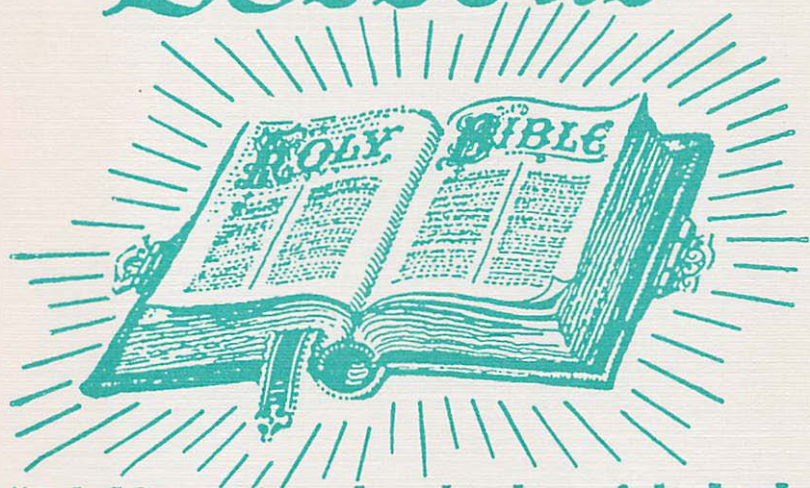


# Bible Lessons



"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,  
we are CHANGED . . . ." II Cor. 3:18

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 23, No. 4  
Oct., Nov., Dec.  
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**Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People**  
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**Volume 23**

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**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of  
Jesus Christ and His Church  
Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Wayne Murphey**

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## **Theme for Fourth Quarter, 1991**

Our studies for this quarter will be a continuation of the book of Psalms. Beginning with Psalm 49 we will draw lessons from various chapters up through Psalm 73. For the last two lessons, in accordance with the Christmas season, we will study the subject of God sending His Son into the world, and what it means to make room in our hearts for Him.

We are not including in this series of studies the psalms that are especially prophetic of Jesus, but will look forward to a study on that subject later on.

Many of these psalms were written in the time of great adversity, and they contain much spiritual wealth for our souls today. It is our earnest prayer that God will inspire these lessons that they will be spiritually uplifting for every one.

—Bro. Leslie C. Busbee



**October 6, 1991**

### **THE VANITY OF RICHES IN THE FACE OF DEATH**

Psalm 49:5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

8 (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

9 That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption.

10 For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.

12 Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.

13 This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.

14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

17 For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

18 Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.

19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

20 Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Ps. 49:15.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** To pursue earthly and material wealth is a vain and useless endeavor, for death will come and man will lose all he has accumulated for himself. But, through Christ Jesus, hope is given to the soul to triumph over death and the grave.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"When the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about"* (v. 5): Adam Clarke says that the word "heels" would have been more properly expressed as "supplanters," a supplanter meaning one who takes by the heel, or deceives, as did Jacob of old. The covetous and wealthy of which this psalm is largely about can surely be labeled thus because of the greed and deceitful ways of obtaining riches at the expense of others, many times this being the godly and innocent. The general tone of the text is: Why should I be dismayed in the time when I am

oppressed by the dishonesty of the rich? The rest of the psalm explains why we need not be dismayed. The covetous man is just making the bed of his own destruction. Verses 7-9 reveal the hopeless state of the rich concerning the redemption of their souls. Their riches cannot save them from death nor bring them back from the grave. A much greater price must be paid for their ransom, and nothing but the precious blood of Jesus will prevail. *"Wise men die, likewise the fool and brutish"* (v. 10): Brutish means like the animal or beast, carnal and strictly for the appetites of the flesh and their gratification. *"Their posterity approve their sayings"* (v. 13): Despite man's death, his descendants take no counsel to avoid the same mistakes that he, in his vain pursuit of wealth, has made. *"The grave"* (vs. 14-15) is the translation from the Hebrew word "Sheol" which refers to the realm of disembodied spirits. The body goes back to dust, but the spirit returns to God who gave it. (Eccl. 12:7). *"Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them"* (v. 14): The Hebrew says "death shall feed on them." Death is their shepherd and shall feed them with destruction and damnation. Oh, how dreadful and sad!

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The author and occasion of the writing of this psalm is unknown. It is a message that was given for the beneficial warning of mankind against the love of wealth which is so prone to rule the heart. It is a warning, sad to say, that is ignored by the blind hearts of foolish men.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is there about earthly wealth and riches that have such an attraction to a person?
2. What is coming to every person that will deprive him of all of his riches?
3. Does a person who is bound by love for wealth consider the value of his soul?

4. What is the real price for the redemption of one's soul from death and the grave?
5. What is the inward thought of mankind concerning their possessions and property?
6. What **should** their inward thought be?
7. Does one generation profit and learn from the mistakes and errors of the generation before it?
8. What is the hope of a Christian concerning death and the grave?
9. How does a real child of God feel about material wealth?
10. How is foolish man like the beasts?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We live in a world that is dominated and ruled by the love of money. It controls the over-all activity and behavior of mankind. Money is the lifeline of the majority of people. Before Cain of old instituted weights and measures and property lines, man lived simply and exchanged with one another the things needed. Through the ages, the monetary system has developed into an enormous force and influence upon the lives of humanity. Property and land that can be acquired and owned has become the chief treasure of poor degraded and deceived mortals. And, yet, with all a person can own and possess, the most precious and needful thing he should have, he does not have the power to obtain. Death awaits at the end of life's road to disrobe him of all he has gained or gotten possession of. When the heart ceases throbbing, and the spirit takes its flight from the feeble frame of dust, all that a mortal has scraped and accumulated will be left for other blind mortals to squabble over. Oh, what a sad condition our lesson reveals! It was a tragedy in the time when this psalm was written, and it is still a tragedy today. What does all of a man's wealth mean to him compared with the hope of eternal life and triumph over the grave to which he is destined? And yet the majority of people count those things as unreal, unimportant, and unworthy of their thought and endeavor. Still the message sounds to each generation,

and we who hear it today have a chance to escape the awful snare that earthly wealth brings. We can flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. (I Tim. 6:11). Let's be wise and follow the footsteps of our Saviour who turned from the wealth of this world to find the true treasures of doing the perfect will of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The material things of this life must be recognized only for what they can accomplish. Our lesson points out that it is possible to become so enamored with riches that we forsake that which is able to save the soul. Riches can give the mask of abiding forever, but no matter how honored on this earth a person becomes, death is impartial.

There is an Aesop fable which tells about a great gathering of all the beasts. The monkey got up to entertain his friends by doing a dance. So nimble were his feet and so amusing his gestures and grimaces that all the animals roared with laughter. Even the lion, the king of the beasts, forgot his royal dignity and rolled on the ground with glee.

Only the camel seemed to be bored by the monkey's performance. "I don't see anything so funny in that exhibition," she sniffed. "As a matter of fact, it seems very crude and amateurish to me."

"All right, then," cried all the animals, "suppose you show us what you can do!"

Realizing what she had set herself up for, the camel shambled into the circle, and in no time at all had made herself utterly ridiculous by her awkward and stumbling performance. All the beasts booed her and set upon her with clubs and claws and drove her into the desert.

The moral of the story is: "Stretch your arm no farther than your sleeve will reach." This is a perfect application for the material things of this earth. We should not reach out to encompass any more than what the grace of God will cover in keeping us humble. If we do, when it comes time to demonstrate what we truly have, death will show us just

how ridiculous we were. And to be driven from the presence of God is punishment beyond description. —Wayne Murphey

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**October 13, 1991**

**GOD SPEAKS TO HIS PEOPLE**

**Psalm 50:1** The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

**2** Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

**3** Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

**4** He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

**5** Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

**6** And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.

**7** Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.

**8** I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.

**9** I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.

**10** For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

**11** I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

**12** If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.

**13** Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

**14** Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

**15** And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

17 Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

22 Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Mic. 6:8.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** It pleases God for us to offer thanksgiving to Him for His blessings, order our ways of life to be in accord with His precious Word, and then to call upon Him in every time of need for deliverance and help.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"Called the earth"* (v. 1): Called to the earth, that is, to mankind. *"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined"* (v. 2): Zion is a name applied to the Church. The true Church is that which conforms to God's specifications and designs. God shining out of Zion means that God is revealing Himself through the standards of His statutes, and in no other way can a person truly see Him. *"Our God shall come"* (v. 3): Man must be persuaded that he will have to meet his Maker sooner or later. If he refuses to meet Him now in salvation and faith, he will have to reckon with Him later. *"Gather my saints together unto me"* (v. 5): The gospel gathers together souls unto Christ, and through the covenant of His grace we are redeemed. And then in the day of judgment we will be gathered together to be with Him forever. *"A covenant with me by sacrifice"*: It takes a sacrifice to bring acceptance with God. But the only sacrifice that avails with God is the offering of

His Son for the sins of the world. The sacrifice avails for us when we receive it with thanksgiving and submit in obedience to His Word. *"I will not reprove thee for thy . . . burnt offerings"* (vs. 8-13): In these verses is revealed God's true feeling about the animal sacrifices and offerings which were presented to Him under the law. These offerings of themselves meant nothing to God. *"Offer unto God thanksgiving"* (vs. 14-15): This is the sacrifice that avails with God. *"Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving."* (Ps. 107:22). *"What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?"* (v. 16): God does not want man to take hold of His covenant if he is not willing to measure to the standard of His Word, even as verse 17 shows. To hate instruction and cast His Word behind us while we are seeking to lay claim to His blessings is an abomination to Him.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Asaph, the stated writer of this psalm, was one of the singers in the temple in David's time (I Chron. 15:19), and mentioned with great respect in Nehemiah 12:46. There are twelve psalms that go under his name. He was a man upon whom the Spirit of the Lord rested and was inspired to write these psalms for the worship of God. There is no other source from which this psalm can be termed to originate from. It is full of Holy Spirit inspiration and conviction. It has a message for us today. God is still calling for the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and an obedient heart to serve Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of beauty does God have?
2. In what way is God speaking to us now?
3. What sacrifice must attend our covenant with the Lord?
4. How did God feel about the burnt offerings of animals under the law?
5. What kind of sacrifice is God desiring from us?

6. What kind of vows or promises should we pledge to the Lord?

7. Why is God displeased with the wicked taking His covenant in their mouth?

8. Is it possible for a person to claim God's benefits and refuse to submit to His ordinances?

9. What will happen to a person who does that?

10. What are the two things we are to do if we want to be shown the salvation of God?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

God is speaking to us today. He is sifting out the hearts of men. He wants mankind to prepare for the judgment that is coming at the last great day. There will be no excuse or just reason for not being prepared to meet God. He is giving us warning and time to prepare. He is speaking to us in the light of His Word. He is making plain and clear what pleases Him, and what He wants from us. Under the old law there were thousands of animals offered as sacrifices and burnt offerings to God, but He was not satisfied with these offerings. God makes it clear that these literal animal sacrifices were not what He was wanting from man. It is that grateful, loving and obedient heart that God is looking for. He loves the soul who thirsts for knowledge and understanding from His Word. This kind of person will love instruction and discipline that will make him more like his Maker. In God's law he meditates continually and seeks for grace to measure to its standard. God is displeased with the wicked. Those who have a chance to serve Him and neglect to do so will surely reap His displeasure and wrath. We ought to willingly and gladly yield ourselves to please the gracious God who made us and gave us life and being. If we refuse Him, we can expect only sorrow and destruction to be our portion. Let us not be found with the wicked. Let us offer praise and thanksgiving to God and pledge ourselves to His service always. Let us seek to order our conversation

in accord with His holiness. He will show us His salvation and will appear to our joy in that last great day.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

In considering an over-all view of our lesson, it seems the Israelites' problem is that they let familiarity with God breed presumption. It seems they almost considered their sacrifices to God a favor. God plainly told them He owned every beast of the forest and the cattle upon a thousand hills. They weren't doing Him a favor. God asked the question, "Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" In other words, "just why do you think you are offering sacrifices to me?" God would much rather have the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts than a haughty law service.

For any relationship to work, tribute must continually be given to those involved. How often it is that in a marriage relationship, respect for the companion wears off about the same time the newness dims. It is good, every once in awhile, to step back from the intimacy of the daily routine, and take a look at the qualities and beauties which attracted you to your companion in the first place. God was trying to jolt the Israelites into perceiving Him as the same powerful God they had respected in the past when He said, "I am God, even thy God." Then our memory verse flows forward with such comfort and positiveness when the prophet intoned, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" A humble walk with God will take us far in receiving the help we need from Him.

—Wayne Murphey



**October 20, 1991**

**GODLY SORROW AND REPENTANCE FOR SIN**

**Psalm 51:1** Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

**2** Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

**3** For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

**4** Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

**5** Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

**6** Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

**7** Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**8** Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

**9** Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

**10** Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

**11** Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

**12** Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

**13** Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

**14** Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

**15** O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

**16** For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

**MEMORY VERSE:** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Ps. 51:17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Sin and disobedience against God is such a grief and offence to Him that He requires the soul to be sorrowful and sad on account of being guilty of sin, with a strong purpose and determination to please God and do His will.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"Blot out"* (v. 1): To erase. *"Wash me thoroughly"* (v. 2): Wash me completely; through and through. *"I acknowledge my transgressions"* (v. 3): I know; I see clearly; I recognize and understand my sins against God. *"That thou mightest be justified"* (v. 4): The Septuagint rendering of this is quoted in Romans 3:4 when Paul declared, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Man is the one who is at fault and who has done wrong. God is blameless and ever to be justified. *"Shapen in iniquity"* (v. 5): The conception and period of being formed in the womb, plus the agony and travail of birth are all marred by the transmission of original sin from the parents to the child. *"Thou desirest truth in the inward parts"* (v. 6): God wants that depravity and inclination to sin to be purged out and replaced by truth, holiness, wisdom, and righteousness. *"Purge me with hyssop"* (v. 7): Hyssop was a plant used to sprinkle blood in ceremonial cleansing. It was dipped in the blood and sprinkled on a leper who had been healed as a declaration by the priest that he was healed. We need to be cleansed not only by the blood of Jesus but by confession and faith thus showing others we are cleansed from our sins. *"The bones which thou hast broken"* (v. 8): The hard and self-willed desires of the flesh are broken beneath the stroke of God's displeasure but can be healed and restored to holiness. *"A right spirit"* (v. 10): A constant, faithful,

steady and determined spirit to do God's will. *"Uphold me with thy free spirit"* (v. 12): The word "free" here means generous, willing, fully yielded. God's Spirit, through Christ, is that kind of Spirit, and we can be upheld and strengthened to have that same kind of spirit. *Bloodguiltiness* (v. 14): Even from the sin of murder there is mercy and forgiveness. *"A broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart"* (v. 17): The word "broken" here means shattered, reduced to shivers and splinters, rendered completely useless and inoperative. This is the true condition of a repentant soul and the only state which makes a man receptive of the grace of God.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The title of this psalm reads: "To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba." David committed a grievous sin against God. Although his sin affected others, especially the life of one of his most gallant soldiers, Uriah, it was still a sin mainly against God and an affront to His holiness and goodness to David. This psalm was the open and public confession of David's guilt and godly sorrow for the evil he had yielded his members to perform. His humility and confession to God of his error and folly was acceptable with God. It is a good example and very worthy of imitation for souls today. Many persons lack a sense of the vileness and magnitude of their sins. Sensing and expressing the depth of one's sorrow for sin will make manifest the love and reverence God is desiring of us.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What chance would we have if it were not for the multitude of God's mercies?
2. Why is the term "wash" so fitting as relating to our sins?

3. Why is it so necessary for one to know, understand, and confess their sins?
4. Although other people are generally always involved in a person's committing of sins, who is the real One sinned against, and why?
5. Are children born with an element of sin in their nature?
6. Can this sinful nature be cleansed from the soul?
7. Can a person be made whiter than snow?
8. What does God want to see in one's heart concerning his sin?
9. Is it possible for a person to not be truly repentant in their coming to God?
10. What is the real sacrifice God wants a person to bring in coming to Him for forgiveness?

#### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

There are many people who do not obtain the real experience of the grace of God because they are not repentant in godly sorrow to the point of hating their sins and becoming willing and determined to part with them forever. The psalm today is the expression of a man who was truly sorry and repentant for the awful sin that he had committed. David was the king of Israel, but he was so sorry for his sin that he was willing to have it publicly expressed. He tried to cover it for a while, but when God dealt with him through the prophet he broke down in godly sorrow and humility and confessed his sin to God. He pled for mercy and forgiveness. His was a heinous sin, coveting another man's wife, going after her, and having her husband killed so he could have her. God was sore displeased with his servant David. David was blinded by his lust. But after the prophet Nathan had visited him and explained the awful magnitude of his sin, David bowed in true repentance and brokenness of spirit before God. He expressed his sorrow and repentance in this psalm. We need to be aware of the terrible offence that sin is to God. God hates sin and

unrighteousness. Sin is the transgression of the law; a missing of the mark of God's will. We are born in sin and possess the potential of sin, thus we are led captive by the power of sin, and we find ourselves in condemnation and guilt before God. But there is a way for us to obtain forgiveness for sins, and there is a cleansing in the precious blood of the Lamb. It takes genuine repentance to obtain this work of the grace of salvation. If a person fails to be truly sorry, and if a person is not fully convicted and determined to quit the sin business, it would do no good to be granted forgiveness. He would just go out and do it again. It is necessary and indispensable, therefore, for a person to really repent with godly sorrow for his sins. And this is where many people fall short. They are affected by the gospel of Jesus, and feel condemnation upon them for their sins, but they are not humble and repentant enough to effect a real change in their hearts. May God help each one to realize the need for true godly sorrow and repentance for sin.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"...according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." This is a powerful statement with further reaching ramifications than the human mind can understand. Let us consider for a moment the mercy of God. The poet, Nicholas Rowe, once wrote, "Were there but a single mercy apportioned to each moment of our lives, the sum would rise very high; but how is our arithmetic confounded when every minute has more than we can distinctly number." It defies our ability to count the mercies of God. Even if we were capable of knowing and numbering all of them He has shown in our behalf, don't forget the billions of people that have lived from Adam and Eve until now. How quickly God's mercy mounts up beyond our comprehension. And as if that isn't enough, we are told that God remembers the sparrows. (Luke 12:6).

