fine gold;
8. It is sweeter than honey and drippings of the honey-comb;
9. It provides warnings;
10. In keeping this law there is great reward.

III. PRAYER
12-14

The Psalmist prays that he might be right in relationship to this divine law:

1. Who can know his own sins? Clear me from hidden faults;
2. Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins--let them not have dominion over me!
3. Then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression;
4. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God has clearly and forcefully revealed Himself to man--both by His world of nature, and by His word. Paul declares (in Romans 1) that this is enough, that man--in involving himself in wickedness--is without excuse.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Law of God.

1. Is called: law, testimony, precepts, commandment, fear of the Lord, ordinances;
2. Is described: perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true, righteous.

II. The Psalm speaks of--

1. Creation--God is powerfully revealed in His creation;
2. Revelation--He is powerfully revealed in His written message;
3. Preservation--We, like the Psalmist, must fervently pray that we will be in harmony with the divine law that we might have preservation.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. As the heavens declare the glory of God they are declaring the existence of God.
2. It is incredible that one could seriously consider the known marvels of our universe, and fail to reason to an omnipotent, omniscient, omni-benevolent, eternal Being.
3. There is speech which does not come in syllables and words.
4. God reveals Himself (1) in His marvelous creation, (2) in His marvelous word, and in (3) the Christian's marvelous life. Cf. 2 Cor. 3:2,3.
5. It is wonderful, delightful, inspirational to listen to the beautiful "sound of silence."
6. The Law of God is perfect, and thoroughly furnishes the man of God completely unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
7. The Law of God is (1) perfect, (2) sure, (3) right, (4) pure, (5) clean, (6) enduring, (7) true, (8) the producer of righteousness, (9) to be desired, (10) of a warning nature, (11) such as to provide great reward.
8. With the Psalmist, let us ever fervently pray:

Clear thou me from hidden faults;

Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins;

Let not sin have dominion over me;

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart

be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

PSALM 20

PRAYER FOR THE KING'S VICTORY

In these verses we have--

I. PRAYER
1-5

The people pray for the King as the King prepares to go forth for battle: May the Lord--

1. Answer you in the day of trouble;
2. Protect you;
3. Send you help;
4. Give you support;
5. Remember all your offerings;
6. Regard with favor your sacrifices;
7. Grant you your heart's desire;
8. Fulfill all your plans;
9. Give you (and us) joy in victory;
10. Set up our banners;
11. Fulfill all your petitions.

II. ASSURANCE
6-8

We have the song of assurance that Jehovah will hear and will give victory to the King.

1. I know that the Lord will help His king;
2. He will answer him from heaven;
3. God will grant the king victories;
4. Our confidence is in God--not in horses and chariots;
5. Enemies will fall--but we will stand!

III. PRAYER
9

The prayer is repeated for the victory for the King:

1. Give victory to the King, O Lord;
 2. Answer us when we call.
-

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Jehovah is the sole giver of victory!

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. God--

1. Is the one to whom we pray;
2. Is the one who answers in the day of trouble;
3. Is the one who helps us;
4. Is the one who gives us support;
5. Remembers our worship;
6. Can (and often does) enable us to fulfill our plans;
7. Gives us joy in victory;
8. Is the one who responds to our petitions;
9. Is the one who helps His King;
10. Answers the King, and gives him mighty victories;
11. Is the power and strength and security of the nation.

II. The King--

1. Has troubles;
 2. Needs divine protection, help, and support;
 3. Engages in worship to God;
 4. Makes plans;
 5. Extends petitions to God;
 6. Has assurance that God will hear, will answer, and give him victory;
 7. Knows that the security of the nation is not its military might, but the favor and power of God.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. God's people are taught to pray for their rulers (Cf. 1 Tim. 2:1,2).

We should ever pray that God will so rule in the affairs of men that His will will be done, and that men--consequently--will be wonderfully blessed.

2. People should always be seriously concerned about the relationship their rulers have with God. They should pray for the rulers, that they might rule according to God's will. We are enjoined to pray "...for kings and all in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity" (1 Tim. 2:2).

3. God has always retained to Himself the right to govern men. God desires that an earthly ruler simply be a tool in the hand of God. If the ruler recognizes this fact, and governs accordingly, God will abundantly bless the king and the people. If the king does not recognize this fact, tragic will be the consequences.

4. It is right for us to plan in relationship to the affairs of life.

And, we should pray that God will help us to carry out (to accomplish) our plans--IF these plans are according to His will.

5. I heard Roy Hardeman Deaver discuss this Psalm October 16, 1973. He stressed that "The greatest defense policy is trust in the Lord."

PSALM 21

THE SONG OF VICTORY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm should be studied in connection with the Psalm. G. Campbell Morgan points out: "The first is the prayer of the people on behalf of the king as he goes forth to battle...The battle is over; the victory is won, and the assembled people sing the song of victory." This is a Psalm of great praise to Jehovah. The people had prayed for victory, and God had granted their petitions.

In these verses we have--

I. JOY 1,2

The king's joy is described:

1. He rejoices in the strength of the Lord;
2. He exults in the help given by the Lord;
3. He says: "Thou hast given him his heart's desire (Cf. 20:4);
4. He says: "Thou hast not withheld his request."

II. REASONS 3-6

The reasons for the king's joy are set forth:

1. God has abundantly blessed him;
2. God has set a crown of fine gold upon his head;
3. God has given him life--length of days for ever and ever;
4. God has given him glory, and splendor, and majesty;
5. God has made him most blessed for ever;
6. God has made him glad with the joy of His presence.

III. EXPLANATION 7

The basic explanation for his joy is given:

1. The king trusts in the Lord;
2. He is the recipient of God's steadfast love;
3. He shall not be moved.

IV. ASSURANCE
8-12

The Psalmist speaks of assurance of continued victory:

1. God will find out all the enemies of the king;
2. God will destroy the king's enemies;
3. Those who plan evil against the king will not succeed;
4. God will put the enemies to flight.

V. DOXOLOGY

The Psalmist proclaims the closing doxology:

1. Be exalted, O Lord, in thy strength;
2. We will sing and praise thy power.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God is the source of victory.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. God--

1. Is the source of strength;
2. Is the source of grace (help);
3. Is the Great Giver;
4. Is the one who hears and grants requests;
5. Is the source of goodness;
6. Is the one who crowns rulers;
7. Is the source of life;
8. Is the one who delivers;
9. Is the source of true honor;
10. Is the one who blesses;
11. Is the one who brings joy.

II. David's Thanksgiving--for

1. Strength;
 2. Gladness;
 3. Grace and help;
 4. Having been heard;
 5. Requests granted;
 6. God's goodness;
 7. Having been crowned;
 8. Life;
 9. Honor;
 10. Being blessed of God;
 11. God's presence.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The Messianic import of this Psalm is clearly seen in the light of Acts 2: 25-28. The Lord is our King. He has been completely victorious over Satan, sin, and death. The Lord came that he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb. 2:14). He reigns at God's right hand, and He ever "maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34).

O Victory in Jesus, My Savior, for ever,
He sought me and bo't me with His redeeming blood;
He loved me ere I knew Him, and all my love is due Him;
He plunged me to victory, beneath the cleansing flood.

E. M. Bartlett (#596)

2. Paul enjoins: "Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might" (Eph. 6:10).
 3. The Lord said: "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades" (Rev. 1:15-18).
-

PSALM 22

THE NEEDS AND HOPES OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Additional suggested titles: Through Darkness to Light

The Passion Psalm

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: Commentators differ widely in their views of the scope, the occasion, and the date of this Psalm. The first impression produced by the Psalm is that it is indeed a record of personal experience. The Psalm is undoubtedly rooted in David's own experiences, but its language reaches far beyond those experiences to the suffering of the Messiah. It is definitely Messianic. We are unable to attach it definitely to any particular experience in David's life, but we do not have the full story of David's life.

The Psalm should be studied in the light of its relationship to the Christ and the Cross. "His utterance of the opening words of it upon the cross has been thought with much probability to indicate that the whole Psalm was the subject of His meditations during those hours of agony. But this application and fulfilment does not exclude a primary and historical reference." (THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE, p. 112).

Charles H. Spurgeon says:

This is beyond all others "The Psalm of the Cross." It may have been actually repeated by our Lord when hanging on the tree; it would be too bold to say so, but even a casual reader may see that it might have been. It begins with "My God, my God, why hast thou forsake me?" and ends with (the thought) "It is finished." For plaintive expressions uprising from unutterable depths of woe, we may say of this Psalm, "There is none like it."

KEY NOTES of the Psalm: "Thou answerest not" (verse 2)--the summation of verses 1-21; "Thou hast answered me" (. . . he heard, v. 24)--summation of verses 22-31.

A very unique fact with regard to this Psalm is: it contains no confession of sin.

This Psalm contains instances of beautiful poetic hyperbole.

In these verses we have--

I. NEEDS
1-21

The Suffering Servant speaks of His present needs:

1. In verses 1-10 we have the pleading cry of the forsaken and persecuted servant of God--

(1) My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

(2) Why art thou so far from helping me--from hearing the words of my groaning?

(3) I cry by day--but thou dost not answer:

(4) I cry by night--but find no rest;

(5) Yet, thou art holy--enthroned on the praises of Israel;

(6) Our fathers trusted in thee--and

A. Thou didst deliver them;

B. They were saved;

C. They were not disappointed;

(7) But I am a worm--scorned, despised, mocked, and ridiculed;

(8) Yet--Thou art my God, the one--

A. Who took me from the womb;

B. Who didst keep me safe upon my mother's breasts;

C. Upon whom I was cast from birth.

2. In verses 11-21 we have the earnest prayer for deliverance:

(1) Be not far from me--trouble is near, and there is none to help me;

(2) Strong bulls of Bashan surround me--their mouths are open;

2. Continued.

(3) I am poured out like water;

(4) All my bones are out of joint;

(5) My heart, like wax, is melted within my
breast;

(6) My strength is dried up like a potsherd;

(7) My tongue cleaves to my jaws;

(8) Thou dost lay me in the dust of the earth;

(9) Dogs--evildoers--encircle me; they have pierced
my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones--
they stare and gloat over me; they divide my
garments among them, and for my raiment they
cast lots (cf. Jno. 19:24).

