

EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



PSALMS 107 - 118
(The Deuteronomy Psalms)

BY

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[BOOK 49-L]

Revised 27 December 2015

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

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

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

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

Salvation is available for all members of the human race.

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

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

How do I become a Christian?

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

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

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

The results of Salvation

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

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

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DOCTRINES	BTB

PSALMS SECTION FIVE**THE DEUTERONOMY PSALMS – PSALMS 107 - 118****PSALM 107****INTRODUCTION**

This psalm begins the fifth and final section of the Psalms; the Deuteronomy Section. The book of Deuteronomy is the book in which Moses speaks finally to the people on the Plains of Moab. He sums up the teaching of his life time and warns the people of the dangers of ignoring the truth he has taught them from the Lord. He speaks of the Law to be applied in the Land of Promise in light of the revelation received and the experiences learned from on the wilderness march.

The psalm that starts this section, Psalm 107 before us now, is the third of the historical overview Psalms, two of which we have just seen. Psalm 105 took us from the Call of Abraham to the Exodus, and Psalm 106 took us from the Exodus into the Land and through until the Babylonian Captivity. This Psalm before us now takes us from the Babylonian Captivity forwards. The fact that it begins the new section of the book of Psalms is instructive.

Historically this psalm stems from the return of the Exiles, and dates probably from the days of the prophets Zechariah and Haggai. Prophetically it refers to the events that will occur after the final return of the people to the Land of Promise under the rulership of the Lord Jesus upon His throne in Jerusalem. The return of the scattered Jewish people is a dramatic event. It is dramatic, and quite fast, and it would appear, with large numbers coming by both plane and ship. Isaiah 60:8-10 even appears to describe the arrival of the Jewish people on Gentile airliners!

The PLAN OF GOD is set out for us in the scriptures and it is full and clear, and once the pieces start moving on the board, those present at the time will be able to chart their course through the GREAT TRIBULATION period by the day. Daniel 7:19-28, 8:23-28, 9:24-27, 11:29-45, 12:1-13, Zechariah 12:2 – 14:15, Matthew 24:9-51, Revelation 8-20.

Refer to the BTB studies on the subjects PROPHECY and TRIBULATION that this section of the book of Psalms introduces. If I am correct on my thinking about the significance of this psalm as the introduction to the fifth section of the book, then this psalm introduces the psalms that will be the song book of the Millennial Kingdom. It begins the psalms that will be the worship song book for the people in the Land of Israel in that time and also for the various nations of the earth. These songs are the heart of worship for the Lord's reign upon the earth, and are the reminder for all the peoples of the earth of their King and their dependence upon His laws for their happiness through this time.

PSALMS 107:1-43

- 1 O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- 2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;
- 3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.
- 4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.
- 5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.
- 6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.
- 7 And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.
- 8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
- 9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.
- 10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;
- 11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:
- 12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help.
- 13 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.
- 14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.
- 15 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
- 16 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.
- 17 Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.
- 18 Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.
- 19 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.
- 20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.
- 21 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
- 22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.
- 23 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;
- 24 These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.
- 25 For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.
27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.
28 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.
29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.
31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
32 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.
33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;
34 A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.
35 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.
36 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;
37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.
38 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.
39 Again, they are diminished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.
40 He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.
41 Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.
42 The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.
43 Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the LORD.

REFLECTION

1 Oh give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; 3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.

The final section of the book of Psalms begins as many other psalms have begun with praise to the Lord, but in this section the praise is even more powerful, for the Lord Jesus reigns upon the earth and the people who inhabit the earth do so as His people. The Lord's mercy towards His saved people endures forever; until the end of time the people of the earth are blessed and they glorify His holy name. Psalms 103:17, 106:1, 118:1, 136:1. The songs of praise are sung especially loudly by those whom the Lord has delivered and brought home from the far corners of the world to have their home in the land as their ancestors had done. The return of all the exiles is accomplished and is the start of the full joy of the Jewish people.

It is always important for the people of God to express their love and joy in the Lord. "Let the people of the Lord, the redeemed, say so!" Let us proclaim aloud that we are the redeemed of the Lord, and that we are humbled by the fact, and rejoice only in the things the Lord has done. The prophet Malachi speaks of this joy in the Lord. He says, "Those that feared the Lord spoke often to one another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name." Malachi 3:16.

4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.
5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.
6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.

The last days of the Great Tribulation will be a time when the believers will be in hiding or fighting. It will not be safe for believers to be living openly in most places upon the earth because of the vehement hatred of the ANTI-CHRIST towards all who love the Lord Jesus. The only way for believers to survive in the last days of the greatest PERSECUTION the world will ever see is to be able to live rough in the wilderness places of the earth. They will be unable to live normally, and will suffer great privation, and will be hungry and thirsty at times.

They will experience fear like never before in their lives; their soul will faint within them. In their great distress they will cry aloud to the Lord, and the Lord will hear them and bring them through, but it will be in great distress and trouble. Remember, the people who are saved in this period have refused to accept the Gospel message from the Church Age evangelists, and so they are saved only in the midst of this most terrible time and must go through it until the end, or until their death at the hands of the Anti-Christ's people. Revelation 7:9-17, 12:10-17, 13:7-10.

7 And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.
8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Even though this time upon the earth is the worst that has ever been upon the earth there will be a vast multitude saved through this period. Many will be martyred amongst them, but equally many appear to survive the Great Tribulation and are there to worship the Lord in the end of that period. The Lord leads the people who worship Him into a place of habitation; a place where they can live through this period and after it, so that all the survivors praise the Lord for His wonderful goodness and His wonderful works for the saved children of men. Given the malice of the satanic forces it is inconceivable that anyone should survive and yet multitudes of believers do survive, and they join together in the end to praise the deliverance of the Lord and rejoice in each other, for many will be surprised at who is saved and has survived

9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.
10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;

The Lord meets the needs of those who genuinely seek the truth. The Lord seeks real honesty from people towards Him, and seeks man's enthusiastic desires for righteousness. Matthew 7:7-13, Luke 13:24-30. We are urged to come to the Lord for spiritual food, but the Lord seeks the genuinely and enthusiastically hungry to feed, not the mildly interested! Matthew 11:28-31. How hungry are we for the truth? It is real hunger for the truth that the Lord seeks, and then He will meet our needs.

If people want to play with the truth they will not be satisfied, for the Lord wants us to be gripped by the truth and sold out to it. Polite interest in the truth is not enough to satisfy the demands of a holy God. For many in that terrible time there will be deliverance from prison and certain death by the Lord's coming. For others there will be peace of mind and soul satisfaction even though they are bound with iron and suffer great physical and mental affliction in jail in their last days before execution.

**11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:
12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help.**

The enemies of the truth have been brought down in the past, and will be brought down in the future. Those who persecute the saints will always be judged and destroyed. Although verse twelve is written in the past tense, it is written to be sung in the Millennium, and so all the events of the Great Tribulation period, yet future to us, are past tense then.

The enemies of the truth will follow after the satanic alternatives with enthusiasm and joy initially, for the Anti-Christ will appear to have all the political and economic answers. Most will follow after his lies and believe them totally and enthusiastically join in the persecution of the believers in the Lord Jesus. Revelation 13:3-10. Keep remembering as we look at the specific future application of this psalm and others, that they are also teaching truths that are always applicable. Satanic deception and counterfeits will always enthusiastically deceive those unwilling to bow their knee to the Lord of glory.

They believe that God has been replaced and there is no need for any faith at all except in the power of Satan and his demonic forces, for that can be seen. These people will all see the power of God over the months of the last three and one half years of man's history before the Lord's return. They will see their efforts all stalled, and the world and nature itself turn against them. All their hard work to do without God will fail. All their efforts to oppose God's people will fail and they will fall to their deaths and there is none to help them for they have turned away from God, who was their only help. Revelation 6:15-16.

The great sadness of these last verses in Revelation six is that this response is that of the unsaved through history; even when confronted by the truth, they will not repent and be saved. They had the same response to Jesus in Jerusalem and he lamented over them for this same reason. Matthew 23:37-38. In this lament the Lord refers to his Second Advent as the next time they will welcome him. He ties all these psalms to the Second Advent and Millennial Kingdom himself.

**13 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.
14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.**

Again and again through history the Lord has delivered His people from troubles, but the last great deliverance, with the land in desolation is the greatest of them all. Zechariah 12:10ff. The closest example to the deliverance of the Great Tribulation period is that in the days of Isaiah when a revival in the city of Jerusalem leads to that place being spared destruction and the population within the city being able to re-seed the land. Isaiah 36-39. It is of significance that the previous chapters, Isaiah 32-35, cover prophetically the events of the Lord's return and the Millennial Kingdom.

The sermons of Isaiah that we have in the second half of the book of Isaiah are specific comfort and encouragement for the people of the land under the great persecutions of the Great Tribulation, just as they were to those under the Assyrian invasion of 705-700 BC. The Lord brought them from certain death and destruction in that earlier day, and He will, even more gloriously, bring them out of the shadow of death in the end of our Age also. Psalms 23:4-6, Isaiah 42:13-16, 49:5-11, 60:1-3, 63:1-6, Micah 2:12-13, Zechariah 14. Even those captured by their enemies and held in iron bands will be delivered in that last great day.

**15 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
16 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.**

The challenge to the people is to praise the Lord in advance of His deliverance, for the deliverance that He is bringing to them. The challenge of FAITH is the challenge to see things as God is going to make them rather than just seeing what is in front of you now. The challenge is to see the truth of God's power, not be dominated by the fear associated with your entrapment.

We are challenged to see that the Lord has already broken the gates of brass to the prison of our mortality and entrapment to sin and evil, and that the Lord has already cut apart the bonds that constrain us into the mould of the prince of this world! Paul grapples with this entrapment to human viewpoint, and breaks through to divine viewpoint in Romans 7:14 – 8:2. The brass of sin and the iron of evil, with all their powers associated with them, are broken by the believer who walks in the filling of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 45:1-7, 1 John 4:4.

**17 Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.
18 Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.**

Believers are persecuted at times, but they do not get into this category here. The “fools” who suffer greatly are those who have rejected Bible doctrine. The biblical definition of “fool” is set by David in the early Psalms and Solomon in the Proverbs. It is the person who has said, “There is no God”. Psalms 14:1, 53:1-3. The “fool” does not understand faith, grace or the mercy of God. Psalms 92:1-6. The fool has rejected not just God’s existence and involvement in this world, but His revelation of truth in the Biblical text. Proverbs 10:8-14, 17. They are those who are “wise in their own eyes”, and reject all biblical correction. They speak great swelling pride filled words, but they have no substance. Proverbs 12:15, Ecclesiastes 2:14-19, 10:12-14.

In the end these people experience the total collapse of their entire philosophy and their life, because they cannot face the truth with their lies and self deceit. The suffering of a fool is the result of their foolishness. The stupidity of their philosophy opens them to the disasters that unfold about them, and they cannot blame God for these things; their own philosophy opens them to disaster. I have worked with many women through the years that were beaten and raped, and in many cases (not all remember!) they were in situations that either their philosophy, or their parents, placed them in.

They were set up to be beaten, abused and raped by the foolishness of their belief systems and their associated behaviours. Many were brought up to believe in the “goodness of all mankind” by liberal parents, rather than the biblical viewpoint that all people have an Old Sin Nature and are potentially very evil indeed. I still hear the words of one woman, then in her fifties, who expressed the difficulty she had forgiving her father for bringing her up with the “liberal stupidity” that led her to walk in places where she was beaten, stabbed and raped. She was not brought up to face the reality of evil, and so she walked carelessly through her early life and suffered as a “fool” as a result.

Liberal belief systems are satanic in origin and they are incredibly dangerous to those foolish enough to follow after them, for they will lead to danger and death at times. These people’s own foolish philosophies burden them with falsehood, debilitate them, and finally destroy them. The Psalmist just picks one such belief system to zero in on here. One of the dominant philosophies of the End Times is going to be VEGETARIANISM, and these people eat themselves into ill health as a result in the end. There is nothing wrong in vegetarianism at times for health, but applied as a spiritual belief system and applied too vigorously, as in veganism, it can debilitate and even kill the person.

When I was gassed and physically flattened in the Armed Forces in the late 1980s I used a vegetarian diet for around six months to assist my lung function, and it was very helpful, but there was no philosophical or religious commitment to it, and once it had done the job I returned to the full balanced diet that was going to keep me well later. Genesis 9:1-4. The man who ran the health shop I went to through that time was an incredibly unhealthy looking creature, but he spoke eloquently of what was “right and good” in the matter of health, but he was a Vegan, and as this psalm says, his foolish religious diet led him to the gates of death! His teeth chattered loosely in his mouth and he looked like a cancer sufferer, and he had to give up the shop later due to ill health. He was in biblical terms a “fool”.

**19 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.
20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.**

Even for the greatest fool there is however hope if they cry out to the Lord. All the fool needs to do is cry out to the Lord and they will be delivered. The weeping of that last generation of Jewish people in the Great Tribulation will be great because they will all be convicted fully and overwhelmingly of their foolishness through the years before the breakthrough. Zechariah 12:10-14. Even today the saying in Israel is, “Jerusalem prays and Tel Aviv plays”. In that last day all the land will be filled with Jewish people who genuinely face their past foolishness, and all pray genuinely seeking the Lord’s deliverance. Psalms 30:2-5, 103:1-14, 147:11-20.

The healing the people sing praises for is their re-discovery of the Word of God. God’s Holy Word will be precious in that day, and even books like this one may play their part to encourage God’s previously stupid people, to re-ground themselves in the truth. It is never too late to be delivered. If a person is still alive they can be delivered by the Lord; all He requires of them is honest REPENTANCE and CONFESSION and they will receive full FORGIVENESS and mercy. When this Psalm is sung most vigorously in the Millennial Kingdom, the people will recall all the deliverances they have experienced and they will sing with thankfulness and with wonder that the Lord was so gracious.

**21 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.**

The Psalmist cries aloud his frustration that the people of the Lord don’t praise the Lord as they should, and that the glory of the Lord is not honoured aloud as it should be now. Praise is the antidote to despair, and has been all through the ages of mankind. As we focus upon God’s gracious goodness we are set free from FEAR even now.

Many have spoken of what they called the “sacrificial life”, and it has meant different things through the years, sometimes biblical sometimes legalistic. What the Lord calls us all to throughout history is to be ready to offer the “sacrifice of praise” every hour of our life. It is this whole hearted and enthusiastic sacrifice that the Lord seeks from us often.

The greatest sacrifice we can make is that of a daily transformed life; where faith has replaced fear, and praises exist where curses and hypocrisy did before. Hosea 6:1-6, Matthew 9:13, 12:7. There is no end to the number of such sacrifices we can offer each and every day, and the more we offer this sacrifice up to the Lord, the more Christ centred our life will be, and the faster the enemy will flee from us. Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:1-2, Philippians 2:17. 4:4-13, 17-19.

**23 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;
24 These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.**

As an old sailor and Naval Officer I love this verse, and it is quoted often in the Royal Navy order of service by naval padres for ship's church services. One of the things about the sea is that it is a great leveller of men; few think they are powerful any more when they experience a great storm at sea with waves towering over their ship. I can still recall a storm off the coast of New Zealand (which has the most dangerous and severe weather of anywhere) with our small ship losing sight of everything each time we went into a wave trough, and doing 40 degree rolls for hour after hour after the worst of the storm passed, each time wondering if the ship would come back to centre and right itself. There were, as I remember, no atheists that I could find aboard the ship that day!

All of us believers who have seen "the wonders of the deep" stand in awe of the creative power and majesty of God, but the unbeliever may cry to God in their fear in a storm, but my sad experience is that they return to their active paganism soon afterwards. It is not more SIGNS AND WONDERS that mankind needs; it is a confrontation with the truth of the word of God, and their need of a Saviour. Luke 16:29-31.

**25 For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.
26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.**

A great storm can "melt" the hearts of the biggest and strongest of mariners. The smaller the ship the more terrifying the storm appears to be. The psalmist must have been to sea at some point or looked out to sea during a great storm. Waves appear to lift up out of no-where; they have their own life and power and they sweep and surge in ways that an experienced person can mostly predict, but at times not predict at all.

As Officer's of the Watch, and as Helmsmen, we got pretty good at judging where the wave would go, how it would build and where to put our ship to minimise the danger, but at times we would get what we politely called "a green one". It was a deep green mountain of sea water that would crash upon us, sweep over the deck carrying everything away with its power, and would earn us the colourful rebuke of the captain. At times we were at fault, but at other times the seas were too large, too fast and our ability to turn our ship too slow to minimise damage. Many men's hearts have melted and many men's lives have been lost through the years to storms at sea.

**27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.
28 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.**

At times it is only the worst of storms that still the heart of the worst of men. At times stupid men and women need to be physically brought to their knees before they will hear the Word of the Lord. Jonah 1:4-16, Acts 27:13-44, 2 Corinthians 11:25-29. Paul's early experiences of three shipwrecks prepared him to take leadership in the fourth and greatest one recorded in Acts 27. The sea can reel like a drunken man and cause all aboard ships to reel like drunken men also.

God's grace will always meet us in our adversity when we call to Him. Paul could confidently say that he had learned that in "all things" he could trust the Lord because he had proved this truth again and again, and in the toughest places; be they wild wilderness places, or the wild storms of the sea. Philippians 4:4-13, 1 Timothy 6:6-8.

**29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.**

The Lord is able to quieten the worst of storms, as He did for the mariners after Jonah is cast overboard. Jonah 1:15-16. The Lord proves his Messiah status to the disciples when He calms the severe storm on the Sea of Galilee. Matthew 8:23-27, 14:24-33, Mark 4:35-41, John 6: 16-21. All that the Lord needed was to say, "Be quiet" and the winds dropped and the sea calmed. The creator of the universe had no difficulty dealing with His creation at any point, and He still has no problems now. We are in the Lord's hands when we walk with Him in his paths for us; we are not in the hands of the sea or the winds, but in the hands of the creator of them.

**31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
32 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.**

The cry goes up again from the psalmist, to call upon all of mankind to honour the Lord with their voice and praise His wondrous mercy and grace. God does wonderful things for His children. It is right and proper that we lift up our voices and praise the Lord for His goodness far more often than we do. There should be congregational praise services for all the people, and also specific worship services where leadership gathers to strengthen themselves for their tasks in the Lord through worship. Refer to the BTB studies MUSIC, WORSHIP. Romans 1:18-23.