To the same degree the Psalmist asks that his transgression be blotted out, David verifies that is just what God

does. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Psa. 103:12.

Offenders of the legal system are sometimes granted what is called "an amnesty." This is literally interpreted, "not remembering." This is what the humble soul receives who pleads God's mercy. Greek mythology tells of a river in hell called "lethe." Its waters were said to cause forgetfulness of the past to all who drank. The river of forgetfulness is not in hell, but in heaven. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:17. —Wayne Murphey

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**October 27, 1991**

### **CALLING UPON GOD IN THE MIDST OF TROUBLE**

Psalm 55:1 Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

6 And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.

7 Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.

12 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

14 We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me.

17 Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

18 He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.

19 God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

20 He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant.

21 The words of his mouth were smother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

22 Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

23 But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Ps. 55:22.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Regardless of the adversity and sorrow we meet in life, in the midst of it all we can call upon God for His help and sustaining grace.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"Supplication"* (v. 1): Earnest plea; entreaty; prayer. *"In company"* (v. 14): With the multitude or throng. *"Because they have no changes"* (v. 19): Because people are not willing to humble themselves and change their attitudes and ways, they have no fear of God in their hearts. *"He hath broken his covenant"* (v. 20): The covenant of peace that should exist between friends and relations is disrupted and forsaken.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In the title of this psalm it says: "To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David." Neginoth referred to a particular kind of musical instrument that was played by the plucking of the strings. Maschil means an instruc-

tive poem. Adam Clarke believes that this has the same title as the previous (54th) psalm, which says that it was written when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, "Doth not David hide himself among us?" David, in fleeing from Saul, had taken refuge in the mountainous region of Ziph, a village in the southern part of Israel. As I Samuel 23:19-29 informs us, Saul came after David, and David just barely escaped him by the Providence of God. The anguish and sorrow David suffered in being hated and hunted by Saul was a terrible ordeal. Saul was not his enemy at first. David had helped to comfort and solace Saul in his depression. But jealousy arose in the heart of Saul, and David was forced to flee for his life. David could place no confidence in Saul. Even when Saul would seem to tender when he saw how David spared his life two different times, David could not feel safe in returning. But in the midst of it all we see David calling upon God in earnest prayer for Divine help and protection. And God gave it to him, eventually bringing him out to victory and success. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Would flying from our troubles be the real solution to them?
2. Who can hurt us the most and cause us the greatest sorrow?
3. Why is it easier to meet adversity from an outright enemy or foe rather than from someone who is supposed to be our friend?
4. Can you think of other incidents in the Scriptures where people were mistreated by someone who should have been helpful to them?
5. What wonderful privilege do we have in times of trouble and distress?
6. Who is on the side of the righteous?
7. Does it pay to keep our integrity with God?
8. How can we obey the instruction in verse 22 to cast our burden upon the Lord?

9. Is there ever a temptation to cease trusting in God and take matters in our own hands?

10. What is the usual end of bloody and deceitful men who do not fear God?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We never know what a day will bring forth and what new and strange adversities will arise! Life is so full of complexity and danger. People are cold, inconsiderate, impatient, short-tempered, and desperate. They can act so nice and seemingly be your friend, and suddenly a change takes place. Something happens and things go in reverse. There are seasons when it seems all is going well and peaceful. But be on guard. There could be trouble around the next corner! Keep prayerful and watchful. There are times when we bring hardship and sorrow upon ourselves because of our faults. But then there are conflicts and adversities that come because we are endeavoring to please the Lord. Oh, what a refuge we can find in prayer! Casting our burdens and cares upon the Lord is a great and wonderful lesson to learn. Worry, fret, murmuring, bitterness, and despondency become notable traits in individuals who do not learn how to pray and trust in God. Everyone has their troubles. But we do not need to let troubles get within us. We can keep our hearts calm and restful by casting our burdens upon the Lord. What can we do about our troubles anyway? The best thing to do is to commit them all to the Lord and have faith that He will bring us out. Taking the humble attitude, as David did towards Saul, puts God on our side. We will see those who manifest an ugly spirit frustrated and defeated while we will come forth with victory, if we will pray, call on God, and cast our burden upon Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest." Perhaps all of us can relate to that feeling. None of us enjoy trouble any more than

David did, and the temptation is to stay away from it.

Thinking of the reality of flying away from trouble, where would a person ever find the right place to come down? I am afraid we would be like the dove Noah released from the ark which "found no rest for the sole of her foot." (Gen. 8:9.) Troubles are everywhere, many of them worse than what we are experiencing. There are troubles that we can stay out of by living according to God's will, and then there are troubles that God allows to come our way and we must realize they cannot be skirted.

Rest is not found in a place, but a state. Peace of mind is not contingent upon where the body is, but where the spirit is. More specifically, rest is found in Christ. "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:32-33.

—Wayne Murphey

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**November 3, 1991**

### **EXPRESSIONS OF STRONG FAITH AND TRUST IN GOD**

Psalm 56:3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?

57:1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.

7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

61:1 Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

4 I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

62:8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

9 Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

**MEMORY VERSE:** In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Ps. 56:11.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** A fixed trust in God will carry a soul safely through the most difficult times of life.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"I will not fear what flesh can do unto me"* (56:4): What is done against us in a carnal and threatening, destructive way is the work of men who are but perishing flesh. God is an eternal Spirit, and He will sustain me. *"Thou tellest my wanderings"* (56:8): God takes note of every privation and move that we make for His sake. *"Put my tears in thy bottle: are they not in thy book?"*: God keeps track of our tears. Not one tear is shed in vain for His sake. *"My heart is fixed"* (57:7): My heart is prepared, established, and rendered sure by His grace. *"Awake up,*

*my glory*" (57:8): Stir up my innermost being to faithfully and early praise the Lord every day. "*From the end of the earth*" (61:2): At the end of my earthly resources and at the extremity of my human powers, when my heart is overwhelmed with the sense of my own weakness and unworthiness—from this point I cry unto thee: "Lead me to that Rock that is higher than I, higher than self, higher than the human, higher than man in his best state." "*Men of high degree are a lie*" (62:9): Rich men trust in that which is deceitful and disappointing. Therefore they are a lie, untrue, and unworthy of our trust.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

All four of the psalms from which we have drawn the text for our lesson today are attributed to David. In David's fleeing from Saul he went to Gath to find asylum and refuge with the Philistines. Later, he hid in the cave of Adullam. It was a hard time in his life, but it was the means that God used in preparing him to be the king of Israel. Faith prospers and increases the most in the time of adversity. With elements about us contrary to our faith and integrity with God, we can best prove in reality that we do love and trust in God. We gather from these four psalms various expressions of faith and wisdom that David gained in these hard places of life. There will be times when we can repeat these sayings and know in our hearts what they mean. Along with these utterances of confidence in God we see joyous expressions, too. It is evident that in all of his wanderings David had his harp with him. We can have our harp with us, too—glorying and rejoicing in Christ ever in our hearts, making melody and singing with grace unto Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. What must we discipline ourselves to do when we are afraid?
2. How can praising God's Word help us to overcome adversity?

3. What is said in our lesson that assures us of God's watchful eye over us?
4. What can we do while in the midst of the calamities of life?
5. Why can a fixed heart be rejoicing in the time of trouble?
6. How can we gain the security of the Rock that is higher than "I"?
7. Is man prone to put confidence in man?
8. Why is it unwise to put confidence in the abilities of man?
9. Can we rob God, and if so, how can we rob God?
10. What is bound to happen if one sets his heart on riches?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

There is nothing unusual or wrong with being afraid. Everyone at sometime in their life has experienced fear. But we have something within our reach that can help us overcome the powers of being afraid. And that is putting our trust in the Lord God Almighty. We really do not have any cause to fear when we are believing God's promises. If we are saved—washed in the precious blood of Jesus—we belong to God and God has promised to care for us. If we do not learn to trust in God, our lives will be dominated by fear and unbelief. Trust and confidence in God brings joy and singing to the heart. The heart cannot sing and rejoice when it is full of fear. We can call upon the name of the Lord, knowing our frailty and limitations. He will teach us how to trust and will lead us to that Rock that is higher than self and the flesh. How sad is the person who has never learned to look beyond the natural and trust the great love of God! Our earthly life is vanity. We need to recognize this fact. Any effort we put forth to lift ourselves in the praise of men or the security of carnal things will make our lives a lie. Power belongs to God. He can bless without the puny devices of man. A person is far better off trusting in God, praying and pouring out one's heart to Him. In our covetous society with

people all geared up to the materialistic doctrine of the flesh, it will mean much for us to hold fast our faith in God. But we can do it, and we must do it. It is the only thing that affords real happiness and peace. —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"In these two verses [Psa. 57:1-2] the way of salvation is set before us in a very expressive manner. Observe there is:

**"Danger—**'Until these calamities be overpast.' Saul was threatening the life of David, but his danger was nothing compared to the danger of those who are under the threatening judgments of God. His wrath against sin is a terrible calamity for the sinner. (John 3:36).

**"Prayer—**'Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me.' This is the language of one who is very sensible of his danger and need. Mercy is the crying need of those who have been awakened to a sense of their real condition. 'God be merciful unto me, the sinner.'

**"Provision—**'The shadow of Thy wings.' How gracious is our God, that He should stand, as with outstretched wings, waiting and willing to receive and shelter all who take refuge beneath them. 'O Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered . . . as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings' Matt. 23:37. The shadow of His wings means the shadow of God.

**"Faith—**'My soul trusteth in Thee; yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge.' The outspread wings of divine grace can only save those who trust and accept. 'Ye would not' was the only hindrance in the way of Jerusalem sinners being saved.

**"Deliverance—**'I cried unto God . . . that performeth all things for me.' God's salvation is perfect. He performeth every needed thing. It is His way, that when He begins a good work in you, to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6). Salvation is of the Lord."

—Taken from writings of James Smith

**November 10, 1991**

**LONGING FOR GOD IN A DRY AND THIRSTY LAND**

**Psalm 63:1** O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

**2** To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

**3** Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

**4** Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.

**5** My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:

**6** When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

**7** Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

**8** My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.

**9** But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

**10** They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.

**11** But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

**64:7** ... God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

**8** So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.

**9** And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

**10** The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. Ps. 63:7.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** We can rejoice in the Lord and have victory in Him right in the midst of this famine-parched world and vain society, because we have seen His glory in the holy sanctuary of His presence and have experienced the work of His grace in our souls.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"My flesh longeth for thee"* (63:1): Not only was his spirit thirsting for God, but David knew that the fellowship and favor of God was the life, health, and sustenance of his physical being, also. *"In a dry and thirsty land"*: Far from the service and public worship of God amid a society who did not worship God. *"Thy lovingkindness is better than life"* (63:3): The joy and happiness of God's favor meant more to him than life itself. *"My soul followeth hard after thee"* (63:8): My soul cleaves to thee with an earnest bond. *"Those that seek my soul"* (63:9): David had many enemies who rose up against him. However, those who persecute those who are the apple of God's eye do it to their own hurt.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

This 63rd Psalm was written by David during the time of his exile from Israel by Saul. He missed the worship of God, being in the temple and partaking of its feasts and ceremonies. He loved God with an earnest love. The expressions of love and worship to God in this psalm are so touching and inspiring. His worship was genuine—from the heart—the kind of worship that God is pleased with. He was clinging to God regardless of his situation. He knew God was going to bring him out. The 64th Psalm is another psalm of David, written probably on another occasion during his long exile from home. We note that David is unafraid of predicting the downfall of his enemies. Although he would take no measures in bringing his triumph to pass, he knew he was right with God and that He would ultimately bring him forth to the light. —Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is there about God that is so desirable?
2. Why do so many fail to see the desirable side of God?
3. Is it just the soul that is benefited when we worship and serve the Lord?
4. What purpose is there in lifting up our hands in His name?
5. Why is the night season a good time to meditate on the Lord?
6. How could David be so sure of his enemies' downfall?
7. Did he wish the downfall of his enemies in a malicious way?
8. What did he hope would happen if God would overthrow those who were persecuting him?
9. Is it possible for us to glory in the battles and tests of life?
10. What is it that will really satisfy the souls of mankind?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Oh, how important it is for a person to hunger and thirst for God! But, sad to say, there are so many things in this world that can sap a person's appetite and render the soul dull and disinterested in God, His salvation, and spiritual blessings. There are so many books and magazines that can take the place in a person's time that could be more properly given to feasting on the Word of Life. We need to seek the joy of God, earnestly seeking Him with purpose of heart, reaching out in prayer and supplication. Such diligence and hungering for God will pay off. Oh, how light and vain are the frivolous things carnal minded people are pursuing today. You can stop and observe on a television or turn on the radio and hear the shallow and empty things people are feeding on. It is pitiful and disgusting. It is garbage and filth. Oh, but the sad thing is, that people gorge their soul's appetite on those things and think they are satisfied. They are deceived, not knowing the Lord has something so much better. And not only this, but unholy appetites and corrupt communications will bring a

person to a place where they are an enemy of God and His people, which will bring sorrows untold. Oh, how much better it is to be humble, sincere, earnest, and fervent in our desires for God. Let holy, fervent zeal and desire for God ascend in prayer and worship to God, preparing the heart for His blessed refreshing and visitation.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

All souls at some time in their earthly pilgrimage have this thirst that David spoke of. This signifies its kinship through creation to the eternal God. Many souls never realize the quenching of this thirst because they don't direct their efforts in the right direction. God made provisions for all our cravings to be satisfied by what He put on this earth, except for this one. The satisfying portion for the soul can only be found in God.

There is a story about a revival in a certain town, in which a man who had been very worldly-minded, was awakened to his need of God. For some time he concealed his feelings, even from his wife, who was a praying woman. She left him one evening in charge of his little girl of three years of age. After her departure, his anxiety of mind became so great that he walked the room in his agony. The little girl noticed his agitation, and inquired, "What ails you, pa?" He replied, "Nothing," and endeavored to quiet his feelings, but all in vain. The child looked up sympathizingly in his face, and inquired, with all the artlessness and simplicity of childhood, "Pa, if you were dry, wouldn't you go and get a drink of water?" The father started as if a voice from heaven had fallen on his ear. He thought of his thirsty soul famishing for the water of life; he thought of that living fountain opened in the gospel; he believed, and straightway fell at the saviour's feet.

"My soul followeth hard after thee. . ." It is said that once a tree root finds the river, it follows along by it. Once the Christian has found the Fountain of living waters, their soul abides right beside it.

—Wayne Murphey

**November 17, 1991**

**GOD BRINGING HIS PEOPLE OUT  
INTO A WEALTHY PLACE**

**Psalm 66:1** Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:  
**2** Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

**5** Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.

**6** He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

**7** He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

**8** O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

**9** Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

**10** For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

**11** Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

**12** Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

**13** I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,

**14** Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

**16** Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

**17** I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

**18** If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

**19** But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

**20** Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place. Ps. 66:12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God brings His people through trying times and allows painful experiences to come their way, but if they will hold fast to their faith and integrity, God will bring them out into a wealthy place with Him.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"He is terrible in His doing"* (v. 5): The word terrible here means fearful, awesome, wonderful, to be revered and respected. *"His eyes behold the nations"* (v. 7): God's eyes search every secret and hidden thing. *"Holdeth our soul in life"* (v. 9): He keeps and preserves our soul. Regardless of the adversity and opposition from carnal men, God preserves us in His favor. *"If I regard iniquity in my heart"* (v. 18): To know there is evil in the heart and not be willing to be purged from it is to regard it as more important than God's favor.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The origin and author of this psalm is not really known. It sounds like it could be a writing commemorating Israel's escape from Egypt. But it is a comfort for us today to know that this same God still can and will bring His children out of their hard places in life. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Is the account of Israel's deliverance from Egypt important to us today? If so, why?
2. Is Israel's God of deliverance our God of deliverance?
3. Does a person prosper when they refuse to go the way of the Lord?
4. For what reason does God allow His children to get into the net, or else places?
5. Can we count adversity and people taking advantage of us as the special working of God for our good?

6. Does God expect us to keep the promises we make to Him when we are in trouble?
7. When the Lord does a wonderful work for our souls, should we publish and tell others about it?
8. What will keep the Lord from hearing our prayers?
9. If we see iniquity in our hearts, can we go to the Lord and cry for deliverance from it?
10. Can a Christian expect times of trial as are described in our lesson today?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

It has been the testimony of saints through the ages, of God's mighty deliverance to them when they were in trouble. A sinner will never call upon the Lord for deliverance from his sins until they become a woeful bondage to him. But when he realizes the awful pit of corruption and sorrow he is in and feels guilt and condemnation before God, he will begin to call upon Him for help and mercy. As the conviction deepens and the burden gets heavier, he will cry even more earnestly to God. God will hear his prayers, see his tears of repentance, and will reach way down and deliver that soul from the power of sin and evil. Oh, what a wonderful experience that is! And then as a soul goes forth to live for God before this present evil world there will be times of trouble and trial. God will preserve him, but He will permit that soul to be tested. He may allow people to do all kind of things—bad and unjust things—to us. He may permit our bodies to be afflicted. He may permit losses like houses, lands, and gold. He may take us through the fiery flames of the furnace of affliction and through the deep waters of sorrow. Oh, yes, this is the pathway to blessings and glory. He may bring us into a net of circumstances that will be very hard and distressing. However, if we will hold fast our faith and love for Him, He will bring us out into a wealthy place. It has happened to many dear saints through the ages. Look at Noah, Daniel, Job, Abraham, David, and Elijah. They all went through the furnace, but

God brought them out. "Lean hard on Him, Oh tested soul; On Him thy cares and burdens roll. Our God still lives and has control, He will not fail you now!" —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A ship on its voyage home was caught in a terrific storm, and it was feared she might founder. One of the passengers who was returning to his native land with a fortune, was full of terror, and, kneeling before a statue of St. Christopher, kept loudly calling upon the saint in prayer, promising, if he would only interfere, and bring him safe to land, a wax taper [spiral] the size of his statue in Paris.

"Look out what you promise," said a bystander; "although you sell off all your property, you can't pay for it."

"Hold your tongue," said the other; then lowering his voice, lest the saint should hear, said: "Do you suppose I mean what I say? If once I get to land, I won't give him a tallow candle."

How much do you think this type of attitude will accomplish with God? David said, "I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows, Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble." If we regard iniquity in our heart, or try to deal deceitfully with God, He will not hear our pleas. It is those who prostrate themselves in openness before Him that He brings into a wealthy place.

The two words "faith" and "integrity" in the *Central Thought* are key words to our lesson. In the midst of trials we must keep a firm faith in God and refine our integrity with both ourselves and Him. The result will be satisfying to us as well as pleasing in the eyes of God.

—Wayne Murphey



**November 24, 1991**

**PRAISE TO GOD FOR HIS BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS**

**Psalm 65:1** Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed:

**2** O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

**3** Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

**4** Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

**5** By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea:

**6** Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power:

**7** Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.

**8** They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.

**9** Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

**10** Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

**11** Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

**12** They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

**13** The pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Ps. 65:4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The blessings God has showered upon man in the earth are so many and so wonderful that we ought to enjoy them with gladness and daily praise Him with all of our hearts.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion"* (v. 1): The Hebrew text says, "Praise is silent to Thee, O God in Zion." God alone is worthy of all praise, and it should not be given to anything or anyone else, but reserved for Him. Unto Him alone should all vows, pledges, promises, offerings, and sacrifices be made. *"Unto thee shall all flesh come"* (v. 2): All humanity should come consistently to Thee in prayer. *"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us"* (v. 5): By awesome and wonderful favors God answers the needs of praying people. *"By his strength setteth fast the mountains"* (v. 6): The mountains have been raised, set up, established, and rendered firm by the strength of Almighty God. *"Which stilleth the noise of the seas"* (v. 7): God has control of the winds and the currents of the mighty ocean. They rise and fall at His command. People are like waters and God is able to still anxious and troubled hearts. *"Afraid at thy tokens"* (v. 8): His signs and evidences of power and might are beheld all over the world and can strike fear to the bravest and stoutest heart. Earthquakes, tornadoes, cyclones, and other natural signs of God's power and majesty ought to cause men to tremble and realize how little they are. *"The outgoings of the morning and evening"*: The going forth of man to his work in the morning and his return in the evening are to be appreciated as the abundant tokens of divine favor. *"Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so pro-*

vided for it." (v. 9): The Hebrew text makes it a little clearer: "You visit the earth, and water it greatly; You enrich it; The river of God [His blessings] is full of water—You provide their grain, for thus You have prepared it." *"Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof."* (v. 10): The Hebrew text again: "Its furrows You fill with water; You press down (or shape) its ridges; with showers You make it soft; its sprouting You bless. *"Thy paths drop fatness"* (v. 11): You leave fat and rich blessings in your tracks. *"The pastures are clothed with flocks"* (v. 13): Hebrew: "The meadows are fitted by Thy hand for the flocks of sheep, goats, and cattle that men raise."

### LESSON BACKGROUND

This psalm of David is an exposition of God's goodness to man, even as it was spoken in Acts 14:17, "He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." It could have been written after the Lord had given a lovely rain following a time of drought. It is a beautiful and eloquent psalm, magnifying the rich favors of God upon man and upon the earth.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Is there any danger or inclination of man to fail to give God the praise that is due Him?
2. What is the first blessing that is spoken about in this psalm?
3. What would all the natural blessings be without the privilege to go to God in prayer?
4. What kind of man will God allow to approach Him?
5. What are some of his characteristics?
6. Do the blessings of God's holy temple really satisfy?
7. Why are the mountains such a wonderful picture of God's great power?

8. Should a person ever complain about the rain?
9. Which would be better: to have too much rain, or not enough?
10. Is it possible for a heart to be blind to the goodness of God in nature and fail to see Him?
11. Is God pleased for us to consider how great His blessings are and to express our thanks and praise for them?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

All around us in nature are tokens and evidences of God's power and majesty. May the Lord help us to have eyes to see and appreciate them. Some people see very little of God's handiwork during the course of a normal day. All around them is the man-made world: their bedroom, kitchen, automobile, city street, office, plant, restaurant, supermarket, general store, and all the other man-made things. Oh, God would have us to open our eyes to His handiwork. There are the flowers. You do not have to go far to behold one of these. Jesus said that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like ~~one~~ of these. Then there are the birds, part of God's creation that He enjoys and cares for even today. And then there is humanity. They are God's handiwork, but are too often marred by the effects of sin. But, if you know a godly person who is following in the footsteps of Jesus, you have found God's most wonderful work. Then there are the trees. Take the shade trees first. What a blessing they are! Who has not enjoyed refuge from the hot sun under a tree? We take them for granted, but we shouldn't. Then think of the fruit trees. How wonderful that such luscious and tasty food could be found hanging on a tree! Think what a blessing it is on a hot, sultry day in July for the clouds to begin forming in the northwest and soon a shower of rain begins to fall, accompanied by the thunder and lightning and wind. Look out on the fields of corn and wheat. How about our gardens of ripe tomatoes, okra, cucumbers, melons, and other delicious vegetables? These

are all manifestations of God's love and goodness, if we could but have a tender heart to receive it.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Next Thursday is Thanksgiving, and I don't know of any better scripture reading than this 65th Psalm, to put a person in the proper frame of mind to prepare for it. The pilgrims who gathered together for the first day of thanksgiving had experienced many of the temporal blessings of which the Psalmist David made mention. There is something about the fall time of the year, as David said, that is the crowning of the year. It is the wrapping up of harvesting all that the earth has produced. It is a time of rejoicing.

Thanksgiving is traditionally an American holiday, yet it did not originate in America. About 3,000 years before it was observed in this country, God spoke to Moses in the days when the Israelite slaves had just escaped from Egypt. They were having their first experience in the wilderness of Sinai. The original proclamation from God is recorded in the 23rd chapter of Exodus, 16th verse: "Thou shalt keep the feast of harvest, the first fruits of thy labors, which thou hast shown in the field: and the feast of in-gathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field." So this year let us not just observe Thanksgiving as Americans, but as Christians.

—Wayne Murphey

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**December 1, 1991**

**A SONG OF TRIUMPH FOR GOD'S SAINTS**

**Psalm 68:1** Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.

**2** As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

**6** God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

**7** O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

**8** The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

**9** Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

**10** Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

**11** The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.

**12** Kings of armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

**13** Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

**17** The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.

**18** Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

**19** Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.

**20** He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death.

32 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:

33 To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.

34 Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds.

35 O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Ps. 68:18.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** We that are saved and redeemed by the blood of Christ need never go down in defeat before Satan and his host, for, as He has in times past, God will scatter and frustrate the forces of evil that come against His saints.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"God setteth the solitary in families"* (v. 6): God gives those who are alone a home and a family. *"Kings of armies did flee apace"* (v. 12): The word apace is not in the original text. It just simply states, "Kings of armies flee, they flee." This is doubtless referring to the enemies of Israel who sought to withstand them in their march to Canaan, their inheritance. *"She that tarried at home divided the spoil"*: In Judges 4 is the account of the housewife Jael who, though she stayed at home, prevailed against the enemy and wrought a great victory. In I Samuel 30 David made it a statute and an ordinance that they who tarry by the stuff will share alike in the spoil with those who go out to battle. The mother, the widow, the quiet and seemingly insignificant person who works hard and prays and helps to send others will be just as blessed as he who goes forth to work for God. *"Though ye have lien among the pots"* (v. 13): Though you have stayed at home with the

house and barn duties, you will share in the riches and beauties of victory. *"The charlots of God"* (v. 17): The Lord has an abundance of heavenly hosts to back up His servants who are engaged in battle with the enemy. This verse is a prelude to verse 18 which is applied by Paul in Ephesians 4:8 directly to Christ. According to Matthew 26:53 Jesus had more than twelve legions of angels backing him up. This figure amounted to over 72,000. As Elisha said to his servant in II Kings 6:16, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." *"For the rebellious also"* (v. 18): The gifts of the Spirit bestowed in Christ are for the benefit of those who ignorantly resist the will of God as a means to enlighten their darkened minds. *"Ascribe ye strength unto God"* (v. 34): Give God the credit and praise that His strength deserves.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

The heading of this wonderful psalm attributes it to David. Adam Clarke stated that he knew not how to undertake a comment on this psalm, that it was the most difficult of the whole book of psalms. "Yet," he wrote, "of the composition itself I have the highest opinion: it is sublime beyond all comparison; it is constructed with an art truly admirable; it possesses all the dignity of the sacred language; none but David could have composed it; and it would require no small influence of the Spirit that was upon him to give its true interpretation." I, too, join with many in the past who have stood in awe at the majesty of this psalm. There is something about it that is extraordinary and unusual. I see a similarity in Deborah and Barak in their song recorded in Judges 5 after the triumph of Israel over Jabin, the king of Canaan, and his general Sisera. Much is mentioned in this psalm of the glory of God on the mountain of Sinai. It is a truly wonderful and inspiring expression of glory to God for His almighty help to His people down through the ages. —Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Who has hardened himself against God and prospered?
2. What does God's enemies compare to in their being driven away from the presence of God?
3. Why does God set His love especially upon the lonely, the sad, the bereaved, and the suffering?
4. Does it pay to be rebellious?
5. Does a child of God get weary sometimes?
6. Can everyone have a part in publishing the gospel?
7. What can a person who has to stay at home do in helping the work of the Lord?
8. Will they be any less rewarded by having to stay at home?
9. What does God want to do about the rebellious?
10. What would you say is the main theme of this psalm?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

How many times the Devil has bluffed people from living for God. Satan gets people to look at the conflicts and the struggles they are going to have against the world and its persecutions, besides all the other discouragements that rise on every hand. Satan seeks to hide the victorious side and keep the heart from realizing how much God loves us and how great is His power to help us in the Christian fight. But, oh, if we could just let this psalm in our lesson today lift up our souls to comfort and courage! God's people have always been the target of vile and desperate foes. God allows them to come against His saints. We are to face the fight and hold fast our faith. God will bring us ultimate victory. Though we are poor and needy, and oftentimes weary and heavy laden, God has a way of sending refreshing showers to confirm and strengthen us. One of the most striking things about the message of this psalm is its encouragement to those who have to stay at home and are not permitted to engage in the fields of labor for the Lord. If we will be faithful at home with the normal routine of

household duties and responsibilities, we will share in the reward and the glory of those who go forth. We, being faithful in the lowly duties of home, will be richly blessed with the silver and gold of the spiritual blessings of God. We have a victorious Saviour, and He is more than willing to share with His beloved saints His victory. He will give us power and strength and we can triumph over all the power of the enemy until that final day when He takes us to Himself forever.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

We should greatly rejoice to be on the side of someone with the stature of God. There are things in life to be faced that makes the heart of the strongest man melt in fear. It is like the story of the fawn who was browsing among some ferns with her mother. It was peaceful there in the shelter of the forest growth. Suddenly, from a distance came the sound of baying hounds. The mother deer stood stock-still and began to tremble.

"Mother," said the fawn, "you are bigger than a dog and swifter of foot and better winded, and you have horns with which to defend yourself. Why are you so afraid of the hounds?"

The mother smiled, and said: "All this, my child, I know full well. But no sooner do I hear a dog bark than, somehow or other, my heels take me off as fast as they can carry me."

This well portrays the natural man when facing the enemy that is out to destroy. But it is a different person who confidently follows the One who rides upon the heavens. It is the enemy who melts and vanishes. Kings flee before Him, even the earth shakes and the heavens succumb to His presence.

David also reveals another side of God. "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." God is strong and fierce against His enemies, but He is kind and gentle to His children. There is no question as to where our allegiance should lie. "Kiss the

Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Psa. 2:12. —Wayne Murphey



**December 8, 1991**

### **A PSALM OF CONFIDENCE IN OLD AGE**

**Psalm 71:1** In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

**2** Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

**3** Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.

**4** Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

**5** For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth.

**6** By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.

**7** I am as a wonder unto many; but thou art my strong refuge.

**8** Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.

**9** Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength falleth.

**14** But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

**15** My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.

**16** I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.

**17** O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

**18** Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God,

forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.

20 Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

21 Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

**MEMORY VERSE:** And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. Isa. 46:4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** When we reach the time of old age in its infirmities and limitations, God will bless and sustain the heart that clings by faith to Him.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"Let me never be put to confusion"* (v. 1): Let me never be confounded or put to shame. *"My strong habitation whereunto I may continually resort"* (v. 3): The Hebrew text is very plain: "Be for me a rock of refuge to come to always."

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

There is no heading to this 71st Psalm but the first three verses have parallels in Psalm 31:1-3 which is attributed to David. It is the prayer of a man facing the infirmities of old age. Several times in this psalm David alludes to the fact that he had served and trusted in God from his youth. And now with the failing of the physical side of life and the frailties of old age facing him, he is holding fast to his faith in the promise of continued help and support from his God. It is wonderful, as our Memory Verse reveals, that God will carry us in His arms in the time of old age. Psalm 92:14 declares that the righteous will still bring

forth fruit in old age. And Proverbs 16:31 tells us that "the hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." Be assured that if we will take God for our refuge in our youth, He will be with us all the way and will take care of us when our strength falls in the time of old age.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. If a person becomes confused, who has he been listening to?
2. What is the best way to escape from the temptations of life?
3. Is it wrong to have a hiding place where one can get away from the sorrows of life?
4. How can the Lord be that refuge we can escape to?
5. Is a person who rejects the Lord in his youth very apt to find Him in old age?
6. Do we have to fear old age if we will serve the Lord when we are young?
7. What does a godly and aged person see beyond his mortal years?
8. What should an aged person show to his generation?
9. What are some of the weaknesses of old age that can be really trying?
10. What should be the predominate topic of the conversation of an aged person?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

It is surely a wise thing for a person to give his heart to the Lord in his youth. It is easy to allow the lusts and pleasures of the flesh to dominate one's life in the young years, and it is a sad mistake that many make. Years have a way of flying by so fast. We are all getting a little older. We should remember our Creator in the days of our youth before the infirmities and limitations of old age take hold upon us. The eyes wax dim, the ears become dull, the mind becomes short and feeble, the bones become brittle, the muscles shrivel up, the teeth fall out, the skin becomes

wrinkled, and the general strength of the body wears away. And besides all of these physical factors of old age, there comes added burdens of an emotional nature, domestic and financial problems that change and decay bring. Oh, a person needs to prepare for old age by living a consistent spiritual life for Christ in their younger years! One should continually resort to the Lord all along the journey of life. Prayer should be a consistent exercise and activity. How sad to see many grow old who have not followed the Lord wholly in their younger days! If a person will really keep up with His Maker from youth on up, the Spirit of God will keep him young in spirit. Even though the outer man perishes with age, the inner man can be kept young, tender, and active. Keeping young and rejoicing in spirit is one effective tool against the infirmities of old age. The Lord will stand by the faithful soul and will bear him up in His arms through his declining years. Let us prepare for old age by living faithful to the Lord in our younger years.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

When John Adams was eighty years old, he met a friend who inquired, "How is John Quincy Adams today?" "Quite well, I thank you," replied the former president, "but the house in which he lives is becoming dilapidated, in fact, almost uninhabitable. I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out before long. But he himself is well, quite well."

"When at sixteen I was vain because someone praised me, my father said: 'They are only praising your youth. You can take no credit for beauty at sixteen. But if you are beautiful at sixty, it will be your own soul's doing. Then you may be proud of it and be loved for it.' " —Marie Stopes

"This is a grand 'Old Age Pension,' to be able, when 'grey-headed,' to shew forth the strength and power of God. Why should the aged lose their spiritual freshness? The Vine is still the same, if the branch abides it will be fruitful."

—James Smith

"Let me grow lovely, growing old—  
So many fine things do:  
Laces, and Ivory, and gold,  
And silks need not be new.  
And there is healing in old trees,  
Old streets a glamor hold;  
Why may not I, as well as these,  
Grow lovely, growing old?"  
—Karle Baker

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**December 15, 1991**

**THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED  
VIEWED FROM THE SANCTUARY**

Psalm 73:1 Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.

5 They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.

6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.

7 Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.

8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.

9 They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

12 Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

13 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

14 For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

16 When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.

18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down to destruction.

19 How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

20 As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

23 Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.

24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.

27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

28 But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works.

**MEMORY VERSE:** My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. Ps. 73:26.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** To prosper in a material way with nothing of God or heaven in view is a sliding ramp to eternal ruin and damnation.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"There are no bands in their death"* (v. 4): The Hebrew text says, "There are no pangs, [or pains], in their death." Adam Clarke remarks thus: "Many of the godly have sore conflicts at their death. Their enemy then thrusts sore at them that they may fall; or that their confidence in their God may be shaken. But of this the ungodly know nothing. Satan will not molest them; he is sure of his prey; they are entangled, and cannot break their

nets; their consciences are seared, they have no sense of guilt." *"I have cleansed my heart in vain"* (v. 13): If one looks on things from an outward or humanistic view, it would seem that endeavoring to live for God is useless and detrimental to ease and prosperity. One must have a spiritual vision to understand the real value of Christ. *"Until I went into the sanctuary of God"* (v. 17): Entering into the holy counsels of the Word of God and partaking of the spiritual blessings of the Holy Spirit enlightens us to see things as they really are, that is, the prosperity of the wicked is to their sorrow and damnation, and the adversities the righteous suffer are for the betterment and salvation of their souls.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The heading of this psalm tells us it is another psalm written by Asaph, whom we have already learned to be one of David's leaders in the worship of God. Surely this man, whoever he was, was endued with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to be able to present such a vital truth that is so valuable even to us today. Personally speaking, this psalm has been among the most inspiring and edifying in the whole book. Its message is so comforting and uplifting. It answers many questions that trouble many people. The last six verses are just fraught with spiritual consolation and victory. It surely pays to enter into the sanctuary, to enter with all of one's heart into the worship and service of God. Failing to do so robs the soul of understanding that can mean the difference between life and death, heaven or hell, in the end.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What had caused the psalmist to almost slip?
2. Why did he wonder at the prosperity of the wicked?
3. What was the death of many of the wicked like?
4. What was the lot of many of the righteous?
5. How did all of these thoughts make him feel about serving God?

6. How was he enlightened to see the real truth of the matter?
7. How can a person enter into the sanctuary today?
8. What does entering into God's holy service do for a person?
9. Why is the prosperity of the wicked a "slippery place"?
10. What lies beyond the prosperity of the wicked?
11. What lies beyond the adversities of the righteous?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

I heard one brother years ago telling about his godly father and the trials he suffered and how he died. He said that after his father was gone he was driving through town and saw drunks on the streets. He said to himself, "Here my Dad is gone and these drunks are still here! What profit was living for God to my Dad?" He stumbled over that for a while, but God was merciful and saved him. Then he understood. I asked my mother when I was a lad, "Why does God allow the wicked to do the things that they do?" My mother's answer was very simple, but true: "God knows that these earthly pleasures are all that these sinful people are going to have, so He lets them have them." It is good to live for God, even though He allows us to suffer many hard things in life. It is good to bear up and be strong in adversity, to trust fully in God and get good out of the trials. God will probably keep us poor and with our portion of hardships and sorrows, for He wants heaven to be sweeter at the end. We surely need to look at things from a spiritual viewpoint. Looking at things from a financial, material or physical angle will cause us to miss the real point. We need to enter into the sanctuary, that is, enter into the service and worship of God with all of your heart. Pray and seek God daily and be punctual and faithful to attend the public services held in His name. Enter into the spirit of the service; don't just be a spectator. Listen to the Word and read it yourself in your devotions at home. Listen to its counsels, for they reveal secrets that are hidden to the

**carnal-minded. You will see God with you in your trials and hard places. You will know that He is guiding you by His counsel, and your hope of glory will be bright and sure. God will be the strength of your heart and your portion forever.**

**—Leslie C. Busbee**

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**Just because a person is prospering in a material sense is no sign of God's favor or blessing upon them. Or, just because of adversity and hard times, one must not conclude that they are out of harmony with God. The apostle Paul spoke of some who considered "gain is godliness." I Tim. 6:5. It was Christ who spoke of the deceitfulness of riches. (Mark 4:19). The misrepresentation involved is that as individuals obtain opulence and the prestige that often accompanies it, they feel they are finding their place in the world. The reality may be that the world is finding its place in their heart. The psalm in our lesson described the lifestyle of those who had been defiled by the things of this world as corrupt and lofty. This indicates a malady of the heart.**

**I read a quote once that said prosperity is the sweet buy and buy. This may sound attractive, but it is only the positive side of the equation. Let us never lose sight of the fact that there is a place in the sanctuary of God where we can enjoy the things of life, be free of the ignoble ways and sudden destruction of the wicked, and inherit an eternal home in heaven. — — — — —**

**—Wayne Murphey**

**December 22, 1991**

**GOD SENT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Galatians 4:4 . . . When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

1 John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

John 17:1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

Hebrews 10:5 . . . When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** . . . This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. John 6:29.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into this dark and sinful world with a commission to give His life for the sins of mankind and redeem them back to His fellowship.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** "*Only begotten Son*" (John 3:16): The only person born of a woman, whose humanity never came by the ordinary manner of generation, He being the creation in the womb of the virgin by the energy of the Holy Spirit. *Send*: To set apart; to command and commission to go with a special work to accomplish. "*Propitiation for our sins*" (I John 4:10): Atonement; to satisfy or appease the displeasure of an offended party; to extinguish all guilt or condemnation.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

At this season of the year when our minds are on the things concerning the birth of Jesus and His advent into the world, we want to study the thought of God sending His Son into the world to be our Saviour and Lord. We have arranged several Scriptures on this thought of Christ being "sent" into the world. Aside from the two scriptures from the writings of Paul in Galatians and Hebrews, all the rest are from the writings of the beloved disciple of Jesus, John.

John used the term "sent" concerning Christ's coming into the world very emphatically. He was surely persuaded, and he was right, that Jesus had been sent into the world from the Father. Paul was certainly of this persuasion, also. The Scripture in Hebrews which states that God prepared a body for Christ is the Septuagint translation of Psalm 40:6. In that place the translation from the Hebrew text says, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened." The scholars who were commissioned by the king of Egypt to translate the Scriptures into the Greek language worded that phrase as it appears in the Scriptures from the book of Hebrews. I believe that this was the work of God to make appear more clearly the advent or coming of our Lord into a human body. The Holy Spirit wrought the work of conception in the womb of Mary for the bringing forth of the Saviour. Thus He was sent, yes, sent with a commission from God to save the lost and undone and fit them for eternal dwellings with Him. Oh, praise the Lord for sending His Son from heaven into this cold dark world where mortals were groveling in sin and darkness. He did not just happen along; **He was sent!** God sent Him to be our Saviour and Friend. How thankful we ought to be! And remember our memory verse: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did God send His Son into the world?
2. By what avenue did God send His Son into the world?
3. Is it important to understand that God **sent** His Son into the world?
4. What caused the Father to send His Son into the world?
5. What honor should we bestow upon God's Son whom He sent into the world?
6. What will we receive if we believe on Him who sent His Son into the world?
7. What did Jesus say was eternal life?

8. What did God prepare for His Son in coming into the world?

9. Do you really believe God sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Another Scripture that we could include with our lesson is Hebrews 1:6, which reads: "When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." This is a quotation from the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 32:43, which reads: "Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him." The writer in Hebrews applies this Scripture to Christ and His coming into the world. Oh, what a wonderful thought that God Almighty, the Heavenly Father and Lord of all being, would send His Son to be the Saviour of the world! Such was the tenor of the angels' message to the shepherds that night so long ago: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." All the Scriptures in our lesson today declare that Jesus was sent by God into the world. Let us never doubt it. Jesus came, sent from God, with a mission to save our souls from eternal ruin. Oh, how glad and thankful we ought to be! How we need to believe in Him whom God hath sent and prepare our hearts to make Him room! How we need to kiss the Son, worship Him purely, and embrace His gracious doctrine! He has been sent by God to visit and redeem us from eternal damnation. If we will believe on Him and submit ourselves to Him in truth, He will unite us with the Father and we can live with hope and consolation in our souls all of our days. We rejoice at this season and at all seasons for the Father sending His Son to be the Saviour of the world! If a person just happens to come along and decides to help us, that would be nice and appreciated, but when we are assured that such a Saviour has been sent, then we know that there was love on the other end, a love that cannot be measured. We know

that God sent His Son, and we accept and embrace His way and rejoice in His perfect salvation. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

I am aware of a book that was written by a panel of distinguished historians entitled, "If, Or History Rewritten." In the book the historians attempted to suggest how the course of history might have been altered if certain events had turned out differently. They considered such things as the difference it might have made in the outcome of the Civil War if Lee had won at Gettysburg. They analyzed the difference it might have made if Lincoln had survived the assassin's bullet. Another great "if" was what might have happened if Napoleon had escaped from St. Helena and come to America. Of course these things are irrelevant as history cannot be rewritten, but it is easy to see things could be drastically different for us today if one small event in history was changed.

Nearly two thousand years ago a baby was born in a small Judean village, and the world has never been the same since. Think of the impact His life has had on all succeeding generations. The greatest tragedy involved in the sending of a Saviour to the earth is that the world has largely tried to negate the impact Christ made. Christ raised mankind to a higher plane of living and spiritual consciousness, yet mankind seems determined to sink back to a lower level. But no matter what others do, we can accept Christ into our hearts and enjoy every blessing that He revealed through His birth, life, death and resurrection.

—Wayne Murphey



**December 29, 1991**

**PREPARING ROOM IN OUR HEARTS FOR HIM WHOM  
GOD HAS SENT**

**John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**2** The same was in the beginning with God.

**3** All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**4** In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

**5** And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

**6** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

**7** The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

**8** He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

**9** That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

**10** He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

**11** He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

**12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

**13** Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

**14** And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

**15** John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

**16** And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Rev. 3:20.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God sent His Son into the world to be the Saviour of the world. Every heart must prepare Him room, receive Him, and embrace His grace and truth for the saving of the soul.

**WORD DEFINITIONS:** *"The Word"* (John 1:1): Translated from the Greek word "Logos" which means "a word spoken; speech; eloquence; doctrine; reason, or the faculty of reasoning." Adam Clarke. Clarke further states, that the term for Jesus, "Logos," should be left untranslated, just as the appellations "Jesus" and "Christ" are left untranslated. Jesus is properly called "Logos," because He is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He is the fount of wisdom, bringing light, understanding, knowledge, and reason to all men. He is the grand source of Divine revelation and has made manifest the mysteries that have been hidden from the ages. *"The Word was with God, and the Word was God"*: The Word—Christ—was a separate Being distinct from the Father, yet was so united with the Father that He could properly be called "God" in the sense that all the Father's works were done by Him. *"The darkness comprehended it not"* (v. 5): The darkness of this world did not hinder or prevent this Light from shining into the world and upon humanity. Darkness does not hinder or prevent light. Darkness is the absence of light, and when the light shines, the darkness disappears. Satan seeks to blind the mind, put up barriers and veils to keep the Light from shining in the darkness of man's heart, for

he knows that if a darkened heart can but be illuminated with the true Light, that person will want to be saved. *"The true Light, which lighteth every man"* (v. 9): This light has been made available for every living creature of mankind, no one is to be excluded. *"To them gave he power to become the sons of God"* (v. 12): To us who receive Him He gives that right, authority, and privilege to become born from above and to be the real sons of God in the Holy Spirit. *"Grace for grace"* (v. 16): Favor upon favor; blessing after blessing; a never ending supply.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The first 18 verses of the first chapter of the Gospel according to John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, were the introduction to his treatise on the gospel of his Saviour. Our Memory Verse for today, (and we do hope this verse will be inscribed upon everyone's memory) comes from part of Christ's discourse and revelation to John on the Isle of Patmos, part of the closing words of His message to the seven churches in Asia. Christ has been sent into the world, and now it is up to us to prepare our hearts to receive Him and crown Him King of our lives. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What problems does Christ encounter in seeking to find access and room in the heart of man?
2. Will Christ be a joint-tenant with Satan and the love of the world?
3. What must be done to the heart before Christ can enter?
4. Are there provisions in the grace of God for the heart to be purified and made fit for the Heavenly King?
5. What is involved in the term, "receiving Him"?
6. Will it be a hard matter for a person to make room for Christ if he or she actually beholds Him in the glory presented by the gospel as the only begotten Son of God?
7. Where is the real darkness that the Light of Christ seeks to dispel?

8. What are some of the reasons why people refuse to give Christ room in their hearts?

9. What kind of birth does Christ give to those who really receive Him?

10. Have you opened your heart and made room for the Saviour in your life?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come; let earth receive her King! Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing!" Isaac Watts. Christ is seeking room in your heart and mind. He will not force His way in; we must open the door gladly and crown Him King of our lives. Just think, the Word that framed the heavens and the earth seeks entrance to our affections and innermost being! Oh, why would anyone refuse such a Royal Guest? It is the ignorance and darkness of a blinded mind who dares to refuse Christ entrance into their heart. They just do not know what they are doing. Wrong thoughts and ideas planted there by the enemy of their soul keep the King of Glory from coming in. In Him is Life, and this Life infuses into the heart and mind understanding and knowledge of the heavenly way. Christ is the Word. We know what important things come to us by way of words and intelligible speech. Man has the power of speech, the ability to communicate intelligence and knowledge to one another. Christ is the Word, and His entrance into a man's heart gives light and understanding. Oh, how we need to make room in our hearts for Him! Otherwise, all is darkness. He is the Light of the world. He can help us to understand ourselves, others, and God. He teaches us how to live, move, and speak. Too many refuse Him entrance. They are deceived by the same Devil that got Eve's mind all mixed up. Let us with open face look upon the image of the Saviour as it is reflected in the Word of God. As we see Him in His risen beauty and understand the glorious benefits of His holy kingdom, we will want to make room for Him in our hearts, and crown Him King forever.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Wally was nine years old and in the second grade, though he should have been in the fourth. He was big and clumsy, slow in movement and mind, but well liked by the other children in class, all of whom were smaller than he. At times the boys did have trouble hiding their irritation when the uncoordinated Wally would ask to play ball with them. He would stand by — not sulking, but hoping — always a helpful boy, willing and smiling, the natural protector of any child he felt was being mistreated.

As Christmas time approached, plans were made for the annual school pageant. Children were being assigned their parts — angels, shepherds, wisemen, Mary, Joseph. Wally stood by expectantly — then suddenly his joy knew no bounds, for he heard the teacher say, "Wally, I want you to be the innkeeper." (Not many lines to learn, she reasoned, and his size would make his refusal of lodging to Joseph more forceful.) Little did the teacher dream the lesson that such a tenderhearted boy would teach to all who would attend that program!

Then came rehearsals; the crooks and manger, beards, crowns, halos, and a stageful of squeaky voices. Most caught up in the magic of the night was Wally. He would stand in the wings and watch the performance with fascination. His teacher had to make sure he did not wander onstage before his cue.

Came the long-awaited night, and Wally stood, holding a lantern, by the door of the inn, watching as the children who portrayed Mary and Joseph came near him. "What do you want?" Wally asked with a brusque gesture. "We seek lodging." "Seek it elsewhere, the inn is filled." "Sir, we have asked everywhere in vain. We have traveled far and are very weary." "There is no room in this inn for you." Wally looked properly stern.

"Please, good innkeeper, this is my wife. She is heavy with child and needs a place to rest. Surely you must have some small corner for her. She is so tired."

Now, for the first time, the innkeeper relaxed his stiff stance and looked down at Mary. With that there was a long pause. The audience became a bit tense.

"No! Begone!" the prompter whispered from the wings.

"No! Begone!" Wally repeated automatically.

Joseph sadly placed his arms around Mary and Mary laid her head upon her husband's shoulder, and the two of them started to move away. The innkeeper did not return inside his inn, however. Wally stood there in the doorway, watching the forlorn couple. His mouth was open, his brow creased with concern, his eyes filling unmistakably with tears.

And suddenly this Christmas pageant became different from all others.

"Don't go Joseph," Wally called out. "Bring Mary back." and Wally's face grew into a bright smile. "You can have my room!"

A burst of laughter — then silence — then tears flowed freely as the message came through to the listeners. Wally, the boy considered "slow," had made room for Jesus.

—Selected

### **The Innkeeper**

I only did what you have done  
A thousand times or more  
When Joseph came to Bethlehem  
And knocked upon my door.

I did not turn the Christ away  
With alibi so deft.  
Like you, I simply gave to Him  
Whatever I had left.

—B. P. Baker



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