(10) But, thou, O Lord--

A. Be not far off!

B. Hasten to help me!

C. Deliver my soul from the sword;

D. Save my life from the power of the dog!

E. Save me from the mouth of the lion;

F. Save me from the horns of the wild oxen!

II. HOPES
22-31

The Suffering Servant speaks of His future hopes:

1. In verses 22-26 we have his thanksgiving for
answered prayer--

(1) I will tell of thy name to my brethren;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise
thee (Cf. Heb. 2:12).

(2) You who fear the Lord--you sons of Jacob--

A. Praise Him;

B. Glorify Him;

C. Stand in awe of Him!

(3) For--

A. He has not despised the affliction of the afflicted;

B. He has not hid his face from the afflicted;

C. He has heard the cry of the afflicted.

(4) I will praise Him in the congregation;

(5) I will be faithful to Him;

(6) The afflicted shall be satisfied; they shall come to praise the Lord!

(7) May your hearts live for ever!

2. In verses 27-31 reference is to the extension of Jehovah's kingdom--

(1) Many from all over the world shall turn to the Lord;

(2) People from every nation shall worship before Him;

(3) Dominion belongs to the Lord--He rules over the nations;

(4) The proud of the earth shall bow before Him;

(5) Men will come to recognize their dependence upon Him;

(6) Posterity shall serve Him;

(7) Men shall proclaim to generations yet unborn the deliverance that He has wrought!

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: The Suffering Servant of God would experience intense agony, persecution, and shame. But, there would be a great and wonderful victory. This glorious victory would be of great benefit to all men.

SPECIAL LESSON: This Psalm must be studied in the light of the reference to the Christ. Consider--

1. Verse 1, and Mt. 27:46;
 2. Verse 6, and Mt. 27:39-44;
 3. Verse 8, and Mt. 27:39,43; Mk. 15:29,30; Lk. 23:35;
 4. Verse 16, and Jno. 19:37;
 5. Verse 17, and Lk. 23:27,35;
 6. Verse 18, and Jno. 19:23,24;
 7. Verse 22, and Jno. 20:17; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:12;
 8. Verse 31, and Jno. 19:30.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. There is intense suffering and agony of the soul in the feeling that God has turned away.
2. Out of the deep depths of despair we should still have the courage and the faith to call upon God for deliverance.
3. There is no real rest for the person from whom God has turned away.
4. Even when things are not as well with us as we think they should be, and when we fail to understand--we must have the faith and the confidence to recognize: "Yet, thou art holy."
5. Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake (Mt. 5:10-12).
6. Jehovah is able to deliver out of the mouth of lions.

7. The Suffering Savior--The Victorious King! ". . . heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him" (Rom. 8:17). "Faithful is the saying: For if we died with him, we shall also live with him: if we endure, we shall also reign with him . . . " (2 Tim. 2:11,12).
8. The Way of Redemption is the Way of the Cross. "The way of the cross leads home." "There is no other way but this."

PSALM 23

THE SHEPHERD PSALM

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm should be studied in relationship to Psalm 22 and Psalm 24. These constitute a "triptych"--the SAVIOR, the SHEPHERD, and the SOVERIGN. Or, the CROSS, the CROOK, and the CROWN.

In these verses we have--

I. AFFIRMATION
1a

The Psalmist affirms--

The Lord is my shepherd.

II. EXPLANATION
1b-5

The Psalmist explains--

1. I shall not want;
2. He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
3. He leads me beside still waters;
4. He restores my soul;
5. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;
6. Even thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil--for
 - (1) Thou art with me;
 - (2) Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me;
7. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
8. Thou anointest my head with oil--my cup overflows.

III. CONSOLATION
6

The Psalmist expresses his consolation--

1. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
 2. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.
-

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God is our sufficiency. He meets our every need.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Sheep goes with the Shepherd--

1. In the pasture of human needs:

- (1) I shall not want;
- (2) He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
- (3) He leads me beside still waters;
- (4) He restores my soul;

2. In the way that leads to heaven:

- (1) He leads me in paths of righteousness;
- (2) And this, for His name's sake;

3. In the valley of death itself:

- (1) I fear no evil:
- (2) For--
 - A. Thou art with me;
 - B. Thy rod and thy staff--they comfort me;

4. In the presence of enemies:

- (1) Thou preparest a table before me;
- (2) Thou anointest my head with oil;
- (3) My cup overflows;

5. In the rugged way of life:

- (1) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my
life;
- (2) And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

II. The All-sufficient Shepherd.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| If we are considering-- | He-- |
| 1. Want | 1. Supplies the need (I shall not want). |
| 2. Weariness | 2. Provides wonderful rest (He makes me to lie down in green pastures). |
| 3. Movement/Traveling | 3. Provides leadership (He leads me beside still waters). |
| 4. Weakness | 4. Gives strength (He restores my soul). |
| 5. Direction needed | 5. Provides guidance (He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake). |
| 6. Fear-generating Circumstances | 6. Precludes fear (Even thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me). |
| 7. Enemies | 7. Prepares a table before me and anoints my head with oil (Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup overflows). |
| 8. Continued life | 8. Will grant me goodness and mercy (Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life). |
| 9. The final dwelling | 9. Will surely provide it (and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever). |
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. A little boy quoted (?) the first part of this Psalm as follows: "The Lord is my friend--I don't need anything else!"
 2. The Lord is the "good shepherd" (Jno. 10:11-16).
 3. The Lord is the "Chief Shepherd" under whom elders (as shepherds) serve (1 Pet. 5:4).
 4. A shepherd must watch in behalf of the sheep, protect the sheep, provide the needs for the sheep, lead the sheep, train the sheep, comfort the sheep, love the sheep.
 5. As sheep, traveling toward the pastures of eternity, we must keep our eyes upon the Good Shepherd.
 6. The Lord is the great remover of fear. So very often, in the course of His personal ministry, He said: fear not, be not afraid, let not your hearts be troubled.
 7. When the journeys of life are over, if we have been faithful in following the Good Shepherd--we can dwell for ever in the place prepared for the righteous.
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PSALM 24

THE PENTECOST PSALM

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: The Savior, who suffered the agony of the Cross (Psalm 22), and who--as the Great Shepherd--has the task of leading His sheep to the eternal home (Psalm 23), is seen entering into Glory (Psalm 24), to His position of authority, honor, and power (Cf. Ps. 2:6).

In these verses we have--

I. PROCLAMATION 1,2

The Psalmist Proclaims the sovereignty of Jehovah:

1. The fact--

(1) The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;

(2) The world is the Lord's, and those who dwell in it.

2. The explanation--for

(1) He has founded it upon the seas;

(2) He has established it upon the rivers.

II. QUESTION 3

The Psalmist asks a significant question:

1. Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? Cf. 2:6.

2. Who shall stand in His holy Place?

III. ANSWER 4-6

The Psalmist gives a pointed answer:

1. He who has clean hands;

2. He who has a pure heart;

3. He who does not lift up his soul to falsehood;

4. He who does not swear deceitfully.

5. THIS is the person who will receive blessings from the Lord;

6. THIS is the one who shall be vindicated by God;

7. THIS is the character of the one who seeks the face of the God of Jacob.

IV. APPROACH
7-10

The Psalmist speaks of the King's approach:

1. Command--Lift up your heads, O ye gates!

Be lifted up, ye everlasting doors!

2. Explanation--that the King of Glory may come in.

3. Challenge--Who is this King of Glory?

4. Answer: The Lord, strong and mighty;

The Lord, mighty in battle!

5. Command--Lift up your heads, O ye gates!

Be lifted up, ye everlasting doors!

6. Explanation--that the King of Glory may come in.

7. Challenge--Who is this king of Glory?

8. Answer--The Lord of hosts;

He is the King of Glory!

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: The Suffering Savior who endured the cross, and who has the task of leading His sheep to the eternal home, is now the King of Glory. As our Shepherd, and our King, He can and will guide us safely home.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. On Giving.

1. The earth and all things therein belong to the Lord.
2. Everything that I have belongs to Him.
3. We are stewards of blessings which He has granted to us, and "Here, moreover, it is required to stewards that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2).
4. If all that I have belongs to Him, then all that I have--not just the amount which I contribute on the Lord's Day--must be used to His glory.

5. If what I have actually belongs to Him, then when I speak of "giving" to Him I must be using the word "giving" in an accomodative sense.
6. If I have a hundred dollars, and "give" ten dollars to the Lord, it is not the case that I can use the ninety dollars in just any way. The ninety dollars also belong to the Lord, and must be used to His glory. Obviously, this use to His glory includes the meeting of our personal needs.
7. "Not how much of my money shall I give to the Lord, but how much of His money shall I use for myself."
8. "I must begin giving to the Lord as He has given to me, lest He begin giving to me as I have given to Him."

II. The King of Glory.

1. Ponder the Lord's life upon this earth, as presented in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and he ". . . went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).
2. "He who has clean hands"--all His actions were right.
3. He who has "a pure heart"--His attitude, His thinking, His teachings were all right.
4. He who upheld not one thing that was false.
5. He who engaged in not one thing that was deceitful.
6. He who was wonderfully blessed of God.
7. He who was mightily vindicated by God.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. We rejoice that the one who suffered for us is now reigning as our glorious King. As our Guiding Shepherd He will lead us safely home.

2. Because He created it and because He sustains it the earth is the Lord's and all things and all persons that are therein belong to Him.