33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;

34 A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

When a people are repeatedly disobedient, then that people will be punished. The Lord has turned great empires into wastelands for their evil and sinfulness. Both Assyria and Babylonia have been turned into wastelands as a result of their persistent evils. These places were not only great cities but were surrounded by vast fertile farmlands and orchards and olive groves. They are both today surrounded by desert regions. Isaiah 13:17-22, 19:5-10, 32:13-15, Nahum 3:1-19. Wicked people believe they will survive forever and prosper in their wickedness, but they will not. JUDGEMENT comes in God's timetable and through God's power and majesty.

35 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.

36 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;

Just as God can turn fertile lands into deserts for the sin of the people associated with them, just so the opposite action is possible. The Lord will, in the Millennial Kingdom, turn the desert places into fertile places again. We must remember that the Sahara was once very fertile country and the entire Arabian Peninsula was fertile grazing land. It will become fertile and productive again. The survivors of the Great Tribulation period will be provided places to live and places to prosper again in, with fertile fields to plant the crops that will feed them and bless others. Isaiah 35:1ff, 43:18-20, 44:3-8, 51:3.

37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.

38 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

The prosperity that is referred to here is agriculturally based prosperity, and that is the blessing of the future of mankind; with people living close to the cycles of nature and the goodness of the earth. In the future of mankind there is an agrarian society, not a solely city based one. There is prosperity and cities, but there is a balance of country-city life that creates great health and happiness. The dead, empty, and cold cities of the present are gone forever.

The lament of Revelation 18 for the collapse of the great pagan city culture is heart felt, but that form of living is gone forever when the new Babylon falls. Don't look to Iraq for this city, for like the great pagan city-states of the past the New Babylon (the centre of pagan religion, immorality, pornography and world finance) already exists. The closeness of mankind to the earth is a good indicator of their closeness to their maker, and the further away people get from the source of their food the further away they can get from their maker and the maker of all things, and the easier they are able to be controlled by centralized powers who control finance and distribution of commodities.

39 Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

40 He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.

The paganism of the past and of the future is the same in its effects upon mankind; we are made small, have our spirits crushed, and mentally are placed in anguish through its impact. Paganism and all its fruits in the soulless cities of the present and the future create nothing but sorrow and affliction to the spirit of mankind. The greatness of the modern super cities is their great ability to make man feel small and crush his spirit.

The Lord will bring all these places and their mighty rulers down. The crash of 2007-2012 is nothing as to the collapse of the "New Babylon" of the future. I believe that the cities of New York, LA, Chicago and the other great centres of modern paganism and false economies, are probably the mass that is referred to as "Babylon". Today we have "princes" who are princes of finances and who make and break the economies of nations.

One man alone, George Soros, a number of years back, created a financial crisis for Britain by targeted currency speculation, and affected the value of the British pound creating chaos for millions. Another, Bernie Maddof, more recently, created chaos for millions and cost the livelihood of many, all for the sake of his own greed and lust for financial power. These men are true Machiavellian "princes", for they did not care or concern themselves with the hurt of the millions they created suffering for; their sole concern was their own greedy goals. One character in the movie "Wall Street" says it aloud – "Greed is good". He is speaking the satanic truth – but it is a lie and the Lord will end it one day.

These are only the obvious and famous princes, but behind Wall Street, and the Financial districts of many great cities, there are faceless but powerful men who destroy economies before taking lunch, and do not care for the poor they destroy. The poor do not inherit the earth today, but the Lord's promise remains and it will be fulfilled. Matthew 5:3-12.

41 Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.

42 The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

43 Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the LORD.

The Lord is the one who will lift up the poor and needy and brings the needy to the place where their needs are met sustainably. What the Lord will do upon the earth in this great day when He reigns, is establish a kingdom that is sustainable upon the earth. All He does will bring glory and peace and prosperity, but do not look for such things today, because Satan will undermine and pervert all such things. He is to be crushed before the Kingdom of Righteousness can truly begin. Revelation 19:16 – 20:6. Iniquity must be wiped out before righteousness can truly reign over this earth. At that time the great loving kindness of the Lord will be fully seen, for His world will be as it was meant to be.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. It is never too late to turn from foolishness to faith; from false viewpoints to the truth of God's Word. We are called to deliver the truth to people, and so open the door from the bondage of the lies of satanic systems to the liberty that there is in Christ Jesus. John 8:32-36, 10:10.

2. We walk in FAITH or we cower in FEAR through this life. The choice is our own each day. It is the daily choice to praise the Lord that liberates us from fear daily. The battle against fear must be won each day; the victory we may have gained yesterday does not flow into today unless our faith in the Word is reaffirmed and applied today. Let us take in the Word today, believe it today, and apply it today.

3. Let us not trouble ourselves with energy expenditure for financial or political reform, for that will not hinder the satanic forces from their future plans for world domination. The only certainty that we can use for our targeted energy expenditure today is the certainty of the Lord's words being fulfilled to the last syllable. The Lord will reign, and he will destroy the plans, plots and power bases of the princes of this world who follow after Satan. Satan does indeed deliver wealth and power to his people today, but the final wages of sin is death! Romans 6:23.

Let us focus upon the things that deliver eternal life, and deliver people from their bondage to Satan, for that will bring better dividends to us than all the political jockeying to resolve the world's financial corruption. Only the Lord will resolve that, and He is coming to do it! Hallelujah!

DOCTRINES

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS

TRIBULATION – GREAT TRIBULATION IN MATTHEW 24

TRIBULATION – SIGNS OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

ANTI-CHRIST – WORLD RULER

PERSECUTION

CHRIST – FIRST AND SECOND ADVENT

ANGELS – SATAN – COUNTERFEITS OF SATAN

ANGELS – SATAN – SATANIC ATTACK

ANGELS – DEMONS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FAITH

FEAR

VEGETARIANISM

CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – REPENTANCE

SIGNS

MIRACLES – PURPOSE

MUSIC

CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE

NATIONAL DIVINE DISCIPLINE

PSALM 108**INTRODUCTION**

This psalm is a compilation of two earlier psalms; verses 1 – 5 are a repeat of Psalm 57:7-11, and verses 6 – 13 are a repeat of Psalm 60:5-12. Minor changes only are made, with the name for God as Jehovah in Psalm 57 being substituted for Adonai in the psalm before us. Psalm 108 is put together in the years after the Babylonian Exile's return to Jerusalem and so the choice of these two specific sections of these two early Davidic psalms to combine, and the way they are combined is important to note. The result of the combination and the context in which it occurs is as significant as the sum of the two parts of this psalm. Repetition is never making exactly the same point, and the use of these two early psalms in a new combination is making a new point which we must see, in and of itself.

PSALMS 108:1-13

- 1 O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.**
- 2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.**
- 3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.**
- 4 For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.**
- 5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth;**
- 6 That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me.**
- 7 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.**
- 8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;**
- 9 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.**
- 10 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?**
- 11 Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?**
- 12 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.**
- 13 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.**

REFLECTION

- 1 O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.**
- 2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.**

The most important difference between this Psalm and its two halves of the others from which it was taken is seen in the Prayer-Praise arrangement of it. The Davidic Psalms begin with prayer and end with praise when the prayer is seen to be answered. If we remember the purpose of these last psalms of the book, that they are the hymn book of the Millennial Kingdom, then the arrangement here makes sense. The psalm before us begins with praise, and ends with praise; it is a song that celebrates a victory, rather than looking for one to come. The Davidic hope for victory has been turned into the confident and loud celebration of victory.

David's conclusion after long and passionate prayer is the starting point for this Post-Exilic Psalm, as the psalmist of this later age contemplates the complete and final victory of the Messiah of Israel over all the traditional enemies of Israel. His heart (thinking of the mind for the Israelite) is absolutely settled in the doctrines of God's Word, for he is certain of the prophetic future, that the Lord will be victorious.

When this psalm is sung in Jerusalem in the days of the Reign of the Lord it will indeed be sung with gusto, because the people singing it will be able to see the Lord upon His throne. This is the reason for the change from the ancient title for the God of Israel, JHWH (Jehovah) in the original Davidic Psalm, and Adonai here before us. This psalm is also a reminder to us that Jesus is Jehovah! It is the Lordship of the Lord Jesus that is in view and that is acknowledged in the Millennial Kingdom, for He is then Lord of all. Refer to the BTB studies on NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, ANGEL OF JHWH, NAMES OF JESUS.

- 3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.**
- 4 For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.**

When this psalm is sung in the Millennial Kingdom the psalmist will truly sing amongst the nations, for all the peoples of the earth who have come through the Great Tribulation will be believers and they will gather in Jerusalem yearly to celebrate the Lord and His deliverance. Zechariah 14:16-21. There will be praises sung in that day that will bring joy to the people of the earth and our job today is to begin that process by praising the Lord in advance of His final victory, in faith that it will be wonderful for all who will see it. Our privilege is to praise the Lord now for what He will do, as if it is already done, for in the grace and mercy of the Lord it is already done. The greatness of the Lord's mercy towards us is amazing indeed and our praises ought to reach the heavens, for that is where the grace and mercy of God reach.

- 5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth;**

The purpose of worship is to honour the Lord for whom He is, and we are to praise Him for who He is and what He has done, and what He will do. Each of these things is a part of worship, and if we leave any of these three things out, we omit an important thing to praise God for. Simply to praise God for who He is forms the heart of genuine worship. This is to be our song all the day long. His mercy reaches to the heavens, and His love for us to beyond the stars. Psalms 57:5-11, Micah 7:18-20, Matthew 6:9-12, Ephesians 2:4-7. Let us lift our heads skywards more often than we do; let us lift up our eyes to the heavens and then remember that the Lord made the stars and His glory is beyond them all. Stars are born, grow old, and die, but the Lord's stable and loving character goes on forever.

6 That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me.

7 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

Troubles will still come in the Millennium, but their answer will be easily and quickly seen in the presence, power and plan of the Lord. Nothing has actually changed about this! This is still our privilege today; to pray to the lord and seek His answers to our prayers. 1 Peter 5:5-9. It is a joy to come before the Lord in prayer and we ought to be doing it often through each and every day.

Prayer needs to be an ordinary activity, but expressed in powerful and passionate words that we mean. Last night I was called up to pray for a church youth group, and I almost ran to the stage to be able to lead the Lord's people in prayer. This morning I was able to pray twice with my ninety four year old aunt; what a joy prayer is, and what a joy it is to feel the love of those prayed for.

The Lord will save us with His right hand of power; we can relax in His character and His provision for us in accordance with His wonderful plan. The Lord hears and He speaks to us in His holiness, and He will divide our portion to us in accordance with His plan for our life and eternal blessing. The Lord has called us to bless us, and by following His plan we place ourselves in the place where blessing can flow. Psalms 16:9-11, 89:30-34. If we disobey we are punished, but as children, not as renegades, for the Lord will not betray us as we at times betray Him. 2 Timothy 2:12-13, Hebrews 12:5-15.

8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;

9 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.

All the areas mentioned had been lost to the nation of Israel by the days of Solomon's sons. The Gilead was overrun by enemies and lost early to the Ammonites and the Syrians, and the lands of Manasseh and Ephraim on the East Bank were lost to the desert peoples and the Syrians also. The Philistines remained troublesome until the Assyrians and Babylonians deported them all. Moab as a nation was gone early, and while control of these lands see-sawed back and forth, as to who ruled over them, they were all lost by the days of the return of the Exiles from Babylon.

Only Judah was left as a rump province of the Persian Empire. The amazing thing about the prophecy of Ezekiel is that he sees from the midst of the Babylonian Exile the return of the Exiles after his death, but he sees way beyond that time to the return of the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth under the King Messiah Jesus and the restoration of the great kingdom of Israel, even greater than in Solomon and David's day. Ezekiel 48.

10 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

11 Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?

Who is there in uncertain times to lead us through the wilderness? Who can lead us to the "strong city" of safety in all situations? It is the Lord alone who leads us through difficult places and impossible situations. The Lord alone will lead us through the "bandit territory" of our day. Edom was a wild land with wilder people, and a journey through that land was fraught with danger, but the Lord's promise is clear; He will bring us through every dangerous place that we are meant to be walking in! The Lord will not cast us out or bring us to dismay. When the Lord has a plan, then that plan will be fulfilled, and we have no fears that are real regarding this. Let us praise Him and follow after His will alone, for there alone is safety.

12 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.

13 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

It is the Lord's help alone that gives us assistance, for no man is able to save us from evil and the enemy of mankind. The Lord however has the power to deal with every opposition and every evil that we may ever meet. The Lord will help us tread down our enemies, and He alone is able to do this for us. Let us be sure of the path He wants us to walk and then let us step out in obedient faith and have no fears of what men may do to us. Psalms 18:25-39, 118:6-13, Isaiah 63:3, 7-9.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Oh believers, let us praise the Lord with all our strength and all our hearts. The Lord is worthy to be praised and the Lord is eager that he might express his love towards us and through prayer that occurs.

2. The history of the world is in the Lord's hands and we have no worries about where history is heading. Many wonder about wars to come, but the Lord's words are to be our comfort; "there will be wars and rumours of wars until he comes". Our task is not to waste energy worrying, but spend our energy focused upon the things the Lord would have us do in our part of his plan. We are not to seek other people's roles in the great plan, but find our own place and role and play it with all our might.

3. There is no safety outside the Lord's plan for us, and the Lord's place for us in the plan. Our task is clear, and that is to be very sure of our path and very clear about our orders, and then to follow them exactly. If the Lord calls us to walk in a certain path, then that is the path we are to walk in, and if we do, then we are safe there. Matthew 7:13ff. Let us walk with the Lord alone, for in his company, and under his orders alone we are safe and secure.

DOCTRINES

GOD – NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD

GOD – NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

CHRIST – ANGEL OF JHWH (JEHOVAH)

CHRIST – DEITY OF CHRIST

CHRIST – NAMES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

PSALM 109**INTRODUCTION**

This psalm of David is a powerful verbal assault on evil people. In the context of the Millennial Kingdom how does this psalm fit? David really is asking for judgement here, and yet it has already occurred. This psalm looks back and sums up the dramatic action of the Lord to eliminate evil from the earth. It is a reminder that the prayers of all the saints down the ages for deliverance from evil men will be answered, and for the next thousand years there will be peace as a result of God's dramatic actions. This psalm may appear to be harsh but it is the required action that the Lord will unleash upon unsaved and rebellious men and it will bring safety, health and life to the believers.

This psalm reminds us that you cannot have heaven without hell being there for those who do not want God as their Lord. There is no room in the eternal state for any who do not want to serve the maker and Saviour of the universe, and all that is beyond it. It is therefore quite appropriate that this psalm is sung, to remind all upon the perfected earth of how the present universe will end, and that none who hate God will enter the eternal state, but will be forever and ever bound into the fire that ends this universe. 2 Peter 3:10-14, Revelation 20:5-15.

PSALMS 109:1-31

- 1 Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;
- 2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.
- 3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.
- 4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.
- 5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.
- 6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.
- 7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.
- 8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office.
- 9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.
- 10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.
- 11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.
- 12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.
- 13 Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.
- 14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.
- 15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.
- 16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.
- 17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.
- 18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.
- 19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.
- 20 Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.
- 21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.
- 22 For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.
- 23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.
- 24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.
- 25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.
- 26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:
- 27 That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it.
- 28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.
- 29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.
- 30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.
- 31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

REFLECTION

- 1 Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;
- 2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

The psalmist cries aloud for the Lord not to stop His acts of judgement against the evil and sinful men who reject the truth, the author of it, and the followers of it. God is the "God of Praise" because He alone is worthy of our praise forever and ever. While we may not desire praise from others, for we seek the Lord's assessment and praise, we do not appreciate and can be hurt deeply by unjust criticism or malice.

The evil men and women of the earth have spoken and acted in evil and malice against the people of God since the days when Cain slew Abel. Genesis 4. The worst attacks are often not the physically violent, but the deviously lying. A lie well told by a seriously malicious person can do more damage to a person and their ministry than any murder would do; at all times a lie is far more effectively destructive of a ministry than any martyrdom!

A martyrdom can grow a ministry but a devious lie can destroy the reputation of an individual and the confidence of many. God alone can protect us from the malice of a secret lie, but we are instructed to have behavioural protocols that keep us safe from true accusation of evil. We are instructed to abstain from every appearance of evil, not just evil itself. 1 Corinthians 6:18, 10:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 1 Timothy 6:9-11.

3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.

5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

The psalmist is concerned that the story of past malice is told and remembered by all who hear and sing this psalm. It is right to remember the malice of others and so keep our self from such things later in life. In the Millennial Kingdom of the Lord there will be a freedom from this sort of evil that will be refreshing to all the people of the earth, but it is still important that this psalm is sung, in order that all mankind may remember the evils that once ruled the earth and why the Lord acted against them.

It is the injustice and unfairness of evil and malice that really upsets the victims of it. If we had a sense of immediate justice against evil people we would be able to dismiss our sadness and frustration at evil a lot easier. God will act and will act decisively when the Lord returns, and the evil men and women will be eliminated from the earth. The psalmist remembers the terrible feeling of injustice towards the evil men who made his life miserable at times. He recalls that they attacked him because of his love for God and his desire to do things right for the Lord. They even hated his love towards them. His response was to pray for them, but they increased in their hatred of him. Matthew 5:43-48.

The hardest thing to understand about evil people is why they attack love. I remain baffled at times with evil women and men, when all they have to do is relax and receive love and trust, and live well, and they cannot do it, but betray trust and love and destroy their own life and family in the process.

The pointlessness of evil is what arrests the psalmist, but also the deep hurt he feels at the damage done to him. Also there is the sadness he feels, for he loved these people, and they betrayed his love for them, and so they destroyed love, their relationship, and finally themselves. The psalmist grieves for the incredible cost of evil, and it is vital that people do that, for then they understand more of the heart of the Lord towards us and towards His judgement of the lost. Psalms 35:7-14, 55:12-19.

At the end of the Millennial Kingdom there will be one last great rebellion of those who have grown up in perfect environment, and yet are still able to be tempted by the devil and so will sin against God's love. Ezekiel 38-39, Revelation 20:7-10. This psalm, by being regularly sung through the thousand years, warns mankind of the cost of sinful rebellion, and leaves those who do rebel without any excuse before the Lord when they do the unthinkable and rebel against the rulership of the Lord Jesus Christ.

