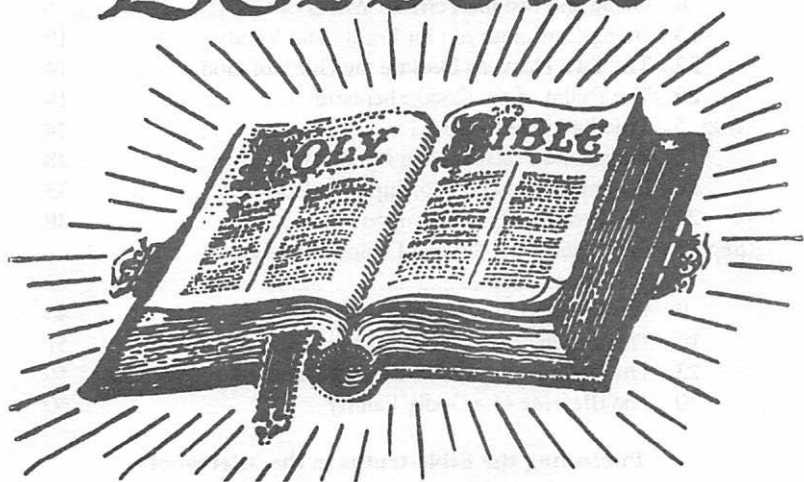


# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 33, No. 3  
July, Aug., Sept.  
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**Volume 33**

**July, Aug., Sept.**

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## THEME FOR THIRD QUARTER, 2001

For our lessons this quarter we feel inspired to study from more of the blessed book of Psalms. We pray that God will bless every lesson to all who partake of these studies.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee



JULY 1, 2001

### THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF GOD'S JUDGMENTS

Psalm 94:1 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

3 Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

5 They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage.

7 Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

8 Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?

9 He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know?*

11 The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

12 Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law;

13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

17 Unless the Lord *had been* my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.

19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee....

21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous,....

22 But the Lord is my defence; and my God *is* the rock of my refuge.

23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness;...

**MEMORY VERSE:** Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. Psalm 94:12-13.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The seeming triumph of the wicked proves to be short-lived and vain, while the Lord chastens and refines the righteous through their sufferings and prepares them for the final triumph in glory.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 94:1), The Hebrew says, "O God of revenges, Jehovah God of revenges, shine forth!"

(Psalm 94:8), "*Brutish*": To be senseless, irrational, without the power to reason or understand, beastly and governed only by the animal and sensual impulses.

(Psalm 94:10), "*Chastise*": To punish in order to correct or make better.

(Psalm 94:13), "*Digged*": Plotted, planned and prepared. Just as heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, so the lake of fire (the pit) is a prepared place for a prepared people. The faithful in Christ are chastened and taken through the fires of tribulation, but it is to refine and prepare them for eternal glory. But the wicked, by their pride and rebellion against God are preparing themselves for the pit of everlasting destruction.

(Psalm 94:21), "*They gather themselves together*": The Hebrew says, "They crowd." The righteous are often under pressure from the ungodly, being persecuted and scorned because of their holy conviction.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a prayer of the godly who are vexed and grieved because of the vaunting and exulting of the wicked who disregard the laws of the almighty God. God is recognized and acknowledged to be the God of vengeance and just retribu-

tion. The first part of the prayer shows the anguish of the child of God and the earnest desire for God to do something about the woeful conditions prevailing about him. The wicked strut in their pride and scorn the holy. And they are ignorant and warped in their thoughts to suppose that God is not taking notice of what they are doing. To this brutish idea the writer hurls his indignant reproof. How can man be so foolish as to think so vainly? The apostle Paul quotes verse 11 in I Cor. 3:20 in speaking of the folly of the wisdom of this world. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." The ideas and reasonings of carnal man are full of error and ridiculous calculations. They stem from their lustful nature that seeks to justify everything done by them as they resist the reproof and admonition of God. But then in verses 12 and 13 the writer confesses the blessedness of the righteous despite the exulting of the wicked. In what a righteous person suffers from the wicked is found God's providence for His eternal good. It is so. The child of God will benefit spiritually from what he suffers and is taught therein of the precepts of God's law. The mercy of the Lord will hold him up and bring him out of the confusion that Satan would cloud over him. Verse 19 is a beautiful description of the consolation that the godly experience in the Spirit of the Lord. God gives us His thoughts, revealing them to us through His precious Word, and, oh, what a delight it is to our inner man! Thus, while the wicked crowd and pressure against us, we have an inward strength and refuge.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why does vengeance belong only to God?
2. What causes the righteous to pray for God to show Himself?
3. How can man be so foolish to suppose God is not seeing?
4. How does God turn the sufferings of the godly for good?
5. What is God preparing the wicked for?
6. Of what profit is the chastening of the Lord to the godly?
7. What are some of the thoughts that God comforts us with?

8. What can the righteous enjoy in the days of adversity?
9. What is going to be the end of the ungodly?
10. What is God preparing the righteous for?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

God has made it clear in His Word that vengeance belongs to Him and that He will see to it that the wicked will receive his just dues. In Deuteronomy 32:35 He says, "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste." This was part of Moses' song that he wrote at the end of his life concerning the people of Israel and what would develop in later times. In Isaiah 65:6 the Lord spoke through the prophet: "Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom." Isaiah was quoting from Moses. Then Paul quoted it again in Romans 12:19, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." So the writer in our lesson knew that to God belonged vengeance and recompense. It has been a difficult thing for God's saints through the ages to meekly suffer the abuse and ill-treatment of the wicked, remembering what the Lord has spoken concerning vengeance belonging to Him. A child of God wants to please the Lord rather than getting even. This is one of the tests of a saint. Jesus, Himself, took this attitude toward His persecutors: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

Our lesson has earnest warnings to the ungodly. But too often these warnings are ignored. But let us turn from the woeful end of the wicked, and consider the blessedness of the righteous who are willing to bear the chastisement of the Lord and be taught out of His law. The word, "blessed," in verse 12 in the Hebrew is the interjection "How happy!" It is a bright light in the midst of the darkness of adversity. God is going to work it all for good to those who love God and who are called according to His purpose. While the righteous suffer and endure the abuse of the wicked, the Spirit of the Lord is working on their spirit to prepare them for everlasting life in glory with Him.

In conclusion notice what the apostle Paul said in Romans 2:5-6: "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against (for) the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds." —Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law: That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked." Psalm 94:12-13.

One anthropologist said that Eskimo children are rarely punished. Someone commenting on the study remarked, "No wonder. When a spanked child wears fur-lined pants, the moral is lost on him."

There is a tendency in all of us to try to cushion ourselves from correction. No one enjoys chastisement, whether adult or child. However, as hard as it may be to acknowledge, there are benefits in God's punishments. Sometimes it takes severe action to penetrate our fleshly feelings in order to teach us wisdom, but life is actually a much better experience when we live according to God's laws. Obedience to God makes Him our defense against those things which would hinder our Christian walk.

The ultimate reward of being chastened is one of sheer bliss. When God takes out His vengeance on the wicked on the day of judgment, we can stand before Him clean, clear and without fear.

—Wayne Murphey



**JULY 8, 2001**

### **COME AND SEE THE TERRIBLE WORKS OF GOD**

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*.

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:** If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*. Psalm 66:18.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Psalm 126:3.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 66:5), "*Terrible*": That which causes reverence and godly fear.

(Psalm 66:7), "*His eyes behold the nations*": The Hebrew says, "His eyes search out the nations. He is weighing the spirit and attitude of every human being."



(Psalm 66:10), "*Proved*": To test, try, examine, or investigate. "*Tried*": To refine, purge, or purify through heat and adversity.

(Psalm 66:12), "*Ride over our heads*": God tests and tries His people by allowing unpleasant and difficult circumstances and people to have dominion and rule over them for a time. "*Wealthy place*": Satisfaction, abundance and plenty.

(Psalm 66:18), "*Regard*": To look upon with favour and respect.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Although the author of this 66th Psalm is unknown, yet it is the testimony of the true saints of all ages. It was true with Joseph, David and many tested souls throughout the annals of time. It has been the working of God to put His beloved children thus to the test by allowing adversity and abuse to be heaped upon them by the ungodly. How does this prove a person? The strain and straits of the pressure put on us from those of the contrary part puts a test to our character and our decision for God. Are we going to stand fast for the will of God in the face of human contradiction and opposition? It brings to full proof our love for God. If our faith cannot overmaster the tide of adversity and being withstood by humankind, then it is no good. But if we can brace up and master all the abuse heaped upon us and stand fast for God regardless of the opposition, keeping an humble and loving attitude, our souls will take on glory and brightness unheard of before. Every fiber of our being is going to be tempted with evil. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." James 1:12. To endure temptation is to resist it steadfastly with no yield. This is the way that the Lord tries us and puts us to the test. And this is how our love for God is brought to proof. Let us remember that spiritual blessedness is preceded by keen adversity and the straits of difficulty. And it is not an earthly wealthy place that God is bringing us to, but rather spiritual abundance and joy. —Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of works is spoken of in this 66th Psalm?
2. For what purpose does God allow His saints to be sorely tried?
3. What measures and means does God use to try His people?
4. Describe how Joseph, David, and others were ill-used by men.
5. What can God bring out in these times of suffering?
6. Will we be tempted to look on iniquity with desire and favor?
7. What must we do to endure and overcome all temptation?
8. What kind of wealthy place does God design to bring us to?
9. Why is God's works in our lesson called "terrible?"
10. Why should we prepare ourselves to face adversity?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Hardships and adversity are proven means of refining and perfecting the spirit of man. It is a vital part of God's dealings with our souls for our eternal good. And the greater part of this process of being tested and tried comes through the avenue of people, our fellow creatures of earth. The first witness to martyr the cause of faith was a victim of a jealous and overlording brother. Abel fell as a prey to the malicious Cain, but it proved His faithfulness and acceptance with God. Joseph suffered from the abuse and mistreatment of his jealous brothers. He was wrongfully accused and unjustly imprisoned. He was forgotten by the butler whom he had helped and befriended. But he stands out in history as one of the faithful, proving and counselling to us the truth that adversity is the making of a man and the means by which we are brought to honour and glory. David was an innocent victim of a jealous and dominating ruler and was run off from his home and deprived of friendship and honour that he deserved. Our own beloved Lord and Master was the victim of hatred without cause and unjust jealousy and envy. He was illegally

tried and sentenced to the most horrible death known. He learned obedience and was perfected by the things that He suffered. (Hebrews 5:8-9.) And the story is not all in yet. There will be many, many more such cases brought out to be recompensed and rewarded in the great judgment day that is to come. We who are following in this great way of faith and holiness will be given the golden opportunity of adding to this glorious report. Do we desire spiritual blessings and prosperity? Let us then embrace the cross and reconcile our hearts to suffer and endure hardships, sorrows, mistreatment, abuse, wrong judgments, false accusations and being unjustly taken advantage of without resentments, illwill or unkind retaliation. Let us take the spoiling of our earthly goods, knowing that in heaven we have a better and an enduring substance. (Hebrews 10:34.)