3. Those shall be blessed of God who--

(1) Have clean hands;

(2) Have pure hearts;

(3) Do not involve themselves in any false way;

(4) Practice no deceit.

NOTE: This is the character of those who seek the God of Jacob.

4. With regard to the Lord's entrance into Heaven, we note the following:

(1) The book of Luke closes as follows: "And he led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven" (Lk. 24:50,51).

(2) Acts 1:9-11 reads as follows: "And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."

(3) Peter concludes the great sermon on Pentecost of Acts 2 by saying:

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

(4) "It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but

into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own; else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation" (Heb. 9:23-28).

- (5) Daniel, in visions of the night, saw the King's entrance into His glory. Daniel said: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed (Dan. 7:13,14).

PSALM 25

PRAYER OF THE DISTRESSED SOUL TO THE JUST AND UPRIGHT GOD

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: This Psalm is a beautiful acrostic, each verse beginning with its proper letter of the Hebrew alphabet (which has 22 letters).

In these verses we have--

I. PRAYER 1-7

The Psalmist fervently prays:

1. For victory over his enemies--
 - (1) Let me not be ashamed;
 - (2) Let not my enemies triumph over me;
 - (3) Those shall be ashamed who are disloyal;
2. For knowledge and guidance--
 - (1) Show me thy ways, O Lord;
 - (2) Teach me thy paths;
 - (3) Guide me in thy truth;
 - (4) Instruct me;
3. For forgiveness--
 - (1) Grant me thy tender mercies;
 - (2) Grant me thy lovingkindness;
 - (3) Remember not the sins of my youth;
 - (4) Remember me according to thy lovingkindness.

II. PROCLAMATION 8-15

The Psalmist proclaims that God is good and upright:

1. He provides instruction;
2. He provides guidance;
3. He leads men in the right paths;
4. He forgives sins;
5. He instructs those who love Him;
6. He blesses materially those who love Him;

II. Continued.

7. He is the companion of those who revere Him;
8. He delivers the righteous from their enemies.

III. PRAYER
16-22

The Psalmist continues to pray:

1. For deliverance--from loneliness, affliction, troubles, distresses, and sin;
2. For protection (from his enemies);
3. For the redemption of Israel.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Jehovah God is the source of help in time of sorrow. Regardless of the depths of despair, we must be anxious to carry everything to God in prayer.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Note David's circumstances.

1. Enemies abounded, verses 2,19;
2. Some were wantonly treacherous, verse 3;
3. There was remembrance of sins of his youth, verse 7;
4. There was deep realization of guilt, verse 11;
5. There was loneliness, affliction, trouble, and distress, verses 16,17;
6. He knew the need for and the value of prayer--he prayed to the just and upright God.

II. David Prays.

1. Let me not be put to shame;
2. Let not my enemies exult over me;
3. Let those be put to shame who are wantonly treacherous;
4. Make me know thy ways--teach me thy paths;

II. Continued.

5. Lead me in thy truth;
6. Remember thy mercy--extend to me thy mercy;
7. Forgive my sins--the sins of my youth;
8. Turn thou to me--be gracious to me;
9. Deliver me from loneliness, affliction, trouble, distress, sins;
10. Help me to be righteous;
11. Redeem Israel.

III. Blessings to the Man who fears the Lord.

1. Pardon--from guilt;
2. Instruction--in righteousness;
3. Prosperity--including material blessings;
4. Friendship--fellowship with God;
5. Knowledge--of God's covenant;
6. Deliverance--from snares;
7. Deliverance--from loneliness, affliction, troubles, distress, sin.

IV. Thou Art the One.

1. The one in whom I trust;
 2. The one who hears and answers prayer;
 3. The one who is the God of our salvation;
 4. The one who forgives the penitent;
 5. The one who instructs sinners in the way;
 6. The one who guides and teaches the humble;
 7. The one who blesses those who keep thy covenant;
 8. The one who provides material blessings;
 9. The one who is a companion to those who love thee;
 10. The one who delivers one out of distress.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Regardless of our circumstances in life, we must maintain our confidence in God.
2. We must seek to know God and His will--to heed His instructions and to follow where He leads.
3. God is good and upright. Therefore, He instructs, leads, and teaches.
4. Our troubles and afflictions often are the result of our sins (v. 18).
5. We must remember to pray for others--not for ourselves only (v. 22).
6. Though forgiveness comes from God, the one sinned against--it is the case that we must do the very best that we can to follow in the path of righteousness. This includes an everpresent attitude of repentance and desire to be forgiven.
7. We are enjoined in Scripture to "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).
8. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt. 5:6). "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you . . ." (Mt. 7:7). "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself" (Jno. 7:17).
9. Are you interested in things which are ancient? Consider God's mercy and steadfast love (verse 6).
10. Observe that David prays to be remembered--not according to his sins and transgressions, but according to God's goodness and steadfast love. This, too, must ever be our plea.

PSALM 26

THE PSALMIST SPEAKS OF WORSHIPPING GOD

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: With special emphasis upon his personal integrity--his attitude and conduct--the Psalmist pleads for God's favor and blessings to be upon him, and promises that he will continue to walk in the way of righteousness.

In these verses we have--

I. PREPARATION 1-5

The Psalmist speaks of preparation for worship:

1. He prays for vindication;
2. He cites the grounds upon which he prays (For I have walked in my integrity);
3. He asks God to examine him;
4. He cites the ground upon which he makes this request (For thy lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in thy truth);
5. He explains his attitude--
 - (1) Toward wicked men;
 - (2) Toward hypocrites;
 - (3) Toward the company of evil doers;
 - (4) Toward worship;
 - (5) Toward the temple.

II. PARTICIPATION 6-8

The Psalmist discusses actual participation in worship:

1. He proclaims his innocence;
2. He describes his praise in singing;
3. He mentions his telling of God's wondrous deeds (works);
4. He stresses his love for God's house.

III. PRESERVATION
9-10

The Psalmist prays that he might be preserved:

1. Sweep me not away with sinners;
2. Deliver me from the punishment of the wicked.

IV. PROMISE
11,12

The Psalmist promises:

1. I will (BERKELEY) walk in my integrity;
2. My foot stands on level ground;
3. I will bless the Lord in the great congregation.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Acceptable worship must be preceded by proper attitude and conduct.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Psalmist's Prayer.

1. Vindicate me;
2. Examine me;
3. Try (test) me;
4. Sweep me not away with sinners;
5. Redeem me;
6. Be merciful to me.

II. Integrity: Past, Present, Future.

1. I have walked in my integrity;
2. I do walk in my integrity;
3. I will walk in my integrity.

III. Right Attitude and Conduct.

1. I have walked in my integrity;
2. I have trusted unwaveringly;
3. I have maintained the right attitude;
4. I have walked in thy truth;
5. I have not associated with deceivers;

III. Continued.

6. I have had no fellowship with hypocrites;
7. I hate the gatherings of evil-doers;
8. I will maintain innocence;
9. I will worship thee;
10. I will be thankful to thee;
11. I will tell of thy wondrous work;
12. I love thy dwelling place.

IV. Significant Questions (RSV).

1. Where should one walk? In integrity.
2. Where should one sit? With the righteous.
3. Where should one stand? On level ground.

V. Love and Hate.

1. I love the dwelling place of God;
2. I hate the company and the conduct of evil doers.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. If we expect God--upon examination--to vindicate us, we must--
 - (1) Walk in His truth;
 - (2) Keep His lovingkindness before our eyes;
 - (3) Trust Him without wavering;
 - (4) Walk in integrity.
2. Paul says: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13:5).
3. Let us be careful always to have no fellowship with evil-doers. ". . . and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). "Be not deceived: evil companionships corrupt good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33). "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20).

PSALM 27

WAIT IN CONFIDENCE

In these verses we have--

I. CONFIDENCE
1-3

The Psalmist expresses his confidence in God:

1. The Lord is--
 - (1) My light;
 - (2) My salvation;
 - (3) The stronghold of my life.
2. Therefore, I shall not be afraid.
3. My adversaries shall stumble and fall;
4. Though enemies encamp against me and war comes--
I will be confident.

II. DESIRE
4

The Psalmist stresses his one basic desire:

1. One thing I ask and seek after:
2. That I may dwell all the days of my life in
the house of the Lord;
3. This, in order that--
 - (1) I may behold the beauty of the Lord;
 - (2) I may inquire in His temple.

III. BLESSINGS
5,6

The Psalmist mentions certain blessings which would
come with the realization of his one desire:

1. God will give me protection and security;
2. He will set me upon a rock;
3. He will exalt me above my enemies;
4. I will worship Him;
5. I will praise Him in song.

IV. PRAYER
7-12

The Psalmist prays:

1. Hear me, O Lord;
2. Be gracious to me;

IV. Continued.

3. Answer me;
4. Thou hast commanded, "Seek my face," and I do
seek thy face;
5. Hide not thy face from me;
6. Turn me not away in thy anger;
7. Cast me not off-forsake me not;
8. Teach me thy way;
9. Lead me on a level path;
10. Deliver me from my enemies.

V. CONFIDENCE
13

The Psalmist again expresses his confidence:

1. Though my father and my mother forsake me, the
Lord will take care of me;
2. I believe that I shall see the goodness of the
Lord.

VI. ADMONITION
14

The Psalmist admonishes:

1. Wait for the Lord;
2. Be strong;
3. Let your heart take courage;
4. Wait for the Lord.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: In spite of the circumstances, one must wait for the Lord in confident patience. He hears our pleas, and at the right time and in the right way He will respond.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. David's Confidence.

1. He knew that God was--

- (1) His light;

I. Continued.

- (2) His salvation;
- (3) His stronghold;
- 2. Therefore, even though--
 - (1) Evildoers assailed him,
 - (2) Slanderers spake against him,
 - (3) Enemies opposed him,
 - (4) A host encamped against him,
 - (5) War should arise against him,
 - (6) Others might forsake him,
- 3. He would--
 - (1) Not be afraid;
 - (2) Be concerned about duty and worship;
 - (3) Fervently pray;
 - (4) Maintain confidence in God;
 - (5) Be assured of protection and deliverance;
 - (6) Patiently wait for the Lord.