6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Why would you ask the Lord to get a wicked man to stand over the persecutor, and get Satan to stand at the evil man's right hand? The answer is clear; it is because this man has done Satan's work and in his condemnation by the Lord the psalmist wants him to see that Satan has been his master, and wicked men his companions, and that they all go down to hell together. He wants this man to see that he has been "wicked" and is in the company of "wicked men", and Satan himself. This is the clue to understanding the attacker of the psalmist. This is a man who believed he was righteous and good, and yet has been truly evil.

This is a man who would speak of his opposition to evil and the Devil, and yet by his actions has been a supporter of satanic policy. Galatians 5:19-21. These are the worst sorts of persecutors of the righteous, for they themselves think they are righteous and so are the more evil as a result. These are the sort of people who formed the Inquisition in the Middle Ages, and they are like Paul was when he was Rabbi Saul. They killed good people and believed they did it with God's blessing. Self righteous people are the most dangerous people you will ever meet. Acts 22:3-5, 26:10-12, 1 Corinthians 15:9, Galatians 1:13, Philippians 3:6.

8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

These prayers to the Lord may seem harsh, but they are just and right, because such people are better not to live and influence their children for evil and pervert their wives after their own wickedness. They are best removed quickly from the earth so that those who love them, or are under their control, are free of their malign influence and able to find better role models for their later lives.

The Psalmist expresses hard things here and reminds all the people of a wonderful age just how serious a threat these people were to life, wealth, and mental health. If the persecutor is a believer the psalmist asks for the SIN UNTO DEATH over them, and that is a legitimate thing to ask for over evil people. Asking for judgement is not something we are encouraged to do in the Church Age, but it is bone fide after we have earnestly and repeatedly prayed for their salvation in accordance with John 16:8-11. The martyred saints before the throne of God are not rebuked for asking for judgement upon the persecutors of the believers upon the earth. Revelation 6:9-11.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

The judgement upon these evil men and their families is extreme and many wonder if the psalmist has gone too far. The fact that this psalm will be sung in the Millennial Kingdom as a reminder to the trials and tribulations of the saints upon the earth is important to remember. The emotions and thinking of this psalm is certified as correct, or it would not have found its way into the canon, and it certainly would not have found its way into this section unless it has the Lord's seal upon it as a teaching Psalm for the Millennium.

When children have grown up with wealth that was stolen through crime or political and financial extortion, they will have a Narcissistic attitude towards wealth; they expect to be wealthy always and they have a sense of entitlement to the best things in life. The only hope for their salvation is that they are reduced to abject poverty, with all the wealth and power they trust in stripped away from them.

The family of the persecutors of the believers have reduced the saints to poverty and death; they have extorted all their money, property, and businesses from them, and left them to die of starvation. So the psalmist seeks for these people to suffer the same fate as their fathers did to others, that they might be driven to their knees and find genuine faith before they also die.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

13 Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

This is a prayer that dates from the days of the kingdom of David, and so has been a bone fide prayer for saints for 3000 years at the point I write these things. It will be sung for a further 1000 years in the Millennium to remind people that this is indeed what the fate of the godless wicked was. It is not unfair to pray this prayer, nor is it nasty on the part of the psalmist. He is asking for the SIN UNTO DEATH upon them, and is making his request in accordance with the words of the Lord to Moses in Exodus 20:1-6. It is referred to in scripture as the FOUR GENERATION CURSE.

Read the Exodus passage right now and reflect upon it, for the heart of the psalmists prayer is found here in these verses of the Mosaic Law. Notice that the curse applies only if the people involved continue to hate God and God's people. Notice also that the Lord will turn cursing into blessing at any point when salvation changes the nature of an individual. At times entire families have been wiped from history after the fourth generation of rebellion against the Lord.

The "FOUR GENERATION CURSE" will operate for those who persist in their hatred of the Lord and may be seen in our own generation, and this form of discipline will be in existence until time ends. There is a limit to the extent of evil that the Lord will allow to grow upon the earth. Those who persist in their evil will be removed from the earth, and it will be fair, but the Lord's dealings with them will be merciful if they repent, and gracious if they follow the Word of God. Deuteronomy 29:18-29, Luke 11:42-54.

14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

How is sin forgotten? We are told in the scriptures how sin is blotted out and forgotten; it is through confession by the believer. We have the wonderful promises of God regarding the forgiveness of sin in the scriptures here in the Psalms. Psalms 103:10-17. Sin is remembered and judged only when the individuals involved in those sins persist in them and continually repeat them until their death as unbelievers.

The Psalmist wants these people, who persist in their sins, to be fully and finally judged, and be removed totally from the earth, so that even their memory is no more. That is exactly what the Lord will do on His return to the earth. All the unbelievers are fully and completely removed from the earth. They are forgotten, and all that remain are those who love, honour, and serve the Lord.

16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

It is in these verses that we see that the Lord's treatment of the unsaved is in exactly the same proportions as they treated others. Matthew 5:7, Romans 9:15-18, James 2:13. The biblical principle is set firmly before us; there is no mercy shown to those who have shown none to others, unless they repent fully and completely. If there is no FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT in the life of a person then they are not the Lords and they are outside His blessing.

If we do not have evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in our life we are "none of his". Romans 8:9. The fruit of the Spirit leads to mercy and love being shown to others, and blessing flowing from God to your life, but a rejection of these things leads to judgement and death. Matthew 7:15 – 23, 12:33, 13:23, John 15:2-16, Romans 6:21-23, 7:4-6, 9:16-23, Galatians 5:14-25, Philippians 1:9-11. The teaching about the relationship of the Fruit of the Holy Spirit and God's blessing is extensive!

18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

The hardest thing for the victims of crime today is the certainty that justice will rarely be done by our courts. Crooked liberal lawyers conspire against justice in our court systems at every turn and even judges make decisions based upon premises that run counter to the very principles of moral law. When I work in my clinic with the victims of criminal actions, the thing that often blocks them moving on with their lives is the near certainty that they could meet their evil abuser on the streets one day soon.

These people are tormented by the thought of having to face the evil person again one day, and they know that justice has not been done, and that the evil man or woman will be more hardened by their jail experience and more bitter. We have seen in the last week a man released from jail at 8am one morning and by 7pm he had been arrested again and returned to jail having created five new victims of crime! People despair in our society today, and this despair will lead in a future day to Satan's man, the ANTI-CHRIST being given power to sort the problems of the world out, but the only one who can do that is the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will do so! Justice will be done, but only when the Lord returns.

All victims of crime today can find victory over the evil that has abused them only through prayer for the wicked people who have abused them. John 16:8-11. They can then find peace, knowing that the wicked person will either be saved and transformed by the power of God, or they will be judged and eliminated from the earth altogether. There will be justice one day, and it will be brought about by the Lord himself. As evil men have done to others, so it will be done to them unless they repent. This is the immutable Law of God. Throughout the Millennium, when peace and harmony reigns, the people will be reminded by this psalm of just how awful things were while sin and evil ruled in the lives of men.

20 Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.

The psalmist wants the Lord to seriously judge those who do evil and wickedly treat the believers, but he wants the same principles of justice and mercy to apply to himself. He asks for the reward of their works to be reaped by the evil ones, and the reward of his works to be rewarded to him.

The Lord does require the same consistency of thinking from us. If we ask for judgement upon others for their selfish acts then we must expect the same for ourselves. If we speak evil of others we cannot ask for justice against them without such a prayer request coming back to bite us. Deliverance is in the hands of the Lord alone, and we are not to take matters into our own hands. We are to cast ourselves upon the Lord for assistance and for justice, for He alone will deliver both in righteousness. Psalms 55:22, 75:1ff, Proverbs 3:33-35, 1 Peter 5:5-9.

22 For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

A wounded spirit is the right spirit to begin a prayer for those who have persecuted or abused you. When humility guides our heart and mind we will be in the right spirit to pray for the lost. The psalmist has asked for judgement, but in the context of the terrible things that have been done he is right in doing so. He has recognised within the midst of his prayer the mercy of the Lord and so is ready for mercy to be shown as quickly as judgement is. He is in a physically sad and unhealthy state as a result of the abuse he has received.

He is in the place of total mental and physical anguish when he asks for the Lord's judgement and deliverance, and there is a strong lesson here to us all. We are not to ask for anything against any other person unless there is very good reason for it, and we have walked down the road of forgiveness, and prayed earnestly for them to be saved, for a seriously long time beforehand.

24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh fails of fatness.

25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.

If we wish to pray for judgement upon others the standard for our own previous behaviour is spelled out here. We need to have prayed with fasting beforehand for a considerable time. This means our prayers for our fellow believers, and for the lost, need to have been fervent for a long time. Prayer ought to have been often presented before the Lord before we can ask the Lord for judgement upon anyone.

People had wagged their heads at the psalmist, considering him a strange fellow for his earnest prayers. It is a good test for each of us as believers. Has anyone ever accused you of praying too much? Has anyone ever told you that you care too much for the lost? Have unbelievers and carnal believers ever thought you were too enthusiastic towards your faith?

Let us walk before the Lord in humility and fervent prayers for the lost, and fervent prayers for our brethren in the Lord. 2 Corinthians 11:23-31. Let us strengthen our weak knees and walk forward, even though we stagger at times. It is overwhelming to see the spiritual state of our nation in these last days, but we are to draw in all the Holy Spirit's power we can and keep serving the Lord where He has called us. Hebrews 12:1-15.

26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

27 That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it.

We ask for mercy in accordance with the great mercy and love of God, for we want His bounty, not bounty as man identifies it. The psalmist is challenging all generations after him to base their prayers upon the sure foundation of the CHARACTER OF GOD not the character and desserts of mankind. Let us raise our voices to the Lord for deliverance and let us expect His deliverance to come in accordance with His mercy.

The purpose of deliverance is not just to deliver the saint, but to challenge and convict the unbeliever. This is the evidence I see in this psalm of the psalmists persistent prayers for the lost all through the process of asking for judgement. He desires for them to know the truth, and recognises that what they do with the truth is their business, but they must be convicted. Luke 16:27-31, John 16:8-11.

28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

These things will be inexplicable to those within the perfection of the Millennial Kingdom except from this psalm before us. They live in a time when they have total worship of the Lord around the whole world, but they need to understand the volition of mankind, and understand how evil it became towards the end of the last age before the Lord's return. They need to recognise that all people face the daily choice to serve the Lord, or reject His truth and worship.

At the end of the Millennium itself there will be the greatest rebellion of mankind against the Lord. Ezekiel 38-39, Revelation 20:7-14. As incredible as it seems to us, from this side of history, mankind will once more be faced with the great choice to walk with God into eternity or walk in rebellion against the Lord. It is the content of this Psalm before us as it is sung through the 1000 years of the Millennial Kingdom that reminds the people living then of this choice and the consequences of the wrong one. Those who stand against God in any age will be covered in shame and disgrace forever.

30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

The believers of all ages will enter the eternal state with rejoicing. Revelation 21 – 22. Refer to the BTB studies ETERNITY PAST, ETERNITY FUTURE. The desire of all believers is to praise the Lord aloud, in front of the largest crowd it troubles us not. We are not put off by solitude or by crowds, for our love for the Lord constrains us and we must praise the Lord aloud. 2 Corinthians 5:14. The Lord will rule and ensure that the poor and despised are lifted up. Righteousness will be done in that glorious day. Let us sing before the Lord for what He does and even more in faith, for what He will do.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. The stupidity and pointlessness of evil and sin is always going to be a sad mystery to believers. The psalmist sings of the sadness of his memories of rebellion and insults delivered to his love for his past friends. When friends and relatives go after evil we will find it hurtful and sad, but we must face the truth of evil and keep our self from it, and from sympathy for those who insult love. Let us see evil for what it is and call it for what it is, and praise God that He judges evil fully and finally and that it will be gone forever one day. Let us leave our injustices and hurts in the Lord's hands, for He will deal with all issues of justice and fairness and do a far better job than we can do.

2. The judgement of the Lord upon those who reject His Plan and His will for them is absolutely certain. The Lord is absolutely fair and just in all His judgements. None suffer under the hand of the Lord without persistently being evil and wicked in all their doings towards the believers and being persistent in their rejection of the Lord's Word and will for them upon the earth. We are called to pray for our persecutors and persist in praying for them to be saved, but we are not wrong if we shift that prayer to pray for their judgement, for if they persist in unbelief and wickedness towards God's saints, then they will be judged. Let us pray for their salvation still, for that gets us the mental and moral victory in our spirit over their evil and malice towards us, but let us also recognise that the Lord will judge them and justice will be done, and it will be done fully and finally.

3. Let us be patient in the matter of judgement and justice generally. The psalmist waits until he is near death before asking for judgement upon the evil ones, and we must conclude that up until that point he has prayed for them. He has been patient under pressure and so must we be. Let us pray for our enemies and those that spitefully use and abuse us, and in so doing let us be true followers of the Lord. If we must ask for justice, then let us do so with mercy and grace in the prayer if the evil ones repent.

DOCTRINES

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

JUDGEMENT – FOUR GENERATION CURSE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

ANTI-CHRIST – WORLD RULER

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

CHRIST – FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS

CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

ETERNITY PAST

ETERNITY FUTURE

PSALM 110

INTRODUCTION

The Lord Jesus Christ will rule over the earth one day, and one day soon. We do not know when the Church will be removed, and the Great Tribulation begin, but the signs of it's soon arrival are present upon this earth now, and they are all present now for the first time in history. We stand in interesting times, but not fear filled times for believers, for we stand on the brink of the Age that will end this time of evil in history and usher in the rule of the King of kings and Lord of all lords. Refer to the BTB studies on RAPTURE, CHRIST – PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING.

This psalm is a psalm that sings of the glory of the King who is the High Priest of all the earth. It is another song of the Millennial Kingdom that celebrates the victory of Christ as the Great High Priest of mankind. It is a song that will be sung directly to the Lord.

PSALMS 110:1-7

- 1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.**
- 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.**
- 3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.**
- 4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.**
- 5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.**
- 6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.**
- 7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head**

REFLECTION

- 1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.**
- 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.**

The Lord Jesus himself refers to this psalm as a significant piece of evidence that He is Messiah and that David, although his ancestor recognises Him as his Lord and God. Matthew 22:42-44, Mark 12:35-37, Luke 22:41. This Psalm has a central place in theology, because it tells us about the Lordship of Christ, the High Priesthood of Christ, and it proclaims His total victory in what we could call "Operation FOOTSTOOL". All the enemies of the Lord will be reduced to being the footstool of his feet.

In the ancient world when a king conquered a people he placed their leaders under his feet as he judged the enemy forces. The Lord will place all enemies under his feet when He defeats Satan and all who have ever followed after him. Revelation 20:1ff. The "rod" of judgement will be in the Lord's hands as He judges the enemies of the truth in the end, and they will be forced to bow their knee before Him, and then will all be condemned to eternal damnation. Refer to the BTB studies on these subjects below.

- 3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.**
4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.
5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

The people will certainly be “willing” in the day of the Lord’s power; willing and ready to praise Him, serve Him, and honour Him correctly as the King of all kings and Lord of all lords. There will be a freshness and joy in the Lord through this time of the Lord’s crowning in glory. It will be a new dawn for mankind, and the day of glory will be 1000 years. The Lord will be as a young sovereign over His people and the joy of the people will be that of a people welcoming their new King in all the hope that a new reign brings after dark times.

The Lord will reign as the great Priest-King after the order of Melchizedek. The great king of Salem (Jerusalem) was the king who came from no-where and as the priest king of Jerusalem blessed Abraham after his defeat of the great army of the Mesopotamians. Genesis 14. Refer to the BTB study MELCHIZEDEK.

The Lord will rule over all the kings of the earth, and all who have opposed His plan and person will be dealt with fully and finally, and will be no more. They will all be raised for judgement at the end of time, and the very site of the Lord’s throne at Jerusalem will be the site of the last JUDGEMENT of unsaved mankind. All the mighty kings of men who opposed God are blasted by the judgement of the Lord! All the unsaved will remain in the Lake of Fire forever with Satan who they followed and the entire universe will “melt with fervent heat” and be gone, to be replaced by a new heavens and a new earth, within which dwells righteousness only.

- 6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.**
7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

This is a battle picture of a victorious commander as he advances through a battlefield, fully alert as he drinks water from the brook, and ready to slay the enemy as he goes. It is a picture of the Lord as the avenger of the righteous and the slayer of the unjust. It is a serious picture of the Lord as the conqueror of the enemies of the truth. Isaiah 63:1ff, Revelation 19:11ff.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. The Lord is the great priest-king of mankind for his Millennial Reign. He rules as king and priest for all the people of the earth. The Millennial Kingdom is a new dawning for mankind, with 1000 years of perfect environment before this space-time universe is wound up and put away.
2. The final judgement of mankind and the fallen angels is an awesome event. Peter tells us that the Great White Throne Judgement will end with the entire universe as we know it being folded up and put away forever. Peter urges us to reflect upon the end of all things and think about what sort of people we ought to be. Let us do that and serve the Lord with seriousness and humility. 2 Peter 3:10-18.
3. The Lord will judge the enemies of the truth with extreme severity, and all will be killed. The days of grace and mercy are over when the Lord moves to judge the earth and its evil inhabitants on his return. Let us remember that grace, and mercy are offered for a limited time only and let us preach the truth with fervent energy to ensure that all hear the truth and repent of their evil before it is too late.

DOCTRINES

RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS

CHRIST – PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING ROAD TO GLORY

CHRIST – HUMILIATION AND EXULTATION – THE

JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE

FOOTSTOOL

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

MELCHIZEDEC

PRIESTS

PSALM 111**INTRODUCTION**

The great French philosopher Pascal wrote, "Philosophy seeks truth, Theology finds it, but Religion possesses it. Human things must be known to be loved, but divine things must be loved to be known." This psalm and the next are psalms that speak of mature praise; praise from believers who have walked with the Lord, in truth and love.

As Pascal states above, these psalms are written by and for those who have been gripped by the truth, transformed by the truth, and who are in love with the author of the truth. This psalm, with the next, form a pair of praise psalms, each of which have their lines beginning with a different, but sequential, letter of the Hebrew alphabet. I suspect that they will be used in the Millennial Kingdom, with Psalm 119, which has a different verse for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, as songs with built in memory aids for the young and old.

They are songs that celebrate the life and witness of those who walk in the truth through the years. They are written in such a way that makes it easy to remember them when sung in Hebrew, and the principles taught by these psalms are the crucial ones for spiritual growth and stability in all ages. When we sing a song that has an easy way of remembering it as part of its structure, we are singing a song that will stay with us through all the years of our life.