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

In the third century, Cyprian, a minister at Carthage, wrote a letter to his friend, Donatus, which perfectly describes what God can do for the righteous in the midst of a corrupt world.

"This is a cheerful world as I see it from my garden under the shadows of my vines. But if I were to ascend some high mountain and look out over the wide lands, you know very well what I should see: brigands on the highways, pirates on the sea, armies fighting, cities burning; in the amphitheaters men murdered to please applauding crowds; selfishness and cruelty and miser and despair under all roofs. It is a bad world, Donatus, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any pleasure of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. They are masters of their souls. They have overcome the world. These people, Donatus, are the Christians—and I am one of them."

—Wayne Murphey



**JULY 15, 2001**

**BEING CONSCIOUS OF OUR FRAILTY AND VANITY**

Psalm 39:1 I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

2 I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, *even* from good; and my sorrow was stirred.

3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing, the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue.

4 Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is*; *that* I may know how frail I *am* .

5 Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah

6 Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up *riches*, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

7 And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst *it*.

10 Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.

11 When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

12 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I *am* a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers *were*.

13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is*; *that* I may know how frail I *am*. Psalm 39:4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the

glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. I Peter 1:24-25.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 39:1), "*I will take heed*": The Hebrew says, "I will keep my ways from sinning with my tongue." "*Bridle*": Muzzle. The kind of muzzle we need is not a literal one to put over our mouth to keep us from talking. It is an inner muzzle of the heart, a watchful and strict principle of self-control strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

(Psalm 39:2), "*My sorrow was stirred*": His pain and adversity was worsened because he refrained from confiding with others. He was so fearful of speaking unadvisably with his lips that he kept his trouble to himself.

(Psalm 39:3), "*Musing*": Pondering, meditating and silently observing. "*The fire burned*": By keeping silent and waiting on the Lord we give the Holy Spirit a chance to work in our hearts with inspiration and instruction of what is needed to say. "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." Proverbs 14:29.

(Psalm 39:4), "*Measure*": Extent or limit. "*Frail*": Destitute or vacant.

(Psalm 39:5), "*Handbreadth*": Width of the palm, not the spread of the fingers. Compare a palmbreadth to space and you will have a similar comparison to your mortal days and eternity. "*My age is as nothing*": My fleeting time in this transient world is as non-existence. "*Altogether vanity*": Perfect emptiness.

(Psalm 39:6), "*Vain shew*": An illusion, false, unreal, deceptive and misleading. "*Disquieted*": In an uproar. All of their pushing and shoving and striving for wealth and riches will prove to their destruction.

(Psalm 39:8), "*Reproach of the foolish*": The shame or disgrace of the fool. The only way to avoid this is to be wise in the fear of the Lord.

(Psalm 39:12), "*Sojourner*": A temporary resident; a pilgrim.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

This is one of David's psalms. It is a psalm for us poor mortals who are passing through this life of vanity for an eternal existence somewhere. It is a very instructive writing. Keeping our ways from sinning with our tongue is one of life's greatest injunctions. It is for our own good that we hold our peace and let our words be few. It is not easy, but it is sure worth a person's watchful endeavor. The first part expresses his deliberate silence. Then, when he did speak, what he said was very wise. It is a prayer we should all pray consistently. Help us, O Lord, to realize how short our time is and how empty and vacant we really are even in our strength and best state. Oh, if more people would allow their hearts to be in this frame of thought! Too many are walking in an illusion of the glory of the flesh, and their own selfish pursuits. It is all too soon proven to be useless and of no profit. What are we really desiring, and what is there that is really worth waiting for? That is the question. The answer? "My hope is in thee". Without the hope of the gospel of Christ, life is altogether vanity and vexation of spirit. How many a person has prospered in this world only to have it snatched away in a moment! God's stroke is not only well timed and accurate, but it is perfect in its accomplishment. How we need to remember that we are strangers and pilgrims in this life. We will soon pass away and these fleeting mortal shells will be laid away beneath the sod. Prayer is so vital from our hearts to God for His mercy and grace to prepare us for that solemn appointment of death and the judgment.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is keeping from sinning with our tongue so important?
2. What did the Psalmist say when he did speak?
3. What did he liken his days to be compared to eternity?
4. Are these thoughts the general sentiment of our society?

5. What is it that is really worth waiting for?
6. What does it usually take for a man to realize his frailty?
7. How does God with rebukes correct man for his iniquity?
8. What do we need to get ahold of before we go to be no more?
9. What are we in this world as all our foreparents were?
10. Should we wait for God to strike us before we seek Him?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We look out on our society today and what do we see? Do we see people reverent with godly fear, living with deep consciousness of their frailty and vanity of their earthly life? No, sad to say, in most people's minds these thoughts are non-existent. People are so free with their tongues. They say anything they want as if their lips were their own, as if they are unaware of who is lord over them. (Psa. 12:4.) To excel in strength, wealth and in the praise of men is the chief aim of most of humanity. But, despite all of their efforts and accomplishments and their inventions and devices, it is altogether vanity. Death comes, life goes. This present life is all that is substantial to them. The realm beyond the shadow of death is vague and uncertain. Oh, that the fear of God could be put more before their eyes! Their end, the extent and limit of their days, and their frailty—this should be their quickening thoughts to seek God. Let it be our prayer, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am." The day is coming, and all too swiftly, when we will go hence, and be no more. Let us pray and seek God concerning this. Our life is but a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. (James 4:14.) You may be young now, but the years will soon fly by. Remember now thy Creator in the days of your youth before your dust returns to the earth as it was and your spirit goes back to God who gave it. (Eccl. 12:1, 7.)

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

On a tombstone in an old New England cemetery are the words: "This is what I expected, but not so soon." Most

everyone living has the mental power and observation to realize that some day death will come. But how often is it that when death does come it is unanticipated?

The secret of an expected end is to be able to measure our days as the Psalmist requested the ability to do. His request to God wasn't that he would know how many more days and hours he had left to live, but that he would be able to comprehend the comparison of his days with those of God's. It is then that he could live each day with a readiness for it to be his last one.

Knowing how to measure our days could mean the difference between having a dying testimony like Saul's, "I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly," or one like Paul's, "I have kept the faith." —Wayne Murphey



**JULY 22, 2001**

## **THE TWO HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD**

**Psalm 19:1** The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.

**2** Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

**3** *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard.

**4** Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.

**5** Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

**6** His going forth *is* from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

**7** The law of the Lord *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple.

**8** The statutes of the Lord *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

**9** The fear of the Lord *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord *are* true and righteous altogether.



10 More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

12 Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins*; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

**MEMORY VERSE:** I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. Psalm 40:8.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The literal aerial heavens portray the awesome splendor of God's glory and majesty, and typify the spiritual heavens that shine forth His precious testimony and law.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 19:1), "*Declare*": The Hebrew word means to score with a mark as a tally, to record, to inscribe, to enumerate, show forth, or celebrate. "*Firmament*": The great expanse of space that God opened up in the midst of the waters in the beginning when all things were created. "*Sheweth*": To put out in front to be viewed, make manifest, announce or explain. "*Handiwork*": The work of God's hands, His creation.

(Psalm 19:2), "*Day unto day, night unto night*": Every day and every night, that is, continually. "*Uttereth speech*": Gushes or pours forth profusely a message. Although the heavenly glory and majesty has no voice of words intelligible to the physical ear, yet there is a message pouring forth daily upon the creatures of earth, declaring in a forceful and impressive manner the greatness and wisdom of a wonderful, endearing and profoundly intelligent Creator.

(Psalm 19:4), "*Line*": A connecting cord, a measuring line or rule. What an instructive and informative agent God has given to us to safeguard us from unbelief and infidelity! "Lift

up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things...." Isa. 40:26. "A *tabernacle for the sin*": A place, position, course and avenue for the beautiful united spectrum of light to shine its warming, healthful, enlightening gracious influence upon this earth.

(Psalm19:5), "*Chamber*": or canopy. As a young bridegroom fresh with the glow of love and happiness comes forth from sweet hours of rest and fellowship with his beloved wife to meet the duties of the day, so the glorious luminary of heaven comes forth from the night in a very freshening manner. Well spent time it is to arise early and watch the eastern skies begin to glow and welcome the rising of the sun! And let us not take the sun for granted. Jesus said that it was the heavenly Father's sun. Matt. 5:45.

(Psalm19:7), "*Converting the soul*": or, restoring the soul, which is the same expression as Psa. 23:3. Other words can be applied, such as renew or refresh. The Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, not only saves and redeems the soul from destruction and sin, but He also maintains it by renewing it by seasons of refreshing from heaven. From His seat of power and grace in the heavens Christ feeds and nourishes His saints through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and His Word.

(Psalm19:12), The word "*his*" is added by the translators. The Hebrew simply raises the question: "Who can discern errors?" And then it says, "Acquit me from that which is hidden." The word "*faults*" is added, too. The expression is: "Who can know and understand where he is in the wrong? Please enlighten us by Thy law that we might see where we are coming short of Thy will."

(Psalm19:13), "*Presumptuous sins*": The word "sins" is added by the translators. The Hebrew expression is: "Withhold Thy servant also from being presumptuous." This is pride, arrogance and haughtiness. This kind of attitude will make one's heart to be hardened with insolence, having no sense of right or wrong. This will enable a person to do about anything with no remorse or conviction. No wonder the Psalmist is requesting the help of God to be kept from this kind of attitude!

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today is a Psalm of David, and is his meditation on the glory of the aerial heavens and the blessed influence of the law of the Lord upon our souls. We want to look at the Word of God as it is ministered to us through the Holy Spirit as the spiritual heavens. Both heavens have a Sun, the Lord Jesus being the Sun of righteousness, rising with healing in His wings. (Mal. 4:2.) He shines through the avenue of His laws, testimonies, statutes, commandments and judgments. The Psalm concludes with an earnest and fervent prayer for God's help in overcoming the power of sin and transgression that we might be acceptable in His holy sight. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How valuable are the literal heavens to us?
2. What kind of condition would we be in without the sun?
3. What does the Psalmist liken the sun to?
4. In what way is the sun likened unto a Bridegroom?
5. How is he like a strong man rejoicing to run a race?
6. How is the Word and Spirit of God like to a second heaven?
7. What kind of influence and benefit does His Law wield to us?
8. Why do we need to be warned, and what about?
9. What will a presumptuous attitude cause us to be and to do?
10. What do we need to have always to be acceptable to God?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

There are two different heavens that we need the influence of. There is the aerial heavens. Much could be said about their value and benefit. Think of the sun, and how vital it is to our life, comfort and health! How beautiful and marvelous is its light and the spectrum of its colors! Surely no one but a wise and gracious and powerful God could design and create such a blessing! "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Eccl. 11:7. Too many of us

mortals take it for granted and go our self-ridden ways day by day with little thought or appreciation for the benefit of the sun.

Then let us think of the other heaven, the spiritual luminaries above us in the gracious influence of the Word of God with the Spirit of God. Jesus is the Sun in this Heaven, the bright and morning star. (Rev. 22:16.) In speaking of the gospel going forth to all the earth, Paul said in Romans 10:18, (quoting from verse 4 of this Psalm) "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Just as the sun, moon and the stars shine to the ends of the earth, so the Lord wants His Sun and His Gospel to shine to all lands and people.

The sun, moon and stars shine their message of glory to us every day. Even when the clouds cover our skies, these lights that God placed in the firmament are still there, the same as when they first shone on Adam and Eve in the beginning. Even so does the Spirit of the Lord convey daily the message of the Word of the Lord to our hearts and minds. We are lifted up from the sordid and vain things of this fleeting world into the heavenly places to bask in the light of this glorious Sun of righteousness and be influenced and taught by the wonderful testimonies of His great wisdom. Let us keep mindful and with open hearts to the light of these spiritual heavenly lights to guide us ever in the way that leads to eternal glory.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

I remember reading where one person poetically stated something to this effect, "God has woven the stars in His tapestry and spread it out like a tent above the inhabitants. The stars are just a few of the jewels on His royal train."

Have you ever been out on a starlit night and felt so close to God that it seemed if you could gaze just a little farther into the heavens, you could see God? It is about like the experience Moses had when he asked to see God. God put him in a rock and covered him with His hand before passing by. Moses saw only the back of God.

Nature is so close to God that it is almost like beholding

His backside. The same writer of the above quote also made the allegory that the sun is but a small gem in the crown of God. This reminds me of the story in which a missionary was imparting the gospel to a heathen. The heathen showed the missionary his gods of stone and wood, and then asked the missionary to show him his God. The missionary said he couldn't do that, whereupon the heathen asserted he couldn't worship a god he couldn't see. The missionary had a sudden inspiration. He took the heathen outside and told him to look at the sun. It was too bright to view, and the missionary said, "If you can not look at one of His servants, how do you hope to see Him?"

Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "It takes no brains to be an atheist. Any stupid person can deny the existence of God—a supernatural power, but cannot ignore the marvelous order in which the universe about us moves. The Scriptures are true, the heavens are a witness of God that knows no land or language barrier.

—Wayne Murphey



**JULY 29, 2001**

### **THE PSALM OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

Psalm 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 Hemaketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Knowye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Psalm 100:3.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** As a shepherd feeds, guards, guides and cares for his flock, so the Lord God almighty and His Son, Jesus Christ, is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Psalm 23:1), "*Shepherd*": One who tends a flock. He pastures it, leading and providing it with a place to graze and be nourished. He rules over it with his skill and knowledge and protects it from danger and harm. And he associates with his sheep as their friend. "*Want*": Lack.

(Psalm 23:2), "*Lie down*": To recline, repose and make their bed. This involves safety, contentment, security, peace and satisfaction. Surely only the Lord Jesus has that which will bring true contentment and satisfaction to our souls. "*Still waters*": Waters of quietness. Here is some more of this. Instead of turmoil and strife and vain efforts for the elusive dream of self-gratification, we are disciplined by our Shepherd to have a meek and quiet spirit that will prevail in our souls wherever we are and in whatever situation we are in. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Isaiah 32:17-18. "...In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength:..." Isaiah 30:15.

(Psalm 23:3), "*He restoreth my soul*": He died as a ransom and sacrifice to redeem my soul from the power of Satan and sin. "...The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." John 10:11. "...In due time Christ died for the ungodly". Rom. 5:6. He is the Shepherd and Bishop (overseer) of our souls. (I Peter 2:25.) "*For his name's sake*": In heed of, for the purpose of, and on account of the wonderful name and influence of our Heavenly Father's name, and the name of our blessed Lord and Saviour we are guided by His Spirit and His Word to walk in the ways of righteousness and true holiness. Not only is it a joy to walk thus, but we have a great responsibility to make manifest the wonders and beauties of His name before our fellow man.

(Psalm 23:4), "*The valley of the shadow of death*": This is

an accurate picture of our life in this mortal flesh. Not only in times of danger and perilous situations, but we are constantly living under the sentence of death. We must all die sooner or later. But this life-threatening gloom that surrounds us needs not to bring our souls under the blight of fear and alarm. We have His presence with us. Nothing can harm us with Jesus so near. His rod and His staff bring us comfort. The shepherd's rod and staff are his means of protecting and guiding his sheep amid all the dangers around them. I believe that the Word and the Spirit make up the rod and staff which Jesus employs for the spiritual welfare and safety of His sheep today. He speaks to us by means of His Holy Spirit and through the avenue of His precious Word. These two witnesses are the agents of His communication with us. And these two, the Word and the Spirit, are united in aim, purpose, function and duration. They are ever with us. Through the influence of His Word and Holy Spirit we are not afraid in this valley of death. We are constantly reminded of what the Holy Scriptures speak concerning our blessed hope. His precious promises make up the foundation of our hope, and it is revealed unto us by His Holy Spirit, made real and precious to our hearts.

(Psalm 23:5), "*A table before mine enemies*": Many there will be that oppose us in our faith and following after our Shepherd. But though ten thousand people rise up against us, Jesus will meet our every need for strength and protection. He will supply us with food for our souls that will sustain us through all that the devil heaps upon us. "*Thou anointest my head with oil*": Oh, the richness and blessedness of the help of His Holy Spirit living within us! "*My cup runneth over*": Not only the food and the oil, but also the wine, the sweetness and spiritual drink of communion with Heaven, is given us in abundance.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

God "chose David his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands." Psalm 78:70-72.

David had experienced the life of a shepherd, both of the literal sheep of his father, and then of the rule of God's people. Thus he was able to visualize and understand the loving care that is in the heart of God as the great Shepherd. It is a wonderful blessing to be one of the Lord's sheep, as our lesson portrays. There were some who were not of the Lord's sheep, as Jesus told them in His day. "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep,..." John 10:26 But Jesus knows those who are His own, and they hear His voice and they follow Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the functions of a shepherd?
2. What does lying down in green pastures mean spiritually?
3. Why is quietness and soul rest so vital to the child of God?
4. How does Jesus restore the soul?
5. What does righteousness have to do with His name?
6. In what way are we in the shadow of death?
7. What is His rod and staff?
8. How does the Lord prepare a table for us before our enemies?
9. What is the oil that He anoints us with?
10. What kind of future do we have as the sheep of His pasture?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Along with other wonderful things that were foretold of Christ we find a wonderful prophecy of Him in Isaiah 40:11, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Also in Ezekiel 34:14, God promises in Christ to feed His people "...in a good pasture, there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed...." We also have our own dear Saviour's loving words concerning His sheep in John 10:9, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." One of the greatest things written about Him is



found in Hebrews 13:20-21: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." This thought of Christ as the great Shepherd and us as His sheep is a beautiful and comforting truth. Through the ages there have been many sad and woeful things that have befallen the saints in this world of trouble and strife. But we see Jesus at the right hand of God always in contact with His true and faithful sheep, answering their prayers and meeting their every need. He gave His life for them to be saved, He ever lives to intercede for them, and some day He will bring them all out to dwell with Him in that heavenly home forever and ever.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"If we could stand upon one of the hillsides of Judea towards the time of sunset, we should see, most probably, the shepherd, his crook in hand, not, as with us, driving the sheep on in front, but leading the flock, and calling them after him till all are safely gathered into the stone enclosures of the fold. Such is the picture we have to consider today—Jesus, the good Shepherd, going on before His sheep, whom He calls to follow in His steps, till He brings them to safety and rest.

"He knows His own sheep. This is such a precious thought, as showing the ground of security. He knows all about them when, perhaps, they know not Him. He knew Nathanael under the fig tree. He knew the street and the lodging house where Saul was. The sheep also bear the owner's mark by which the shepherd knows them.

"He calls His own sheep. In the East, the shepherd makes a peculiar call and the sheep hear and follow him. So it is with the followers of Jesus. Matthew heard Him at the receipt of custom, Peter at his fishing and Zaccheus in the sycamore tree.

"He gathers His own sheep, no matter where they are straying. He finds them and carries them on His shoulder—

the place of strength, or in His bosom—the place of love. He gathered one straying in outcast Samaria. (John 4:29.) He gathered another upon the cross. (Luke 23:42.) A third was found in a loathsome prison. (Acts 16:34.)”

—Taken from *The Titles of Our Lord*, by Rowley Hill.



AUGUST 5, 2001

### TRUE SACRIFICE TO GOD

Psalms 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.

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 Forevery beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I shew the salvation of God. Psalm 50:23.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God is not desiring animal sacrifices as they did in ancient times in Israel. He is desiring true worship, thanksgiving and praise from our hearts and loving faithful obedience to His Word.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 50:2), "*Out of Zion*": The term Zion represents the standard of excellence and holiness that God wills and provides for His Church, His people, to possess and live up to. Through the power of Jesus and His redeeming grace we can be transformed from the ruins of sin to be in His own image of perfect holiness. From this God wills to shine and be seen.

(Psalm 50:5), "*Saints*": Those who are godly, humble and obedient to the will of God; holy people. "*Covenant*": A binding and solemn agreement between two or more individuals or parties to do or keep from doing a certain thing.

(Psalm 50:8), "*I will not reprove thee*": God is not making the offering of animal sacrifices to be the requirement for His people to make. This is repeated in Isa. 1:11, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats." Those animal sacrifices were not what God was wanting.

(Psalm 50:14), "*Thanksgiving*": The Hebrew word here covers more ground than merely the giving of thanks. It means open confession, honest avowal, adoration, praise, worship and trust. "*Pay thy vows*": This means to render to God from your heart what you rightfully owe to Him. This includes obedience to His Word, praise and worship and love in fulness and completeness, devotion, honor and faithful service.

(Psalm 50:17), "*Instruction*": This includes chastisement, warning, discipline, control, obedience, reproof and restraint.

So many even in our day want to profess Christ with their lips but are unwilling to accept His discipline and reproof. This is wickedness of the worst kind.

(Psalm 50:23), "*Ordereth his conversation*: The Hebrew says simply, "sets a way." This means that to please God and be right with Him we must take command of our behavior, actions and manners of life, and turn them in accord with and in strict obedience to holy laws and commandments of His Word. This must be done along with believing in Christ Jesus and putting our trust in His shed blood. There is a blood washing for us to have from the guilt and condemnation of sin; and there is, also, a practical washing that we employ through obedience to the doctrines of His Word.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

This is one of the Psalms attributed to Asaph, who was in the days of David as a seer, one upon whom the Spirit of God rested, and who had visions and visitations of inspiration from God. (II Chron. 29:25.) It is surely a wonderful message from God to the sons of earth, making plain just what kind of offerings that are really well-pleasing and acceptable to Him. It also contains a severe warning to the wicked who would brazenly dare to profess godliness without being subject to the Lord's discipline. It is a message that everyone should take seriously in all honesty and submission. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What would you say is the main thing God wants us to know?
2. Why was God not satisfied with animal sacrifices?
3. Can you explain the reason why God requires sacrifice?
4. What kind of sacrifice does God really desire from us?
5. Is it possible to worship God with our lips only?
6. Can we expect for God to hear us in trouble if we do not obey?
7. Why is instruction and discipline so often cast off by people?
8. And why is instruction and discipline so very important to God?

9. What is going to befall those who will not obey God's Word?

10. What does offering praise and correcting our ways include?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

God, the mighty God, Jehovah, the true and living Father of mankind, means business. We must mean business, too. We must cover every area of responsibility that He has laid out in His Word. Israel had slipped into so much formality, void of heart worship, through their animal sacrifices and worship system. God was not pleased with their worship. He was looking for obedience to His holiness and loving worship and adoration from a sincere heart. He sought for praise and gratitude from an humble and contrite people. He was weary of talk, and wanted to behold uprightness and purity of heart and mind. He wanted the sacrifices of fervent love and devotion to Him. A man desires love and affection from his wife and children. He must show them love and the way to love. So God has shown to us His love and goodness. We must be careful to return to Him filial love and affection. We must embrace His discipline and have respect to His Word. It is a wonderful experience when a person submits to the discipline of the Lord and fully obeys the truth He has spoken. The glory comes down and heaven fills the soul. We must set our ways to please the Lord. It takes daily diligence and sincere submission. But it will pay off in blessings from God and escape in the day of wrath.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

We speak of sacrificing for God. But what is sacrifice? In light of the old law, perhaps we could say that sacrifice was giving part of one's earthly goods, or some other outward conformity to precepts. But what is sacrifice in light of Mount Calvary? Anything which we can give to God compared to what Christ gave on our behalf, is inconsequential. So instead of feeling like we have deprived ourselves when we give to God, we ought to feel honored that He would even accept our feeble gifts.

David Livingstone once wrote, "People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? Is that a sacrifice which brings its own best reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter? Away with the word in such a view, and with such a thought!"

—Wayne Murphey



AUGUST 12, 2001

### PRAYER AND PRAISE FOR THE AGED

Psalms 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.

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.

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 faileth.

13 Let them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. Proverbs 16:31.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The time of old age need not be oppressive with gloom and despair. It can be a ripening up for heaven, a happy time of spiritual strength and joy. Our last days can be our best.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 71:1), "*Confusion*": There are several words that describe this condition that the writer is seeking God to be able to avoid. These are disappointment, shame, dismay, discouragement, despair, being confounded, dishonor, disgrace, regret, remorse and condemnation.

(Psalm 71:3), "*Continually resort*": The Hebrew says simply, "always come to." How blessed the man who continually is coming in his heart and mind to God in prayer, earnest entreaties and praise! What a great void there is in the heart that has no communion with Heaven!

(Psalm 71:6), "*By thee have I been holden up from the womb*": The Hebrew says, "On you have I leaned from the womb." By this expression and several others in this psalm we can be assured that the writer had godly parents who helped to mold his heart and mind into this godly attitude and spirit.

(Psalm 71:20), The Hebrew rendering of this verse is so good: "Who has shown me distresses great and evil, You will turn me, make me live, and from the depths of the earth (the grave) You will turn, You will bring me up." Oh, how great is the blessed hope of the righteous!

(Psalm 71:21), "*Increase my greatness*": Whatever great-

ness a person has (whether for good or bad), it tends to be multiplied as one advances in age. If a man is a fool and he persists in his own way then he will be a greater fool, a derelict of dishonor and shame. But if he or she pursues after righteousness and seeks to do the will of God wholeheartedly, they will increase and abound more and more in godliness as age advances.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

There is no title nor heading to indicate who wrote this wonderful psalm. But, as it is with others of like state, the absence of the author's name does not affect the spiritual quality it possesses. It is very evident that this psalm was the sentiments and deep convictions of an elderly person. It is a godly man's outlook and upward look as he nears the closing of his mortal days. But to have this kind of spirit in one's declining years, one must start out for God in the time of youth. An ungodly person's spirit is nothing like what this psalm expresses. It is so important for a person to start out for God in their youth! We can see that this writer's heart is overflowing with praise and gratitude to the Lord. He has lived for God all of his life. In childhood he had the discipline and influence of the Lord given to him. Now as the years of his earthly pilgrimage are becoming fewer and more uncertain, he is so glad that he has lived his life for the Lord. We can see that decision and strong determination to continue on in the Christian way. He wants to increase more and more. His hope is bright. Soon his spirit shall leave this tenement of clay to go back to God who gave it. His earthly house will be deposited in the earth. But his hope takes in a resurrection of this mortal body. He is going to come out of that grave. The greatness of his faith, courage, decision, joy, peace, victory and all of the other worthy attributes of his beautiful life will ever increase in his soul. He is looking forward to a great reward, an eternal recompense for all he has suffered and endured for Jesus. Oh, what a wonderful future we have when we really live for the Lord and go all the way with Him! —Leslie C. Busbee



## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What are some of the fears that are met up with in old age?
2. When is the best and wisest time to prepare for old age?
3. How can a person overcome depression in their aged years?
4. What should one's mouth show forth all the day?
5. What should we desire the Lord to help us do ere we die?
6. What was the hope that the Psalmist had in the Lord?
7. Is the spirit that is portrayed here optional or required?
8. How can a person make his last days to be his best?
9. What does it mean to "continually resort" to the Lord?
10. What are the truths in our lesson that can help in old age?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Isaiah 46:3-4 says, "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb:... and *even* to hoar hairs will I carry *you*: I have made and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you*." Through all the various stages of this earthly life God has promised to bless and overshadow us if we will seek to follow Him with all of our heart. He will carry us and bear us up in His arms through all the dangers and difficulties of this mortal life. As a person advances in age his strength fails. He is just not what he used to be and he knows it and feels it. Oh, how needful it is to start out for the Lord early in life, in the time of strength and youth! The years will soon fly by. If we spend the years in the Christian life and in the service of the Lord, He will work to prepare us for the years of old age when our strength fails. But, on the other hand, if we live our years in spiritual poverty and the lusts of the body, time will pass very swiftly just the same. The earnest prayer of this psalm should be in our very hearts. We are all facing the infirmities of old age. Even the youth should recognize the fact that some day they will be old. Now in your youth is the time to remember your Creator and really get hold

of His saving grace and power. You need to really be born of the Spirit of God, be sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit, and go all the way in doing everything that the Bible teaches you to do. As time goes on you need to stay with your decision and make progress to deeper depths and higher heights in Him. Be fervent in spirit, be a real prayer warrior, be attentive and faithful to attend services with the saints as much and as often as you have the opportunity. Keep humble and down low at the feet of Jesus. Take time to be holy. Work at your experience, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "...Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10. —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"This psalm may well be called, 'The Old Man's Psalm.' Would that the portrait were more common! It is pleasant to look at in poetry; it is far more delightful to behold in fact. In this portrait of a godly old man, we may mark—

**"His earnest prayers.** The godly are ever given to prayer. It is their great resource. It is the never-failing means of obtaining mercy and grace. In old age, the cry of the godly is, 'I must pray more.'

**"His varied experiences.** Often, when looking back, there is dimness, or many things have fallen out of sight, or there is a confusion in the perspective; but events that have made a deep impression stand out clearly. Memory goes back to the time of youth, and traces life onward, with all the great changes, the dangers and adventures, the attempts and the achievements, the joys and sorrows. There are grateful recollections of kindness and help from many; but above all, there is praise to God for His goodness and wonderful works.

**"His settled convictions.** Experience is a great teacher. The man who has seen many days has learned much, and is able to bear witness as one that speaketh with authority. One thing that the godly old man testifies is that God is worthy of trust; another thing is that the Word of God is not a cunningly devised fable, but truth.

**"His unfaltering resolution.** The old have their regrets. They have also their times of trial and weakness. Instead of wavering, he will press on.

**"His glorious prospects.** For the old the end is near. They know that soon they must die, and have no more to do with anything under the sun. This seems a miserable condition. But for the godly there is not only hope in death, but the bright prospect of a blessed immortality."

—Taken from, *The Pulpit Commentary*



**AUGUST 19, 2001**

### **FERVENT PRAISE AND WORSHIP UNTO GOD**

Psalm 138:1 I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord.

6 Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The Lord will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, *endureth* for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off. Psalm 138:6.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Lord God almighty is worthy of all the love, adoration, submission, obedience, reverence, honour, and trust that can be rendered unto Him from the heart of man.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 138:1), *"I will praise thee"*: The Hebrew root word for "praise" here means to use or hold out the hand. It is an expression of worship by extending the hands. God is beholding our hands, not so in a literal sense, as in the heart that directs the hands in their work and activity. Paul said in I Timothy 2:8. "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Psa. 24:4 states that those who would ascend into the hill of the Lord or stand in His holy place must have clean hands and a pure heart. *"Before the gods"*: The word "gods" translated here from the Hebrew in the ordinary sense could mean gods (plural), but it also especially refers to the supreme God Himself. The presence of God was between the cherubims on the ark of the covenant. David had gone to great effort to bring the ark back from its place of exile to the city of Jerusalem. The worship of God was David's greatest joy in life.

(Psalm 138:2), *"Magnified thy word above all thy name"*: The Hebrew says, "You have magnified Your name, Your Word above all." The almighty God has moved in history to exalt and make great His name in the eyes of all who will be honest and willing to acknowledge it. His Word, also, God has proven to be true and unfailing and holy so that its influence and persuasion have far surpassed the myths and superstitions of this world's literature.

(Psalm 138:3), *"Strengthenedst me"*: The Hebrew says, "made me bold."

(Psalm 138:4), *"When they hear"*: The Hebrew says, "because they have heard." The Lord manifested His power and glory in the eyes of the nations through Israel. He brought them from Egyptian bondage and the hardness of Pharaoh's heart. And if Israel would have been submissive and obedient to the God that was sponsoring them, how much greater a witness they would have been!

(Psalm 138:5), *"Sing in the ways of Jehovah"*: This means that we can take the holy and clean way of the Lord for the course of our lives and be jubilant and happy while doing it. It is not a heavy yoke to take the humble way of obedience to the will of God. It is really a much heavier yoke to try to follow

the world and its vanities, to have friendship with the world and suffer from its unfaithfulness and guile. "*Great is the glory of the Lord*": The unseen spiritual beauty of the Lord shining in the inner man is not discerned by the carnal minded. But to those who find the treasure of the kingdom of God, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17), God reveals His glory and beauty so vividly. How sad that so many fail to catch the vision of the glory of God as is revealed by the Holy Spirit!

(Psalm 138:6), The Hebrew renders this verse: "Though Jehovah is exalted, yet He looks upon the lowly, but the proud He knows at a distance." God cannot be close in heart to a proud person, for He cannot mix with his spirit. But the lowly, the contrite, the meek and the humble He beholds with grace and draws near to work with them.

((Psalm 138:7), "*Thou wilt revive me*": The Hebrew says, "You give me life." In the midst of trouble and distress we can triumph because of the inward life that quickens and strengthens us.

(Psalm 138:8), "*Will perfect*": This means that God will complete and fully perform that work that He is doing in the soul. As Paul expressed his confidence in the Philippian brethren, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform (finish or complete) it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. "...Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12-13.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

There is very little question concerning the author of this sublime and Holy Spirit inspired psalm. It is the writing of David, the man whom God bore witness as being a man after His own heart. (Acts 13:22.) We have no definite knowledge concerning when or in what stage of David's life it was written. But, considering the course of David's sojourn in this world,

we can recognize some of the situations that he was in that could have helped to inspire his heart with these expressions of worship and adoration to the Lord Jehovah. The language of this psalm carries such fervency and a devoted attitude of worship that is worthy of our earnest imitation. What David wrote here can be the deep heartfelt disposition of our hearts, also.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What has our God done for us that we should praise Him for?
2. Why does God want His Name and Word magnified over all?
3. Can we worship toward God's holy temple today? How?
4. What can God's strength in the soul do for us?
5. What will people do when they truly hear God's Word?
6. Why are God's ways so good so as we can sing in them?
7. What kind of glory does the Lord have for us today?
8. Why does the Lord have respect unto the lowly?
9. Who are the enemies that we need deliverance from?
10. What is it that we need to have the Lord to perfect in us?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

What a wonderful life the service and worship of the true God will give to us! If we will really be a true worshipper of God with our whole heart we will see many wonderful and outstanding blessings. People need their spiritual eyes anointed with the eyesalve of the Holy Spirit so that they can see the wonderful works of the Lord. We need His strength in our souls. Let us cry unto the Lord. Your mortal strength is weakness and you at your best state are altogether vanity. Let us open our ears and hearts to the gracious words of His mouth! Oh, how they fall as the rain from heaven upon the thirsty ground! Oh, the message they will bring to us! The Word of the Lord will enlighten our eyes that we may be able to see how good and blessed are the ways that God would have us follow in this life. His way is holy. His way is an humble way, His way is peace. How much better are God's ways than our ways! Too many are so proud and confident in their own ways

and are not willing to humble down to walk with Him. We can take His ways and be happy. Let us seek to be lowly and contrite before Him. Pride is so deceptive. We need to get wise to its poison. God can bring perfection and completeness far more satisfying than all of our selfish devices could ever do. Let us stay with the Lord, for be assured that He will keep working with us and never give up in His great plan and purpose for our eternal welfare.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

A comforting thought in our lesson today is the fact that God really does care about us. In I Peter 5:6-7, the apostle wrote to the Christians, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." It is our duty to keep ourselves humble, realizing our worth before God, and then we can feel His keeping care in our lives.

A Hindu once said to a missionary, "We must not entangle God in human relationships. If He were entangled He would be involved, unhappy, imperfect, and therefore not God." This may be good reasoning concerning someone who is limited, but we have a God who "is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens."

There are several things that give us reason to know that God cares and has respect for us. For one thing, He dared to get involved in our problems. Have you ever depended on someone to help you in some manner and felt that they would do so as long as it didn't cost them time, effort, or above all, reputation? Christ expended all of these for our sake. He left the glories of heaven to spend 33 years in this sin-darkened world. Three of those years were spent in life-draining effort to help the needy. And His reputation was continually sullied by those who opposed Him. After this, can we doubt that He cares for us and will condescend to help us even now? We do not serve a spasmodic God, but one who is the same yesterday, today and forever. (Heb. 13:8.)

—Wayne Murphey



**AUGUST 26, 2001**

**THE REWARD OF CALLING UPON GOD**

Psalm 116:1 I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice  
*and* my supplications.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will  
I call upon *him* as long as I live.

3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of  
hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

4 Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I  
beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 Gracious *is* the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God *is*  
merciful.

6 The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and  
he helped me.

7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt  
bountifully with thee.

8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes  
from tears, *and* my feet from falling.

9 I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly  
afflicted:

11 I said in my haste, All men *are* liars.

12 What shall I render unto the Lord *for* all his benefits  
toward me?

13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name  
of the Lord.

14 I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence  
of all his people.

15 Precious in the sight of the Lord *is* the death of his  
saints.

**MEMORY VERSE:** I will offer to thee the sacrifice of  
thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. Psalm  
116:17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God is truly a rewarder of them that  
diligently and earnestly call upon Him. He has deliverance and  
help for every need that we have in this life, but His most  
wonderful benefits are those that have to do with the salvation  
of our precious souls.



## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psa. 116:1), "*Love*": Strong affection, attachment, or devotion; a fond and tender feeling. "*Supplication*": An earnest and humble request or petition in prayer.

(Psa. 116:2), "*Call upon*": To summon for aid or attention, to address earnestly, and to lift up one's voice in an effort to be heard.

(Psa. 116:3), The Hebrew says, "The cords of death surrounded me, and the straits of the grave found me; sorrow and distress I find." This woeful plight is true with every person, but very few seem to be aware of it.

(Psa. 116:4), "*Soul*": The life and vitality that is given to every human being by the breath of the Almighty. The real soul is spiritual, the inner man, which can live only through an experience of being associated and in touch with the Spirit of God.

(Psa. 116:5), "*Gracious*": Having or showing kindness, courtesy and charm; merciful and compassionate, especially to inferiors.

(Psa. 116:6), "*Simple*": This word basically means single, not complicated or mixed with other elements, easy to deal with, plain, not luxurious or elegant, without guile or deceit, innocent and humble.

(Psa. 116:7), "*Rest*": Quietness; with no turmoil, fear, anxiety, gloom or disturbance of any kind. "*Deal bountifully*": Treated well, benefited.

(Psa. 116:11), "*Haste*": Alarm. "*Liars*": Man in his depraved nature is essentially dishonest, deceitful and not to be trusted. Only by the saving grace of the Lord Jesus can a man be changed from this corrupt nature and be made upright and trustworthy. There is much trouble and alarm today because of the deceitful lusts that rule mankind.

(Psa. 116:14), "*Vows*": That which is promised or under obligation to give or pay.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a psalm which is a testimony and prayer of a soul who had experienced the deliverance of

Jehovah from sin and death. It is a deliverance that every person needs to receive and experience from God. This deliverance from the Lord caused such love and gratitude to flow from the heart. The author of this psalm is not known, but the Spirit that inspired it is well known to those who have experienced this wonderful blessing of the Lord. Verse 10 is quoted by the apostle Paul in II Cor. 4:13-14 where Paul was talking about bearing in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, with death working in him while life was working in those he was ministering to. "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." It is a sublime testimony of God's marvelous grace and salvation and the love that it inspired in the heart of one thus redeemed. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the reason why the writer said he loved the Lord?
2. What does God's answer to prayer cause us to want to do?
3. What kind of trouble and peril was the psalmist in?
4. Will we receive anything from God if we fail to call upon Him?
5. Why is it necessary to be brought low before the Lord helps us?
6. What were the three things the writer was delivered from?
7. What kind of life will we live if we walk "before" the Lord?
8. What does it mean to "take the cup of salvation?"
9. Name some of the things that we need to pay unto the Lord.
10. Why is the death of His saints so precious to the Lord?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It is a wonderful experience to call upon the Lord in the time of distress and need and have Him respond with help and deliverance. It is a very valuable experience for children to

have in their growing up years. Parents who are godly and know the worth of prayer have a priceless heritage to pass along to the children in this regard. It is a blessed thing to be convicted of sin and the sentence of death and hell. Christian in the *Pilgrim's Progress* acquired the burden of sin on his back by reading in the Bible, seeing therein that he must die and go to the judgment. Worldly Wiseman scorned him for reading it. So it is today. Old fashioned conviction for sin and eternal death is very rare now. The pains of death, hell and the grave are very seldom experienced and felt. People are too taken up by the influence of ungodliness and worldly wisdom. They are not taught what sin is. The Bible is still plain on those subjects but people do not catch the vision. But for those who sense their need and call upon the Lord there is deliverance. Faith takes hold with the gospel and the Word of God preached. We can reach out and take hold of salvation and live a consecrated life for Him thereafter. We need not fear death any longer. The sting of death has been destroyed in the salvation of Jesus. What we feared in a lost and undone condition of death and the great beyond is turned to be a precious thing, hoped and yearned for. Surely we have much to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving for. We owe the Lord everything and we will render it all up to Him in an acceptable sacrifice of our bodies to Him and to His service. We will walk before Him in white, in holiness and righteousness before Him in the land of the living all the days of our life. We will trust Him to guide and preserve us in the simplicity of Christ and the gospel from the evils of this deceitful age. And we will maintain that same spirit of faith that believes the promises of God and will not be ashamed to speak and bear witness for Christ and His precious truth.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" Psa. 116:12. This is a deeply personal and a very needful thing to consider.

Before we decide what we should render unto God, it is helpful to enumerate His benefits toward us. This the Psalmist did in the 116<sup>th</sup> chapter, and they are these.

"...he hath inclined his ear unto me." God does not ignore His children, but like an anxious father, bends His head towards the earth to listen to the cry of His children. What a wonderful privilege to have the listening, sympathetic ear of God.

"For thou has delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." This is an experience accessible to us because of the great sacrifice made by Christ on Calvary.

"The Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Out of God's own fullness, and in infinite grace, He has supplied all our needs.

"Thou hast loosed my bonds." The bonds of sin, doubt, fear and despair have been broken and have fallen away. We have liberty to serve with gladness our King and Deliverer.

Now, let us again ask ourselves, "What shall I render unto the Lord?" Here is how the Psalmist answered. I will love him, (v. 1) I will call upon Him, (v. 2) I will rest in Him, (V. 7) I will walk with Him, (v. 9) I will speak for him, (v. 10) I will take from him (v.13) and I will offer to him. (v. 17-18) I think God would be pleased with these answers, don't you? —Wayne Murphey

LEH RB 40B DRB LSH 20R

**SEPTEMBER 2, 2001**

### **FORGIVENESS FOR SIN AND DIVINE GUIDANCE THROUGH LIFE**

Psalm 32:1 *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*

2 *Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*

3 *When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.*

4 *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.*

5 *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*

6 *For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in*

a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

7 Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

9 Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are* upright in heart.

**MEMORY VERSE:** I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Psalm 32:8.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God has made provision through His Son Jesus for us to be forgiven of all sin and transgression we are guilty of. This will put us in condition of heart to trust in Him for protection and guidance on our journey of life.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 32:1), "*Blessed*": An exclamation: "How happy!"

(Psalm 32:2), "*Imputeth*": To charge. "*Gulle*": Deceit, dishonesty.

(Psalm 32:3), "*Bones waxed old*": This expresses the trouble of guilt and conviction for sin, the heart weighed down with condemnation and fear of God's wrath. The bones represent the hardness and strength of the rebellious nature that is crumbling and melting under the hand of the Spirit of God. "*Roaring*": This is moaning and groaning for sorrow and anguish of heart because of the vileness of himself before God.

(Psalm 32:4), "*Molsture*": The vigor and sweetness of the pleasures of sin fade and disappear, leaving only the remorse and condemnation and the sense of God's grief and displeasure.

(Psalm 32:8), "*I will guide thee with mine eye*": We surely

need to be guided by something greater than our human way of thinking. We need to have spiritual vision, to be able to see things in the light of God and in the way He looks at things. If we will come to terms with God and get things squared up with Him, we can find, through prayer and giving good heed to the Word of God, light and understanding of His holy will. In this way we can be guided by His eye. The Hebrew says, "I will counsel on you my eye." God's eye is upon the righteous, and beholds all about us, and through His Holy Word and Spirit we can be led safely though the dangers and perils of our journey through this wicked world.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The heading of this Psalm says, Of David, Maschil. This means that it is an instructive poem to be studied and closely observed. It is a great expression of the perfect redemption of salvation in Christ. It is thought to have been written in reference to David's sin and repentance concerning Bathsheba, the wife of one of his soldiers, Uriah. Paul quoted from the first two verses of this Psalm in Romans 4:6, saying, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." This Psalm shows the deep conviction that rests upon a person for sin. It is the result of a godly attitude, this conviction and remorse for sin. Too many hardened souls drink sin down like water and feel no guilt and condemnation. Oh, what a deplorable condition for a man to be in! There will be no confession and repentance in such a heart! But for those who let the fear of God and true wisdom come within there will be that godly sorrow and repentance unto salvation. The forgiven soul finds new life and a blessed refuge in God from the floods of trouble that come. He can find guidance in the way that God wants him to go. Mercy and songs of deliverance will surround him all along the path of life. Surely it is a great blessing to be clear with God and have Him to guide us through this sinful dark world.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does old time Holy Spirit conviction do for a sinful soul?
2. Is it possible for people to be in sin and feel no conviction?
3. Why is sin and condemnation such a dreadful thing?
4. Why must we confess and acknowledge our sins to God?"
5. Will there be any forgiveness if we refuse to confess our guilt?
6. What are some of the benefits obtained in being forgiven?
7. Why do we need a hiding place?
8. Why do we need to be guided by God's eye?
9. Why do we not need a bit and a bridle as a horse or mule does?
10. Can you testify of what being forgiven means to you?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Oh, how blest to be forgiven, and how sweet to have no guile,  
To be ready, yes, for heaven 'neath the Saviour's loving smile!  
Just to know your sin is covered, charged not with iniquity,  
With His goodness o'er you hovered, and your spirit is set free.  
Once in stubbornness we lingered, keeping all our fears within,  
While our thoughts we toyed and fingered, seeking to escape  
our sin.

Days and weeks passed by, God waited with His mighty hand  
sore laid,

And we groaned while unabated was our trouble's piercing  
blade.

Day and night His hand was heavy, and the sweetness of sin's  
stride

Dwindled neath a painful levy and the folly of our pride.

Finally we could no longer hold our sad confession in,  
Deep within was painful hunger His forgiveness sweet to win.  
So we came in mournful weeping, bowing at His mercy seat,  
And with sorrow on us heaping, cast our souls down at His  
feet.

Sin had lost its binding pleasure, gone was all the world's vain charm,  
 For we sought a richer treasure 'neath the shelter of His arm.  
 There we wept and bowed our spirit, poured our hearts to Him in prayer.  
 Til His voice, we seemed to hear it, spoke forgiveness to us there.  
 What rejoicing filled our being when we knew our sins were gone,  
 What new visions we were seeing, higher plane to travel on.  
 Troubles came our pathway flooding with adversity and pain,  
 But we found His joys a budding, and His peace did sweetly reign.  
 We had found a place of hiding, a retreat from fear and harm,  
 He surrounded us, abiding, shielding us with His great arm.  
 And a promise then He gave us, "I will guide thee with mine eye!",  
 As He died to bless and save us, Now He'll keep us till we die.  
 To the wicked is much sorrow, but to us who trust in Him,  
 There will be no dread tomorrow, and our hopes will never dim.  
 Let's be glad, rejoice for ever, shout for joy, ye pure in heart,  
 We have peace a flowing river, and have found that better part!  
 —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Christ is redemption to us, only as He actually redeems and delivers our nature from sin. If He is not the law and spring of a new spirit of life, He is nothing to us. 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,'—as many; no more."  
 —Horace Bushnell



SEPTEMBER 9, 2001

### WORSHIP AND SUPPLICATION UNTO THE LORD

Psalms 86:1 Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me: for I am poor and needy.

2 Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.



3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.  
4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For thou, Lord, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

6 Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

8 Among the gods *there is* none like unto thee, O Lord; neither *are there any works* like unto thy works.

9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.

10 For thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things: thou *art* God alone.

11 Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

12 I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.

14 O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent *men* have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.

15 But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see *it*, and be ashamed: because thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Psalm 86:5.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Our hearts are full of love and devotion to the Lord our God, for He is so gracious and full of goodness and has delivered us from eternal destruction. We look to Him with confidence that He will work all things for our

good and deliver us from all the evil that Satan should trouble us with.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Psalm 86:1), "*Hear me*": Heed, pay attention, respond, answer.

(Psalm 86:2), "*Holy*": Godly, pious, reverent, saintly.

(Psalm 86:3), "*Daily*": All the day.

(Psalm 86:8), "*Gods*": The Hebrew word "*Elohtym*," which is often used to denote the supreme God, here refers to magistrates and civil rulers.

(Psalm 86:11), "*Unite my heart to fear thy name*": Join or make one my inner being with the reverence and honour of Thy name. This should be the sincere desire of our hearts. Proper respect and reverence for God and His holy name is indispensable to obtaining the favor with Him.

(Psalm 86:12), "*Pralse*": To worship and revere with extended hands. Oh, how worthy is our God of all the adoration and loving devotion that we can possibly render unto Him!

(Psalm 86:13), "*Lowest hell*": The Hebrew word is "*Sheol*" which means the same as the Greek word "*hades*," which means the realm of the dead or departed spirits. To be delivered from "*Sheol*" means to be resurrected from the dead to life again. This is the deliverance that Christ brought to us in His death, burial and resurrection from the dead.

(Psalm 86:14), "*Have not set thee before them*": These people who persecute the true saints of God are those who have something else besides the fear of the Lord before their eyes. They have self, wealth, pleasure and worldly gain set before them instead of what would please the Lord.

(Psalm 86:16), "*Turn unto me*": Face, appear, look and behold. God sees everyone but only those who are devoted to His fear will be favored with a look of compassion and gracious help.

(Psalm 86:17), "*Token*": A sign or evidence that shows favor and acceptance. "*Holpen*": Helped.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today is one of the psalms that is labeled "A

prayer of David." It could very well have been written during the time when he was persecuted and hunted by King Saul. It is the expression of the heart that is yearning for God's Providence to bring about deliverance from affliction and adversity. He, sensing his poor and needy state, prays for God's response to his needs. He seeks to be preserved and for his soul to be made to rejoice and be glad. He constantly was lifting up his soul before God as that of utmost importance. He knew that the Lord was good and gracious, and would be his helper. This psalm is full of expressions of worship and honor to God. How important it is for us to have this kind of attitude and spirit! To be delivered from sin and its consequences of death and damnation is the greatest blessing a man can have in this world. Oh, the material wealth and riches are nothing! It is the spiritual blessings for the soul that is of utmost importance. David desired a token to be seen in him by those who were persecuting him. And God granted it to him time and time again. After David spared Saul's life the second time (1 Sam. 26:25.) Saul returned to his place and ceased to pursue David. God will give us who are trusting and obeying Him in the midst of trials and tribulations a token for good that will shut the mouths of the scoffers. Let us be faithful to Him and patiently endure the difficult times. He will bring us in His own good time to a wealthy place.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is it so important to count ourselves as poor and needy?
2. What must we render to God to have Him to preserve us?
3. How can we properly "lift up" our souls unto the Lord?
4. What is the Lord's true attitude to those who call upon Him?
5. What is the Lord worthy of from all the nations He created?
6. What does it mean for our hearts to be united to His fear?
7. For what reason should we praise the Lord above all else?

8. From what do we escape in being delivered from hell?
9. What must we do if we expect the Lord to "turn" unto us?
10. Why do we need to pray for God to give us a token for good?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It is so important for us to be fully aware of our true condition of poverty and need! God's Word speaks of this so often, not only in the psalm, but in other places. A person who realizes their true, poor state will be more inclined to be godly and sense the value of God's favor. We must live prayerful lives, continually resorting to God for help and guidance. We must pray every day and all day, praying without ceasing. God is easily and readily pacified and forgiving. All we need to do is to humble ourselves and be submissive to Him. He knows how to work out our deliverance.

Oh, how we praise the Lord for saving us from sin, death, and eternal torment! Jesus came to save us from eternal loss. He will deliver our souls from the lowest hell. He, Himself, suffered the awful death on the cross and was resurrected to life again. This He did so that we could share in that same risen life. We can be raised from the dead state of sin unto a life of holiness and righteousness. And we are given a lively hope of being resurrected from the grave to be with Christ in that beautiful world of eternal life to come. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

A certain patient in a mental hospital thought of himself as a God-maker. When visitors came to his ward, he would take from his locker a block of wood. The block was cubed shaped and great care had been taken to make the edges square and the surface smooth. After displaying the block, the patient would say, "This is my God. I made him. I worship him daily."

Although there aren't many who reduce God's stature to a block of wood, there is a tendency in people to elevate humanity and make God less than deity. When men feel equal

to God, or even near it, they will fail to humble themselves in true worship. True worship to God causes us to feel honored that He would even want to dwell in our hearts, and the depth of our worship to God is to a great extent in comparison to our faith in His abilities.

—Wayne Murphey



**SEPTEMBER 16, 2001**

### **TRUSTING IN GOD'S GOODNESS FOR DELIVERANCE**

Psalm 31:1 In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.

2 Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.

3 For thou *art* my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.

5 Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

6 I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the Lord.

15 My times *are* in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

18 Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

19 *Oh* how great *is* thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

20 Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed *be* the Lord: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city.

22 For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

23 O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. Psalm 31:5.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Regardless of the adverse conditions we may encounter in life and the pressures against us from the ungodly, our gracious God will stand by us if we will prove faithful to Him.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 31:1), "*Let me never be ashamed*": The Hebrew expression is: "Let me not be ashamed forever." There are other places where this is expressed. There are times when because of the reproach of men the children of God suffer shame. But for the faithful this shame is but temporary. It will not be forever. God will bring us out in His time.

(Psalm 31:3), "*Lead me, and guide me*": Both of these words are from the same Hebrew word. The Lord gave me a thought once while I was pondering an expression of another brother's prayer when he asked the Lord to "lead, guide and direct." To lead is to go before and for us to follow. To guide is to be with us giving us counsel and knowledge of the right way. And to direct us is to be behind us, watching our path and offering warnings and instructions concerning the direction we should go. I quickly assumed that we surely do need Him to lead, guide and direct us. The brother's prayer was all right.

(Psalm 31:5), "*Commit*": To give in charge or trust; deliver for safe keeping.

(Psalm 31:6), "*Hated*": We are not to personally and maliciously hate anyone. The proper attitude for the child of God toward people who regard lying vanities is a combination of righteous indignation and pity. We hate the sin and ungodly way, but we love the sinner. "*Regard lying vanities*": The Hebrew says "keep idols of worthlessness." To the true worshipper of God all who worshipped idols and false gods were an abomination.

(Psalm 31:15), "*My times*": The times and seasons of our life. These include the good and enjoyable as well as the

adverse and unpleasant. They are in God's hands for Him to change and bring to pass according to His own wisdom and decree.

(Psalm 31:20), "*Pride of man*" The Hebrew labels this as plots and snares. "*Strife of tongues*": The scalding, injurious slander and confusion that rages in this cursed society where so many speak from the bitterness that is in their corrupt and defiled heart.

(Psalm 31:21), "*Strong city*": The Hebrew says, "besieged city."

(Psalm 31:22), "*In my haste*": Oh, the trouble we bring upon ourselves because of hasty actions and words! These can be sudden reactions in times of adversity, words of anger and harsh criticism, and expressions of despair and unbelief. Blessed is the man who learns the dire lesson of not speaking all of his mind, but keeping it in till afterwards. (Prov. 29:11.)

(Psalm 31:23), "*Proud doer*": The doer of pride.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today is from the 31st Psalm. Not having space to include all the 25 verses, we have selected a few of the choice expressions as our study. David is generally attributed to be the author, although some have seen some similarity in the writings of Jeremiah. But regardless of who the author is, it can be applied to so many of the trials and sufferings that have been the common lot of the saints of God down through the ages. Verse 5, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit," was uttered by the Lord Jesus (Luke 23:46) as He was dying on the cross, as it probably has been by many others in their last moment. The 15th verse, "My times are in thy hand," is another valuable thought. Our times are not in our power or control. Jesus said that the times and seasons God hath put in His own power. (Acts 1:7.) This is one of those special places in life where we must learn to trust completely in God and His wisdom. Let Him order and bring to pass the seasons of our life. If we had the power to control and bring to pass as we would, we would probably get things in a real mess. But God is wise and needs not our earth-dimmed vision. He speaks in verses 19 and 20 about His great goodness and the secret of

His presence where He will hide and keep us secretly from the devices of the enemy and from the strife of tongues that is continually raging about us. We enter the secret of His presence in the sanctified and Holy Spirit filled life. "Within the second vail, oh, holy, holy place. With joyful lips we tell the fulness of His grace!" It is our privilege to live daily in the secret of His presence, hid away with Christ in God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What can we expect from God if we truly trust and obey Him?
2. Why do we need the Lord as a rock and fortress?
3. Why do we need to commit our spirit into God's keeping?
4. Why is it best for our times and seasons to be in His hand?
5. What has God laid up for them that fear Him?
6. What does it mean to trust in God "before the sons of men?"
7. Where can we find the "secret of His presence?"
8. How can we be affected and harmed by the "pride of man?"
9. What is the "strife of tongues," and why be kept from such?
10. What is sure about the Lord's dealings with mankind?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

There are many things that we will meet in life that are harmful and destructive to our spiritual lives. To be preserved and kept from these influences and be guided in the true ways of God is truly of the Lord. We need to look straight through to Him for the salvation and keeping of our souls. Our dear Saviour became obedient to the death of the cross. It was not easy for Him to face and endure the shame and suffering of such a death. But He yielded all into the Father's will and committed the keeping of His spirit to Him. I Peter 4:19 says, "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful



Creator." God has control of everything. He is ruling the hearts and lives of the faithful and true. Our times are in His hand. His sovereign will and purpose is supreme above all others. He can bring about our deliverance and blessings no matter what kind of opposition and adversity we suffer. For the soul who is suffering in trials and temptation He is storing up in reserve a great blessing of rich reward. Being faithful in the heated furnace of affliction will bring us a great recompense. The history of God's people proves this to be so. Besides those we have on record, there are many more who have proven God faithful in the trying times of mortal life. All the confusion in the world concerning God and the Bible is so distressing. Man's pride and uncrucified self asserts itself on every side, bringing sorrow and frustration. But there is a place where we can be hid away from the pressure of these things. Being holy and filled with the Holy Spirit gives us access to that within the second veil and communion with heaven. The Christian life is a hidden life, that within the soul, and can be unaffected by all the rubbish without. Let us draw near and seek for that hidden life in that besieged city that will never fall. The Lord will preserve the faithful and the doer of pride will not escape his due reward.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in Thy righteousness."

"The word translated 'deliver' is exactly the same as the word for 'save.' I always call this Martin Luther's verse. When he was a monk in the Augustinian monastery, he was in great distress about his soul, and he tried by all kinds of penances to make some sort of atonement for his own sins, but he became more and more miserable and distressed.

"Then one day he was reading the Latin psalter and came upon this verse, 'In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: save me in Thy righteousness.' Luther stopped and looked at it and said, 'What a strange verse. I can understand how God can damn me in His righteousness; how He can banish me from His presence in His righteousness, for my sin deserves that; but if He saves me, surely He must save

me in His mercy, not in His righteousness.' But there was the word, 'Save me in Thy righteousness,' and Luther began mulling it over in his mind. He was led to turn to the Epistle to the Romans and read, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.' Not the mercy of God, merely, not the grace of God, simply, but the righteousness of God. The gospel shows how God can be righteous and yet justify ungodly sinners."

—Taken from writings by H. A. Ironside



**SEPTEMBER 23, 2001**

### **THE GREAT MERCY OF GOD TOWARD THOSE THAT FEAR HIM**

Psalm 103:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with *good things*; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

17 But the mercy of the Lord *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19 The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. Psalm 103:11.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** If we will walk in godly fear and strive to please the Lord according to His precious Word, we can look for His goodness and mercy to be upon us all the days of our earthly life.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Psalm 103:1), "*Bless*": The Hebrew word basically means "to kneel." This will include expressions such as worship, adore, praise, submit, obey, honor, reverence and cherish.

(Psalm 103:2), "*Benefits*": Things that God bestows in His kind and gracious treatment of mankind.

(Psalm 103:5), The Hebrew reads: "Who satisfies your desire with the good; your youth is renewed like the eagle." Adam Clarke applies this to the molting of birds, (especially to the eagle because of its great size), in which the old feathers fall out and a new plumage is taken on. The Christian life through the refreshing and renewing work of the Holy Spirit does not diminish nor weaken with age, but is renewed in the inner man day by day. II Cor. 4:16.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

This Psalm 103 is generally attributed to David as the author, but is meant to be a living reality in the heart and life of every true child of God. Adam Clarke comments that "it is a Psalm of unmatched sweetness and excellence; contains the

most affectionate sentiments of gratitude to God for His mercies; and the most consoling motives to continue to trust in God, and be obedient to Him." This Psalm is filled with inspiration and comfort to the sincere soul who seeks wholeheartedly to please the Lord. It portrays God as a God of mercy, love, and kindly help, and not as a stern demanding Monarch who has no sympathy nor feeling. The writer especially stresses the great mercy of God toward those who fear Him. No such mercy is promised to anyone who deliberately refuses to reverence and respect God and His Word. We who are of the dust need to deeply sense our frailty and need of the mercy and goodness of God. It is vain pride that blinds a man and causes him to overlook the real need for God's help. He is closing his eyes to many undeniable proofs of God's existence, so God is very apt to close His great eye of mercy toward him. God's kingdom ruleth over all and He is faithful to those who fear Him while He is faithful to punish the rebellious.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. In what ways can we truly bless God in an acceptable way?
2. What are the benefits of God mentioned in this Psalm?
3. What are some of the good things He satisfies us with?
4. In what way does He renew our youth?
5. Why is His great mercy promised only to those who fear Him?
6. What does it mean to truly fear God?
7. What causes a person to not fear God?
8. What does the fear of God cause us to do about His Word?
9. What covenant does God want us to keep with Him?
10. In what way does God's kingdom rule over all?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Our relationship with God, our heavenly Father, is a loving one. He is a God of love, compassion, mercy and goodness. He desires that there be in our hearts toward Him

love and fervent devotion. So He works in a positive way to inspire this kind of affection in our hearts. He daily loads us with benefits. (Psalm 68:19.) We must not be unmindful or forgetful of these benefits. We must never lose the sense of their preciousness. He forgives, heals, redeems, crowns and satisfies. What more could we desire? He blesses us in a temporal way, and also in a spiritual way. He cares for us for both soul and body. He is good, and doeth good. (Psa. 119:68.) He is gracious and kind. He is forbearing and long suffering. He deals with us according to His mercy and not according to our faults and iniquities. His forgiveness is complete. Once He forgives He never throws it up to us again. All this is sure to us if we will hold Him in proper esteem, honor and reverence. We must fear Him and be submissive and easily influenced by His Word. He that disregards and fails to be moved by His Word will not make it with Him. It is only right in the light of all He does and has to give to us that we fear and tremble before Him and show Him proper respect and honor. If we will be aware of our weakness and sore need of Him and confess and acknowledge our dependence on Him, it will help us to have the true fear of God in our hearts. It is when people get self-sufficient and confident in their own selves that they lose the fear of God. Let us consider seriously the truth in our lesson that His throne is in the heavens and that His kingdom is everlasting and all powerful, ruling over all. Let us praise Him and be thankful unto Him, and bless His name now and always.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." Psalm 103:11.

The Hebrew word "heaven" in this verse is translated as, "Where the celestial bodies revolve."

Consider some comparisons between the height of our human mercies and those of the God of the heavens.

If we are merciful in the midst of daily annoyances, we feel we have done something extraordinary, but our mercies are nothing compared to God's.

I recently heard a man describe a situation which most of

us can relate to. He spoke of driving home from a busy day at work and stopping to pick up some items at the super market. With his purchases, he hurried to the express lane to check out. There before him was someone with obviously more than the 10 item limit. The man said he reacted in the way most people do. He began counting the items in the overloaded cart and as he did so, he said he felt like a siren went off in his head and he became the "grocery police." But he was "merciful" and refrained from chiding the offender.

If we are able to control ourselves and our tongues in the ordinary trials of life, like the situation described above, we probably feel we have shown mercy. In actuality, we have done little in comparison to the compassion God has on His people, not to mention the mercy He shows to the unbelieving. Our mercy, compared to God's, is like reaching the top of a fence post when all the sky is still stretched above us.

God's mercy offered up His only begotten Son to a despised death, and His Star of Mercy still gleams above us against a heavenly background of grace.

—Wayne Murphey



**SEPTEMBER 30, 2001**

### **THE BLESSING OF A GODLY FAMILY**

Psalm 127:1 Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

2 *It is* vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep.

3 Lo, children *are* an heritage of the Lord: *and* the fruit of the womb *is* *his* reward.

4 As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth.

5 Happy *is* the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

Psalm 128:1 Blessed *is* every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

5 The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. Psalm 127:3.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** A family who loves and worships God as the center of their home will enjoy His rich blessings of peace and love. Children will be welcomed and enjoyed as a special inheritance and reward from the Lord.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 127:2), "*Bread of sorrows*": The Hebrew says, "bread of painful toils." "*So he giveth his beloved sleep*": While so many are labouring and toiling in worldly strife for things that will soon pass away, the beloved saints of the Lord enjoy soul rest and repose by believing His Word and will come out way ahead of the ungodly in spiritual things.

(Psalm 127:3), "*Children*": How sad that so many look upon the fruit of the womb as undesirable. Those who abort the unborn, taking the life of the innocent, are guilty before God and are missing out on one of life's greatest joys and blessings. It shows the abnormal and warped society that we live among. People who love and worship the Lord God and have His love and peace in their hearts are desirous to have little children, regardless of how much work and trouble is involved. Children are a blessing to a godly home.

(Psalm 127:4), "*Arrows...children of the youth*": Each child of a mature and godly young married couple who have God in their life will have a great potential to grow up to be productive, beneficial, and even a weapon against ungodliness and unbelief.

(Psalm 127:5), "*Quiver full*": This is speaking of the fruitful wife, as a quiver with potential of bearing a goodly number of children. "*Speak with the enemies in the gate*": This denotes the children of a godly home will be apt to be leaders and vessels of honor, not only in position to be magistrates to contend with lawbreakers, but may fill the highest honour of being a herald of the everlasting gospel of Christ.

(Psalm 128:5), "*Bless thee out of Zion*": A godly home where both parents are partakers of the salvation of Christ and the fulness of the Holy Spirit will be blessed with great blessings from His Church and of His holy saints. You will find success and happiness on every side. The grandchildren will only add to the glory and the blessing therein.

(Psalm 128:6), "*Peace upon Israel*": This should be a separate sentence and a benediction: "Peace be upon Israel!"

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

For our lesson today and the final lesson in this series of studies from the blessed book of Psalms we feel greatly inspired to consider two of the shorter Psalms that are closely related, even considered by some to be part of each other. These are Psalms 127 and 128. They have to do much with the family status of a godly man and the wonderful blessings that God pours out upon a family who puts God as the center of their home. These two Psalms are part of the succession of Psalms that are entitled "Songs of Degrees." The clearer definition of the word "Degrees" is expressed as "steps or stairs for ascending upward." There are several different ideas from various sources, some of them quite ancient, about what these are about. There is good indication that they, (being 15 in number, Psalm 120 to Psalm 134), might correspond with the 15 steps by which the priests ascended into the temple. But the existence of such steps and practices cannot be proved. These Psalms have been attributed to various authors, including David, and there is some thought that they were written by someone during the Babylonian captivity, as it seems evident that some actually were. But, as we have said before, the authors of these Psalms are not important as much as the fact



that they were inspired by the Holy Spirit and their expressions hold much spiritual content that are so edifying to us today.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Is it very likely that a person will seek to build or establish a home without the Lord working with him?
2. Which is easier in the long run: To deny self and be submissive to God, or to seek to please self and go it on your own?
3. What is a contentious and selfish person robbing himself of?
4. What should we count children to really be to us?
5. How are children of the youth likened unto arrows in the hand of a mighty man?
6. What does it mean to have "his quiver full of them?"
7. What is required of a man to inherit the real blessings of God?
8. What will a godly wife be to a godly man?
9. What will godly children bring to a family and community?
10. What steps must a young person take in seeking to have a godly home?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

There is a house that deep within the heart of every man he desires to build. It is not a house of wood and stone, but it is rather a house that is made up of peace and happiness with those he loves. And this is the kind of house that the Lord wants to help everyone to build. But He cannot add His construction to this particular house unless we give Him the full right and jurisdiction to do so. That is why fearing God and walking in His ways on our part is so important. We must seek Him earnestly when it comes time in life to be married and establish a home. A marriage that consists only of a fleshly relationship cannot possibly attain to true happiness and success. The wise in heart will precede all relationships with prayer and the leadings of the Holy Spirit. This will be a foundation for what will follow in the married life. There will be

adjustments, responsibilities, adversities, disappointments, reverses, pain and other difficulties. There is the factor of children being born. The attitude must be godly. Love, patience, kindness, consideration, forbearance, firmness and stability must be there in abundance. Selfishness, lust, strife, bitterness, anger, wrath and greed should have no place. Pray, pray, pray, Young People! Seek God and do not move until you know beyond all doubt of what His will is. And God will guide you into a life of love and happiness in your family and home.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There is a proper order of importance in our responsibilities of life. The most significant obligation is to your own soul. Next in importance is your obligation to your companion and to your family. After that, there is the service we render to others.

If we keep these responsibilities in their correct sequence, it will make for a happy family. When they are transposed, it causes disharmony.

One of the most outstanding verses in the Bible pertaining to how the husband should love and care for his wife is found in I Peter 3:7. "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

This means that the husband should care for his wife with an understanding of her needs. A wife's health is an important consideration in the health of the family and decisions in life should be made with the understanding of not over-encumbering her.

As children are born into a family, parents need to realize how precious they are. Psa. 127:3 says children are an heritage of the Lord. This means they come from God and as such, are little spheres of innocence and joy with great potential. It is a wonderful privilege when God gives us the privilege to nurture their lives and care for their souls.

—Wayne Murphey