II. David's Basic Desire.

- 1. The identity of it--to dwell all the days of his life in the house of God.
- 2. The reasons for it--that he might
 - (1) Behold the beauty of the Lord;
 - (2) Inquire in His temple;
- 3. The blessings of it--
 - (1) Protection;
 - (2) Security;
 - (3) Solid foundation;
 - (4) Deliverance from enemies;
 - (5) Privilege of worship.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. How we need to learn the great lesson of waiting in confidence upon God. God is not always "in a hurry" as we generally are.
2. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).
3. Let us be careful to seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and to fasten our minds upon things that are above (Mt. 6:33; Col 3:1).
4. God commands us to "seek His face," and let us be able to say with David: "I do seek thy face."
5. "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever" (Ex. 14:13). How we need to learn confident waiting.

PSALM 28

AN URGENT PLEA IN TIME OF PERIL

In these verses we have --

I. PLEA
1,2

David pleads with God to hear his call:

1. To thee, O Lord--my Rock--I call;
2. Listen to me--lest I become like one caught in the throes of death;
3. Hear me, for I need thy help.

II. PRAYER
3-5

David Prays:

1. For himself, asking that he will not be destroyed with the wicked;
2. With regard to the wicked--that God will deal justly with them:
 - (1) Repay them according to their works;
 - (2) Render to them their due reward;
 - (3) God will break them down and build them up no more.

III. PRAISE
6,7

David Praises God for hearing his supplication:

1. Blessed be the Lord! for he has heard my supplications;
2. The Lord is my strength and my shield;
3. My heart trusts in Him;
4. He has helped me;
5. My heart exults;
6. With my song I give thanks to Him.

IV. PROCLAMATION
8

David proclaims that God is the strength and the refuge:

1. He is the strength of His people;
2. He is the saving refuge of His king.

V. PRAYER

9

David prays for his people:

1. O save thy people;
2. Bless thy heritage;
3. Be thou their shepherd;
4. Carry them for ever.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: To God we pray. In Him we trust. He hears our prayers. We praise Him. We proclaim Him to others. He is our Strength, our Savior, and our Shepherd.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The God of David.

1. His Rock;
2. The one to whom prayers are made;
3. His strength;
4. His shield;
5. The one in whom he trusts;
6. The one whom he praised;
7. The strength of His people;
8. The saving refuge of His king;
9. The shepherd of His people.

II. Blessed be the Lord! (verses 6 and 7).

1. He hears our prayers;
2. He is our strength;
3. He is our shield;
4. In Him we trust;
5. He helps us;
6. We are thankful to Him;
7. We praise Him in song.

III. What Is the Lord? (verses 8 and 9). He is--

1. The Strength of His people;
2. The saving refuge of His king;
3. The savior of the people;
4. The benefactor of the people;
5. The shepherd of the people.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. What if we had no privilege of prayer? What if there was no one to hear us and to answer our prayers? One who is in condition in which God will not hear his prayers is like those who are caught in the throes of death.
2. In the judgment, every person will be requited according to his deeds done in this life (2 Cor. 5:10). God will render to every man according to his works (Rom. 2:6).
3. Men often become so involved in the "work of their hands" that they fail to have proper regard for the "work of His hands." It is sin for one to fail to regard the work of God's hands.
4. David asked for help (verse 2), and God helped him (verse 7). James says: "...ye have not, because ye ask not" (Jas. 4:2). The Lord said: "Ask, and it shall be given you..." (Mt. 7:7)
5. Let us be careful to make God our Rock, our Strength, our Shield, our Refuge, our Benefactor, and our Shepherd.

JEHOVAH SEEN IN THE THUNDER STORM

Spurgeon says: "Just as the eighth Psalm is to be read by moonlight, when the stars are bright, as the nineteenth needs the rays of the rising sun to bring out its beauty, so this can be best rehearsed beneath the black wing of tempest, by the glare of the lightning, or amid that dubious dusk which heralds the war of elements. The verses march to the tune of the thunderbolts."

Imagine David in his boyhood days, on some Judaeen hillside, watching his father's sheep. The clouds gather. The skys darken. A severe storm comes. He watches and studies the storm. He sees Majesty and power of Jehovah. He hears his voice.

In these verses we have--

I. ADMONITION
1,2

The Psalmist admonishes:

1. Ascribe to Jehovah--

(1) Glory,

(2) Strength,

(3) The glory of His name;

2. Worship Him in holy array.

II. DESCRIPTION
3-9

The Psalmist describes the storm:

1. The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;

2. The God of glory thunders;

3. The voice of Jehovah is powerful and full of majesty;

4. The voice of Jehovah breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

5. Jehovah makes Lebanon to skip like a calf;

6. He makes Mt. Hermon to skip like a young ox;

7. The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire;

8. The voice of Jehovah shakes the wilderness;

9. The voice of Jehovah makes the oaks to whirl;
10. The voice of Jehovah strips the forests bare;
11. In His temple all cry, "Glory!"

III. LESSONS
10,11

The Psalmist sets forth the lessons to be learned:

1. Jehovah sits enthroned over the flood;
2. Jehovah sits enthroned as King for ever;
3. Jehovah gives strength to His people;
4. When the storm is over, Jehovah gives His people
peace--wonderful peace.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: The storms of life do come. If we watch carefully, even in the storm, we can see the majesty and power of Jehovah. He is our King. He will give us strength. And, when the storm is over, He will give us peace--wonderful peace.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Voice of the Lord.

1. Is upon the waters;
2. Is powerful;
3. Is full of majesty;
4. Breaks the cedars;
5. Makes the mountains jump;
6. Flashes forth flames of fire;
7. Shakes the wilderness;
8. Makes the oaks to whirl;
9. Strips the forests bare;
10. Is symbolized in the lightning and the thunder.

II. Jehovah--

1. Is strong;
 2. Is worthy of worship;
 3. Is powerful;
 4. Sits enthroned over the flood;
 5. Sits enthroned as king for ever;
 6. Gives strength to His people;
 7. Blesses His people with wonderful peace.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The voice of God can be heard in the thunder storm.
2. We need to ponder well the majesty and power of God as He is seen in the world called "nature."
3. The King of nature is the Everlasting King.
4. The Everlasting King is our Redeemer.
5. In a sense, life itself is a storm. In it all we can see (if we will look) the majesty and power of God. When the storm of this life is over, there is heaven--peace, wonderful peace.
6. God moves in mysterious ways,
His wonder to perform;
He plants His footsteps on the Sea,
And rides upon the storm.
7. "Worship Jehovah in holy array." It is important--when we come in worship before Jehovah--that we be concerned about proper dress.

JEHOVAH SEEN IN THE THUNDER STORM

Spurgeon says: "Just as the eighth Psalm is to be read by moonlight, when the stars are bright, as the nineteenth needs the rays of the rising sun to bring out its beauty, so this can be best rehearsed beneath the black wing of tempest, by the glare of the lightning, or amid that dubious dusk which heralds the war of elements. The verses march to the tune of the thunderbolts."

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fire;

8. The voice of Jehovah shakes the wilderness;

9. The voice of Jehovah makes the oaks to whirl;
10. The voice of Jehovah strips the forests bare;
11. In His temple all cry, "Glory!"

III. LESSONS 10,11

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2. Jehovah sits enthroned as King for ever;
3. Jehovah gives strength to His people;
4. When the storm is over, Jehovah gives His people
peace--wonderful peace.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: The storms of life do come. If we watch carefully, even in the storm, we can see the majesty and power of Jehovah. He is our King. He will give us strength. And, when the storm is over, He will give us peace--wonderful peace.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Voice of the Lord.

1. Is upon the waters;
2. Is powerful;
3. Is full of majesty;
4. Breaks the cedars;
5. Makes the mountains jump;
6. Flashes forth flames of fire;
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8. Makes the oaks to whirl;
9. Strips the forests bare;
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II. Jehovah--

1. Is strong;
2. Is worthy of worship;
3. Is powerful;
4. Sits enthroned over the flood;
5. Sits enthroned as king for ever;
6. Gives strength to His people;
7. Blesses His people with wonderful peace.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The voice of God can be heard in the thunder storm.
2. We need to ponder well the majesty and power of God as He is seen in the world called "nature."
3. The King of nature is the Everlasting King.
4. The Everlasting King is our Redeemer.
5. In a sense, life itself is a storm. In it all we can see (if we will look) the majesty and power of God. When the storm of this life is over, there is heaven--peace, wonderful peace.
6. God moves in mysterious ways,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps on the Sea,
And rides upon the storm.
7. "Worship Jehovah in holy array." It is important--when we come in worship before Jehovah--that we be concerned about proper dress.

PSALM 30

LESSONS LEARNED FROM ILLNESS

The following is from THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE: "A thanksgiving for recovery from an almost fatal sickness, and a reflection on the lessons which it was sent to teach."

"The Psalmist praises Jehovah for preserving his life in answer to his prayer (1-3), and calls upon the godly to join him in thanksgiving (4,5). He goes on to relate his own experience of God's mercy. In prosperity he had grown presumptuous, till God withdrew His favour, and trouble came (6,7). Then he pleaded that his life might be spared, and in thanksgiving will he employ the remainder of his days (11,12).

In these verses we have--

I. PROMISE 1a

The Psalmist promises that he will praise the Lord:

"I will extol thee, O Lord."

II. REASONS 1b-3

He sets forth the reasons underlying his promise:

1. Thou hast drawn me up;
2. Thou hast not let my foes rejoice over me;
3. I cried to thee for help, and thou hast healed me;
4. Thou hast brought up my soul from Sheol;
5. Thou hast restored me to life from among those gone down to the pit.