The principles of doctrine within these psalms are principles that are crucial for all believers to understand if they want to grow in strength and power in their witness. These psalms will form the core of the worship of the Millennial Kingdom for all peoples, and they give us a clue that the universal language of the Millennium will not be English, but Hebrew, and all nations will use Hebrew as their language of praise, even though they may maintain their own native language for daily commerce.

PSALMS 111:1-10

1 Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

2 The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

3 His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.

5 He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.

8 They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

REFLECTION

1 Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

The double reference to praise here is important to pick up. The first is the order to all people to praise the Lord. The second is the willing response of the FREE WILL of all individuals to praise the Lord with all their heart. At our church men's prayer meeting this week we all particularly prayed for the move of the Holy Spirit, that the people of the Lord within the church might be free in their worship, abandoned to the Lord, whole hearted in their praise and worship of the one who gave them His all. The Lord held nothing back from us, and yet we often sing and pray and share the things of the Lord in a half hearted or reserved manner.

Our religious activity is all too often polite and half hearted! God seeks our whole hearted love and worship. Anything short of whole hearted worship is not acceptable to the Lord! He gave His all, and He rightly demands our all! Psalms 9:1, 103:1, 119:10, 34, 58, 69, 145, 138:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, James 1:6-7. Worship may be expressed alone at times, and we are ordered to be praying without ceasing through each day, (Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 4:2), but formal corporate WORSHIP is to be done in fellowship with others and in the assembly of the saints every week.

2 The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

3 His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

What God does is always morally, and in all possible ways, good. The FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT is always moral goodness. The sign of the presence of God is goodness, and where anything else is felt then the Lord is not dominant in

that company. In the Millennial Kingdom the presence of goodness will be dominant because the Lord is there in person and Satan will be bound through the period.

Those who love the Lord in all ages are active in their seeking out of His goodness and grace. Believers are like magnets, drawn to places and people where the love of the Lord is dominant. Many wonder why certain churches are full to the doors and great places to be worshipping, and yet others struggle to get enough people to fill a service, but the reason may be right here. Where the Holy Spirit has free reign over people their worship is wonderful, and the works of God are manifest, and people who love God will love to be there. A church fellowship where the Spirit of God is active is a hard place to leave and go home from.

God's work upon people is always in honour, glory and righteousness. These things are the "gold standard" for worship as long as time lasts. The Lord's name and work is honoured, the worship is glorious, and the result of walking with the Lord is righteousness of life on the part of the people. Worship brings joy! Nehemiah 8:10, Malachi 3:16-18. If a church service falls short of this "gold standard" for worship and fellowship then there is need for sincere and powerful prayer on the part of the church, because some sin or evil presence is grieving, hindering, or quenching the Holy Spirit. Refer to the BTB study SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT.

4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.

5 He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

The Lord wants us to remember His wonderful works, from the past and from the present. These twin psalms before us have the memory aid of the Hebrew alphabet to assist people to remember them, but we are challenged by these verses to make an effort to remember the works of the Lord in all we do and say. From the past actions of the Lord we learn that the Lord is gracious and loving; full of compassion towards His people.

The character of God has been seen most clearly in his provision for his saints in their times of difficulty. The Lord has provided food for the needy who walk in the "fear of the Lord". He provided MANNA throughout the wilderness wanderings of Israel, and the promise is secure, that He will always remember his PROMISES to his people. God does not forget his promises to the believers and He does not expect us to forget this either; the Lord can be trusted to remember his people and to do all that they require to enable them to serve and worship Him.

6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure.

God demonstrated his power especially to the Exodus Generation, with works of power that provided a legacy to the Israelites from the heathen nations which had gone before them. The heathen nations lost their tenure to the land through their evil RELIGION which debased the image of God and debauched the morality of man. This fact needed to be remembered by Israel, and yet they forgot it, and generation after generation they followed after false gods and evil religions, and so themselves suffered individually the SIN UNTO DEATH and nationally the FIVE CYCLES OF NATIONAL DISCIPLINE.

God had acted with them in absolute integrity, with all his actions based upon truth and justice. There was absolute certainty for Israel, as there is for us today, because the Lord will always keep his word, and the Holy Word of God will always be the absolute standard for his dealings with us. If we know the doctrines of God's Word, then we know absolutely and with 100% certainty what the Lord will do in every situation. God can be trusted and his moral standards never change. "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today and forever." Hebrews 13:8.

8 They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.

God's commandments and statutes for man stand firm until time is gone. God has been "straight up" with us. This modern way of speaking sums up the concept of "upright" in the KJV translation of this psalm. God has been transparent and open with mankind, for the Word of God is clear and open for all to see and understand. God's Word is truth and the Lord has proclaimed it to the people and redemption has been told out to his people Israel for all to hear and believe. God has commanded his covenant for ever to all his people, and holy and reverend is his name. The name of the Lord is to be honoured and praised.

All the NAMES OF GOD sum up aspects of the wonderful CHARACTER OF GOD and also they teach us aspects of the PLAN OF GOD. We are called to respond to all this in WORSHIP AND PRAISE. Isaiah 6:1-10. Knowledge of God will not produce just more study, but much more powerful worship. If worship and praise do not flow from a person who appears to understand the person and power of God, then they have not understood as God intends them to! Holy Spirit filled Worship is always the fruit of true biblical understanding. Bible study that doesn't produce worship isn't Holy Spirit filled Bible study!

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

The principle expressed so clearly here is that which Solomon spelled out so strongly in Proverbs. Proverbs 1:7, 2:1-6, 3:1-7. Pause for a minute and contemplate the real nature of fear. FEAR is a negative emotion but it can have positive results in many situations. For example, it is good to fear the consequences of walking along the edge of a cliff for then you don't fall over and be injured or killed. It is good to have a healthy fear of dangerous creatures and treat them with respect. Now the "fear of the Lord" goes beyond both those concepts of fear, but builds upon them.

The "fear of the Lord" is a phrase that sums up the MENTAL ATTITUDE of holy reverence for the Lord's character, His Word, and His Plan for our life. It means to take seriously the claims of the creator and saviour upon our life. To "fear the Lord" means to have a correct attitude towards the reality of the claims of God upon our life and to worship His holy name and obey His righteous commands. John 15:7-17.

WISDOM is defined as the result of application of the truth of God's Word into daily life over enough time to produce true understanding of the truth and of the character of God behind it. Wisdom is a word that sums up the deep knowledge of a person who doesn't just know the truth, but that the truth has got hold of them! Wisdom is the word used by many to describe the inner integrity of a life transformed by the truth over time.

The result of biblical wisdom is a full and life transforming understanding of God's Word, so that the commandments of the Lord are understood, remembered, believed, and applied into the fabric of daily life. Wisdom is life transforming, not academic or formal. It is not tested by exams but by a fruitful life. The result, or fruit, of biblical wisdom is going to be praise of the Lord that lasts in the soul of the wise believer for all their life and into eternity. Wisdom produces a hunger to praise God at every opportunity, and with all ones heart and mind. Praise and worship are the by products of grace, mercy and truth being understood and applied into life on a daily basis. Proverbs 9:10-12, Ecclesiastes 12:12-14, 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Regular worship is a characteristic of the Millennium and it ought to be the mark of the saint in today's age also. Faith will always "work out" in life in acts of service and worship and believers will be regularly found in the company of others praising the Lord. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is whole hearted worship. If there is not whole hearted joy in the Lord, then the people have not truly met the Lord!
2. When the Holy Spirit moves in power and purity amongst the people of God there is an excitement in worship and a real presence of God's love that makes it easy to stay at church and hard to return home at the end of the service. This is why the church café, or after church lunch or dinner is such a wonderful thing when the Holy Spirit is moving upon the people, for they will seek to stay and enjoy more fellowship with each other and the Lord. If we do not have this experience after our church services then we need to go to solemn prayer for our church, because something or someone is blocking the move of the Holy Spirit.
3. Feats of memory belong to earlier generations, and yet we are urged to remember things that will assist our walk in faith. As we study the works of the Lord in the Word of the Lord we need to remember the things that have occurred in the past because they are a clue to what will occur in the future. God's character does not change, and as He acted before, so He will act again. To know the works of the Lord in past ages is to know the assurance of His acts for you now. Do we learn and remember enough of the things of God to keep us safe and enthusiastically moving forward?
4. God's moral standards never change. When we read in the Holy Word of God the standards of the Lord for our behaviour, then we need to take them with 100% commitment, because they are the Lord's path to blessing. We are to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit through each and every day, for only then will we be serving the Lord as we ought. God's standards do not change, and His character has not changed, so on the basis of the past we can predict how the Lord will respond to us in the present and the future. We have absolute certainty in the Lord. Let us feed upon the Word and learn of His character and works, for then we can have the confidence He wants us to have in all we do today.

DOCTRINES

GOD – DIVINE INSTITUTIONS – FREE WILL

CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SPIRIT

HOLY SPIRIT – SINS AGAINST THE HOLY

MANNA

PROMISES

RELIGION

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

ISRAEL – FIVE CYCLES OF NATIONAL DIVINE DISCIPLINE

GOD – NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

FEAR

CHRISTIAN LIFE – MENTAL ATTITUDE

PSALM 112**INTRODUCTION**

This psalm can be seen as the second half, or mirror half of Psalm 111. It runs a parallel course to the psalm we have just seen. It reflects the wonderful realities of the mature believer's life after the Lord has won the victory and each believer can sing about what the Lord has done while thinking of the defeat of the enemies of truth and righteousness. It looks forward and backwards as a psalm of praise.

When it was written it looked forward to the day of the Lord's final victory over the enemies of the truth at the end of the Great Tribulation period. When it is sung in the Millennial Kingdom it will look back to that day, but also forward to the final rebellion of mankind at the end of the Millennial Kingdom and sadly reflect upon the fate of the wicked in that last day of time before the GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT. It is a psalm that sings about the strength of character, strong work, and stable witness, of the mature believer who is grounded and established in the doctrines of the Word of God. It is a psalm about the blessing of the mature believer in the midst of all that the wicked can throw at them.

PSALMS 112:1-10

- 1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.**
- 2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.**
- 3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.**
- 4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.**
- 5 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.**
- 6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.**
- 7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.**
- 8 His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.**
- 9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.**
- 10 The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.**

REFLECTION

- 1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.**
- 2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.**

The blessings of the man or woman that fears the Lord are many and powerful. The person who delights in the commandments of the Lord is the recipient of more blessing that they could manage to enumerate. We are blessed in the Lord far more than we could ever explain to anyone else, but those blessings within our character are expressed over time in our life actions. To delight in the Lord is to open the door to blessing. Psalms 1:1-6. Refer to the BTB studies, BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES, and GIFTS RECEIVED AT SALVATION.

It is the person who loves the Lord and walks in humility that receives the blessings of the Lord. They are especially blessed upon the earth in the Millennial Kingdom and they receive there greater blessing than any previous age, for they can live as Adam and Eve lived; they appear to be able to live for centuries in good health due to the restoration of pre-flood conditions. This period of history is an amazing time to live and the upright in spirit are truly blessed for centuries.

What will be the role of the believers who have lived before this date? It isn't clear at all, and any comment on this matter is speculation. One school would have us ruling with Christ upon the earth for this period, another would have us back in heaven doing other things there while this last period of history is played out. We will know for sure only at the time!

- 3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.**
- 4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.**

Wealth is all too often a trial and test for us in today's earth, but during the Millennial Kingdom with only believers upon the earth, there will be no test involved; just blessing that is abundant, but never self centred. Even today, on our presently fallen earth, with evil around us, mature believers can handle all manner of wealth, fame, and power if the second thing mentioned here is present; if we have righteousness that lasts forever. When people are stabilised in their character by the righteousness of God, then they are truly morally stable, and so are able to enjoy all things without the things that surround them turning their heads away from God.

When righteousness guides people, they are led by the Holy Spirit, and that means that they experience light in the darkness, as the Spirit takes the Word of God and applies it into dark places and brings LIGHT. When people have been enlightened by the Word of God they will manifest the FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:13-23, for those with out the FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT are not genuine believers at all! Beware of people without compassion and graciousness for whatever they are, they are not Holy Spirit filled Christians! Romans 8:9.

- 5 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.**

6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

The character of people is seen in their actions, not their words alone. A good man shows favour to others and helps them when he can. This doesn't mean handouts necessarily, but "hand ups" to assist others to independence, or to "bridge the gap" when they fall on hard times. To loan people money or land to assist them was a noble thing in ancient Israel, for no interest was charged on any loan to a fellow believer.

If you loaned money in this biblical day you may have agreed to share the profit on a venture, but you were forbidden to charge interest to a fellow member of God's family. Exodus 22:25, Leviticus 25:36-37, Deuteronomy 23:19-20. Christ centred character does not seek to make merchandise of a fellow servant of the Lord. The first characteristic of the mature believer in business is their readiness to assist their brethren, the second is their "discretion".

A good man works with discretion in all he does. This word has a different meaning today than it had in 1611 when the English translators choose this word. Today "being discrete" means you act in a way that others don't find out what you are really up to! It often means you can keep a guilty secret. Discretion here in our psalm does not mean secrecy with evil, but moral carefulness and biblical thoughtfulness in all dealings, with morality guiding each and every step taken.

It means a businessman is not just thinking of profit, but of personal morality, and the impact of what he is doing upon others. It is ethical business that is in view here. A believer's faith must work into his/her cheque book and business plan or it is not a biblical or ethical business, and their faith is false! The "Fruit of the Holy Spirit" will be a care for others that is guided by moral principles and ethical actions. Godly/Righteous people are not moved from their righteous standard but hold to the Lord's Word as their guide forever.

Another fruit of the Spirit is in view here, and that is tenacity and stability of character. The mature believer is dependable in their moral and ethical standards; they do not change over time, but remain stable upon the rock of Christ's holy standards. Such people are blessed in time, but also can look forward to ETERNAL REWARDS.

7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

8 His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.

The genuine believer in business trusts in his/her integrity, is stable and dependable in their ethical standards, and operates biblically, with moral concern for those they interact with. They trust the Lord to protect them in their business, because they follow the plan of God for their life. Godly business people work by prayer and careful thought. Every business and personal decision is prayed over, and so when it is made it is secure, and they rest upon the Lord's will within it. As a result of how they work there is no reason for any fear in any situation because every one is in the will of the Lord for them.

No "evil tidings" can disrupt the tranquillity of mind of the mature believer. If we walk in the Lord's will, then each and every situation is one from which the Lord will weave blessing, so "evil tidings" can always be turned around by the power of God within the Plan of God. The heart of the mature believer is "fixed"; it is stabilised in the Plan of God, and in the Character of God that guarantees the plan! There is no thought of defeat for such a believer, because he/she knows he/she is on the winning side. The mature believer knows that the enemy will be defeated by the Lord, and that any set back, or "evil tidings", is simply a matter of temporary inconvenience. It is a subject for prayer; never for fear.

9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

The mature believer has given to the poor, and not let any down turn in business stop their prayerful giving program. The mature believer works by faith, and is confident in the Lord turning their business around and their being blessed fully in the end. They do not get distracted by any financial pressure, but maintain their giving and their service, for they know the Lord will honour their witness. Their prosperity (horn of plenty and power) is exulted, because they walk in the place of power. The mature believer walks close to the Lord and is safe with the Lord in all they do. The mature believer is exulted because they walk where and as the Lord intends them to walk. If we want to be exulted in this life we need to walk close to the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to empower and guide us in all we do and blessing will flow.

If you really want to upset wicked people, just walk close to the Lord and allow Him to bless and uphold you, and the evil ones will be silenced and slink away in shame. God protects his people and blesses them spiritually in all they do. We may not always be the richest people in financial terms, but the believer who walks with the Lord is wealthy beyond measure, as Paul identifies in Philippians 4:4ff.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. If a person is without compassion, graciousness, and righteousness, then they are without Christ and the Holy Spirit is not active within them. God's presence is known by the fruits of the Holy Spirit. If the fruit is not in the life, then the root of that person is not grounded in Christ! Matthew 7:13-23.

2. We must challenge our application of faith into our businesses and our social interactions. We are to be ethical in all our dealings and trustworthy in our financial practises. If a person's faith does not influence their financial and business practises then their faith is not real biblical faith. James 2:12-26.

3. How do we see adversity? Do we see it as the mature believer sees it or as a panic stricken worrier? If we are in the Lord's hands, and operating within his plan, how can anything happen that will disturb the plan of God and the power of God's operation for our life? Let us practise faith and trust in the Lord at the level we are challenged to by this psalm. From the other side of the victory of the Lord we will be embarrassed that we were afraid now, so let us not be afraid, but express our faith in the soon to be completed plan of Almighty God.

DOCTRINES

JUDGMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – BLESSED IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST

CHRISTIAN LIFE – GIFTS RECEIVED AT SALVATION

CHRISTIAN LIFE – REWARDS AND CROWNS

LIGHT

CHRISTIAN LIFE – WALKING AND LIVING IN THE LIGHT

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

PSALM 113

INTRODUCTION

The Lord is the glory of the entire earth in the Millennial Kingdom, but even today, in our fallen world, the Lord is the glory of our daily life. One of the titles for this psalm is "Glory and Grace". It is a "Hallel" Psalm; a psalm of praise to the Lord, and was sung in the Second Temple period after and around the solemn feasts like Passover and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). It was traditionally sung up to eighteen times a year; at every New Moon festival and after Passover, after the Fourth Cup of blessing. It would have been sung after the Passover meal on the night of the Lord's betrayal, just before the disciples headed off into the night to their date with destiny and the Lord's trials.

It was a Psalm that reminded the people of their debt of gratitude to the Lord, and their privilege of giving honour and glory to the Lord for all He had done, did for them and would do. It is a psalm like all others that can be sung in all ages of mankind, but will have special significance in the Millennial Kingdom when all mankind can look back and truly see what the Lord has done for His creation. It is sung in three verses and reminds us that every detail of our lives are in the hands of the one who made the universe and all that is in it and beyond it.

PSALMS 113:1-9

- 1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.**
- 2 Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.**
- 3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD's name is to be praised.**
- 4 The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.**
- 5 Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,**
- 6 Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!**
- 7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;**
- 8 That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.**
- 9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.**

REFLECTION

- 1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.**
- 2 Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.**
- 3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD's name is to be praised.**

Praise the Lord, praise His holy name, all the servants of the Lord praise the name of the Lord. Hallelujah!!! Refer again to the BTB study on the NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, for all the names of God tell us something about

Him and give us reasons to praise His holy name. Believers should be characterised by praising the Lord. We should be known as people who pray, as people who sing praise to their God, and as people who worship the holy names of God.