III. EXHORTATION 4

The Psalmist exhorts the saints to praise God:

1. Sing praises to the Lord, O you His saints;
2. Give thanks to his holy name.

IV. EXPLANATION 5

The Psalmist explains why the saints should praise God:

1. His anger is but for a moment;
2. His favor is for a lifetime;
3. Weeping may tarry for the night;
4. Joy comes with the morning.

V. DISMAY
6,7

The Psalmist discusses his sinful attitude and his consequent dismay:

1. I said in my prosperity--
 - (1) I shall never be moved;
 - (2) By thy favor, O Lord, thou hadst established me as a strong mountain;
2. Thou didst hide thy face;
3. I was dismayed.

VI. PLEA
8-10

He refers to his fervent plea for help:

1. To the Lord I cried;
2. To the Lord I made my supplication;
3. I stressed that if I die I can be of no value to the Lord;
4. I pleaded: Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!
Be thou my helper.

VII. RESPONSE
11,12

He discusses the divine response:

1. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing;
2. Thou hast loosed my sackcloth;
3. Thou hast girded me with gladness;
4. That my soul may praise thee and not be silent;
5. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: There are great and wonderful lessons to be learned from our illnesses.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. God Helps in Times of Affliction.

1. Thou hast drawn me up;

I. Continued.

2. Thou hast not let my foes rejoice over me;
3. Thou hast healed me;
4. Thou hast brought up my soul from death;
5. Thou hast restored me to life;
6. Thou hast turned my mourning into joy;
7. Thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness.

II. Affliction Contributes to Praise.

1. Sing praises to the Lord, O ye His saints;
2. Give thanks to His holy name;
3. Thou has turned my mourning into joy;
4. My soul will praise thee and not be silent;
5. I will give thanks to thee for ever.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Like David, we, too, must be able to learn from affliction.
2. Consider the following:
 - (1) "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I keep thy word" (Ps. 119:67).
 - (2) "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes" (Ps. 119:77).
 - (3) "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me" (Ps. 119:75).
3. In times of affliction we must be careful to turn to God's word. David said: "If thy law had not been my delight, I should have perished in my affliction" (Ps. 119:92).
4. Affliction is sometimes chastening from the Lord. "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6).

5. Christians learn to rejoice even in tribulation: "And not only so, but we rejoice also in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh steadfastness; and steadfastness approvedness; and approvedness hope; and hope putteth not to shame . . ." (Rom. 5:3-5).
 6. We must always seek to have God's favor upon our lives. Cf. 2 Tim. 2:15.
 7. There is much weeping related to the affairs and problems of this life.
But, if we are faithful, there will be the "morning of joy."
 8. Let us be careful to avoid the sin of arrogance (haughtiness).
 9. Paul says: "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, rejoice" (Phil. 4:14).
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PSALM 31

THE SEASONS OF THE SOUL

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: Following G. Campbell Morgan, we have entitled this Psalm "The Seasons of the Soul." Morgan himself calls it: "Jehovah the Refuge of the Afflicted." It is a beautiful song of trust and confidence, sung by one who is struggling through tears and trials to triumph.

In these verses we have--

I. AUTUMN
1-8

". . . with its winds and gathering clouds, yet having sunlight, and a golden fruitage, even though the breath of death is everywhere."

1. In thee, O Lord, do I seek refuge;
2. Let me never be put to shame;
3. Deliver me;
4. Listen to me;
5. Rescue me speedily;
6. Be thou a rock of refuge for me;
7. Be thou a strong fortress to save me;
8. Lead me and guide me;
9. Deliver me from the hidden snare;
10. Into thy hand I commit my spirit;
11. Deal with me as one who trusts in the Lord;
12. Thou art a rock of refuge for me;
13. Thou art a strong fortress to save me;
14. Thou hast redeemed me;
15. I will rejoice and be glad for thy steadfast love.
16. Thou hast seen my affliction;
17. Thou hast taken heed of my adversities;
18. Thou hast not delivered me into the hand of the enemy;

I. Continued.

19. Thou has set my feet in a broad place.

II. WINTER
9-13

" . . . chill and lifeless, full of sobs and sighing."

1. I am in distress;
2. My eye is wasted from grief;
3. My soul and my body also;
4. My life is spent with sorrow;
5. My years are spent with sighing;
6. My strength fails because of my misery;
7. My bones waste away;
8. I am the scorn of all my adversaries;
9. I am a horror to my neighbors;
10. I am an object of dread to my acquaintances;
11. Those who see me in the street flee from me;
12. I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;
13. I have become like a broken vessel;
14. I hear the whispering of many-terror on every side!
15. Men scheme against me--they plot to take my life.

III. SPRING
14-18

" . . . with its hope and expectation, its sweeping rains,
and bursting sun-gleams."

1. I trust in thee, O Lord;
2. Thou art my God;
3. My times are in thy hand;
4. Deliver me from my enemies and persecutors;
5. Let thy face shine on thy servant;
6. Save me in thy steadfast love;
7. Let me not be put to shame;
8. I call on thee;

III. Continued.

9. Let the wicked be put to shame;
10. Let the wicked go dumbfounded to Sheol;
11. Let the lying lips be dumb--lips which speak against the righteous.

V. SUMMER
19-24

"At last the glad and golden summer."

1. O how abundant is thy goodness;
2. Thou dost hide the righteous from the plots of men;
3. Thou dost shelter the righteous from the strife of tongues;
4. The Lord has wondrously shown His steadfast love to me;
5. When I had decided that I was far from thy sight, thou didst hear my supplications;
6. Love the Lord, all you His saints;
7. The Lord preserves the faithful;
8. The Lord abundantly requites those who act haughtily;
9. Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: There are four seasons of the soul, and we need them all to make up the total "year" of life. Even when worn out in body and mind, one can (and ought)--in serious consideration of past blessings, and in blessed assurance that God will hear--to pray fervently to God who gives deliverance and victory.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Psalm might be studied according to the following:

1. CALL (verses 1-8);
2. COMPLAINT (verses 9-18);
3. CONFIDENCE (verses 19-24).

II. The Psalm might also be studied according to the following:

1. TRUST (verses 1-8);
2. TRIAL (verses 9-18);
3. TRIUMPH (verses 19-24).

III. Blessings Sought by the Psalmist:

1. Refuge;
2. Preclusion from shame;
3. Deliverance;
4. Rescue;
5. Leading/guiding;
6. Protection from hidden traps;
7. Divine favor;
8. God's steadfast love.

IV. Blessings the Psalmist recognizes:

1. Thou hast redeemed me;
2. Thou hast seen my affliction;
3. Thou hast taken heed of my adversities;
4. Thou has delivered me from the hand of the enemy;
5. Thou hast set my feet in a broad place;
6. God's steadfast love;
7. God's hearing and responding.

V. The Psalmist prays that God will be to him--

1. A Rock of Refuge;
2. A strong fortress;
3. A guide, a leader;
4. A deliverer.

VI. The Great Depository.

1. "Into thy hands I commit my spirit" (verse 5). This beautiful statement the Lord quoted while upon the cross (Lk. 23:46).
2. "My times are in thy hand" (verse 15).

VII. The Psalmist's Wonderful Attitude, including--

1. Recognition of his dependence upon God;
2. Confidence in God's righteousness, justice, faithfulness, power and love;
3. Realization that blessings of the past were assurances with regard to the future;
4. Knowledge that He is the Great Protector and Deliverer.

VIII. God's Steadfast Love--

1. "I will rejoice and be glad in thy steadfast love" (verse 7);
2. "Let thy face shine on thy servant; save me in thy steadfast love" (verse 16);
3. "Blessed be the Lord, for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me when I was beset as in a besieged city" (verse 21).

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. All His saints must keep on loving God--regardless of the circumstances.
2. The Lord preserves the faithful.
3. God will deal justly with the wicked.
4. God's people must be strong and courageous.

5. God's people--in patience--must wait upon the Lord.
6. God has marvelous and innumerable blessings in store for those who fear Him.
7. " . . . but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

PSALM 32

THE BLESSEDNESS OF FORGIVENESS

In these verses we have--

I. FORGIVENESS 1,2

The Psalmist speaks of the blessedness of forgiveness:

1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered;
2. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon
sin, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

II. CONCEALMENT 3,4

He speaks of the futility of concealment:

1. When I declared not sin, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long;
2. For day and night God's hand was upon me;
3. My strength was dried up, as by the heat of summer.

III. CONFESSION 5

He stresses the value of confession of sins:

1. I acknowledged my sin to thee;
2. I did not hide my iniquity;
3. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the
Lord";
4. Then, thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.

IV. EXHORTATION 6

The Psalmist exhorts and explains:

1. Therefore, let every one who is godly offer prayer
to thee;
2. In time of distress--in time of the rush of great
waters--these great waters shall not reach him.

V. ASSURANCE 7

He issues a statement of assurance:

1. Thou art a hiding place for me;
2. Thou preservedest me from trouble;
3. Thou dost encompass me with deliverance.

VI. RESPONSE
8,9

The Psalmist shows the divine response to the penitent:

1. I will instruct you and teach you;
2. I will counsel you with my eye upon you;
3. Do not be like a horse or a mule--without understanding. These must be curbed with bit and bridle, or they will not stay with you.

VII. JOY
10,11

The Psalmist speaks of the joy of forgiveness:

1. Many are the pangs of the wicked; but steadfast love surrounds him who trusts in the Lord;
2. Be glad in the Lord;
3. Rejoice, O Righteous;
4. Shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Indescribable joy comes with the assurance of forgiveness. "Many are the pangs of the wicked; but steadfast love surrounds him who trusts in the Lord."