The names of the Lord are indeed blessed for evermore. From one end of the earth to the other, from dawn to darkness there is no right time to praise the Lord, for all time is God given to praise the Lord. There is no time when we ought not to be praising the Lord. Psalms 41:13, 106:48, Daniel 2:19-23, Ephesians 3:14-21.

**4 The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.
5 Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,
6 Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!**

No nation should ever start to believe its own publicity about how great it is and how powerful it is. No matter how powerful the nation, no matter how great the military forces, or how many times their nuclear arsenal can destroy the earth, they will not do so, for the Lord is returning to this earth. Man has no power at all to step out of the will and plan of God.

Our future is secure; there is no anxiety about the future of mankind, for we have God's Word on it that the Lord will return to deliver the earth. God is "high above" the nations, and he is also the creator of the heavens, and so the power of galaxies 200 million light years away are still under His power and control. Psalms 8:4, Hebrews 2:6. Our God is great, and we need to say a loud "AMEN" to this statement far more often, for when we look up to the stars, if we understand this truth it will keep us from worry about nonsense down here.

If God can order the heavens then He can order the events of time that affect our life, security, and prosperity. The power and plan of God is unlike anything else, and yet many believers have a small grasp upon it and its significance upon them. God's Plan is awesome! The awesomeness of God's Plan should make all believers relax in the care of God for them and the universe. There is no power or force that is like the Lord. The Lord is beyond this universe, and yet within it.

Today we speak of "parallel universes" and no-one asks any philosophical questions about this any more, because we have seen that space and time are continuums of our existence, but do not limit possibilities beyond them. God is beyond our universe and yet a part of it as its creator and saviour, and replacer! 2 Peter 3:10-18. As we look up at the heavens we need to remember that this universe is only "this present universe"; it was made and it is aging, and it will be replaced one day. Even as the creator of all things seen and unseen the Lord does not think it beneath Him to reach down and get involved in the things of earth, and also in the things that are happening in the heavens.

We have seen this fact at earlier points in the study of the Psalms, but it is helpful to remember this fact again. God's actions on the earth may be incredible, but they are measured in centuries, but what the Lord has done already in the stars is measured in millions of light years! We can see and study the events of time, but once we contemplate the events in the heavens we enter an altogether different reality and time frame of God's operational power.

The Lord has already extinguished one third of the stars as you read these words, and he has done it millions of light years ago. Many of the stars you look up at tonight are no longer in existence; it is just their light you see. In the days of the Great Tribulation one third of the stars will be seen to go out, but they were actually extinguished by God millions of years before, but the timing of their deaths was organised by God so that they would all be seen simultaneously in the Great Tribulation.

We know this because during the Great Tribulation period one third of the stars will be seen to extinguish in a short period of time. Revelation 8:12-13. This is a demonstration of the incredible PLAN OF GOD and the timing of all events within the plan, and mankind at the time sees it as an awesome event of judgement. Let us appreciate and worship the awesome power and majesty of the Plan of God.

**7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;
8 That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.
9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.**

The Lord not only works with the stars to achieve exactly the effect He wants to create at certain time periods, but He also works with the most humble and despised of people. It is the total contrast that the psalmist seeks to emphasise here. God has ordered the stars of the universe, but He has still ordered and is involved in the affairs of ordinary and even despised people. The poor and the needy are people that kings do not concern themselves over, either in the past or today. Few rulers concern themselves with the starvation of the drunkards on their city's streets, nor the conditions in jails where evil men dwell, and they care only at election time about the poor in their cities and countryside.

The poor and needy are a nuisance to governments because they require assistance and yet produce little value for any economy. Economists are happiest when the poor and needy are dying young, and the younger the better! Don't be in any doubt about abortion being a policy by satanic controlled people, and they will tell you that it resolves crime rates also, as the young poor don't grow up to become criminals! Politicians don't care for the poor and needy; they would rather they stay on the dunghill and die there quietly so no-one notices them. God alone cares about the poor and needy.

God delights in lifting up to rulership people that the world has despised. 1 Corinthians 1:26-27. God can transform a person born into poverty, and even with useless or criminal parents, and lift them up by salvation and spirit filled power to be a king and ruler over the Lord's people. Many times in the early church a master and his slave would head off to church before dawn on a Sunday morning, and the master would sit in the pews and the slave would minister as the pastor of the church. God delights in using the most unlikely people.

God can bring children to those who think they will never bear children, and hinder the child bearing of the wealthy who have considered it their right to have children. All things are in the Lord's hands and if things are not going as we think they should our challenge is to step back and let the Holy Spirit light our path by means of the Word of God and the leading of God. There is no detail in our life that is too small for the Lord who made the universe to care for. Refer to the BTB study GOD CARES FOR US.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us never tire or hesitate about the importance of praising the Lord as often as we can. Let us praise the Lord as often as we can, and let us praise the Lord wherever we are. Praise the Lord believer, praise the Lord!
2. There is no detail in our lives that is too small for the Lord not to care for and deliver upon. We are in the Lord's hands and that means we are as secure as the future is. It is in the Lord's hands and the Plan of God will be fulfilled.

DOCTRINES

GOD – NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

AMEN

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU

Notes

PSALM 114**INTRODUCTION**

This psalm is the song that celebrated the work of God amongst the Exodus generation and all future generations when the Lord moves upon nature. It is the next of the Hallel Psalm; a song of hallelujah to the Lordship of Christ. This psalm was traditionally sung before the Passover meal. It was a song to remind the people of their deliverance from Egypt, and of the dramatic ways the Lord delivered them and exercised His power over the realm of nature and man. As strongly as God had said He would deliver, so He delivered.

It is a Psalm that will also have great significance after the deliverance of the last day of the Great Tribulation also. What God says, He will do, and this is celebrated after the return of the Exiles in 535 BC and after the return of all the Jewish people after the Great Tribulation period is over. Exodus 6:2-8, 13:8-10, 14:13-22, 15:2-19, Zechariah 12-14. The last Exodus passage referred to may be the oldest Psalm recorded, and is Moses' praise to the Lord for the things that He had done to the point of the deliverance of the Yam Suf (the Sea of Reeds).

PSALMS 114:1-8

- 1 When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;**
- 2 Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.**
- 3 The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back.**
- 4 The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.**
- 5 What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?**
- 6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?**
- 7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;**
- 8 Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.**

REFLECTION

- 1 When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;**
- 2 Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.**

The present Jewish nation selected the name "Israel" rather than Judah/Judea as their national title and that is very significant. It reminded the Jewish people after the Holocaust that they were returning to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). Jacob is old Israel's very human name and reminds us that he was at times a con man and sinner, but lifted up by the power and plan of God alone he became the "Prince of God" (the meaning of Israel). Genesis 35:9-15.

These two verses explain the Jewish way of seeing the land and the people within it, even after the return of the Exiles, when most in the land were from the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi. There were few survivors then from the ten northern tribes who had gone into Assyrian captivity as a result of their idolatry and evil practises in 721 BC. 2 Kings 17:19-41. This passage from the book of Kings records the thinking of both the Pre and Post-Exilic periods regarding the tragedy of the loss of Israel and the final destruction of Judah also.

The split amongst the sons of Jacob had been because of the sin of pride on the part of Rehoboam and the northern tribes led by the old rebel against Solomon, Jeroboam. 1 Kings 12:1-19. Pride and idolatry had led to the rot in the days of Solomon that eventually destroyed all he had built up under his stupid son Rehoboam. 1 Kings 11:1-10, 14:22-31. Within five years of Solomon's death all his great wealth was gone and the nation was bankrupt. Sin and Evil had destroyed them. Refer to the BTB studies EVIL, RELIGION, and SIN.

The sexual and idolatrous sins that besieged Jacob's household destroyed his descendant's prosperity. Genesis 30:1-13, 31:19, 30-35, 35:2-4, 16-20. Even though the name of Jacob and of Israel stood for the sins that would later unhinge the nation, they also stood for hope and the Plan of God, for the sin of mankind does not destroy the Plan of God, it simply robs the sinful generation of the joy and blessing of the Plan for themselves.

The entire nation Israel was delivered by the Lord out of Egypt; from the land of a people of "strange language" to a place where they could speak their own language and serve their own God. The entire house of Jacob was delivered, even though all that first generation would rebel except for two men, Caleb and Joshua. Numbers 13:30, 14:26-38. The Lord brought that generation through to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and established the sanctuary and Temple worship in the territory that would become associated with the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, but be called Judah, but the land itself would still be known as Israel.

Even though the ten northern and idolatrous tribes would call their kingdom "Israel" the southern people would also identify themselves as "Israelites" also. The name was not lost or tainted by the idolatry of the northern tribes. When the Exiles returned from Babylon and the other places they had been taken in 535 BC all who desired to return made the journey and it appears all the tribes were represented in the group under the leadership of the most numerous tribe, that

of Judah. In 1948 when Israel became a nation again they rejoiced in that name as their title amongst the nations; identifying that they were restoring the hope for all the survivors of the tribes established by their ancestor Jacob. Refer to the BTB studies on ISRAEL and PROPHECY.

3 The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back.

4 The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.

The Egyptians saw the glory of the Lord demonstrated at the Sea of Reeds and they fled from the Israelites. The Sea of Reeds was parted to enable the Israelites to escape and the Egyptians to be destroyed in their malicious hatred of Israel. Exodus 14:23-31. The next great parting of the waters was the drying up of the River Jordan through a God ordained and caused landslide as the people approached the river to enter the land. In that situation the river dried up before their eyes and the enemy on the other side of the river bed fled for their lives. Joshua 3:14 – 4:24. In the commentary on those passages I noted that we have had two such drying up of the River Jordan in the last thousand years due to a landslide upstream. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on Joshua 3-4.

The timing of the Lord is again being spoken of here, for the drying up of the river occurred at exactly the right time when the priest's feet touched the water. This required the landslide to occur nearly fifteen minutes beforehand up stream. Just as a third of the stars of the heavens will be seen to fail at exactly the right moment in the Great Tribulation period in a future time, Revelation 8:12, so upon the earth at exactly the right moment the river dries at the feet of the priests, because several minutes before the Lord has sent the landslide into the river to block it upstream.

God works to a plan and arranges events to coincide later with man's needs. In Joshua's case the action of the Lord occurs minutes before the effect is required downstream, but in the case of the stars, the Lord has already extinguished most of the stars millions of years ago, but man will see that only at the time the Lord wants them to see it. It is the mastery of the Lord over nature that is in view here.

The Lord is King over the heavens and the earth, and even the solid mountains quake when the Lord wishes them to. Mt Horeb/Sinai quaked in the presence of the Lord when He came upon the mountain to give Moses the Law. Exodus 19:18-19, 20:18, Judges 5:4-5. The greatest shaking of the earth is, we are told by scripture, yet to occur; a shaking even greater than that which formed the earth at the beginning. Jeremiah 4:23-31, Micah 1:3-4, Nahum 1:3-6, Habakkuk 3:3-16, 2 Peter 3:7-12, Revelation 6:12, 8:5, 11:13-19, 16:17-20.

These last of earth's great tectonic events are built up to in the "latter days" by an increase in the number of large earthquakes, and significant earthquakes occurring in weird and strange places in the years before the Great Tribulation period begins in earnest. Matthew 24:7-8. During the Great Tribulation God will seriously shake the earth, destroy the cities of evil men, and re-form the land and sea ready for the Millennial Kingdom. The shaking of Mt Horeb in Arabia was just a foretaste of things to come.

5 What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?

6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?

The psalmist asks the forces and bodies of nature why they were moved and danced to the tune of God. In the very question asked is the answer embedded. All nature dances to the tune that God plays. All nature is under the control of the creator of the heavens and the earth. The great sea, the mighty rivers and the majestic mountains are simply aspects of God's creative power and purpose upon the earth and all of them will be moved to suit the plan and purpose of God with His people.

Nature is not important in and of itself; it exists as the backdrop for the great drama of redemption that is being played out here upon the earth. The modern "Green" movement wants people to think that nature has its own importance, but it gains its importance only because of its created origin as the place where we are to be saved and serve the Lord. We are to be good stewards of the earth, but not ever worship the earth, for it will be shaken and reformed by God, and finally it will be replaced. 2 Peter 3:7-12. Refer to the BTB study on STEWARDSHIP.

7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

8 Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

The Lord provided water from the rock on two occasions for Israel. Exodus 17:6-7, Numbers 20:9-13, 24-26. These waters were associated with rebellion by the people of Israel, and the latter incident with rebellion by Moses also. They were places where the people tested the patience of the Lord and were themselves found wanting in faith. Hebrews 3:7-4:12. The earth trembled in the presence of the Lord but the people did not tremble soon enough to obey His Word to them, and so they trembled in His judgement upon them.

We are challenged to walk in the healthy "fear of the Lord", rather than in the cringing fear of the Lord's judgement upon us. To "fear the Lord" is to celebrate His majesty and receive His blessing in power. God wants us to tremble and obey, and so be blessed in the same power that moved the mountains. If God can turn a rocky flint and granite cliff into a stream of water in the desert, then He can take any of our flinty times and bring refreshment in the midst of them.

It is not just believing that God exists that is required, for the devils believe God exists; indeed they know God exists in power and they know His power! The devils believe God exists and they tremble at the reality of that. James 2:19. God

requires more of us than the devils show. They know the truth about God's existence, so affirmation of the truth of God's existence means nothing regarding salvation. What God requires of us are works of faith done in the power of the Holy Spirit. Anything short of this is not good enough and does not demonstrate saving faith, for saving faith will work out in actions that demonstrate God's transforming power in the life. Acts 26:20-23, James 2:19-26.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Nature bows before the creator and so ought we to bow. To tremble in the Lord's presence is what is required of us all. Let us approach the Lord in fear and trembling. 1 Corinthians 2:3, 2 Corinthians 7:15, Ephesians 6:5, Philippians 2:12. This means we are seriously laying ourselves out before the Lord's power and majesty and are ready to do whatever He commands us. Let us open ourselves to the power of the one who made the heavens and the earth and be obedient as we are commanded to be. God delights in making "streams in the desert places" and we need to focus our energy upon praise and worship towards the one who provides for all our needs upon this present earth.

2. We do not worship nature; we worship the creator of the heavens and the earth. Let us do so with all our heart seeking the power of the Holy Spirit to lead us through this life and into the next. Let us remember the heavens and the earth were made to honour the Lord and serve His plan for mankind, and they will be shaken and transformed by His power. The heavens and the earth, after the Millennial Kingdom, will be folded up and put away, and be replaced by a new creation altogether. Let us not be attached to things that God shakes and is planning to replace, but let us be obedient to the one who shakes the worlds and is the creator of them all.

Notes

DOCTRINES

EVIL

RELIGION

SIN – OLD SIN NATURE

ISRAEL – JACOB AS A TYPE OF ISRAEL

PROPHECY – SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – STEWARDSHIP

PSALM 115**INTRODUCTION**

Psalms 115 – 118 were sung in sequence during the Passover meal. This psalm before us was a psalm used also in temple services during the second temple period from the days of Ezra and Nehemiah onwards. It may have been sung in parts by both the Levites and the people. Ezra 3:11, Nehemiah 12:24, 40. God's people had returned but for the first hundred years there were few of them in the land and they were surrounded by paganism, and the very same enemies who has assisted the Babylonians to destroy them in 586 BC. This psalm reminds the people that the Lord is superior to the gods of the nations and that the idols are "nothings". The psalm reminds us that the demons behind all idol worship are inferior to the Holy Spirit's power in each spirit filled believer. 1 John 4:4. It reminds us all that victory is assured in the Lord's plan and power.

Dr W G Scroggie divides the psalm up into five parts:

- Verses 1-3 An appeal to God.
- Verses 4 – 8 An estimate of the value of idols and the demons behind them.
- Verses 9-11 A call to trust in the truth of God, not be deceived by the lies of the demons.
- Verses 12 – 15 An assurance of blessing for the believer who walks with and trusts God.
- Verses 16 – 18 A promise of praise.

PSALMS 115:1-18

- 1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.**
- 2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?**
- 3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.**
- 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.**
- 5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:**
- 6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:**
- 7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.**
- 8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.**
- 9 O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.**
- 10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.**
- 11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.**
- 12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.**
- 13 He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great.**
- 14 The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.**
- 15 Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.**
- 16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.**
- 17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.**
- 18 But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.**

REFLECTION

- 1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.**
- 2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?**

Where do we want glory and honour to go today? Do we seek glory and honour for ourselves or for the Lord? We live in a day of increasing Narcissism, with self centred and self important people crying for our attention on every street corner and from every magazine and television program. It is staggering to see the garbage television that comes to us from America and Japan especially. Japanese Game Shows are strange and bizarre to put it mildly! Contestants do ridiculous things that are both dangerous to health and completely pointless. They do these ridiculous things for a short burst of what they call "fame".

Taggers make their marks on walls to be "famous" in their counter culture. American "reality shows" are even more disgraceful in their abandonment to immorality and self promotion. The people who "star" in these shows do not even see how totally ridiculous they appear to thinking people, but the programs obviously sell because the TV producers keep making them. Unsaved people are obsessed with fame and fortune, and yet despise the only hope they have of lasting blessing through worship of the living God. They prefer the fame of man in time to the eternal rewards that God gives.

People are frantically searching for fame today, even though they do not have the character or ability to use their fame for any useful purpose whatsoever. All these people can do is consume every moment on their own lust in self centred pleasure seeking. James warns believers not to live for self, and especially not to pray for things that are selfish or lust based. James 4:1-6. There is hope in the midst of this passage of strong warning, for James reminds us that if we face

our lusts and eliminate them, then the Lord will give “more grace” to us, to bless us and lift us up to the exact place in society and history that He has called us to occupy.

Jeremiah’s great servant Baruch faced this question of fame. He was able to choose to walk in one direction in the political world and find fame and fortune with rich and powerful men, but he choose to walk with God in the path the Lord had ordained for him and serve Jeremiah and carry his letters to the Exiles in Babylon. By doing this he has gained true and lasting fame, where the politicians of his day are forgotten. Jeremiah 45:1-5. These verses from Jeremiah and James form an excellent commentary on our Psalm.