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. IT IS GOD--

1. Who forgives our sins;
2. To whom we confess our sins;
3. Who hears our prayers;
4. Who keeps us from drowning in troubles;
5. Who gives us protection;
6. Who surrounds us with deliverance;
7. Who instructs us;
8. Who wants us to stay with Him because of our love;

9. Who surrounds us with His steadfast love;
10. In whom we rejoice.

II. THE AGONY OF GUILT--

1. My body was wasted away;
2. There was groaning all the day;
3. For night and day thy hand was heavy upon me;
4. My strength was dried up;
5. Many are the pangs of the wicked.

III. THE JOY OF FORGIVENESS--

1. Blessed (happy, with divine favor) is the man whose sins are forgiven;
2. Our prayers are heard;
3. There is assurance of deliverance;
4. There is protection;
5. There is instruction and guidance;
6. There is fellowship with God;
7. There is God's steadfast love.

IV. THE FORGIVEN ONE--

1. Prays;
 2. Learns;
 3. Heeds;
 4. Loves;
 5. Is glad;
 6. Rejoices;
 7. Shouts for joy.
-

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. David, in prophecy, speaks of the actual forgiveness of sins, which forgiveness can be realized only in and through Jesus Christ. Cf. Rom. 4:6,7.
2. "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy" (Prov. 28:13).
3. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jno. 1:9).
4. Note carefully: sin, sorrow, confession, restoration, joy, exhortation.

PSALM 33

PRAISE JEHOVAH--FOR HIS WORD, HIS WORK, AND HIS LOVE

In these verses we have--

I. EXHORTATION

1-3

The Psalmist exhorts the righteous to praise the Lord:

1. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous!
2. Praise befits the upright;
3. Praise the Lord with the lyre;
4. Make melody to him with the harp of ten strings;
5. Sing to him a new song;
6. Play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

II. EXPLANATION

4,5

He explains why this is to be done:

1. Because of His word (The word of the Lord is upright);
2. Because of His work (It is done in faithfulness);
3. Because of His love (He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord).

III. ELABORATION

6-22

The Psalmist elaborates upon each of these items. He proceeds to discuss God's--

1. WORD--

(1) Creation (6,7)

- A. By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made;
- B. All their host by the breath of His mouth;
- C. He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle;
- D. He put the deeps in storehouses.

(2) Attitude (8,9)

- A. Let all the earth fear the Lord;

(2) Continued.

B. Let all the inhabitants of the earth stand
in awe of Him!

C. For He spoke, and it came to be;

D. He commanded, and it stood forth.

2. WORK--

(1) Nations (10-12)

A. The Lord brings the counsel of the nations
to nought;

B. He frustrates the plans of the peoples;

C. The counsel of the Lord stands for ever;

D. The thoughts of His heart (stand) to all
generations;

E. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as His heritage!

(2) Observation (13-15)

A. The Lord looks down from heaven;

B. He sees all the sons of men;

C. From His throne He looks forth on all the
inhabitants of the earth;

D. He who fashions the hearts of them all
observes all their deeds.

(3) Victory (16,17)

A. A king is not saved by his great army;

B. A warrior is not delivered by his great
strength;

C. The war horse is a vain hope for victory.

3. LOVE--

(1) Care (18,19)

A. The eye of the Lord is on those who fear
Him; is on those who hope in His steadfast
love;

B. He delivers their soul from death;

C. He keeps them alive in famine.

(2) Gladness (20,21)

A. Our soul waits for the Lord;

B. He is our help and shield;

C. Our heart is glad in Him;

D. Because we trust in His holy name;

(3) Prayer (22)

A. Let thy steadfast love, O Lord, be upon
us;

B. Even as we hope in thee.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: We must (and we are grateful that we can) ever praise
Jehovah--for (1) His word, (2) His work, and (3) His love.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. God's Word.

1. Because of it, we should praise Him;
2. It is upright;
3. By it the heavens were made;
4. By it all the host of the heavens came forth;
5. By it the waters of the sea were gathered;
6. Because He spoke the world came to be.

II. God's Work.

1. He rules in the affairs of the nations;
2. He frustrates the plans (sinful plans) of the peoples;
3. His counsel stands for ever;
4. He blesses His people--those who love him and fear Him;
5. He observes all the deeds of men;
6. All His work is done in faithfulness;
7. He is the one who gives victory.

III. God's Love.

1. He loves righteousness and justice;
2. His eye is upon those who hope in His steadfast love;
3. He provides for those who love Him;
4. He provides protection;
5. Because of His love (and our love) we rejoice in Him;
6. We must pray: "Let thy steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in thee."

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. We must worship God according to the Law of God under which we live.

The fact that David practiced polygamy does not mean that one can now practice polygamy and be acceptable to God. The fact that David used mechanical instrumental music in the Old Testament worship does not mean that the Christian can use mechanical instruments of music in worship to God. That which is not authorized is sin (Heb. 11:6).

2. He spoke and it came to be.

Away out there alone, above
Without a thing to make it of,
The world was made without a flaw-
Without a hammer or a saw.

Without a bit of wood or stone,
Without a bit of flesh or bone,
Without a board or nail or screw--
Or anything to nail it to.

Without a foothold or a trace
Of anything at all but space,
The only thing the Lord could do
Was simply speak a word or two.

E.U. Cook

3. All the inhabitants of the earth are obligated to fear the Lord--to stand in awe of Him. Cf. Acts 17:26,27,30.
4. God still rules in the affairs of nations.
5. God observes the deeds of men. Nothing is hid from His sight.
6. In a very special way God blesses His spiritual nation of Israel--the church of our Lord.
7. Napoleon claimed that "God is with the greatest batallions."
Napoleon was wrong.
8. God is concerned about our physical needs, as well as about our spiritual needs.
9. God's love for us is the marvelous ground upon which we have hope in Him.

PSALM 34

THE LORD PROTECTS THE RIGHTEOUS

In these verses we have--

I. PRAISE
1-3

The Psalmist expresses praise to the Lord, and exhorts others to praise Him.

1. I will bless the Lord at all times;
2. I will continually praise Him;
3. My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
4. Let the afflicted hear and be glad;
5. O Magnify the Lord with me;
6. Let us exalt His name together!

II. PROVISIONS
4-10

The Psalmist explains that Jehovah provides for those who seek him.

1. I sought the Lord, and He answered me;
2. He delivered me from all my fears;
3. Look to Him, and be radiant;
4. Look to Him, and your faces will never reflect shame;
5. This poor man cried to Him, and He heard me;
6. He saved me from all my troubles;
7. The angel of the Lord protects and delivers those who fear God;
8. O taste and see that the Lord is good;
9. Happy is the man who takes refuge in Him!
10. Those who fear Him have no want!
11. Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

III. PRECEPTS
11-14

The Psalmist sets forth certain rules for life.

1. Invitation: Come, O sons, listen to me;
2. Explanation: I will teach you the fear of the Lord;
3. Question: What man is there who desires life, and who covets many days, that he may enjoy good?
4. Answer: The man--
 - (1) Who keeps his tongue from evil;
 - (2) Whose lips speak no deceit;
 - (3) Who departs from evil;
 - (4) Who does good;
 - (5) Who seeks peace and pursues it.

IV. PROVIDENCE
15-18

The Psalmist speaks of God's providence:

1. The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous;
2. The ears of the Lord are toward their cry;
3. The face of the Lord is against evildoers;
4. The Lord hears the cry of the righteous;
5. He delivers the righteous out of all their troubles;
6. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted;
7. He saves the crushed spirit.

V. PROTECTION
19-22

The Psalmist stresses that God protects the righteous person:

1. The righteous do experience many afflictions, but the Lord delivers out of them all;
 2. He protects the righteous;
 3. The wicked will be condemned;
 4. The Lord redeems the life of His servants;
 5. He protects those who take refuge in him.
-

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: God is the protector and the sustainer of all those
who fear Him.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Exhortation to Praise.

1. I will bless the Lord at all times;
2. His praise shall continually be in my mouth;
3. Let the afflicted hear and be glad;
4. Magnify the Lord with me;
5. Let us exalt His name together!
6. Look to Him and be radiant.

II. God Works for the Righteous.

1. He answers me;
2. He delivers me from all my fears;
3. He enables me to be radiant;
4. He saved me out of troubles;
5. He protects me;
6. He provides "good things";
7. He blesses with good life;
8. He watches;
9. He hears;
10. He is near the brokenhearted;
11. He saves the crushed in spirit;
12. He delivers from afflictions;
13. He redeems the souls of His servants.

III. To Have the Good Life--

1. Keep your tongue from evil;
2. Keep your lips from speaking deceit;
3. Depart from evil;
4. Do good;
5. Seek peace, and pursue it.

IV. On Fearing Jehovah:

1. God watches over and protects those who fear Him;
2. All His saints are to fear Him;
3. Those who fear Him have no want;
4. Men must be taught to fear the Lord;
5. Fearing the Lord will produce the good life.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. We must constantly praise Jehovah--in the word, in work, in song, in teaching, in living, and even in our faces. Let our very faces reflect the fact that our lives are built upon the fear of the Lord (i.e. the proper love and respect and reverence for Him).
 2. If we have the right attitude toward God, our own experiences will bear out the fact that "the Lord is good."
 3. Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. David said: "I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging bread" (Ps. 37:25). The Lord said: "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt. 6:33).
 4. God's people must involve themselves in teaching others to fear the Lord.
 5. The Lord is concerned about the bereaved and the discouraged.
 6. The righteous are not exempt from, but learn to rejoice in, tribulation.
 7. Those who take refuge in Him will not be condemned.
-

PSALM 35

FERVENT PRAYER FOR HELP IN TIME OF PERIL

In these verses we have--

I. PRAYER AND
PROMISE (1-10)

David prays that God will fight against his enemies, grant him deliverance from them, and promises that-- consequently--he will rejoice and praise God.

1. Situation:

- (1) Enemies fight against me;
- (2) They seek my life;
- (3) They pursue me;
- (4) They devise evil against me;
- (5) They try to entrap me;

2. Prayer:

- (1) Contend with my enemies;
- (2) Fight against them;
- (3) Take hold of shield and buckler;
- (4) Draw the spear and the javelin;
- (5) Say to my soul, "I am your deliverance";
- (6) Let them be put to shame;
- (7) Let them be turned back and confounded;
- (8) Let them be like chaff before the wind;
- (9) Let their way be dark and slippery;
- (10) Let thy angel pursue them;
- (11) Let ruin come upon them;
- (12) Let them fall into their own trap.

3. Explanation: for--

- (1) Without cause they hid their net for me;
- (2) Without cause they dug a pit for my life.

I. Continued.

4. Promise: THEN--

- (1) My soul shall rejoice in the Lord;
- (2) I shall exult in His deliverance;
- (3) All my bones shall say: "O Lord, who is like thee, thou who deliverest the weak and the needy?"

II. PRAYER AND
PROMISES
(11-18)

David describes his enemies, continues to pray for God's wrath to be upon the enemies, for rescue from them, and promises that--consequently--he will praise God.

1. Situation:

- (1) Malicious witnesses rise up;
- (2) They ask me of things that I do not know;
- (3) They return evil for good;
- (4) For instance, when they were sick--I was concerned about them; I wore sackcloth; I fasted; I prayed; I grieved, as for a friend or a brother or for a mother. But they laugh at my stumbling. They gather against me. Even cripples whom I do not know slander without ceasing. They mock me more and more.

2. Prayer:

- (1) How long, O Lord, wilt thou look on?
- (2) Rescue me from their ravages.

3. Promises: THEN--

- (1) I will thank thee in the great congregation;
- (2) In the mighty throng I will praise thee.

III. PRAYER AND
PROMISE
(19-28)

David continues to pray for God's wrath to be upon his enemies, for personal vindication, and promises that--consequently--he will praise God.

1. Situation:

- (1) There are people who are wrongfully my foes;
- (2) They do not seek peace;
- (3) They hate me without a cause;
- (4) They speak deceitfully against those who are
quiet in the land;
- (5) They open wide their mouths against me;
- (6) They mock me;
- (7) They rejoice in my calamity;
- (8) They magnify themselves against me.

2. Prayer:

- (1) Let not my enemies rejoice over me;
- (2) Let them not be pleased with victory over me;
- (3) Be not silent, O Lord;
- (4) Be not far from me!
- (5) Awake for my right;
- (6) Vindicate me according to thy righteousness;
- (7) Let them not rejoice over me;
- (8) Let them not be satisfied;
- (9) Let them be put to shame and confusion;
- (10) Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor;
- (11) Let my friends shout for joy and be glad;
- (12) Let my friends say: "Great is the Lord."

III. Continued.

3. Promise: THEN--

(1) My tongue shall tell of thy righteousness;

(2) I will praise thee all the day long.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Even in times of greatest peril we must take the matter to God in prayer. He is the source of deliverance. Because of personal victories given us we should (1) rejoice, (2) praise God, (3) be thankful, and (4) tell others of God's righteousness.

SPECIAL LESSON:

This Psalm is definitely Messianic. The enemies here described are prophetic of the enemies of the Lord. Those who hated the Servant of God hated God also. The Lord said: "He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jno. 15:23,24). The Lord continued: "But this cometh to pass, that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause" (Jno. 15:25). Enemies hated David without a cause, and enemies of our Lord--the Son of David--hated Him without a cause.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Our enemies may be powerful, but God is more powerful than our enemies.
2. When circumstances and problems overwhelm us we must be careful to cast our burdens upon the Lord, knowing that He cares for us. "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).
3. With Paul, let us live in the assurance that "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work" (2 Tim. 4:18). He also said: "But the Lord

3. Continued.

stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Tim. 4:17).

4. God delivered Noah, Lot, David, the Hebrew men, Daniel, the children of Israel, Paul, and countless others. It is His will, He CAN and WILL deliver us. "Our God is able to deliver thee."

5. God is mindful of the weak and of the needy.

6. Like David, we must be concerned about the sick and the sorrowful.

7. It is right for us to pray for God to destroy evil causes and evil influences.

PSALM 36

ATTITUDES IN CONTRAST

In these verses we have--

I. The WICKED
1-4

The Psalmist sets forth the attitude of the wicked person:

1. Sin has a deep appeal to the wicked person;
2. He tries to make sin worth while (Berkeley);
3. There is no fear of God before his eyes;
4. He flatters himself that his sins can be hid;
5. His speech is deceitful;
6. His actions are not wise and are not productive of good;
7. Even at night he plans evil;
8. He does not spurn (loathe) evil.

II. The RIGHTEOUS
5-9

The Psalmist sets forth the attitude of the righteous person:

The righteous person praises God--

1. For His steadfast love (which extends to the heavens);
2. For His faithfulness (which extends to the clouds);
3. For His righteousness (which is like the mountains of God);
4. For His judgments (which are like the great deep);
5. For His protection (there is refuge in the shadow of His wings);
6. For His provisions (He gives them drink from the river of delights; He provides life and light).

III. PRAYER
10-12

The Psalmist fervently prays--

1. For continued love;
2. For salvation;
3. For protection;
4. For victory.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Let us be characterized by the attitude of the righteous: respecting God (1) for what He is, (2) for who He is, and (3) for what He does for us.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. The Psalmist pictures the wicked.

1. Sin has a deep appeal to him;
2. He works hard trying to make sin worth while;
3. There is no fear of God in his heart;
4. He flatters (and deceives) himself thinking that his iniquity will not be found out;
5. His words are false and his speech deceitful;
6. He has ceased to act wisely;
7. He is not concerned about doing good;
8. He continually plots mischief;
9. He takes his stand upon a path that is not good;
10. He does not spurn (or loathe) evil.

II. The Psalmist pictures the Righteous. The righteous person praises God--

1. For His steadfast love;
2. For His faithfulness;
3. For His righteousness;
4. For His judgment;
5. For His salvation;

II. Continued.

6. For His protection;
7. For His provisions;

III. God's Love--

1. Is steadfast;
2. Extends to the heavens;
3. Is precious to those who receive it and who perceive it.

IV. The Psalmist speaks of God. His--

1. Steadfastness;
2. Faithfulness;
3. Righteousness;
4. Judgments;
5. Protection;
6. Provisions;
7. Salvation.

V. God Provides--

1. Food;
2. Drink;
3. Life;
4. Light;
5. Love;
6. Protection;
7. Deliverance;
8. Victory.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. It is easy to visualize the Psalmist sitting upon some beautiful mountain-side, beholding, studying, appreciating God's beautiful world. The Psalmist looks at the heavens, at the clouds floating by, at the

great majestic mountains, at the sea in the distance, at the shadows, at the river. Each of these reminds him of something great about God.

2. "Evil men and imposters shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 4:12).
3. When men disregard God and His will, they have no correct objective standard by which to be governed.
4. When the heart is evil the words will be evil. When the heart is right, the speech will be right. Cf. Prov. 4:23; Mt. 12:34.
5. God has His storehouse filled with an abundance of blessings which He wants to bestow. In a very special way He bestows these blessings to and upon those who are IN Christ (Eph. 1:3).

PSALM 37

FRET NOT THYSELF BECAUSE OF EVIL DOERS

In these verses we have--

I. COUNSEL
1-9

The Psalmist counsels against murmuring and enjoins trust in Jehovah.

1. Fret not thyself because of evildoers;
2. Do not be envious of workers of iniquity, for
 - (1) They will soon fade away like the grass;
 - (2) They will soon wither like the green herb;
3. Trust in the Lord, and do good; you will dwell in the land and enjoy security;
4. Take delight in the Lord, and He will bless you;
5. Commit your way to the Lord;
6. Trust in the Lord, and He will act;
7. He will vindicate you and bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your right as the noonday;
8. Be still before the Lord--wait patiently;
9. Fret not yourself over the person who prospers in his way--over the man who carries out evil devices;
10. Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath!
11. Fret not yourself--it tends only to evil;
12. The wicked shall be cut off;
13. Those who wait on the Lord shall possess the land.

II. EXPLANATION
10-12

The Psalmist explains that the apparent triumph of the wicked is shortlived.

1. Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;
2. Though you look well at his place, he will not be there;
3. But the meek shall inherit the earth (Cf. Mt. 5:5);

II. Continued.

4. The meek shall delight themselves in prosperity
(in the abundance of peace);
5. The wicked plots against the righteous, but the
Lord laughs at the wicked;
6. The wicked shall be destroyed by their own schemes
and plans;
7. Better is a little that the righteous has than the
abundance of many wicked;
8. The arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the
Lord upholds the righteous;
9. The Lord wonderfully blesses the blameless;
10. The wicked perish--they are like the glory of the
pastures; they vanish like smoke.

III. REWARD
21-31

The Psalmist stresses that the reward of the righteous
is sure and abiding.

1. The wicked borrow, and cannot pay back;
2. The righteous is generous and gives;
3. Those blessed by the Lord shall possess the land,
but the wicked shall be cut off;
4. Jehovah establishes the man in whose way He delights;
5. The Lord is the stay of the hand of the righteous;
6. God does not forsake the righteous, and the
children of the righteous do not have to beg bread;
7. The righteous gives liberally and lends, and his
children become a blessing;
8. Depart from evil, and do good;
9. The Lord loves justice;
10. God will not forsake His saints;

III. Continued.

11. God will preserve the righteous, but He will cut off the wicked;
12. The righteous shall possess the land;
13. The righteous person--
 - (1) Utters wisdom;
 - (2) Speaks justice;
 - (3) Keeps God's law in his heart;
 - (4) Walks according to God's will.

IV. CONTRAST
32-40

The Psalmist contrasts the retribution of the wicked with the recompense for the righteous.

1. The wicked watches the righteous and seeks to slay him;
2. The Lord will protect the righteous;
3. Therefore, wait for the Lord, and keep to His way; He will exalt you to possess the land, and you will see the destruction of the wicked;
4. I have seen the wicked man, towering like a cedar of Lebanon; but again I passed by--and lo, he was no more.
5. Study the blameless--watch the upright; for there is posterity for the man of peace;
6. Transgressors shall be destroyed, and the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off;
7. For the righteous, the Lord provides--
 - (1) Salvation;
 - (2) Refuge;
 - (3) Deliverance;
 - (4) Help.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: The righteous should not fret or worry because of the apparent prosperity of the wicked. God abundantly blesses the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Instructions to the Righteous:

1. Fret not thyself;
2. Be not envious of the wicked;
3. Trust in the Lord;
4. Do good;
5. Take delight in the Lord;
6. Commit your ways to the Lord;
7. Be still before the Lord;
8. Wait patiently for Him;
9. Refrain from anger;
10. Forsake wrath.

II. Those who shall possess the Land: Those who--

1. Trust in the Lord and do good;
2. Wait for the Lord;
3. Are meek;
4. Are blessed by the Lord.

III. Blessings of the Righteous:

1. They shall dwell in the land;
2. They enjoy security;
3. Their needs are supplied;
4. They are vindicated;
5. They have abundant prosperity;
6. They are upheld by the Lord;

III. Continued.

7. They are the recipients of special providence.

IV. The Attitude of the Wicked:

1. He plots against the righteous;
2. He hates the righteous;
3. He seeks the destruction of the righteous.

V. The Destiny of the Wicked:

1. They will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb;
2. They shall be cut off;
3. They shall receive God's wrath;
4. They shall be destroyed by their own weapons;
5. Their power shall be broken;
6. They perish--vanish like smoke.

VI. The Righteous--

1. Delights in God's way;
2. Is strengthened by the Lord;
3. Is provided for by the Lord;
4. Is preserved by the Lord;
5. Is blessed by God;
6. Is concerned about wisdom, justice, and the law of God;
7. Is protected by the Lord;
8. Is helped by the Lord.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. The Bible teaches that we are not to worry. Cf. Mt. 6:25-34; Phil 4:6.
2. When the affairs of this life are over, there will be heaven for the righteous, and eternal punishment for the wicked.
3. "Better is a little that the righteous has than the abundance of many wicked."

4. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt. 6:33).
5. "The arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholds the righteous."
6. The Lord teaches: ". . . it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).
7. Note these words: fret not, commit, trust, be still, wait, refrain, forsake!

PSALM 38

THE SORROWFUL SUFFERING OF THE SIN-SICK SOUL

This Psalm is the vivid description of a man's total suffering because of his sin. The Psalmist was suffering physically, mentally, socially, politically, and spiritually. In suffering, he rightly turns to God.

I. PLEA 1

The Psalmist pleads for God's mercy:

1. O Lord, rebuke me not in thy anger;
2. Chasten me not in thy wrath.

II. ACKNOWLEDGMENT 2

The Psalmist acknowledges divine chastisement:

1. Thy arrows have sunk into me;
2. Thy hand has come down on me.

III. PHYSICAL 3-8

He describes his physical sufferings:

1. There is no soundness in my flesh;
2. There is no health in my bones because of my sin;
3. My iniquities have gone over my head;
4. They weigh like a burden too heavy for me;
5. My wounds grow foul and fester because of my foolishness;
6. I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
7. All the day I go about mourning;
8. My loins are filled with burning;
9. There is no soundness in my flesh;
10. I groan because of tumult in my heart.

IV. MENTAL 8-10

The Psalmist describes his mental suffering:

1. I groan because of tumult in my heart;
2. All my longing is known to thee;
3. My sighing is not hidden from thee;
4. My heart throbs;
5. My strength fails me;
6. The light of my eyes is gone from me.

V. SOCIAL
11

The Psalmist speaks of his social sufferings:

1. My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague;
2. My kinsmen stand far off.

VI. POLITICAL
12-14

He speaks of his political suffering:

1. Those who seek my life set their traps for me;
2. They speak of ruin;
3. They meditate treachery all the day long;
4. Like one who cannot hear and who cannot speak, I
do not rebuke.

VII. PRAYER
15,16

The Psalmist prays:

1. But for Thee, O Lord, do I wait;
2. Thou, O Lord my God, wilt answer;
3. Let not my enemies rejoice over me.

VIII. SPIRITUAL
17-20

The Psalmist sets forth his spiritual suffering:

1. I am ready to fall;
2. My pain is ever with me;
3. I confess my iniquities;
4. I am sorry for my sin;
5. My foes (without cause) are mighty;
6. Those who hate me (wrongfully) are many;
7. They render me evil for good;
8. They are my adversaries because I follow after good.

IX. PLEA
21,22

The Psalmist fervently plead:

1. Do not forsake me, O Lord!
 2. O my God, be not far from me!
 3. Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!
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FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: Sin brings tragic consequences. It brings terrible suffering to the guilty. We should rejoice that--based upon genuine repentance--we can hope for forgiveness from God. Jehovah is the hope of the penitent soul.

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. A Certain Cause of Suffering:

1. My sin;
2. My iniquities;
3. My foolishness.

II. Total Suffering:

1. Physical--

- (1) There is no soundness in my flesh;
- (2) There is no health in my bones;
- (3) My pain is ever with me.

2. Mental--

- (1) I groan because of the tumult of my heart;
- (2) There is constant longing and sighing;
- (3) My heart throbs;
- (4) The light of my eyes is gone.

3. Social--

- (1) My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague;
- (2) My kinsmen stand afar off.

4. Political--

- (1) Those who seek my life set their traps for me;
- (2) They meditate treachery all the day long;
- (3) My enemies are many and mighty.

II. Continued.

5. Spiritual--

- (1) I confess my iniquity;
- (2) I am sorry for my sin;
- (3) O Lord, do not forsake me--make haste to help me, my salvation!

III. It is no Secret--What Sin Can Do. It can--

1. Destroy soundness of the flesh;
2. Destroy soundness of the bones;
3. Bury or drown a person in sorrow, shame, and guilt;
4. Weigh like a burden too heavy;
5. Produce constant mourning;
6. Cause indescribable mental anguish;
7. Remove the light from the eyes;
8. Send an immortal soul to eternal punishment.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. In discussing sinful men and sinful women, Paul says: "...receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due" (Rom. 1:27).
2. The Psalmist clearly and vividly shows the "foolishness" of sin.
3. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6).
4. This Psalm might be considered under the headings of: (1) Condition, 1-8; (2) Contrition, 9-14; (3) Confidence, 15-22.
5. When we come face to face with suffering caused by sin we must be anxious
 - (1) to acknowledge the cause of the suffering;
 - (2) to confess forthrightly our sins to God;
 - (3) to humbly and fervently pray to God for forgiveness; and
 - (4) to confidently expect that God will hear and will answer our cries.

PSALM 39

musings before the fireplace--

MY HOPE IS IN THEE

In these verses we have--

I. PROMISE

1

The Psalmist refers to his promise to keep silence:

1. I said: "I will guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue";
2. I said: "I will bridle my mouth, so long as the wicked are in my presence" (Cf. 38:13,14).

II. FUTILITY

2,3

He stresses that he kept his promise. but to no avail:

1. I was dumb and silent;
2. I held my peace--to no avail;
3. My distress grew worse;
4. My heart became hot within me.

III. COMPULSION

4-6

The Psalmist says that he was compelled to speak to God with regard to:

1. His future--

"Let me know my end";

"Let me know what is the measure of my days";

"Let me know how fleeting my life is!"

2. The shortness of life--

"Thou hast made my days a short time";

"My lifetime is as nothing in thy sight";

3. The transitoriness of life--

"Surely every man stands as a mere breath!"

"Surely man goes about as a shadow!"

4. The futility of material accumulations--

"Surely for nought are they in turmoil";

"Man heaps up, and knows not who will gather!"

IV. TURNING
7-11

The Psalmist turns to God:

1. Expressing his hope--

"Lord, for what do I wait?"

"My hope is in thee."

2. Praying for deliverance--

"Deliver me from all my transgressions";

"Make me not the scorn of the fool!"

3. Expressing his submission--

"I am dumb, I do not open my mouth";

"For it is thou who hast done it."

4. Considering the nature of God's chastening--

"Remove thy stroke from me";

"I am spent by the blows of thy hand";

"When thou dost chasten man with rebukes for sin,
thou dost consume like a moth what is dear to him."

5. Considering the transitoriness of life--

"Surely every man is a mere breath."

V. PRAYER
12,13

The Psalmist fervently prays for divine favor and consequent joy:

1. Hear my prayer, O Lord;

2. Give ear to my cry;

3. Hold not thy peace at my tears!

4. For I am a passing guest, a sojourner, like all my
fathers;

5. Look away from me, that I may know gladness.

FUNDAMENTAL MESSAGE: The God of the Bible is our Hope!

SPECIAL LESSONS:

I. Lord, Let Me Know--

1. My end;
2. The measure of my days;
3. How fleeting my life is.

II. Life--

1. Is short;
2. Is fleeting;
3. Is as nothing in the sight of God (as God regards time);
4. Is like a shadow;
5. Cf. Jas. 4:13-15.

III. Let Us Turn to God--

1. Expressing our hope;
2. Praying for deliverance from our transgressions;
3. Expressing submission;
4. Understanding the nature of God's chastening;
5. Understanding the transitoriness of life.

GENERAL LESSONS:

1. Let us be careful always to guard our tongues. Cf. Jas. 3:2-12.
2. There are times when "silence is golden," but there are times when one is compelled to speak.
3. When we have the time and the opportunities to muse as the fire burns, let us be careful to think of God, the shortness of life, the certainty of the judgment, our blessed hope, the importance of putting spiritual things first in our lives.
4. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth . . ." (Heb. 12:6).