This psalm probably dates from the Exilic period or just after it, when the Israelites were facing abuse and assault from all quarters. The heathen nations around them (all at this time themselves provinces in the Persian Empire), were dismissive of Israel’s claims to spiritual leadership and purity. They looked at the terrible things that the nation of the Jews had suffered and mocked their religion as useless to them. They looked at the Exile and mocked their God, for He had apparently been unable to save them from the exile, and they were still a pathetically small province with poverty as their normal financial status.

The psalmist asks the Lord why He has allowed these nations to mock His majesty through their judgement. The psalmist knows why they have suffered as a nation, but he feels deeply the terrible insult they have offered to the Lord through the process. 2 Kings 24:19, 2 Chronicles 36:11-16. The Israelites had to be judged because of their evil, but by forcing God to judge them they have given the enemies of God the opportunity to mock God. The sins and evil attitudes of believers are disgraceful for this very reason!

**3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.
4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands.**

The sovereignty of the Lord is over all things in this created universe. There is no thing that is outside the Lord’s authority. The doctrine of the CHARACTER OF GOD is our encouragement and the basis for our stability of mind in all the pressures we face today and forever. The Lord has done and will do all things well. God is in charge and we can relax about the prayed through details of our life. God made the heavens, and the faith of the believer is well founded in the Lord, but the idols of the heathen are made with the hands of weak and pathetic men! The contrast is meant to be shocking and an insult to reason, for paganism is an insult to reason. Refer to the BTB study HEATHENISM AND GOD CONSCIOUSNESS and IDOLATRY.

The greatest passages of mockery of idol making are in the great prophets of the Old Testament. Refer to Isaiah 40:18-20, 42:17ff, 46:1-7, Jeremiah 10:1-15. Isaiah contrasts the desperation of the self deluded idol maker with the strong stability of the believer in the living God who can “rise up like the eagle”. Isaiah 40:28-31. The idol maker doesn’t want to accept the truth about the Almighty God and prefers a god he can fashion and make in his own image, but the truth is that the Lord alone is worthy of worship, and able to assist the worshipper.

God’s persistent appeal through the prophets was for the Israelites to cast away their false idols and accept the truth again. Hosea 10:7-15, Habakkuk 2:12-20. The challenge for modern Israel today remains the same; to cast away their falsehood and look upon the one whom they pierced, and they will do that in the midst of the battles of the last days. Zechariah 12:10-14. When Israel finally casts away their false hopes in tradition, and the practical atheism of modern Judaism, they will find that the faith of Abraham and Moses will carry them still, and the Messiah will come “with healing on his wings”. Zechariah 13:1 – 14:14, Malachi 3:2-7, 4:1-6.

**5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:
6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:**

The parallel passage to this is found in Psalms 135:15-18. The writer draws upon the earlier attacks upon idolatry by the prophets, and mocks the very thought of worshipping an inanimate thing that cannot do anything that it is not made to do, and cannot even stay upright unless chained or nailed in place by the men who made it. Satan does at times do things to bind people to their idols and the demons behind them. Refer to the BTB study DEMONS.

We must remember that Satan is behind all false RELIGION and he supports it by working signs and wonders of his own. While the Bible refers to them as “lying wonders”, they are nevertheless wonders and will deceive many. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12. Satan has power, and even though it is limited, it is impressive. Moses found that the demon filled magicians of Egypt were able to match his miraculous signs up to a point. Exodus 7:11-13, 22-25, 8:7, 18-19.

Do not be fooled by wonders as a sign of anything other than power; the question is always to be asked, from where does the power originate? Satan works MIRACLES and SIGNS. All missionaries who have confronted the demonic powers of paganism will have stories of these satanic miracles, but also of the superiority of the power of the Holy Spirit to them. The idols are nothing in themselves, but the demons that get behind them are dangerous if we do not walk fully armoured in the Armour of the Holy Spirit, and walk in the power given through the FILLING of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 10:19-24.

We are called to resist the Devil and he will flee from us, and that means we are to stand against idolatry and the forces of demons behind them also. James 4:7-8, 1 Peter 5:5-11. This means we do what the Lord demands on our walk through life, and we express obedience and the determination to walk spiritually and serve whole heartedly. We don’t set

out to fight demons, unless specifically ordered, and if we do so it is by prayer. Remember, our armour is defensive, but through prayer we tear down satanic strongholds.

We are called to set out to obey the Lord in all things, and do whatever we are commanded to do by the Lord. We don't get casual about idols; we see them as the big "nothings" they are, but we respect the power of satanic demons that get behind them and we deal with these forces in a fully armoured, alert, prayer saturated, and prepared manner.

7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.

The idols are inanimate. They are incapable of movement and speech, and yet the demons will make them speak at times. The demonic speaking of inanimate objects, animals and men with altered speech is a common phenomenon in the world of demonic religion. This is referred to in the biblical phrase "peep and mutter" in Isaiah 8:19-20. It refers to the ability of the pagan priest or medium (referred to in the scripture as the witch or wizard) to apparently communicate with the dead, but what is actually happening in the séance/communication is a demon is working through the medium and their voice alters when they speak because the demon is using their voice box.

All such things are forbidden under the Mosaic Law because they involve people being used by demonic forces for satanic ends. The idols are useless and voiceless, but the demon is able to manufacture great acts of power to work "lying wonders" that gullible and desperate people will assign to the idol. Those who trust in idols are people who are willingly being deceived by demons, and they are ready to believe the things the demon does because of their wicked rejection of the true God and their determination to refuse to bow their knee to Him. Isaiah 44:9-20. The fate of those who turn from truth to a lie is indeed terrible.

9 O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

In contrast to faith in lying demonic forces that live to deceive, Israel is urged to trust in the true God who is there to be their help and their shield from demonic forces. The Lord alone can fully protect us from demonic forces. God alone is able to totally out think the demons, and through the ministries of the Holy Spirit we are able to also, for their strategies and tactics is well described in scripture and a Holy Spirit led and taught believer walking in the power of the Holy Spirit is able to avoid the dangers of the demons.

God is an active defensive shield to His people, even today, when in disobedience, Israel exists and prospers in the midst of malice because of God's shield around them. Deuteronomy 33:26-29, Psalms 62:5-8, 125:1-3, 130:7-8, 146:5-6, Proverbs 30:4-6. These verses will be great comfort to the believers in Israel fighting for their lives in those last terrible days of the Great Tribulation. God will be a shield to His saved people right until the end, even though two thirds are taken by the enemy, the saved third will come through and be rescued by the presence of the Lord at his SECOND ADVENT. Zechariah 12:10 – 14:14. Refer to the BTB studies on the HOLY SPIRIT.

11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

Once again we are reminded that we either have a healthy and positive "fear of the Lord", or we will be in fear of every shadow that moves around us. To respect and follow the Lord is health to our bones and life to our spirit. The challenge to people of all ages is to trust in the Lord, but for the soldiers of the last days of the Great Tribulation fighting in and around Jerusalem they will need to cling to these words like the chains of life itself.

If they fear the Lord they will not fear the evil men who besiege the city, and if they trust the Lord and keep fighting they will see the deliverance of the Lord himself when He arrives in power. Isaiah 41:1ff, 43:1ff, 44:1ff, 48:12-19, 49:8-26, 51:1ff, 52:1ff, 59:1ff, 60:1ff, 62:1ff, 63:1ff, Acts 1:10-11. These passages are but a few of those that will bring encouragement to the Jewish people as they await the return of Messiah Yeshua, as they fight their enemies, and as they pray to Yeshua as their Lord and their God. Zechariah 12:10ff.

The prayer that the Jewish people are encouraged to pray in that last day is given to them in Isaiah 64:1ff. They will pray it and be delivered by the answer. The Lord is going to return to Zion, Hallelujah! God has not ever forgotten His people, and the house of Jacob, and that of Aaron the idol maker (Exodus 32:1-6), will be blessed in their repentance on that last great day. Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu also sinned greatly and died under judgement, but their sin and their father's sin does not stop the blessing of God upon their descendents through their faith in God. Leviticus 10:1ff.

In the closing days of the Great Tribulation, all the tribes of Jacob will have saved members from amongst them and the sub group of the tribe of Levi that will form the Millennial priesthood will be especially blessed. Failure in the past is no guarantee of permanent judgement, because of the grace, mercy, and love of the Lord. God is the God of judgement but also of mercy and hope. All who repent are fully restored, for when the Lord forgives He forgives totally. Our sins are removed as far as they can be from us. Psalms 103:12, 107:3. Even the family of Aaron who sinned so badly is restored in blessing, and the descendents of Korah who sinned become the singers of the Lord. Numbers 16:1ff, Psalms 42, 44, 45-49, 84, 85, 87, 88.

13 He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great.

14 The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

There is judgement for those who persist in rebellion against the will of God, but there is mercy, grace, love and forgiveness towards all who come to the Lord in REPENTANCE. God delights in blessing, and judging is God's strange work. Exodus 20:4-6, Isaiah 28:21. The status and wealth of a person is no guarantee of anything before the Lord, for all are treated the same before the Lord; the only variant in the way the Lord deals with us is the measure of our faith. There is blessing abundantly for the saved members of the house of Israel who will enter the Millennial Kingdom. Israel is blessed beyond measure in that wonderful day. Isaiah 60:8-14, 66:10-24, Jeremiah 32:36-44. Refer back to the studies on ISRAEL, MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

15 Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.

16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

The Israeli of the future will understand that they are the blessed of the Lord. The same power that made the heavens and the earth will restore them as a nation and bless the survivors of their people upon the earth. The heavens are the Lords to enjoy and the Lord has enjoyed the heavens. Most of the stars have already died and been wound up by this stage in human history, and in the Great Tribulation one third will be seen to fade and die in the heavens above the earth (Revelation 8:12), and the remainder of the stars will all be seen to implode after the Great White Throne Judgement ends man's history upon this present earth. Revelation 20:11 – 21:1ff. This earth is just a passing thing, and it has only another thousand plus years to run before its replacement. John got a glimpse of the replacement and records his impressions in Revelation 21-22, and he is awe struck! Let us see this as John saw it and bow our knees to the Lord and praise his holy name for his awesomeness.

The stars are spread out over a vast universe of God's making. It has been around for millions of years as God's place for his activities. Earth is a new comer into this universe, and is here for man's destiny to be played out upon only. We must remember that the light from the furthest stars has taken millions of light years to arrive here. They will be seen to implode and disappear at the right time in the plan of God, and that means that most have already gone, it is just their light still travelling towards us.

One third will be seen to fade and die in the Great Tribulation, and the rest will implode, fade, and die after the last judgement of man. The stars are the Lord's playground, and most have already been wound up, but their light will continue to travel towards us for the remaining years of this age and the Millennial Kingdom, but it is only their light travelling, for the vast bulk of the universe is already empty and ready for the next phase of God's Plan; a new heavens and a new earth! How great is our God believer?

17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

18 But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

We have this earth upon which to make our choices and worship the creator in truth and with passionate appreciation for all He has done. Paganism speaks of second chances through reincarnation, but that is the satanic lie to fool those who wish to be deceived rather than face the truth and bow their knee to their creator and saviour. Those who go down to the grave in a lost state are lost and doomed; there is no hope for them. Their day upon the earth is over and they await the last judgement. "It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgement". Hebrews 9:27. Jesus told the parable of, "The Rich Man and the Beggar Lazarus", to illustrate this point. Luke 16:19-31.

The lost reject their opportunities to accept the Lord as their saviour, but we have embraced the Lord and accepted Christ as our Saviour. As we have received so many gifts as salvation we ought to lift up our voice and praise the Lord with all our hearts and minds. Let us praise the Lord now as the saints in the Millennium will praise Him.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us be ashamed of any sin that allows unbelievers to mock the Lord because of our bad behaviour. Let us be fearful of bringing the Lord's name into disrepute through our actions. Let us walk in the filling of the Holy Spirit and thereby we will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh and disgrace our Lord. Let us demonstrate our saved status by praising the holy name of the Lord at every opportunity we get.

2. Let us be realistic in our assessments of the power and abilities of satanic forces. They have power and the believer who is not wearing their full armour of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:10-18) is in grave danger. We are ordered to be "alert" around the enemy, and those who are not prayerfully alert will be beaten up by the enemy. Those who walk in the Filling of the Holy Spirit will always be victorious against the demonic forces, for "greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world". 1 John 4:4.

3. People who believe in the power of the idol gods are gullible and are deceived because they are prepared to be so. People who have rejected the truth will believe anything rather than bow their knee to the truth. To accept God is to accept the Lord of the universe's right to give orders to you, and in arrogance many men choose not to do that, but as a result they are "under orders" of demons. Let us warn the foolish of the real dangers of rejecting the rulership of the true God over their lives.

4. The last chapter of the history of fallen mankind is already written. We are in no doubt about how it will work out, for the Lord makes it clear for all to see. The Lord is coming again and every time we take Communion we ought to remind ourselves of this fact by saying, “until he comes”, as we sip the grape juice. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Let us tell the story in advance to all who will hear; the Lord is going to return and bring glory to this earth and deliverance to his besieged people Israel, as they fight for their lives in Jerusalem.

DOCTRINES

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

IDOLATRY

HEATHENISM AND GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

ANGELS – DEMONS

RELIGION

MIRACLES – PURPOSE

SIGNS

HOLY SPIRIT – FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

HOLY SPIRIT – OPERATION

HOLY SPIRIT – TEACHER

CHRISTIAN LIFE – REPENTANCE

ISRAEL

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

CHRIST – FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS

CHRIST – RETURN OF OUR LORD

PSALM 116

INTRODUCTION

This psalm is a very individualistic one, and sets us all an example of intensely personal praise and worship in gratitude for deliverance. It has a possible origin in the days of King Hezekiah’s sickness and the Lord’s deliverance of him. Isaiah 38. It may have its origin in that incident, but its final form certainly is dated from post-exilic times.

It is a challenging Psalm, for it challenges us all to praise the Lord our God with all our hearts and minds and voices as our own personal Saviour. The personal pronouns are used in this psalm 37 times in nineteen verses! God wants us to “get personal” in our worship and praise His name for our own salvation. Like all the others in this section of the Psalms it was sung at the Passover Feast and would have been sung by the disciples with the Lord before they left for the Garden of Gethsemane. John 14:1ff, 1 Corinthians 10:16.

The holy name for the Lord JHWH (translated as Jehovah only since 1489 AD as a result of translation work by Erasmus and others) is used fifteen times in the psalm. We must remember that the divine name JHWH was **never** pronounced aloud, but when the name occurred in scripture either the reader breathed aloud, or used the word “Adonai” (or Lord) in its place. It is a psalm of personal lordship and challenges us to make the Lord Jesus truly our Lord. Refer to the BTB study below, CHRIST IS THE ANGEL OF JHWH.

It is also a Psalm that calls us to action. The phrase, "I will" occurs eight times in the psalm reminding us that we are called to act upon our faith. James 2:1ff. Let us express our gratitude for the great deliverance of the Lord over us in a worshipful life of service and in passionate worship services.

PSALMS 116:1-19

- 1 I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.**
- 2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.**
- 3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.**
- 4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.**
- 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.**
- 6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.**
- 7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.**
- 8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.**
- 9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.**
- 10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:**
- 11 I said in my haste, All men are liars.**
- 12 What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?**
- 13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.**
- 14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.**
- 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.**
- 16 O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.**
- 17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.**
- 18 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.**
- 19 In the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.**

REFLECTION

- 1 I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.**
- 2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.**

The intensely personal flavour of this psalm emerges immediately in this first verse. If we are not used to expressing this level of love and adoration for the Lord then we are falling short of His divine standard for believers' praise. It is our freely expressed love that the Lord seeks from us as the sacrifice of the highest praise we can offer. Psalms 18:1-6, Romans 12:1-2, 15:11, Hebrews 13:15, 1 John 4:17-19, 5:1-3, Revelation 19:5. In holy and happy gratitude the believer who knows they are heard by the Lord will praise the name of the Lord all the days of their life. Psalms 55:16-17, 86:6-7, 145:17-19.

- 3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.**
- 4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.**

The suffering and pressures faced by this believer of the past were at a high level. These verses explain why many commentators believe this may be King Hezekiah. Isaiah 38. Many of us have however felt this level of pressure and found in the Lord the healing balm for our tortured soul and sick body. I was told to "go away and die quietly" by my helpful doctor in the 1980s after being gassed in the Armed Forces. The Lord led me through three years of great suffering, and then lifted me up to health again through the prayers of the elders of the church.

I rejoice even in the suffering, for I learned things that have been invaluable for my clinical work, but I certainly rejoice whole heartedly in my health, for I have been able to serve the Lord in ways that are amazing since my recovery. I know exactly the feelings and thoughts behind this psalmist's words here. The feeling that death "has a grip upon you" is hard to explain any other way than in these words, but that darkness that settles around the heart is hard to forget, and I got a shiver through my body as I wrote those very words this day, even 25+ years later!

When we are in such places we need to call upon the Lord to deliver our soul, and He always will deliver us; either into His presence, or into renewed service for the Lord upon the earth. I rejoice in the Lord, for Hezekiah got 16 years more to serve the Lord, and the Lord has already granted me 25 years more than I could have had. The Lord will lift us up, and when you have known the pangs of death as a mature believer you know that you don't care whether it is being lifted up to heaven or to further service. It is a wonderful thing to rest in the love and care of the Lord. Refer to the BTB study GOD CARES FOR YOU. Psalms 142:4-6, 143:6-9, James 1:2-5.

- 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.**
- 6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.**

The doctrine of the holy CHARACTER OF GOD is like "First Aid" to the soul of the suffering saint. Just remembering the wonderfully perfect character of God is encouraging to the believer under pressure, because we know that anything we are going through by way of SUFFERING has a purpose and is a gift of God to the mature believer for our blessing, not our cursing. Romans 8:28-38. The Lord is gracious. The Lord is merciful. The Lord's character can be depended upon to assist those who are simply focused upon Him alone.

The “simple” does not mean the stupid or intellectually challenged. It refers to the person who is simply focused upon the Lord and what the Lord wants for them. God calls us to be absolutely focused upon His will alone, not “double minded” in our plans or enthusiasms. James 1:5-8, 9-12. Circumstances can bring us low but that only means that there are things to be learned close to the floor! If we are brought low it is only because the Lord wants to teach us things we can only learn in humility and then lift us up more gloriously. Psalms 79:8-9, 106:43-48.

**7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.
8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.
9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.**

The psalmist now speaks to his own soul here, and it is a good thing to commune with ourselves at times. It is good to just sit and reflect within about the wonderful things the Lord has done for us and quietly praise Him within our soul. The psalmist recounts the bounty of the Lord towards him. He has been delivered from death itself, his tears have been turned to gladness, and his feet, that he thought were slipping into the pit of death and despair, have been lifted up to firm ground.

His response is the correct one for the mature believer; to walk before the Lord in the land of the living and serve the Lord with gladness. It is not wrong to cry at times, for TEARS are often a sign of humanity, not weakness. We can be brought to places of great distress at times, but the Lord is there to uplift us in the Holy Spirit’s power. Jude 24-25. We may weep at times, but when weeping stops we get up and look to what we can do to serve the Lord more as a result of those tears. Tears in the Lord’s service are training and learning tools, and gifts of understanding that we otherwise would not have.

**10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:
11 I said in my haste, All men are liars.**

Although there may be some problems with the exact text of verse ten its truth emerges clearly. The psalmist has been extremely afflicted by his suffering, but he has believed upon the Lord all through his days of darkness, and he has spoken out his faith and confidence in the end for all to know the truth about the love and care of Almighty God. Men have abused him because of his faith, or doubted his faith in God, or doubted God’s ability to assist him. It is easy in such situations to become totally despondent about mankind, and in haste call all men liars!

Maybe this is what he felt in his extreme pain and suffering. I have known this feeling, but it is dangerous to argue the meaning of a text from a personal experience alone. Men do and say strange things to you however when you are deeply suffering. All their trite theology emerges from their mouths and they can say the most awful things. Job’s “friends” are mild to some things that can be said to the suffering at times! If we add the experience of Job with his “friends” we may have some insights into this difficult verse here before us.

I experienced this when suffering from being gassed in a training exercise in the Armed Forces in the late 1980s. I could barely breath and my Immune System had collapsed, and a Pentecostal preacher stood at the foot of my bed (where I couldn’t get to him!) and urged me to confess my sin, for clearly I must have been mightily a sinner to suffer as badly as I clearly was suffering. Now I must confess to you all, I did want to sin mightily at that point; I would have strangled that man if I could have got to him, and had found the energy. Mercifully the Lord had laid me so low I couldn’t do anything except invite him to leave, and no, I didn’t want such a man to pray for me!

This sort of “wicked” person is always with us to harry and abuse us on our walk through life. This man’s attitude is common of the counsellors of Job, and the Lord condemned them all remember! Job 42:7-9. Unless Job had prayed for them the Lord was determined to slay them all in their false theology of blaming the suffering person. They were wrong to blame Job, but if Job had ranted and raved that “all men were liars and wrong”, he too would have been wrong.

Perhaps this is what the psalmist confesses here. We cannot be sure 100%. The truth is clear however; all men are not liars, but some do lie. All men cannot be trusted, but some can be. The difference is to be found in their attitude to God’s Word and God’s will. It is the fruit of a man and woman’s life that tell us what their heart is, and whether that person is a liar or a truth teller.

**12 What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?
13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.
14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.**

What can we give the Lord who gave us everything? It is a good question to ask ourselves. All that the Lord has made, He has given to us for our use. We have received everything from the Lord, from the very air we breathe and the lungs to take that air in, through to the place we find ourselves in, and the path we are called to walk. The only thing we can render to the one who has given us everything, is everything back in service to Him. The only appropriate service to the Lord is to follow His directives fully and completely and walk the path He has called us to walk in absolute obedience.

What the Lord has provided He has provided for a purpose and we find that as we walk His path. Isaiah 6:1-12. We have been placed upon the earth individually, born into families, cultures, places, and ages in time. None of these things were controlled by us. We have arrived in a place and time, and the question is, what part are we to play in the great march of

time? Why is it that the Lord has brought us into this place, this culture, and this time in history? We must first of all establish a relationship with our maker before we can answer the other questions that flow from these things.

The first thing that is required of mankind is to take the “cup of salvation”, and recognise that they need the Lord’s provided salvation in order to establish a living relationship with God. The first thing for mankind is to recognise that we are sinners in need of a saviour, and see that the Lord has provided the means of becoming acceptable to Him, and take advantage of that provision. Refer to the BTB studies on SALVATION below. Unless a person accepts their need for salvation there is nothing that they can offer to the Lord, for only the Lord’s redemption payment makes them acceptable to Him.

If mankind does not take the redemption offered they are forever separated from their creator. Only when we have accepted the payment of salvation, and thereby entered into a living relationship with God, are we in the place to be able to “pay our vows” to the Lord. This was a phrase that reflected the system of agriculture of this day. You received land from the king and by way of taxation you paid for the privilege of living upon it. The taxation may be in money, in crops and in military service, and to “pay the vow” meant you accepted the responsibility of paying for the right to live upon the land.

We have a “vow” to pay for living within our allotted place in the unfolding drama of history. We have done nothing to be born into the place and time we have arrived into. Each of us has arrived in a different place and with different genetics and life possibilities as a result of our birth. We are able to do some things and not able to do others and this determines our future life. We are then, through the “cup of salvation” BORN AGAIN, and “ADOPTED AS A CHILD OF GOD”, and by this we are entered into the “ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD”.

Whatever limitations we had by our first birth are stripped away by our second birth, and the work of God the Holy Spirit upon us opens up new possibilities that were not there before. It is as if the Lord’s provision through Christ makes up for any lack we have in our natural birth, but we are still in a path that is to be walked. We have received “GIFTS AT SALVATION” that are amazing to assist our walk. To “pay our vows” means to utilise all God has provided in order to do all that God requires on our particular and unique individual path through life.

15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

16 O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

Verse fifteen sums up an important thing about our path through this life. For every generation except the last one, that path will end in death. The important thing for us to see and understand is that each person’s death is sacred in the Lord’s sight, and individually chosen by the Lord. This is the biblical doctrine called “DYING GRACE”. Our deaths are as individually chosen for us by the Lord, in exactly the same way as our life path is. Many people bitterly complain about their “lot in life” and yet they are people who nearly always have chosen to walk away from God’s path for them. Matthew 7:13-14.

The Lord has called us to walk a “narrow path”, and that means a very specific one, where a step to left or right will lead us to disaster. Joshua 23:3-11. We have one life to live, and upon the living of that life, with its objectives, we will be judged. The Lord will not ask why we were not more like Paul, Peter, James, or John, but why we were not more ourselves! The Lord has set us free from sin, and we are free to serve as the bond slaves of the one who set us free.

The paradox of the Christian life is that one becomes a slave to Christ in order to be free to serve Christ. Refer to the BTB studies on SERVICE, SERVICE-SOLDIER IN EPHESIANS 6. Paul delighted in calling himself the “bond-slave” of Christ, reflecting the fact that the Lord had done all to save him, and he would do all, unto death, to serve the Lord. This is our true worship!

17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

18 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

19 In the courts of the LORD’s house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

Once we have our life “on track” we can then pay attention to worship services in a church context, but if we are not “on track” (that is the Lord’s track for our life), then there is no worship service that will feel right to us, and none will be right. Our life must be right before the Lord before our songs and prayers are acceptable. The Lord’s word is clear on this. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me”. Psalms 66:18. Once our life is on the Lord’s track, then we are called to open our heart and mouth and praise the Lord with open thanksgiving for all we have received. We are then able to call upon the name of the Lord for things that concern us.

We can then praise and serve the Lord in public service and public worship services. The two things are kept closely together in scripture, for unless we are publically serving the Lord we have no business being part of a public worship service. Today we are very casual on this matter, and people serve in the church who would not serve in the community in Christ’s name. This is wrong, for worship in our community through walking our path of service to the Lord is the other half of the worshipful service in the church itself.

Worship is dominantly a public act, not a private act, be it in our community walk, or the public worship religious service. We may worship privately, but the psalmist reminds us here that if worship is only private it is probably fake in some essential way. To not lift your voice in the presence of all the people is to fall short of God’s standard for worship.

The psalmist delighted in service in the midst of the Temple, in the very courts of the Lord's house, where all the people gathered to serve the Lord in worship. He loved the Lord's House. This is the second test of true worship. The first is the readiness to walk in godly service on the path the Lord has called you to walk, and the second is a love of the Lord's house and the formal worship service. To the lover of the Lord, all activities are worship to the one who gave His all for them.

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Let us praise the name of the Lord every day we live, for every day is a renewal of his grace towards us and He hears our prayers every day and answers them. Let us praise the name of the Lord with personal passion and earnest thankfulness. Worship is to characterise the believer. We worship the Lord as we walk the path assigned to us through this life, and we worship in the formal church service. Both forms of worship are required of us, and both are to be embraced and enjoyed.

2. Let us neither trust all men, nor doubt all men, but judge all men and women on the basis of the Word of God. The Lord Jesus gives us the right tool for measurement of trust amongst mankind. Matthew 7:13-23. By the fruit of the life can a person be known. If they have the fruit of the Holy Spirit, then while they walk in the power of the Spirit they can be trusted and can be great friends, but if they have the fruit of evil in their life, then they cannot be trusted at all, for they are enemies of God and truth. Let us be discerning on the basis of the Word of God and be good "fruit inspectors" of the lives of those who we must know if we can trust. Galatians 5:16-24.

3. We are all born into a different place in space and time. Our cultures and life experiences are different and this is exactly what the Lord requires us to see and embrace. We are called to be ourselves and serve exactly where the Lord wants us to be, doing exactly what He wants us to do. That means we do not stray away to the left or the right, but obey the Lord in all we are required to do. This is "paying our vow" to the Lord. This is true worship – it is serving the Lord where we are called to serve, not desiring any other man's place. Let us embrace our role in the Lord's work and do it whole heartedly. It is more important to live as and where the Lord has called us to live and serve, than to worship him in song, giving, prayer or charity work. God seeks our service in the manner where we were called.

DOCTRINES

CHRIST – ANGEL OF JHWH (JEHOVAH)

CHRIST – DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

CHRIST – HYPOSTATIC UNION

CHRIST – NAMES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

CHRIST TYPES – PASSOVER AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

GOD – GOD CARES FOR YOU

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUFFERING

WEEPING / TEARS

SALVATION

SALVATION – SIN – MAN'S NEED FOR SALVATION

SALVATION – SIN – BARRIER BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

SALVATION – REDEMPTION

**SALVATION – REGENERATION: BORN AGAIN
GOD**

**CHRISTIAN LIFE – ADOPTION AS A CHILD OF
GOD**

CHRISTIAN LIFE – ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD

CHRISTIAN LIFE – GIFTS RECEIVED AT SALVATION

DYING GRACE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SERVICE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SOLDIER: CHRISTIAN SOLDIER IN EPHESIANS 6

PSALM 117**INTRODUCTION**

When any piece of literature is this small it is easily overlooked, but that would be a mistake in the case of this psalm. It sums up many important doctrines, and forms a summary of the praise of the people so far. It may be the chorus for all the psalms as they are sung in the Millennial Kingdom. I would not be surprised if this psalm is sung as a link between others in public worship, as a refrain that reinforces the truth, or as a benediction to end services around the world. This Psalm is the physical centre of the Bible, and the smallest of the Psalms.

PSALMS 117:1-2 and REFLECTION

1 O praise the LORD, all ye nations

: praise him, all ye people.

2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us

: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever.

Praise ye the LORD.

The peoples of the earth are commanded to respond to the truth about God and praise the Lord their God aloud for all the peoples of the earth, around the earth to hear their praises. This is a universal psalm; to be sung all around the earth as a summary of doctrine and an encouragement to formal worship by all peoples. It would appear that the end of the New Testament book of Hebrews draws upon this psalm in its final words.

The praise in the Hallel Psalms is to the Lord Jesus upon His throne in Jerusalem, but all these psalms are also to be sung to Him from every corner of the earth every day. These psalms are to be the "pop music" of the Millennium. Turn to the last chapter of the letter to the Hebrews and examine some verses together with me as we look at this short psalm.

The centre of all worship is the Lord Jesus, who is "the same yesterday, today and forever". Hebrews 13:8. As the writer of the letter to the Hebrews identifies, true worship is the outpouring of genuine faith, and genuine faith is protected by true doctrine properly understood. "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart is established with grace; not with meats that have not profited them that have been occupied therein." Hebrews 13:9. In verse two of the psalm before us the "truth that endures forever" is the stabiliser of bible doctrine, just as in the Hebrews passage.

Truth stabilises the mind and centres worship round the facts that are then celebrated. True worship must reflect truth. The truth must be proclaimed to encourage all who see and hear the worship, and it must encourage them to study the truth further to stabilise themselves further in it.

Truth must then always move us out into service beyond the Temple/church gate. As we have seen in earlier psalms genuine worship involves both daily life obedience and formal religious services. We worship in our service of the Lord in the ordinary details of daily life, just as powerfully as when we sing in the choir. All worship is a public proclamation of the Lord's centrality in our life, and the standard for our life being His plan for us, and His power working within us and through us to achieve His goals for us.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews urges the believers of his day to push beyond their formal worship to daily obedience in the hard places of daily life, and to press beyond their traditions and previous worship habits and embrace the truth of God, and even change every detail of their life to bring it into obedience to the truth. "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing his reproach, for we have here no continuing city, but seek one which is to come." Hebrews 13:13-14. In the Millennium, in the midst of the praise and glory of the Lord's rule upon the earth the people are to be reminded daily that the best is still "yet to come"; the new heavens and the new earth. Revelation 21:2ff.

Worship is focused upon the Lord Jesus, upon the truths he has taught, but also upon His plan that stretches forward into eternity. In worship we contemplate the person, plan, and power of God, and we praise God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will yet do. Worship brings time and eternity together through the person, plan and power of Almighty God round which worship centres. As the writer to the Hebrews says it, "By Him therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." Hebrews 13:15. Worship is part of every believer's life today, but it will be an even more central part of life in the Millennial Kingdom with the Lord present upon the earth.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews comes to the end of his letter and sums up his appeal in the following words. "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen". Hebrews 13:20-21. All worship services offered up to the glory of the Lord must lead to worshipful service for the Lord. We are here to serve Him and that means by voice in our worship services and by works in our daily lives.

True biblical worship looks all ways; back to what God has done, around to what the Lord wants us to do in His power now, and forward to what He will do in the future. By keeping worship biblical we keep ourselves grounded in praise based occupation with Christ, but also in His service and His future plan for this world. People who worship the Lord in work and words are safe from satanic attack, because their worship keeps them alert to truth and the danger of satanic deception.

Worship keeps us secure and safe in the midst of the pressures of daily life. Those who ground themselves in biblical worship in the Millennial Kingdom will not be fooled by Satan when he is loosed at the end of that period. Revelation 20:4-10. Those not grounded in the truth will be fooled and destroyed with him. Worship truly keeps us safe and secure in soul, spirit and body.

The psalm before us orders all the people of the earth to praise the Lord for who He is, what He has done, and what He will yet do. It encourages them to learn of him and his plan, that the truth might truly set them free from fear, doubts, and distractions. John 8:32-36. Worship is designed by God to set us free from everything that will lead us away from the path of God for our life. Worship is designed to stabilise us in the doctrines of truth in Christ Jesus, centre our contemplation in his person, power, and plan, and lift our hearts with the praises of his name.

There is only one path to the enjoyment of the true "FATHERHOOD OF GOD" and that is for the people of earth to have saving faith in Jesus. All who know Jesus as their Saviour know God truly as their father, and they are then able, through their worship, to celebrate that unity amongst all peoples through their living relationship with Christ Jesus.

The unity of all peoples in worship will be celebrated in the Millennial Kingdom because in that day He will sit upon his throne and rule over all the earth. We can celebrate this future reality right now in our own worship. The unity that Jesus will bring when he sits upon his throne in Jerusalem can be praised now by faith, as we celebrate what He will do in that future day. Hebrews 11:1ff.

Mankind has sought all manner of means to be united, but all have failed. The ANTI-CHRIST will try to achieve world rulership in a last terrible satanic attempt to seize the sceptre from the Lord of glory, but he also will fail, as all evil men have before him. The essential nature of Satan is self centeredness and his own arrogance will unhinge him as all Satan's pawns have been unhinged before.

The Lord Jesus alone will secure unity amongst mankind, and a world government that will not be exploitative. His mercy towards mankind and His truth are stable and strong to meet all mans needs for as long as time lasts. The Lord will end the history of mankind upon the earth with his MILLENNIAL KINGDOM and it will be heaven upon the earth. Even then, it is only a last step on the path to the eternal state, and the Lord will bring in a new heavens and a new earth to replace all we presently see. The best is yet to come! Hallelujah!

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. Biblical Worship truly unites people, and worship alone unites people without exploitation of any. Only the Lord will unite all mankind in truth and safety. All earlier attempts at world government and control have been, and will be perverted by satanic people and forces. It is the Lord alone who will bring unity amongst mankind and peace upon the earth. Let us not waste time with satanic "One World" movements, but focus upon what the Lord wants us to do and do that with all our heart in our path through this world.

2. Let us worship in our daily work for the Lord, and our regular temple/church worship services, for worship in all its forms centres us in Christ, and his truth, and his presence will be a place of safety in all ages and times. Worship keeps us Christ centred in all our doings and so safe in all steps along the path the Lord has called us to walk through this life. Let us praise Him for what he will do upon this earth in the future.

DOCTRINES

GOD – CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD – COMFORT FOR BELIEVERS

GOD – PLAN OF GOD

GOD – FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

GOD – FATHERHOOD OF GOD

CHURCH – WORSHIP AND PRAISE

ANTI-CHRIST – WORLD RULER

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

PSALM 118

INTRODUCTION

This Psalm most likely dates from after the reforms of Ezra and the rebuilding work of Nehemiah. The Temple was built in 515 BC and dedicated then for service, but it was not the beautiful building that the previous one of Solomon's had been. It functioned and the prophet gave formal and severe warning to the people not to "despise the day of small things", for God would do great things in that temple. Zechariah 4:10. Solomon's Temple was great indeed, but it became the centre for idolatry, whereas this second temple would be the one the Lord himself came to.

It is the wall of the second temple that is the western "Wailing Wall" in Jerusalem today, and this will be the site that witnesses the return of the Lord Jesus to rule the earth from that very mount. The very basic temple building was completed by Zerubbabel and Joshua in 515 BC, but it was not fully decorated, enclosed, and beautified, until the arrival of Nehemiah as the Jewish, but also Persian Governor around 445 BC. He quickly rebuilt the walls of the city and then spent the rest of his time beautifying the temple with carved stone reliefs, and walls and out buildings of beautiful white Jerusalem stone and marble.

This is a Psalm associated with the Feast of Tabernacles, which is the feast that celebrated in advance the Millennial Kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Refer to the BTB study FEASTS OF ISRAEL. The psalm itself is in three sections; the processional into the Temple to celebrate the Feast, then the celebration of deliverance from Babylonian captivity, and then the celebration of the beautification of the Second Temple under Nehemiah.

It introduces the great Psalm 119, which is the Psalm of the exiles as they went into captivity, and it is appropriate that the mournful tone of that psalm is pre-fixed by the celebration of this one, for we need to remember that the suffering of the Lord's people is but for a moment, for their ultimate destiny and blessing remains secure. God's people can praise the Lord in security and blessing, for the Lord does all things well and will bring His people through to victory. This psalm is the song of victory for the returning exiles and for the people of the Millennium when they think of their own recovery to the land and the rebuilding of the Millennial Temple on the site of the earlier two.

PSALMS 118:1-29

- 1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.
- 2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.
- 3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.
- 4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever.
- 5 I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.
- 6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?
- 7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.
- 8 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.
- 9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.
- 10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.
- 11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
- 12 They compassed me about like bees: they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
- 13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.
- 14 The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.
- 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.
- 16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.
- 17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.
- 18 The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.
- 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:
- 20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.
- 21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.
- 22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.
- 23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.
- 24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
- 25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.
- 26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.
- 27 God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.
- 28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.
- 29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

REFLECTION

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

2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

It is good to remember that we rest secure in our salvation because of the stable love of our righteous and holy God. We can rejoice in his love because it is stable and secure towards us. Deuteronomy 33:27-29, Jeremiah 33:11. God is good, and that gives us the rest in our soul that we need in the midst of a dangerous world. The dangers of this world are only managed because we trust in the goodness of God and depend upon his perfect mercy towards us. The mercy of God does not fail us, because the character of God does not change. We are secure because we rest upon the character of God, not our own character and deserving behaviours.

Given our sinfulness it is just as well that we depend upon the Lord's character not our own. Let us remember his mercy, and let us remember that his mercy goes on forever. For Israel this is vital to recall, especially when we consider it is nearly 2000 years since the Israelite nation's rejection of the Lord as their Messiah. For nearly 2000 years He has been rejected, and yet God has not rejected them. For as long as between the days of Abraham and the birth of the Lord the people of God have rejected the path of God, and yet they are still the recipients of God's mercy! This is mercy beyond anything that man may know.

3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

The house of Aaron is the house of the priesthood, and for 1940 years they have had no temple to serve within. The psalmist reminds the sons of Aaron that the Lord is merciful to them, and even though they have been for nearly 2000 years without a temple they will be restored to their place and serve the Messiah as their Lord and God. John 20:28. As Thomas doubted and was convinced by the Lord's appearance, so Israel will be convinced in the last years of the Great Tribulation period and will look upon "him whom they pierced". Zechariah 12:10. All the people will fully acknowledge then that the Lord's mercy truly does endure forever. The Lord is not ever short of power that He cannot save us. Isaiah 50:2, 59:1.

5 I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.

6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.

All who have served the Lord in any capacity have discovered quickly that the ANGELIC CONFLICT is real indeed, and that the ARMOUR OF THE SPIRIT is required for each believer who wishes to come through a spiritually active day intact. We are to be ready for the pressures that will come upon us in the Lord's service, and that means we are to be ready to fight with the spiritual weapons that the Lord provides for us. 2 Corinthians 10:4, Ephesians 6:10-18, 1 Timothy 1:18, 1 Peter 1:13-16. We will be often in distress, just as any soldier is in distress in campaigns at times, but we will not be in despair if we keep in touch with our Commanding Officer through PRAYER.

God hears and answers the PRAYER of his obedient children. We are heard, and we are answered by Almighty God. If God be for us who can be against us? Romans 8:31. The answer is clear; SATAN can and is against us, but, "greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world". 1 John 4:4. We do have an opponent, but we do not need to be fearful of him if we walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord is on our side, and so the enemy can do nothing to harm us unless we walk away from the care and protection of the Lord. No man can do anything to us, for the Lord is for us. Psalms 27:1-3, 56:3-11, Romans 8:28-38.

It is a foolish thing for unbelievers to attack believers, for they attack Almighty God in the process and it is only a matter of timing before they are dealt with by God. God takes our part, for when we are in his plan we are under his special gracious protection. We are on the Lord's side and that is the winning side! Micah 7:7-10, Romans 8:31, Hebrews 13:6. If men attack us they will know the wrath of God, and it is a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" Hebrews 10:31. "Our God is a consuming fire". Hebrews 12:29. How secure are we believers? Those who hate us are outgunned badly by the Lord and the Lord takes seriously the assaults of evil men and women upon his servants. Let us be as confident as David was. Psalms 54:4-5, 55:16-19, 59:9-10, 92:11.

8 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

It is always best to trust the Lord rather than trust man. If we want to have confidence as we look forward, then we need it in the Lord, for the plan of the Lord is the only sure thing on this earth; for the Lord's will is going to be done at all times until eternity dawns. Good men can be trusted, but their word to assist us cannot ever be depended upon, for they are victims of events just as we are. Many men have earnestly tried to assist their fellows but been prevented by circumstances well beyond their control. We can depend upon the promises of our friends, for they are well meant and intentioned, but men lack the power to deliver. God alone never lacks the power to deliver on His promises to assist us. Psalms 40:1-4, 62:8-9, Jeremiah 17:5-10.

Ordinary men make promises and may try to keep them, and if they are not hindered by superior forces, their own character weaknesses, or accidents in time, then they do keep their word. Powerful men may also make promises and these "princes" may appear to have the ability to keep their word more than the ordinary man on the street, but that belief in the prince's power is illusionary. They too are just mortal and often selfish men and their word is no more reliable, even

if they have armies to command to keep their promises. They are able to keep their word only if they are allowed to by the Lord. Psalms 146:3-5, Isaiah 30:1-3, 15-18, 31:1-6.

We are never to be impressed by the power of men's armies, for the Lord can bring down the toughest armies to defeat, and make the weakest army be the victor. It is the will of the Lord alone that brings victory, not any power of mortal men.

10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.

11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

12 They compassed me about like bees: they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

This first verse here makes some of the commentators think that parts of this psalm (or all of it) date from the time of the days of Nehemiah, as it records the very challenges he faced with the surrounding peoples. Nehemiah 1-6. When we are attacked and insulted by foreign or evil forces we can take the assaults very personally, but the challenge of the Lord is to rest in His protection, for we are AMBASSADORS and that means nothing that occurs to us is to be taken personally, for we represent the Lord. Now to attack an ambassador is to declare war on the country they represent, and if people attack us, that is what they are doing; they are declaring war on God and heaven itself. This is a seriously stupid thing for Satan to do, but he knows he has nothing to lose, but his followers have!

The believer who is determined to serve the Lord needs to be ready to waste the enemy forces that are opposed to the will of the Lord, and by prayer and bible preaching we are called to bring down strongholds of satanic power. When the enemy opposes our path we are to keep right on advancing as the Lord has ordered us to, and with confidence proclaim their destruction, for those who stand against us stand against God. These forces of evil will at times surround us, but if we keep our focus upon the Lord and His plan for us then we are able to be confident that they will be destroyed totally. 1 Chronicles 14:10 - 17, 2 Chronicles 15:2-7, Psalms 20:6-9, 83:9-18.

13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

14 The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

The psalmist directly addresses the enemies of the truth who have assaulted and abused him. They had really tried to maim or kill him. They had thrust their weapons at him with malice and deliberate design to hurt. The malice of evil people is a surprise to many and yet evil people are malicious and do not care about the feelings of others. We can relax when facing the malice of evil men and women, for the Lord will help us, and the psalmist announces with joy that the Lord indeed helped him.

The Lord is his strength and song, and the Lord has become his salvation/deliverance and he praises the Lord for what He has done for him. Is this your prayer and praise believer? This is where the Lord wants us to be; operating in the danger zone of the Angelic Conflict, but secure there, for it is exactly where the Lord wants us and we are safe there, for He will always help us there. Psalms 18:1-3, 17-18, 56:1-4.

15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

The Lord can turn our sadness into joy, our mourning into gladness. Psalms 30:11-12. Now for this to occur it means that we have been sad, depressed, mourning, and pressed down by events. Bad things will happen, and pressures will overwhelm us to the point of tears at times on our walk through this life, but the Lord is with us and will help us as we rest upon Him. We will come with rejoicing into his presence, but it may be through some hard passages at times. Isaiah 51:11, 65:13-15.

God's "right hand" (the hand of power) will always "do valiantly". The Lord will have the victory when He moves; it is just a matter of timing and our positioning. God will be exulted and His name will be praised above all names. The Lord will be seen to have done valiantly. As we look back at history, and even our own story we will see the glory of the Lord in all He has done for us to bring us through to glory. The Lord is God and His plan will succeed. Acts 2:29-36.

17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

18 The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

The relief and joy at these words is that of a man truly released from the bonds of death. There is a joy that grips the soul more powerfully than the bonds of death, and that is the surge of relief and happiness when we know that we will live again to serve the Lord for a longer time upon the earth before we finally head down the path of death at an older age.

Every young person facing their death feels a sense of loss and robbery at the prospect of their leaving the earth so early. In the Lord's economy however there is no "early or late time" in our departure from this life, but as men and women with hopes and dreams for this life, we feel the sadness of death when we are young. There are things to do, and places to go, and service to render. When older we look back at service and around to increasing physical debility, and we look forward to release from bodily burdens and the joy of heaven. 2 Timothy 4:1-8.

When I faced the possibility of my own death in my late thirties there was resignation to the will of God, but there was also great sadness as I saw my young children playing around my bed and asking me why I couldn't take them for a walk. I experienced the great joy that the psalmist speaks of here when the Lord lifted me up, and I give praise every day for life and opportunity to serve the maker, the saviour and the healer of my soul and body.

King Hezekiah does the same, as recorded in Isaiah 38:16 - 20. When we are lifted up there is a greater burden upon us than any burden of sickness or debility; it is the joyful burden of thankfulness and praise. We cannot stop proclaiming the joy of the Lord. Psalms 40:4-11, 71:14-19, 145:4. We know our life and death are to be for the praise and glory of the Lord. Romans 14:7-9.

When we face great physical distress and its associated great psychological upset, we must accept it as "from the Lord", for He is the Lord of all and the Master of the Plan and our lives. If something enters our life when we are walking his path for us, then it has entered with his permission. The psalmist recognises this and praises the Lord for the hard times he has been through, and praises the Lord that he has not gone down to death that time.

For each of us there will be a sickness that is "unto death", and when that final one comes we will have the DYING GRACE to bear it before the Lord. Until the moment of our death we can however be absolutely confident that the Lord has all the provision for life we need within his wonderful plan for us. In heaven when we look back there will be nothing but praise for the Lord's provisions for us. 2 Corinthians 1:8-11, 6:2-10, 11:23-33. Read these passages in the second letter of Paul to the Corinthian church and see how he suffered, but see how he rejoiced in the Lord's provisions in the midst of his SUFFERING.

**19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:
20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.**

The response to the Lord's deliverance is always as we read of it here. If people do not respond this way to the Lord's deliverance, then something is terribly wrong in their life, or the facts are wrong! There are only two possible alternatives if deliverance from death does not produce greater praise, spiritual works, and worship. The first is that there was no true deliverance, and what happened was not of the Lord. The second is that the person delivered is carnal, not spiritual, and they are, by persisting in carnality, placing themselves under the SIN UNTO DEATH. Refer to the BTB study on SPIRITUALITY. The person who has truly recovered from the gates of death is determined, in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to walk through the gates of righteousness. They are determined to serve the Lord in spiritual power and righteousness of life and witness.

Righteousness may be loosely translated as "right with God", and that means there is no sin in the way for holy service of the Lord. When we have been delivered from death, we daily ensure we are free from the stain and hindrance of unconfessed sin in our life. The Lord is the victor over sin and death, and so having freed us from death to serve Him, we ensure no sin stops that service. We want nothing to come between us and the Lord, and his service. Fellowship with the Lord that will produce GOOD WORKS depends upon CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS of any sins that crop up in the life to ankle tap us.

**21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.
22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.
23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.**

The Lord is to be praised and the psalmist affirms his decision to praise and serve the Lord every day as his saviour, for the Lord alone has lifted him up and brought him through to spiritual understanding and blessing. The Lord has "become" his salvation. Notice that strange phrase, for in it is the recognition of the psalmist that before he faced his own death he had possibly not been truly saved, nor understood the claims of God upon his life at the level he now does. The Lord has set him free from misunderstanding and misconception. He has now been saved/delivered from the blindness that had stopped him serving and praising the Lord as the Lord deserved. Ephesians 2:4-10.

He had failed to see the truth, but now he has seen it and is delivered by it and through faith in it. The power of verse twenty two is felt by every believer in the Lord Jesus for we see Him here, and rightly so. He is the STONE, and the ROCK, and he was sadly rejected at his first advent by the vast majority of his people, but He will be accepted in the end and they will be blessed by their acceptance then. Refer to the BTB studies on these two subjects with reference to the Lord. Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11-12, Ephesians 2:20-22, 1 Peter 2:4-10. This work of God on our behalf is marvellous and wonderful beyond words, and worthy of our eternal praise. When we see the full wonder of the Lord's work we will never stop praising his name for all eternity.

**24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.
26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.**

Every day is to be transformed by praise. When we have been saved from death we see every day as a new bright day of hope for service and praise. I have often said in churches that I wish I could "nearly kill" every individual in the entire congregation and then bring them back from the doors of death, for then they would truly appreciate each and every day and be devoted to the Lord's service as they ought to be. Many look at me strangely when I say this, but those that

reflect upon it realise what the challenge is. We are to see every day as a unique gift from God to use for the praise, worship, and glory of God. Nehemiah 8:10, Isaiah 58:11-13.

The last two verses in this section are quoted by the crowd as the Lord entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and are forever associated with him as a result of this quotation of the appeal to save them. Notice the word Hosanna means "Save Now!" The crowd on that Palm Sunday were asking for the Lord to deliver them from the Romans and bring in the prosperity of the Millennial Kingdom. They misunderstood his First Advent mission. The one coming in the name of the Lord is indeed "blessed" for he brings truth and the good news of salvation. Matthew 21:1-11.

The Lord enters Jerusalem to be their King, but He is rejected, betrayed and killed, but through that apparent defeat He becomes the Lord over sin and death itself, and will one day soon be the King over Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:10, 14:1-7. The people will bless his name from out of the Temple Mount one day soon, for He will reign over all the earth from there in his MILLENNIAL Kingdom. Refer to the BTB studies on this.

**27 God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.
28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.
29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.**

When the people saw the glory of the Lord in any thing or situation they had a way of expressing their worship, and that was by the BLOOD SACRIFICE upon the altar on the Temple mount. The psalmist immediately thinks of offering up an ox upon the altar in recognition of the need for the blood sacrifice to free him from the stain of sinfulness. The praise rings forth as the blood is shed. This is a solemn recognition by the psalmist that he stands only because of the blood shed for him; he is not acceptable in and of himself. It is the recognition in a graphic and awful way of the need for a Saviour who goes all the way to save sinful mankind. Because the Lord JHWH is his God, he will lift up his voice in praise and in thanks and honour the Lord.

He will exult his holy name for all He is and all He has done. The psalm ends with the same words it began, completing the circle of praise. The believer's life, and every day of the believer's life, ought to begin and end with this affirmation of faith and power. God is good and his mercy endures forever! There is nothing that occurs to us that we will not praise God for when we stand with Him in eternity and see all the facts. Faith grasps hold of that reality now and praises Him for all things, even though at this time we cannot see all the facts. We know He is good, and he does all things well, and his mercy towards us endures beyond time's ending. Hallelujah!!!

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL APPLICATIONS

1. God's mercy towards Israel is beyond all bounds of man's standards. We are to stand amazed at the grace and mercy of God towards Israel, for after nearly 2000 years of rejection of Jesus as their Messiah the Lord still waits for their repentance and revival. It will occur in the Great Tribulation period and is foretold in Zechariah 12:10ff. Paul reminds the early Christians that the Lord has not cast over his people Israel. Romans 9:1 – 11:36. It is staggering to us, but just a reflection of the perfection of the Character of God, that his mercy goes on forever.

2. We cannot be more secure as the servants of Almighty God. Those who attack us when we walk God's path for our life attack the very children of the Lord. The Lord fights for us, and we have the Holy Spirit within us, and a guardian angel behind us. We cannot be more protected than we are when we walk in spirituality. Let us walk in the FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT for we walk then with the Lord in his perfect protection and He will deal with all who oppose us. Let us banish FEAR and walk in God's assurance and God's power.

3. We will at times suffer greatly on our journey through this life. We may even turn our faces to the wall as King Hezekiah did and prepare to die, but the Lord will lift us up to his glory and for our ongoing service. If we are saved from death it is for more service, and so let us apply our selves to more work in the power of the Holy Spirit. If we are alive we have work to do, and so let us work and worship, and worship in and through our work! The only thing that will stop our focused work is the distraction of sin or evil thoughts, and they are to be dealt with quickly through CONFESSION. Let us deal with any sin that raises its head, and any evil thought that will lead us away from holy service.

4. We are on a count down to the rulership of the Lord over all the earth. The Lord will rule and we will bless his holy name upon the Mount of the ancient Temple. Do not bother about getting there now, be content to praise him from there on this glorious day when He reigns, for then no evil men will be around to spoil your contemplation upon the truth.

DOCTRINES

FEASTS OF ISRAEL

ANGELS – ANGELIC CONFLICT

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SOLDIER IN EPHESIANS 6 (SPIRITUAL ARMOUR)

CHRISTIAN LIFE – PRAYER

ANGELS – SATAN – ADVERSARY

CHRISTIAN LIFE – AMBASSADORSHIP

HOLY SPIRIT – FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

FEAR

DYING GRACE

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SUFFERING

CHRISTIAN LIFE – SPIRITUALITY-CARNALITY

SIN – SIN UNTO DEATH

GOOD WORKS

CHRISTIAN LIFE – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

CHRIST – ROCK: CHRIST AS THE ROCK

CHRIST – STONE: CHRIST AS A STONE

CHRIST – FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS

KINGDOM – MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

BLOOD SACRIFICE

HOLY SPIRIT – FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT