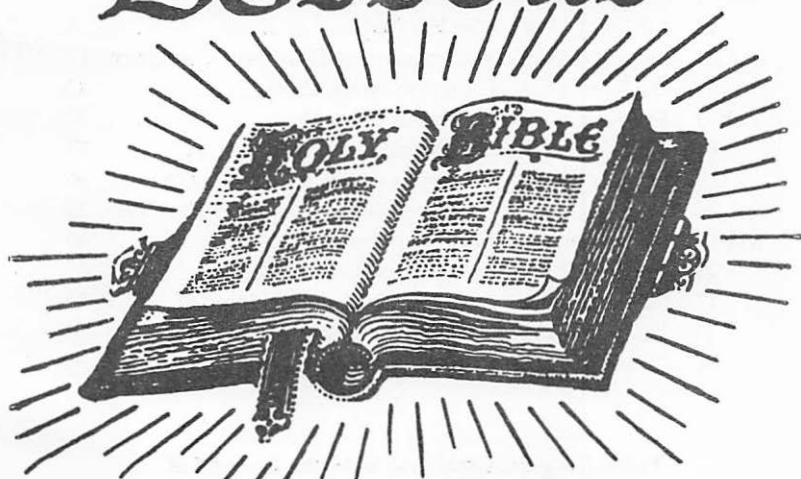


Bible Lessons



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

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

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THEME FOR FIRST QUARTER, 2002

We are greatly inspired to present another series of Bible Lessons from the book of the Psalms. This study will be with those Psalms that contain the inspiring prophecies of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. I believe that, if we will allow the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and inspire us, many wonderful truths rich to our souls will be revealed to us from these prophetic Psalms. Jesus said in Luke 24:44 to His disciples before He was taken up from them into the heavens: "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." The glorious majesty of His everlasting kingdom, His work of redemption and atonement for sin, His sufferings, death and resurrection, with other things are found in clear prophecy in the Psalms. It will help us to see Christ more as He really is. And, when we are able to grasp the vision of Christ more brightly, it will inspire us to love Him more than ever and be steadfast for His cause.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee



JANUARY 6, 2002

EMBRACE THE SON WHOM GOD HATH SET ON HIS HOLY HILL

Psalm 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, *saying*,

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son: this day have I begotten thee.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen for thine

inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

MEMORY VERSE: Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him. Psalm 2:12.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Regardless of how God's holy Son, Jesus Christ, was resisted and rejected by the folly of vain man, He still raised Him from the dead and set Him as King in the heavenly places. We need to fear and give heed to His counsel, embrace His doctrine, and worship Him purely lest we provoke Him to anger and perish at His hand.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 2:1), "*A vain thing*": The Hebrew meaning is "emptiness."

(Psalm 2:2), "*His anointed*": This is speaking of Jesus Christ. The word Christ means "anointed." God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and with power. Acts 10:38.

(Psalm 2:3), "*Bands*": The Hebrew meaning here refers to chastisements, reproofs and restraints. What are the bands and cords of Christ? They are the limits and standards of behavior that are becoming and in accord with holiness and what pleases God. The carnal mind resists the precepts of Christ, being ignorant of their importance and value, unaware that they are really for our safety and happiness.

(Psalm 2:4), "*Have them in derision*": The Hebrew meaning is to mock, scorn or hold in contempt.

(Psalm 2:5), "*Vex*": To cause to tremble inwardly, be alarmed or agitated.

(Psalm 2:8), "*Heathen*": The nations.

(Psalm 2:12), *"Kiss the Son"*: A kiss is a token of subjection and friendship. Another expression is "worship purely." The Septuagint (Greek) translation says, "Embrace (His) discipline." *"When his wrath is kindled but a little"*: Just a little stiffness and rebellion against Christ in the face of all that He suffered in paying the price for our redemption will arouse His sore displeasure.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We are sure that the Holy Spirit inspired David to write this Psalm as a prophecy of the triumph of our Lord, Jesus Christ, over all of His foes in being crucified and then victoriously risen again from the dead. This is the way that the New Testament writers applied this Psalm. In prayer the disciples quoted from this 2nd Psalm thus: "...Lord, ... God....who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ." Acts 4:24-26.

The apostle Paul, in his message to those in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, quoted from this Psalm. After declaring that God had raised Jesus from the dead, Paul said, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Acts 13:32-33. Notice that he applied the truth of Jesus being raised from the dead to what was said in this Psalm, when the Lord Jehovah said to Christ, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Jesus was begotten of God from the womb of Mary. But when God raised His Son from the dead He bestowed a Sonship upon Him that He did not have before. It was eternal Sonship unto everlasting life, a Sonship that He can share with us. Notice what Paul said in Romans 1:3-4: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

The glorified Christ Himself in Revelations 2:26-27 said,

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." These New Testament scriptures very vividly show the great importance of this 2nd Psalm as a prophecy of Jesus Christ, our Lord and King.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

- 1. What are the bands and cords of Christ and why do people seek to break them asunder?**
- 2. What is God's reaction to man's rebellious attitude?**
- 3. How did God set Jesus upon His holy hill of Zion?**
- 4. What kind of Sonship did God give Jesus in raising Him from the dead?**
- 5. What does it mean to "kiss the Son," and why should we do it readily?**

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus Christ met great opposition from the world when He came to teach the way of God and purchase our salvation. Society was not willing to submit themselves to Him. They stood up against Him, and finally condemned Him to die as a thief. But all of their raging had no bearing on God's decree. He raised up Jesus from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. And because of their rejection of His Son, the wrath of God has been poured out upon the world, and in the last great day it will all be ultimately destroyed and those who seek to break His bands and cords will pay the supreme price of eternal damnation.

In raising up Christ from the dead, God gave Him eternal Sonship and power to be Lord of all. He gave Him the whole world as His possession: those who would believe and obey Him to be His holy Bride forever, and those who reject Him for Him to destroy. He has the power to break in pieces a rebellious world. The Jewish nation suffered destruction because of their rejection of Jesus.

Today the challenge and decree is to us: submit to God in reverence and love, and embrace His Son and His discipline completely. We should not hesitate nor linger in indecision.

Hear the gospel, believe it, obey it and cling to Christ forever. He is our only hope. If we refuse to give ourselves wholly to Him in the face of what He paid as a ransom price for our sinful condition, we will incur the fierce wrath of an insulted and grieved Monarch. We will perish forever, regardless of our flimsy excuses and vain reasonings. How wise are all who seek refuge in Him, and how happy they are who experience His love and tender care! Oh, hasten and embrace the Son! Give up your sinful ways and take up your cross and follow Him!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In commenting on Psa. 2:12, C. H. Spurgeon once said, "Now it has sometimes been disputed among most earnest and zealous ministers, which is the most likely means of bringing souls to Christ; whether it is the thunder of the threatening, or the still small whisper of the promise. I have heard some ministers who preferred the first; they have constantly dwelt upon the terrors of the law; and they have certainly, many of them, been eminently useful; they have had Scripture for their warrant—'Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.' Some, on the other hand, have rather decried the threatenings; and have dwelt almost entirely upon the promises. Like John, their ministry has been full of love; they have preached from such texts as this—'Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Now these also have been eminently useful; and they too have had Scriptural warrant in abundance, for thus spake Christ's apostles full often, and thus spoke Jesus Christ Himself. The text however seems to be a happy combination of the two, and I take it, that the most successful ministry will combine both means of bringing men to Christ. The text thunders with all the bolts of God—'Lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.' But it does not end in thunder; there comes a sweet, soft, reviving shower after the storm; 'Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.'"

God is represented by the law and is depicted by Mount

Sinai as thunder and lightening, smoke and earthquake. Christ represents a dispensation of grace. That is why the invitation can be given to draw near and kiss the Son. We today are dealing with mercy, and it is important to portray to the world the true nature of Christ,—that His arms are open wide to them. However, to be true to souls we must also inform them that at the end of this dispensation we will stand before God and be judged.

—Wayne Murphey



JANUARY 13, 2002

ALL THINGS PUT UNDER HIS FEET

Psalms 8:1 O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet.

Hebrews 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that* is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and

honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

I Corinthians 15:24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet....

MEMORY VERSE: But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. Hebrews 2:9.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Although God in the beginning created man to subdue the earth, man, through sin and disobedience, lost that dominion. But Christ, through submission to God unto death, has been given of God the subjection of this world and that which is to come. In the end He will destroy death and bring us forth with Him unto everlasting life.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 8:1), "*O Lord our Lord*": The Hebrew says, "O Jehovah our sovereign." Sovereign means "above or superior to all others." This can be applied to our Lord, Jesus Christ, Himself, who has been invested with the same power that His Father Jehovah has.

(Psalm 8:4), "*Mindful*": To mark, to recognize, to remember and think upon. "*Visit*": To make special point or effort to go to see and commune with.

(Psalm 8:5), "*Thou has made him a little lower than the angels*": The Hebrew says: "You have made him lack a little from God." The word "angels" here is translated from the Hebrew word "Elohim" which is generally the term for "God." This was true of man in his first created state: holy, upright, spiritual, intelligent and invested with dominion over the creation. Man lost this blessed state when he chose to disobey God and was driven from the garden of God's presence. The writer in Hebrews now applies this to Christ.

(Hebrews 2:5), The Greek says, "For not to angels subjected He the habitable world coming, about which we speak." The dominion of the future world to come is what the writer is pointing to as he quotes in the following verses from Psalm 8.

(Hebrews 2:6), "*Testified*": The Greek meaning here is "solemnly and earnestly witnessed." This testimony is applied by the writer directly unto Christ Jesus, the second Adam, the Redeemer of lost men. What was lost by man in the awful fall into sin is now regained by Christ. But the dominion is to deliver our souls from sin and death to an eternal dwelling with Him in the world to come.

(Hebrews 2:8), "*We see not yet all things put under him*": Although Christ has conquered death and sin by His death and resurrection from the grave, He has not been given the full dominion, and all things are not yet put under His feet as they will be when He comes the second time without sin unto salvation. The Father has wisely postponed the final victory into the future. In the meantime He has set Christ at His own right hand to reign over His enemies while they are yet permitted to continue. At the right hand of God, Christ is filling the office of the great High Priest of our salvation, interceding for all in this world who seek after Him. But we know that the time is coming when His enemies WILL be subjected and destroyed.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Today we will view from the Holy Scriptures the prophecy of Christ having all things put under His feet. Because of His humble obedience to the will of the Father to go to the cross and suffer death for the salvation of the world, God highly exalted Him from the grave to His own right hand in the heavenly places. In so doing He put all things under His feet. We have it pictured and foretold so wonderfully in this 8th Psalm. This 8th Psalm is primarily speaking of man in his original created state. But the Holy Spirit has inspired the New Testament writer to apply it unto Christ. Both in Hebrews and I Corinthians we see Christ pictured as the grand fulfillment of these wonderful prophecies. He has been given the dominion of the world to come. This is to be our future eternal abode if we will give all to Him and follow our Lord and Saviour all the way.

Oh, how gloriously Christ has conquered! He reigns above at the right hand of God, interceding to the Father in our behalf. His enemies go right on, seemingly unhindered and uninterrupted. But He has control and is holding the reins over everything. Some day the Father will say, "It is enough." Then Christ will leave His mediatorial throne and descend from the heavens in power and great glory. He will destroy this temporal earth and heavens, raise the dead, and bring all to the judgment. That final victory will see death destroyed and the holy saints who have trusted and followed Him through the ages taken with Him to that blessed world to come. Praise the Lord for the victory we can have in Him! —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Viewing our lesson, what would you say has been put under Christ?
2. What was man's original created state before God?
3. How and why did man lose this blessed dominion?
4. What did Jesus do to regain it and redeem fallen mankind?
5. Why are things not yet all put under Christ, and when will they be?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

When God created man He made him lord of all the earth. He put all things under his control and jurisdiction. He had power over all the animals, the birds and the creatures who lived in the seas. Most of all he had communion and fellowship with God. He had access to the tree of life, the fruit of which would enable him to live forever. How blessed was man's condition then! But man was given a will and the power of choice. This reign of power and goodness would only continue if man would choose to obey his Creator. And man was tempted and he yielded to partake of the forbidden fruit. Thus man lost his dominion of the earth and was reduced to the level of the beast. Death reigned.

But God was not willing for this to continue forever. He promised to send a Saviour to earth to redeem mankind and restore him to the glory and power he once had. Jesus Christ

came to earth on this very mission. He was the second Adam, and He came to pay the ransom price to get us back on our feet again to reign as God originally planned. He came down to take upon Him human flesh and form. He accomplished the will of God completely all the way to the death of the cross. But God brought Him up from death and the grave and gave Him all power in heaven and earth. All things were put under His feet. Satan and sin were defeated, making it possible for death and the grave to be destroyed.

But before His plan would be completely implemented, God set Jesus at His own right hand in the heavenly places to reign over His great work with the souls of men. There He intercedes and communicates with us here on earth. This will be until the end when He comes again and raises the dead to life again, thus destroying death, that final enemy. Oh, praise the Lord God for our Lord, Jesus Christ, the King of glory!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When Adam sinned in the garden, he lost God's image out of his soul. He was no more like God because God cannot sin nor will He have any part of it. Adam's sin separated him from his Creator. Then when offspring began to arrive, they were born in Adam's likeness because that was all Adam possessed to pass on to the succeeding generation. It was impossible for Adam to transmit God's likeness to his children because he didn't have it any longer himself. Since Adam begat children in his likeness, they, too, passed on what they had inherited, and so on down to us yet today. All are born in the likeness of this flesh and possess from birth its qualities and characteristics; selfishness, greed, hatred, envy, jealousy, etc.

But Jesus was the product of a different lineage. He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, therefore He came to us in God's likeness, not possessing the qualities of the flesh as above mentioned, but rather possessing the qualities of His Holy Father. He inherited no sinful nature and He committed no sin of His own volition, therefore He was without spot or blemish before His Father, and so it was upon Him the sins of the whole world were laid. He alone could offer a sacrifice that was not

marred. God saw the sacrifice He made and was satisfied to the point that He would accept that perfect sacrifice and in turn pardon the transgression of poor, lost humanity.

God gave His Son that we might live. Christ gave His life that we might live, but what are we giving that we might live? May God help us each one to be our very best for Him who gave heaven's best for us! —Clifford Wilson (Written in 1969)



JANUARY 20, 2002

JESUS, OUR SAVIOUR, CONQUEROR OF DEATH AND CORRUPTION

Psalm 16:1 Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.

2 *O my soul*, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou *art* my Lord: my goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

3 *But* to the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent, in whom *is* all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied *that* hasten *after* another *god*: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

5 The Lord *is* the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places*; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

8 I have set the Lord always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

MEMORY VERSE: For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Psalm 16:10.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was submissive to His Father's will in permitting Himself to be crucified for the sins of the world, God did not allow His body to decay in death and the grave, but rather raised Him from the dead the third day.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 16:1), "*Preserve me*": The Hebrew meaning is: "Hedge me about; guard, protect, defend and attend to me." "*Put my trust*": This means to flee for refuge; to confide in.

(Psalm 16:2-3), The Hebrew renders these verses: "You have said to Jehovah, You are my sovereign ruler and master; my goodness is not apart from You. As for the saints who are on the earth, they are the excellent, all my delight is in them." Saints here are the holy and pure ones before God. "*Excellent*": Great, powerful and magnificent.

(Psalm 16:4), "*Hasten*": To hurry and run after willfully. "*Their drink offerings of blood will I not offer*": This is evidently a prophetic utterance of Christ refusing and bringing an end to the animal sacrifices offered under the law. He was to offer Himself as the supreme sacrifice for sin; therefore the sacrifices of bulls and goats offered under the law no longer avail with God. Those who hold to the carnal ordinances of the law system are worshipping a false god. Jesus came to fulfill the law in the sacrifice of Himself.

(Psalm 16:5), "*Inheritance, cup, lot*": These are expressions of what is really one's true possession. Jesus sought not for worldly possessions. He was wise to know that this material world was but temporary and soon would pass away. So He always sought to do His Father's will, for He knew that only in Him would He have anything. Whatever He would gain in a material way would be taken away in the death He was to die. But with God as His portion, His gain would far offset any loss.

(Psalm 16:6), "*The lines*": The boundaries and limits. "*Pleasant*": Sweet, enjoyable and delightful. "*Goodly heritage*": A beautiful inheritance. The love and spiritual fellowship of all His redeemed from all ages that make up His bride means more to Christ than all the riches this old world could offer.

(Psalm 16:7), "*My reins*": The inward man so tuned to the

will and pleasure of the heavenly Father. "*Night seasons*": In times of adversity and opposition from the world.

(Psalm 16:10), "*Hell*": The world of the dead, the realm of spirits who have left the body. The Hebrew word "Sheol" corresponds with the Greek word "hades" and both refer to the same.

LESSON BACKGROUND

David is undoubtedly the author of this beautiful prophetic Psalm that points directly and fully to Christ Jesus. Every part of it can be applied to Him. The apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost preached to the wondering crowd about Jesus, His death, resurrection and ascension on high. In the course of his wonderful message he quoted directly from this Psalm as Acts 2:25-28 shows. "For David speaketh concerning him (Christ)." And then He quoted from this Psalm, verses 8 through 11.

Paul quoted from this in his message at Antioch in Pisidia in Acts 13:35, speaking of Jesus: "Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Farther on in Peter's message he said concerning David, "He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." Acts 2:31. And Paul said further in Acts 13:36-37, "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption. (His body decayed in death and went back to the dust.) But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." And it certainly follows that all who love and follow Jesus will one day be brought back from death and the corruption of the grave unto eternal life.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Of whom is this 16th Psalm a direct prophecy?
2. Who quoted from this Psalm in the New Testament?
3. What was the inheritance that Christ desired of His Father?
4. Who will share with Christ in this "goodly heritage?"
5. What will it take for us to share in this glorious resurrection?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Oh, what a wonderful prophecy of our blessed Jesus we have in our lesson today! Every part of it belongs to Christ, and can be ours also if we will love and obey Him. God sent Jesus into the world and He preserved Him from the evil and wickedness that came against Him. Even so we can overcome this world as we follow Christ and put our trust in Him. God can be our Lord just as He was to Jesus. Christ's goodness was not apart from His Father and His sole delight was the people whom He would cleanse and purify from sin, making them saints in light. Christ worshipped and served the true God. He did not fall in line with the compromising elements of fallen Israel and their corrupt leaders. He stood out against them, and that is why they hated Him so. And it is the same today when we stand fast for truth and holiness and refuse to conform to this present, evil world. The Lord is our portion. We are following Jesus and not seeking for the wealth and pleasures of this life. Our inheritance is in Him and He will maintain us in this blessed possession. Our boundaries are in the pleasantness and true beauties of holiness.

So it was with Jesus. He submitted to die the death of the cross, giving up His young life, relinquishing all claim and desire for worldly glory and honour. This world and its riches meant nothing to Him. He sought not to preserve His life. He had set His Father's will before Him as His sole purpose and aim. His holy and righteous spirit within Him sustained and instructed Him in the way of doing God's pleasure. Therefore His heart was glad, and He had the true glory that rejoiced, even though His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men. (Isa. 52:14.) His glory was not that outward glory that will perish, but it was the inward glory of the heart and soul. We must also be of the same mind, not seeking for the outward beauty with its vanity and pride. The hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible must be our objective.

Thus Christ in His body could "rest in hope." He was not afraid to die. Death held no terror for Him. He knew that the crucifixion would kill this mortal, but He knew that immortality would be His portion. We too can share in this hope. He went to paradise when He committed His holy and righteous spirit to

the hands of the Father, and the repentant thief on the cross went with Him. Jesus knew that His soul would not remain a disembodied spirit, but would come back to a glorified body that had known no corruption. He had truly walked the path of life in His short sojourn on earth and thus He knew that His portion would be God's presence of fulness of joy and pleasures forevermore.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

On a simple gravestone in Kenya, South Africa, is this inscription: "Lord Baden-Powell, Chief Scout of the World. Born February 22, 1857, Died January 8, 1941." Underneath is a circle with a dot in the center, the scout sign for "I have gone home."

Because Christ conquered death, that event in the life of the saint has lost its terror and instead is the celebration of going home. No wonder the Psalmist was able to say in commenting on the subject of death, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." We have so much for which to thank Christ!

The burden of a Christian should be to have the opportunity to tell others how to go home. After a group of soldiers had been entertained in London during World War II, one man stood to thank the hosts of the evening. Then, almost as an afterthought, he added: "We are soon crossing to France and to the trenches, and very possibly, of course, to death. Will any of our friends here tell us how to die?" There are still many people yearning for the knowledge of how to go home. Let us watch for them, and when found, impart the good news of Christ conquering death.

—Wayne Murphey



JANUARY 27, 2002

OUR LORD'S CRY OF ANGUISH ON THE CROSS

Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*

3 But thou *art* holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

6 But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,

8 He trusted on the Lord *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

11 Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* none to help.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart *is* like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

31 They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

MEMORY VERSE: The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. Psalm 22:26.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Christ's sufferings, humiliation, reproach and anguish of heart was accurately prophesied and foretold through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Also Christ's triumph and prosperity of His kingdom was likewise clearly prophesied of.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 22:1), "*The words of my roaring*": This expresses the

tone of his speech because of his sorrow and suffering, meaning groaning and moaning.

(Psalm 22:3), "*Inhabitest the praises*": God loved and cherished the loving worship and praise that came from the hearts of those who were proving true and faithful to Him.

(Psalm 22:7), "*Shoot out the lip*": This means that they pour from their mouths slander, criticism and ridicule. Thus the Jewish leaders did to our Lord as He hung in reproach and shame upon the cross.

(Psalm 22:14), "*I am poured out like water*": The wicked men who hated Christ and instigated His cruel death on the cross thought no more of doing such than spilling water on the ground. "*All my bones are out of joint*": Our Lord's mental and emotional struggles coupled with the physical abuse brought such anguish and grief to His whole system that the form and structure of His mortal body was wrecked and marred out of shape. "*My heart is melted in the midst of my bowels*": His heart was broken and melted in grief and terrible sorrow because of their hatred and rejection of Him after all the effort He had put forth to be a blessing to them.

(Psalm 22:16), "*Dogs*": This band of evil doers who thirsted for the blood of Christ to be shed were men void of the Spirit of God and His love. They were jealous of Jesus because of His great power and blessings from above, and they were cut to the heart and condemned by His purity, and also they were angry because He would not condone and honour them. Such malicious hatred caused them to crave His death. They were beasts, brute animals who were in the grossest darkness man could ever be in. They were able to look upon Him suffering, bleeding and dying on the cross and gloat over it and rejoice.

(Psalm 22:18), "*Vesture*": This was evidently an outer garment, as described in John 19:23 as a coat without seam, as one woven piece of work.

(Psalm 22:21), "*Darling*": The Hebrew meaning for this is "my only one." This means His precious life, the only one of it, the only one like it in purity and holiness before God. He is praying for God to redeem His life from the destruction the dogs were tearing Him with. His prayer was answered in that God raised Him to reign triumphant over death and the grave.

(Psalm 22:30), "*A seed...a generation*": This is definitely

pointing to the New Testament Church, the holy Bride of Christ. We are the seed, the out-growth and planting of Christ and His gospel, as Peter put it in I Peter 2:9, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people."

(Psalm 22:31), "*A people that shall be born*": This is referring to the new birth into the kingdom of God, a spiritual birth that brings forth a spiritual people, "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:5. "*He hath done this*": The word "this" is a word added by the translators and is not in the original text. The Hebrew says, "He hath finished." Thus we see that Christ quoted the beginning of this Psalm "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46), and the ending, "It is finished" (John 19:30), while hanging on the cross.

LESSON BACKGROUND

This 22nd Psalm is beyond all doubt a clear and direct prophecy of Christ and His humiliation and suffering followed by His triumphant victory. It is quoted several times in the New Testament. Christ uttered the first phrase while suffering on the cross, (Matthew 27:46), and also the last phrase in John 19:30, as already stated. The scornful Jewish leaders unwittingly quoted part of this Psalm almost word for word (verse 8) in Matthew 27:43, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God." Verse 18 was literally fulfilled as Matthew 27:35 stated: "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." Verse 22 was quoted in Hebrews 2:12 like this: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Seeing then that the New Testament writers emphatically applied this Psalm to Jesus Christ and His sufferings, we can be assured that it was truly so. And we can see the rest of the Psalm, as a whole, to be fitting to the humiliation and reproach that Christ bore for us. It is attributed to be written by David.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How can we be assured that Psalm 22 is a prophecy of Jesus?
2. What parts of this Psalm are quoted in the New Testament?
3. What kind of people wanted Christ to be crucified?
4. How did God answer the prayer of Christ for deliverance?
5. What verses show that Christ came out victorious?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Christ was divine, and He was also human. He suffered anguish of heart and tortuous sufferings in His flesh. It was terrible what He went through. He truly had a broken heart, crushed and beaten by the abuse and mistreatment of those who rejected and hated Him. His holy saints have had to suffer like things down through the ages. We can picture Him there on the cruel tree, and as we weigh the prophecy of this suffering we are made to realize the awfulness of it all. But thank God for the victorious end of it all! His prayer for deliverance was answered. He exhorts us to praise the Lord, "for He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted." God was not unmindful of what Christ was suffering, neither had He forsaken him, as it may have seemed to the human sense. No, but He was rather working out His eternal purpose. A people would be born and become a great nation that would be for Christ the people of His choice, His Bride of love forever and ever! The meek, the holy, the pure and the righteous would prevail and stand with Him in the favor of God forever. Many people of many nations will hear the gospel and be saved, turning to the Lord and to worship Him. Yes, there is victory here: victory for Christ and victory for all who will love and obey Him. Even if we suffer as Christ suffered we will all be glorified together. Thus He really finished and brought His great plan of redemption to a perfect fulfillment.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Through seven utterances from the cross we can trace happenings of the crucifixion at the literal mount of Calvary. The disciple Matthew records one, Luke three, and John three.

The first utterance concerned forgiveness. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The second, spoken to the repentant thief, told of salvation. "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

The third utterance was of love. "Woman, behold thy son...behold thy mother."

The fourth expresses the full suffering of atonement. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

The fifth is also of suffering, but it is physical. "I thirst."

The sixth is the word of triumph. "It is finished." This is but one word in the Greek, though translated into three. It has been called the "greatest single word ever uttered."

The seventh, the last, are words of reunion. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!"

The songwriter, Isaac Watts, so very fittingly penned what humanity's reaction should be to this great event.

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed
And did my Sovereign die!
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

"Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree!
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!"

"But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do."

—Wayne Murphey



FEBRUARY 3, 2002

THE KING OF GLORY ASCENDS UP ON HIGH

Psalm 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

6 This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.

Philippians 2:8 Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,...

11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

MEMORY VERSE: Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Psalm 24:8.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Because Jesus Christ was so faithful and pure and obedient to the will of God and was mighty and triumphant in His battle with Satan and sin. He was given the power to ascend up into the eternal heavens and was given entrance through the everlasting doors into the presence of the almighty God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 24:1), "*The fulness thereof*": Every thing and every living creature, including man, is absolutely the sole property of their Creator.

(Psalm 24:2), "*Founded it upon the seas*": This could be

more properly or clearly expressed as "above the seas and the floods." In the beginning God, as Psalm 104:6-8 described it, "covered the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. (The Hebrew expresses it, The mountains rose and the valleys sank.)" There was nothing but water at first, but God made an expanse in the midst of the waters and caused dry land to appear. II Peter 3:5 expressed it: "By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water." Then in verse 6 Peter added, "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." This was speaking of the destruction of the earth by the flood in Noah's day. Carnal man is not aware that this earth is supported above and protected from the overflowing of the seas only by the command of the Almighty.

(Psalm 24:4), "*Vanity*": The Hebrew word has a variety of applications: "evil (as destructive and bringing to ruin), guile, idolatry and uselessness (vanity)."

(Psalm 24:6), "*Seek thy face, O Jacob*": Adam Clarke is certain that this should read, "O God of Jacob." Several translations, including the Septuagint, express it this way.

(Psalm 24:7), "*Your heads, O ye gates*": This is referring to the controls or keepers of the gates. The command is: "Unlock and open up the entrance to eternal habitation and life!" "*The King of glory*": The King of the honour and majesty given of God to reign in eternal life. This is a prophecy of Jesus. He was God in the flesh, the Lord of all.

(Psalm 24:8), "*Strong and mighty in battle*": This refers to Christ as the Conqueror of Satan and sin in His faithfulness and obedience to the death of the cross and more wonderfully His resurrection from the dead. He overcame the world and the Father subdued all things under His feet. He is the Conqueror and now ascends to the realms of glory and calls for the gates to swing wide and permit His entrance.

(Psalm 24:10), "*The Lord of hosts*": More properly expressed, "The Lord of armies." referring to Jesus Christ and the innumerable host of angels who attend Him, and the triumphant throng of His holy saints who are redeemed by His blood.

LESSON BACKGROUND

This 24th Psalm is generally believed to have been composed on the occasion of the bringing of the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to Zion. (II Samuel 6:12.) But it is also a wonderful type of Christ ascending to the right hand of God as the King of glory after conquering sin, death and the grave. It is a very fitting type even though it is not mentioned, quoted nor referred to by the New Testament writers. But as Psalm 2, written when David conquered Jerusalem and mount Zion from the Jebusites, is used to be a prophecy of Christ as the eternal Son being set as King on Zion, so we can see in this 24th Psalm a mirrored image of Christ overcoming the powers of sin and death and ascending up the hill of the Lord and calling for entrance to the eternal world above.

It starts out by declaring the sole ownership of the Lord over all the earth and its inhabitants. It then asks the question as to who is worthy to ascend up to stand in God's holy place. Then the answer is given of the cleanness of hands, purity of heart and holiness of life and character that one must have to stand before God. And it is very evident that no man in all the earth was able to prevail with God in this way. This is similar to the scene in Revelations 5 where no man in heaven and earth was found worthy to open the book in the right hand of God and loose the seven seals thereof. But then we know that One was found who was spotless and without sin. He was counted worthy to open the book, to loose the seven seals thereof, and to stand before God undefiled and holy. He alone was found worthy to receive the blessing of the Lord and righteousness from the God of His salvation.

Then in verse 6 it is applied to all who follow after and seek Him, that they would be His generation and His Church. This brings us to His approach to the heavenly portals of glory and the call for the gates to swing wide open to permit His blessed entrance therein. We have the heaven-borne witness in our souls that this is really true and what took place with our blessed Saviour, the King of everlasting glory.

We have also included a passage from Paul's epistle to the Philippians that expresses the message found in our lesson from this 24th Psalm.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the earth and all therein rightly the property of the Lord?
2. What are the qualifications of One who would stand before God?
3. Who was this One who alone met these qualifications?
4. How can we be likewise acceptable before Him?
5. Who is this King of Glory and why should He be given entrance?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus Christ fulfilled all the requirements of being found worthy to ascend up on high as the King of glory. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Heb. 7:26. He offered Himself as an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling (acceptable and well-pleasing) savour." (Eph. 5:2.) He "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." I Pet. 2:22. He was rewarded for His humility and obedience to God by being brought back to life and given the power to ascend up to the highest heavens and to sit at the right hand of God. We who believe in Him and follow Him are likewise given access to sit and reign with Him in heavenly places. (Eph. 2:6.) Oh, the glory and blessing of reigning with Christ! He was strong and mighty in battle, overcoming this world and all of its sin and evil, and sharing His blessedness with us who trust and obey Him!

How wonderful that we can be delivered from the power of sin to live holy and righteous before Him and have this blessed hope of sharing in His resurrection! He is our King, the King of glory. He is the Lord of hosts, and we are numbered in that great multitude that no man can number! (Rev. 7:9.) Some blessed day we too shall enter through those everlasting doors to dwell with our gracious King and all of His holy saints who have believed in Him down through the ages. What a day, glorious day that will be!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Christ's ascension is an event of great significance, almost rivaling His resurrection. The world had never known of an ascension like Christ's. Elijah had ascended, but here too were

some outstanding differences. Elijah was carried up; Christ ascended without any outward sign to accompany His gradual ascension. Elijah left his cloak, which filled one man with his spirit. The Lord Jesus left a benediction and sent the Holy Spirit for all mankind. Elijah's work was done when he was carried up on high, but Christ relinquished none of His activity for us. He holds a position of great power at the Father's right hand, and is not slack in using that position for our benefit.

In a dialogue by John Masfield, English poet laureate, Pilate's wife says: "What do you think of His claims?" The centurion answers: "If a man believes something so much that he is ready to die for it, he is going to get others to believe it too." Pilate's wife asks: "Is he dead?" "No," replies the centurion, "He is not dead." "Where is he then?" again asks Pilate's wife. The centurion answers: "Let loose in the world, lady, where neither Roman nor Jew can stop His truth."

Wicked men seemed to triumph over Christ once, but now His position is such that no man can bring Him down.

—Wayne Murphey



FEBRUARY 10, 2002

CHRIST'S SACRIFICE SUPERSEDES THE LAW

Psalm 40:4 Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O Lord my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak of *them*, they are more than can be numbered.

6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it* is written of me.

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

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation:...

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation:...

Hebrews 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

4 For *it* is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

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

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offerting* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

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

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The animal sacrifices offered under the old law system were not sufficient to atone for sin and make the souls of men perfect. For this cause Jesus came down from heaven and took upon Himself a mortal body which in obedience to the will of God He offered on the cross that we might be saved and made holy before God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 40:6, Hebrews 10:5), "Mine ear hath thou opened"—*"A body hast thou prepared me"*: These two phrases are the same, the first being from the Hebrew and the second being from the Greek Septuagint translation. What was translated "ears" in the Hebrew is translated as "body" in the Greek. Adam Clarke believed that it was because in the Hebrew writing of this text there was a mistake caused by a *mar* in the writing that

caused the Hebrew expression to be taken to mean "ears." The translator translating it into Greek detected the corruption and identified the right word as "body." Be that as it may, it is evident that the inspired writer accepted the Greek translation as authentic. We are safe to thus believe it that way. This is a prophecy of Christ coming into the world to inhabit a human body that would be the sacrifice that would accomplish the will of God.

(Psalm 40:7, Hebrews 10:7). "*Volume*": In both of these places the word means a "roll." Books in olden time were rolls that were positioned on sticks that permitted such to be read by rolling the fabric from one stick to the other.

(Hebrews 10:9), "*The first*": The first covenant and worship of the old Mosaic law system. "*The second*": The spiritual worship and holiness that was made possible through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We will consider for our lesson today the prophecy of Jesus in this 40th Psalm. The entire Psalm can be clearly and easily applied to Jesus, but we want to especially dwell on the thought of Christ coming into the world by inhabiting a human body which would become the real sacrifice for the sins of mankind. This body was pre-planned and prepared by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. A virgin was to conceive by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit and bring forth a man child. (Isa. 7:14.) The eye of God was on the formation of His holy Son from the moment of conception on to the time of His birth. Christ had a mortal body that God designed and prepared. It, as a mortal body, was destined to be the supreme sacrifice that God would accept to be the ransom price for the redemption of fallen mankind.

The book of Hebrews in the New Testament is a wonderful and spiritually enlightening treatise on the work and accomplishment of Christ in the flesh as our Redeemer and King. Very well worded and inspired by the Holy Spirit is the glorious truth brought out. It shows the Lord Jesus as fulfilling the prophecies, and also shows the end of the old order of the law and its sacrifices and ceremonies. It clearly shows the old Levitical priesthood being done away with and the everlasting priesthood

of Christ taking its place. In our lesson today the quotation from Psalm 40 shows Christ coming into the world to accomplish these wonderful benefits for the welfare and salvation of our souls. In the volume of the book, that is, the Old Testament types, shadows and prophecies, it was foretold and written concerning Him who was to be the Saviour of the world.

He came to accomplish the will of God. The will of God was for Him to offer His body without sinful spot to God by means of being cruelly crucified and slain on the cross. It was to be one sacrifice for sins forever, with Christ, after thus offering Himself, taking His place at the right hand of God as the High Priest for the souls of men for all ages unto eternity. How we rejoice in this wonderful truth! For by it we behold and receive with joy the perfect redemption that brings us victory and holiness of heart and life.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What does our lesson show that Christ came into the world for?
2. Why were the animal sacrifices not desirable to God?
3. What was the only sacrifice that would really atone for sin?
4. What was the book that was written of Christ and His work?
5. What was the first to be taken away, and the second to be established?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

It is wonderful that the Holy Spirit inspired David to prophesy of Jesus in this 40th Psalm so accurately. The writer in the book of Hebrews was just as inspired of the Holy Spirit to rightly apply this prophecy to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The old law system was proven to be so full of faults and shortcomings that it was destined to be done away with. It could never make the ones under its rule perfect because it was weak and insufficient to reach the real source of man's trouble, that which was in the very center of his being, the heart. It was to take a much greater sacrifice than the animal offerings of sheep and cattle. Thousands and thousands of animals were slaughtered

and offered as sacrifices upon the Israelite altars through the years. It was a custom, a form, a creed and a routine that too often was done with shallowness of mind and little or no real spiritual comprehension of what it really meant or if it pointed to anything of greater importance.

The fulfilling of this prophecy was not without violent upheaval and resistance by the Jewish community and leadership. To come right out and declare that the animal sacrifice ceremonies were to be terminated and done away with was a reproach and a serious offense in the eyes and ears of the Jewish nation. This was the main reason why Jesus was rejected and condemned to death, and also why His followers were so hated and persecuted. Without spiritual inspiration and understanding there was seen no need of a change in the law system, nor the fulfilling of the prophetic writings of Christ. The Jewish leaders knew not the wisdom from above. They were covetous, lustful and full of arrogant pride. They knew not this Nazarene who was, in their estimation, usurping Himself above their religious beliefs. His holy way and humble bearing was repulsive to them. So their carnal reaction was anger, hatred and murder. But to the hungry and thirsty for righteousness the Lord Jesus brought freedom and deliverance from the empty ordinances of the law and ushered in a new age of spiritual grace and victory.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Sacrifices and offerings of old did not please the heart of God, but Jesus says, 'Lo, I come'—I will go down into that world; I will become Man; I will become a Servant, and as a servant I am going to do the will of Him that sent Me; I will go to the cross to do Thy will, O God, for 'Thy law is within My heart.' If not one soul were ever saved as a result of the work of the cross, if everybody spurned it and rejected it, yet God has gotten more glory by the perfect obedience of His Son unto death than He ever lost by all of Adam's sin and all the sin that has come into the world since, because every sinner was but a finite creature but He who came to do the will of the Father is the infinite One. Our sin is finite but His obedience is infinite. At last One has been found to whom the will of God was the most precious thing

in all the universe. We need to dwell on that side of it. We are apt to become too occupied with the work of the cross for us. But God has been glorified in the work. In John 17:4, anticipating the cross, we hear the Lord Jesus say, 'I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.'

—Taken from writings by H. A. Ironside



FEBRUARY 17, 2002

**A ROYAL MARRIAGE HYMN
OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH**

Psalm 45:1 My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

3 Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, O *most* mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

4 And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness *and* righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5 Thine arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee.

6 Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.

7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

8 All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he *is* thy Lord; and worship thou him.

13 The king's daughter *is* all glorious within: her clothing *is* of wrought gold.

14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.

17 I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

MEMORY VERSE: Unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even thy God*, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. Hebrews 1:8-9.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: All the souls who have been rescued from sin and redeemed unto God by Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, are united with Him in marriage as His holy purchased Bride; and in her glorious beauty of holiness within and the garments of salvation she will be ushered into the realms of glory to live with Him for ever and ever.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 45:1), The Hebrew reads: "My heart overflows a good word, I am speaking of my works to the king; my tongue is the pen of a quick and skillful writer." His language is: "I have something sweet and most precious overflowing in my heart, concerning the King and His beautiful Bride, and I haste to write it out and set it forth that all may know about it."

(Psalm 45:2), "*Thou art fairer*": The Hebrew says, "Thou art the fairest." "*Grace*": Graciousness, favor, kindness, goodness and beauty. "*Poured into thy lips*": This is pointing to and foretelling the beautiful doctrine of Christ. This is the wisdom and virtue of heaven to bring light to those in darkness and healing to those diseased by Satan. The people "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." Luke 4:22.

(Psalm 45:3), "*Thy sword*": The Word of God which Christ wielded in His holy doctrines. "*Majesty*": Magnificence, splendor, excellency, honor, noble greatness and authority.

(Psalm 45:4), "*Ride prosperously*": To go forward, make good, be profitable, successful and triumphant. "*Because of*": On the matter or cause of. Christ did go forth triumphantly in

the truth of God, in meekness and obedience to the will of God in submitting to the death of the cross, and in righteousness and all that was just in the fear of God.

(Psalm 45:5), The Hebrew reads: "Your arrows are sharp—people fall under you—in the heart of the king's enemies." This is another referral to the doctrine of the gospel of Christ. It has pierced the heart of many a person who sought to oppose His truth, and without carnal weapons and man's inventions many people have fallen under the Son of God.

(Psalm 45:7), "*Above thy fellows*": Surpassing all your associates, above the angels, above all the saints and godly of the earth.

(Psalm 45:10), "*Forget thine own people*": This is referring to the redeemed in Christ leaving all the world and earthly ties to be solely and ardently united to Christ alone.

(Psalm 45:11), "*So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty*": The inward beauty of faith and holiness of the wholly sanctified soul is the beauty that Christ is seeking.

(Psalm 45:13), "*All glorious within*": Beautiful and rich in the heart and the spirit, an inward value and weightiness of true worth. Peter called it "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." I Peter 3:4. "*Wrought gold*": That which is artfully woven through the trials and difficulties of this mortal life. This along with "*needlework*" in verse 14 refers to the beauties of the heart that is wrought by the Spirit of God as we are led and inspired by Him in our faithful walk with God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The title for this beautiful Psalm in the Hebrew says "To the chief Musician on the Lilies, for the sons of Korah, a contemplation (instructive poem), a song of the Beloved." The author is unknown. But we have a definite clue as to who this Psalm is referring to. The writer in Hebrews 1 speaks concerning God's Son and quotes from various places in the Old Testament that prophesy of Him. He declares that Christ is made so much better than the angels. He quotes from Psalm 104:4 what God says of the angels as ministering spirits and a flame of fire, then

he emphatically stated: "But unto the Son he saith:." And then he quoted from this 45th Psalm, verses 6 and 7. So this tells us that it was the revelation of the Holy Spirit that this Psalm was speaking of Christ, the Son of God. With this in mind, the whole Psalm takes shape and goes together. It is the royal marriage hymn of Christ and the Church which He purchased with His own blood. It is for the joy of each of us to weigh and prayerfully consider the good matter that the ready writer of this Psalm brought forth. There are wonderful truths the sum of which we have not space here to give. But let each one look and behold them for himself, and rejoice to know that we are included in this Song of the Beloved Christ. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What would you say is the good matter this Psalm speaks about?
2. Who is fairest of all men and with grace poured into His lips?
3. How can we know of a certainty that this is a prophecy of Christ?
4. What are some things of Christ that you can see in this Psalm?
5. Of what importance is it for us to be "all glorious within?"

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus Christ our Lord was the fairest of the fair, the chiefest among ten thousand. Grace poured forth from His blessed lips, and God has blessed Him with immortality and life forever. He wields His sword, the blazing Truth of God's Word anointed by the Holy Spirit. With it He has ridden prosperously and gone forth for the salvation of all who will believe and obey Him. Because of His truth and meekness and righteousness He has accomplished the will of God and prevailed over the powers of Satan. His arrows have pierced our souls and we have surrendered all to His dominion. His throne is forever and ever and His kingdom is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. He was faithful to God and triumphed in His heart over iniquity, and God set Him on high and gave Him a name which is above every name. His garments are fresh with sweetness and per-

fumed with the fragrance of the sweet Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley.

We do consider our calling of Him as the sweetest and most wonderful thing that ever happened to us. We forget the things which are behind and reach forth for the prize of the high calling of God in Him. We seek to possess that beauty of inward meekness and devotion to Him in perfect holiness. We are looking and living for that day when we will enter with Him into the realms of His everlasting Kingdom in that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. All of our trials and sufferings for His name work together for our good and will be found unto praise, honour and glory at His appearing. We will live with Him, our precious Lord and Saviour in His Father's house with all of His saints to love and admire and enjoy Him for eternity. Thank God for His unspeakable Gift!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A man visiting an art gallery spoke to the woman who was scrubbing the floors: "There are so many beautiful pictures here."

"I s'pose so, if a body has time to look up," the woman answered.

When is the last time you thought deeply of the beauty of Christ? It is good now and then to stop and do so. Hopefully our lesson will be a good catalyst for just that.

"Thou art fairer than the children of men." Psa. 45:2. Here is one handsome beyond that which is human, because God Himself is His Father.

It is disappointing to discover someone attractive on the outside, only to find that person lacking true beauty of spirit. That's not the case with Christ, however, for "... grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." "... Never man spake like this man." John 7:46. "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth..." Luke 4:22.

The Psalmist even senses something special about Christ's clothing. "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and

cassia..." He is always clothed with beauty and heavenly bearing.

Through a microscope, a scientist was studying the purple heather on the hills of Scotland. A shepherd asked to see the heather under so powerful a lens. Afterward, the shepherd said: "I wish I had never seen its beauty. These feet of mine have trampled on so many of them." After beholding the beauty of Christ, doesn't it bring regret to realize that His invitations have often been trampled and His love spurned?

—Wayne Murphey

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FEBRUARY 24, 2002

**LEADING CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE
AND RECEIVING GIFTS FOR MEN**

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

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

3 But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

5 A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, *is* God in his holy habitation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 But God shall wound the head of his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men. Psalm 68:18.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: By Christ rising triumphant from death and the grave and ascending up on high to the right hand of God, He conquered the power of Satan and sin that held us captive and was given authority to receive and distribute the gifts of the Holy Spirit to whomsoever He will.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 68:6), "*God setteth the solitary in families*": The Hebrew says: "God makes the lonely dwell at home."

(Psalm 68:11), The Hebrew says, "The Lord gave the word; the bearers of it were a great army."

(Psalm 68:17), "*Charlots*": The initial meaning here is "something to ride on." It could be a vehicle or an animal. Revelations 19:11-16 pictures Christ and His Church as a cavalry on white horses, which denote perfect holiness and Holy Spirit power.

(Psalm 68:18), "*Led captivity captive*": This is a clear prophecy of Christ's conquering and subduing the power of Satan and sin that had the sons of men in woeful bondage. As Jesus said in John 8:34-36, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever:

but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "*Received gifts for men*": Christ, because of His obedience to God in suffering the death of the cross was not only given the power to ascend up on high, but He was counted worthy to be able to pour out the Holy Spirit upon His people and bestow spiritual powers and abilities for the various offices and positions that were to be filled in His Kingdom. "*Yea, for the rebellious also, etc.*" The Hebrew says, "And also the rebellious to dwell among, O Jehovah God." This is a direct prophecy of Christ coming down to inhabit a human body and live among sinful humanity.

(Psalm 68:19), The Hebrew says, "Blessed be the Lord, day by day He bears burdens for us, the God of our salvation."

(Psalm 68:20), "*The issues from death*": The Hebrew says, "the exit for death." This refers to deliverance from death and the grave which was given to Christ because of His obedience to the death of the cross.

(Psalm 68:21), The Hebrew says, "Yea, God will crush the head of His enemies, the hairy crown of him who walks on in his guilt."

(Psalm 68:34), "*Ascribe*": To give, bestow, impute, assign and regard as belonging to and being worthy of. The Hebrew says, "Ascribe strength to God over Israel; His majesty and His strength in the skies." The skies refer to the heavens and the realm of the Spirit to which Christ ascended.

(Psalm 68:35), "*Terrible*": Awesome; to be revered and held in holy fear and regard.

LESSON BACKGROUND

This 68th Psalm is a glorious Psalm written by David under the great influence of the Holy Spirit. Adam Clarke confessed that he did not know how to comment on it. He said there were things in it beyond his understanding and power to explain, yet of the composition itself he had the highest opinion, that it was sublime beyond all comparison, and that it would take no small influence of the Holy Spirit that was upon David to give its true interpretation. Personally, I stand in awe at this Psalm. It is fascinating and overwhelming. It glows and glitters with truth so spiritual and divine that it captures my deepest admiration

and joy. It comes forth in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in waves of glory and light. Paul used the 18th verse in bringing forth the truth of the various gifts and functions in the Church, the Body of Christ, in Ephesians 4:7-16. It is truly a masterpiece of spiritual art and beauty. We have not space to include the complete text, and we leave it to each Bible student to take the liberty and time to pursue the deep truths contained therein.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What will happen to those who persist to continue in sin?
2. What was the Word of which the bearers were a great army?
3. What did Christ accomplish and gain in ascending upon high?
4. What were the gifts that He received to bestow upon men?
5. Why did God want Christ to dwell among the rebellious?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The almighty Jehovah God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to bring deliverance to humankind from sin, death and the grave. He allowed Jesus to live among the rebellious to manifest His power and goodness and to allow Himself to be abused, mistreated and to suffer death at their hands. But His plan was fulfilled to redeem the souls of men from the woeful captivity and bondage of sin that they were under. Jesus was God in the flesh, and the victory He gained over the powers of this present, evil world was the greatest blessing man could ever receive and it was the thing he most needed.

God manifested His power through Moses to Israel on Sinai. God manifested His power to David in bringing the ark back from the fields of the wood to its rightful place in the tabernacle. And God manifested His power in the dedication of Solomon's temple. But all of these showings of God's wonder are eclipsed by the great work and accomplishment of Christ in dying for our sins and then being resurrected from the dead and wafted up to the highest heavens in power and glory.

We have various expressions in this Psalm that are full of

powerful meaning. Some of these are: "Thy goodness for the poor," "The Lord gave the word," "ascended on high," "led captivity captive," "gifts for men," "daily loadeth us," "the issues from death," and many others, some of which are not in our lesson text. It shows that God has special favor for the poor and those in trouble and need, like the fatherless and the widows. Those who are lonely will find in Him a home and safety. The Lord gives His Word to His ministers. He inspires the soul of man with His holy laws and precepts to set forth by preaching and teaching. Great is the company of those who are invested with His precious Word. No higher vocation or rewarding work can one be occupied with than the ministry of the pure doctrine of the Saviour.

How glorious was the Lord's ascension on high! Think of the power that the Father has invested in His holy Son! He has the power to save souls from sin and death. He has the power to do wonders and miracles in the earth. And He is endued with the power and authority to destroy this earth and the heavens and bring the whole world back from their graves to be judged by Him! No one will escape. One would be wise to take heed to the warnings in the gospel to be fully prepared to be accepted of Him in that day.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." Psa. 68:1-2. We should greatly rejoice to be on the side of someone with such stature as God's.

There are things in life to be faced that make the heart of the strongest melt in fear. It is like the story of the fawn who browsed among ferns with her mother. It was peaceful in the shelter of the forest growth. Suddenly, from a distance came the sound of baying hounds. The mother stood stock-still and began to tremble.

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

The mother smiled, and said: "All this, my child, I know full

well. But no sooner do I hear a dog bark than, somehow or other, my heels take me off as fast as they can carry me."

This portrays well the natural man when facing an enemy who is out to destroy. But it is different for those who confidently follow the One who rides upon the heavens. It is the enemy who melts and vanishes. Before God, kings flee. The earth shakes and the heavens succumb to His presence.

David also reveals another side of God. "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." Psa. 68:19. God is strong and fierce against His enemies, but He is kind and gentle to His children. There is no question as to where our allegiance should lie.

—Wayne Murphey



MARCH 3, 2002

THE REIGN OF THE LORD'S ANOINTED

Psalm 72:1 Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

2 He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

4 He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers *that* water the earth.

7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

15 And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; *and* daily shall he be praised.

16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

MEMORY VERSE: His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and *men* shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Psalm 72:17.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The kingdom of Jesus Christ, our Lord, Saviour, and King is with righteousness, peace, judgment and everlasting salvation to all mankind, especially to the poor and needy who sense their need of Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 72:6), "*Like rain upon the mown grass*": This could be more properly rendered as rain or dew upon the pastured grass. The gentle rain and the silent dew from out of the cool of the night helps to restore the grass that has been eaten by the flocks and herds. Just so Christ, in His holy and soul-feeding doctrines, distills through His Holy Spirit the water of life to refresh and restore the soul. As it is prophetically said of Him in Deut. 32:2, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."

(Psalm 72:9), "*Lick the dust*": This is an expression of being completely subdued and conquered.

(Psalm 72:14), "*Precious shall their blood be in his sight*": This is an expression of the ardent care and tender regard that Christ has for His saints and those who suffer and endure adversity for His sake. They will not be forgotten, and if because of vile abuse and persecution from the wicked their blood is spilled, He will recompense wrath upon the persecutors and will redeem His people to eternal life with Him.

(Psalm 72:15), "*Prayer also shall be made for him continually*": This could be more properly expressed as "prayer also shall be made *unto* Him for His help and grace constantly." This is a prophecy of the eternal, unchanging priesthood of Jesus

Christ, our great High Priest. And it has been fulfilled. For I am persuaded that since Christ ascended to the right hand of God He has been interceding to God on the behalf of the souls of men, hearing their prayers coming up from the ends of the earth, and relaying them to the Father, continually, without a break or vacation. He has been given that holy office and the power to fill it unfaithfully.

(Psalm 72:16), "*An handful of corn*": The Hebrew says, "a fullness of grain." This denotes fullness of bread, supply, grace, help, mercy or whatever else the children of His kingdom have need of. "*In the earth upon the top of the mountains*:" This means that it is within man's reach but is elevated up above the sinful realm of life upon the mountains of holiness and divine love. "*The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon*": Lebanon is noted for its massive spreading cedars, and the fruit of righteousness shall wave and be spread forth in that copious and beautiful manner.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The title of this Psalm is "A Psalm for Solomon." It is generally believed that David wrote this beautiful Psalm for his son Solomon in his last days when he had set Solomon upon the throne of his kingdom. But, as it is true with other of the writings of David, the Holy Spirit shaped the message to reach into the future to foretell the beauty and majesty of Christ's kingdom, of which the throne of David was a type and shadow. What was spoken primarily of Solomon is fulfilled spiritually in Christ. This Psalm then is a clear prophecy of the glory and majesty of Christ in His everlasting kingdom of peace and love.

It is very worthy to note the expressions of care and regard which was for the poor and oppressed. This is very much fulfilled in Christ, as it says so in various places, namely, Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor," Matthew 11:5, "The poor have the gospel preached to them," Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and James 2:5, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" The truly poor in heart and

attitude are the ones who are most sensitive and susceptible to the grace of the Lord Jesus. The proud and self-sufficient have very little response to the gospel of Christ. It is the poor and depressed in mind and spirit, lowly and meek, humble and broken in spirit who are able to receive the grace of God for their eternal good and salvation. This is a very important factor not to be overlooked.

"And he shall live." (Ver. 15.) This is a simple statement but so vital in importance and value. He shall live. He shall live forever. He will die, but He will not stay dead. He shall live again, never to die any more. And this life He will share with all who believe in Him and obey Him. Let us behold the glorious reign of our Lord and Saviour and press our way into His blessed fellowship!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why are the poor so important to the kingdom of Christ?
2. What does it mean to be truly poor in spirit?
3. How is Christ like the showers upon the grass?
4. In what way and how will Christ make the righteous to flourish?
5. How does the kingdom of Christ fulfill this Psalm?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

What a wonderful scene of the grandness of Christ's kingdom we have before us in the scope of this 72nd Psalm! Surely He fulfills and portrays all of it completely. God gave to Jesus, His Son, His judgments and righteousness. As it was also prophesied of Him in Isa. 11:3-4: "...He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth:..."

Jesus was a poor man Himself. He sought not for earthly pleasure nor treasures of this life. He was humble and meek and lowly in heart. He did not appeal to the proud and self-sufficient and those who were not aware of their need. He appealed to those who knew that they were sinful and condemned before God, for they were seeking help. He was welcomed by those who were hungry and thirsty for righteousness, open to receive His

doctrines as the parched pastures welcome the showers of rain.

Though Jesus was kind and humble, yet He was bold and courageous to declare the judgments of God. He was triumphant even though He submitted to die at the hands of the ungodly. He came forth from death and the grave a Conqueror. All of His enemies will "lick the dust," if not now, they will in that great day to come. He has redeemed us from the power of Satan and we can escape his pitfalls and live victoriously over sin.

Jesus lives today, and, after nearly 2,000 years have come and gone in this age of mercy, He still is at the right hand of God interceding for all who come unto God by Him. Prayer is rising from the ends of the earth constantly. He knows no let-up, nor rest period. He neither slumbers nor sleeps. He reigns in the righteous might of His Father. He will live forever and ever and men shall continue to bless themselves in Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Being poor is neither a qualification nor an assurance of finding favor with God. When the Psalmist wrote, "He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence..." he was saying something very similar to what Christ said in the sermon on the mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:3.

The kingdom of heaven had yet to be brought to the earth when David lived, yet he expressed a blessing toward those who humbly cried unto God from a broken heart.

A Christian is one who can prosper, though poor. "Prosper" and "poor" seem conflicting terms, yet they describe the ability of a child of God to be content in spite of a lack of goods.

Notice some of the promises made in the Bible to the poor and needy. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." Psal. 12:5.

"For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Isa. 25:4.

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none,

and their tongue falleth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Isa. 41:17.

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" James 2:5. This indeed constitutes reigning in this life. —Wayne Murphey



MARCH 10, 2002

HOPE FOR THE PRISONERS APPOINTED TO DEATH

Psalm 102:12 Thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

13 Thou shalt arise, *and* have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

16 When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

18 This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.

19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth;

20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

21 To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.

23 He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.

24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years *are* throughout all generations.

25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed;

27 But thou *art* the same, and thy years shall have no end.

28 The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

MEMORY VERSE: Thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations. Psalm 102:12.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: From heaven did the Lord behold lost humanity and heard the groaning of those in the prison house of sin and death. And in the fullness of time He sent the Saviour to declare His name to those who were gathered together to serve Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 102:13), "*Set time*": The time appointed and decreed of God to come to pass.

(Psalm 102:20), "*The groaning of the prisoner*": This is referring to the sighing of the contrite captives in the prison house of sin who are longing for deliverance and salvation. "*Those that are appointed to death*": The Hebrew says simply, "the sons of death." This refers to us who are under the universal sentence of death on account of sin and transgression.

(Psalm 102:22), "*When the people are gathered together*:" This can be applied to the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the apostles and power was given to declare the name of the Lord Jesus to the great host of devout men who had gathered there to worship God. (Acts 2:5.)

(Psalm 102:25), "*Of old*": Before the created realm came into sight, the Word and Spirit of God were moving and preparing for the heavens and the earth.

(Psalm 102:26), "*As a vesture shalt thou change them*": As a man changes from one garment to another, so the earth and humanity undergoes constant change and deterioration. Man goes from birth to childhood, then to teenage years, and on to adulthood and to old age, and eventually to death. Man is always changing from one stage of life to another.

(Psalm 102:27), "*But thou art the same*": The Hebrew expression is "Thou art He," which implies Christ in His risen immortal state has an unchanging bearing, not weakened by disease or old age, not worn by toll and adversity, and not ravaged by hurt and the destructive elements of the world. He is the same yesterday, and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8.)

LESSON BACKGROUND

We cannot include in our text the entirety of this touching

and inspiring Psalm 102. We mainly want to consider the prophetic phase of the Psalm and what it is pointing toward. But it is good to consider the first part which describes the mournful and heart rending situation that was the background of the writer. Let us consider what Adam Clarke's comments are on this: "The Hebrew, and nearly all the versions, give the following title to this Psalm: *A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and pours out his sighing before the Lord.*" There seems to be little doubt that this is the prayer of the captives in Babylon, when, towards the end of the captivity, they were almost worn out with oppression, cruelty and distress."

It was a time of sorrow and the days of the writer were drawing to a close. His language is ardent and hopeful despite his hardships and sorrows. He foretells the coming of the Lord, not just for the liberation of the captives in Babylon back to literal Jerusalem, but He points to Christ who would come to Zion, to spiritual Zion, those who are seeking to serve the Lord in truth and righteousness. The writer in Hebrews 1:10-12 quotes from this Psalm and applies verses 25, 26 and 27 directly to Christ and the establishment of His kingdom of grace.

It is so touching and beautiful how the prophet beholds the Lord looking down from the height of His sanctuary and purposes in His great, loving heart to do three things: (1) To give an ear to the cry coming up to Him from the hearts of souls pining away in their sinful condition, (2) to bring deliverance to the captives under the death sentence, and (3) to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem. The latter one was to be done at a time when the people would be gathered together to worship the Lord as they were on the day of Pentecost. This was prophecy, pure prophecy, and the writer knew that these were future events. Thank God for the regard that was shown to the poor and their prayers. This pointed to the priesthood of the Lord Jesus and His intercession at the right hand of God for the prayers of His saints. All this was brought to pass in the wondrous visitation of Christ to this world.
—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the prophet prophesying about?
2. What was the real Zion that Jesus wanted to build up?
3. What were the things the Lord took note of from heaven.

4. What did He purpose to do and who did He purpose to help?
5. What was the Lord going to accomplish on our behalf?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

God's people in their waiting patiently for the Lord to come to their rescue and fulfill His wonderful promises have had to wait and endure much sorrow and suffering in the process. This Psalm 102 surely shows this. The heading says, "A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord." We behold in his expressions and description of his troubles a woeful plight that he is enduring. But his tears give place to comfort and peace at the prospect of what God is revealing to him concerning that which is to come. The beautiful temple of God that Solomon had built was in ruins and so was the city of Jerusalem.

But God is shining a light of hope that He is going to arise and have mercy on Zion. The real fulfillment of this prophecy was the coming of the Messiah, the Christ. Ezra and Nehemiah with the returning captives from Babylon would rebuild the temple and the walls of Jerusalem, but that was not to spell the end of the woes of the Israelites. Another 400 years would go by, silent years in which little is known. The writer of this Psalm went to the grave with all the others. But the day did come when God brought his prophecies to pass in a wonderful way. All the sorrow and grief and suffering had not passed His notice and attention. He had heard the groaning of the prisoners and beheld the death and misery that stained the earth.

He would come down to bring the deliverance and salvation that was needed. Jesus did come and accomplished the will of God. He submitted to die as mankind had so that He might be resurrected and triumph over it all. Thus He was to live and endure unchanging with years that have no end. And the children of His servants were to continue with Him forever. This is the salvation that He brought to us. We can be delivered from the prison house of sin and share with Him His eternal life. We can be built up a spiritual Zion, and a new Jerusalem, that is eternal. Thank the Lord we do not have to remain under the bondage of the devil, for whom the Son makes free is free indeed! We can be established before Him and continue with Him forevermore.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Probably one of the most illustrative forms of hope is portrayed by those whose loved ones have gone to sea. Especially was this so hundreds of years ago when voyages were long, dangers unknown, and ships unseaworthy.

Someone painted a picture which depicts a young maiden seated on a rock, her left hand above her eyes, as she gazes most pitifully across a shipless sea. A similar sentiment of pathetic discouragement and vain hope was captured by a writer who penned;

"Wearisome long the maiden must wait,
Months and years ere her watching be o'er,
For a lover that never will come to land,
For a ship that never will touch shore."

How different the hope that is founded in Christ! No danger can overcome Him. He has already conquered death. We have the sure promise of His return, and until then, when the penitent call for Him, He comes to deliver, and that without fail. One song says;

"Over the bounding billows,
Jesus, my Saviour sends
Help to my storm-tossed spirit,
Praise to the Friend of friends!"

—Wayne Murphey



MARCH 17, 2002

ETERNAL PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

Psalm 110:1 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

3 Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.

7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

MEMORY VERSE: This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. Hebrews 10:12-13.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Our Lord, Jesus Christ, after He had suffered the death of the cross in obedience to the will of God, was given the position of power at the right hand of God in the heavenly places as our High Priest to intercede with God on our behalf. He has thus remained and will remain until God calls this world to judgment.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 110:1), "*The Lord said*": The Hebrew says, "An oracle of Jehovah." An oracle is a special divine statement, decree or announcement, much more serious and weighty than a mere remark or comment. Notice that this Lord is Jehovah, the self-Existent or Eternal, and is the Jewish national name of God. He is the Creator, our heavenly Father. "*Unto my Lord*": This term Lord here is from the Hebrew word in an emphatic form meaning one who rules as sovereign lord, owner and controller. The Holy Spirit witness reveals this to be Christ Jesus, our Lord, Master and Saviour.

(Psalm 110:2), "*The rod of thy strength*": The gospel of His Word backed by the Holy Spirit. This is the rod by which Christ rules in His Church and the influence and force He exerts from out of His Church to the world of humanity. By this He reigns triumphantly before all of His opponents and gainsayers. He allows His enemies to go right on in their pernicious ways as if they were the ones prevailing, but in reality He is prevailing and victorious in the unseen realm of the Spirit, waiting for the day when He will visibly prevail over them to their eternal ruin.

(Psalm 110:3), "*Willing*": the Hebrew word here means

"spontaneous," which means acting in accordance with or resulting from a natural feeling, impulse or tendency, without any external constraint, cause or influence. The influence is there but it has been wrought within the heart that causes a joyful and cheerful response. The people who are His own are free-will offerings, who are happy to present their bodies as living sacrifices unto God. *"In the day of thy power"*: This is referring to the Gospel day of His going forth to gain those who will believe in and obey Him. *"In the beauties of holiness"*: The elevated magnificence of a pure and sinless life obtained through the blood of Jesus and the indwelling Holy Spirit. *"From the womb of the morning"*: This is an endearing expression meaning the compassion and cherished love (as is felt in a mother's heart for the child of her womb she is bearing) for Christ and the souls of men that causes the light to break forth as the dawn, causing the Daystar to arise in the hearts of those who are sitting in darkness and yearning for the light. *"Thou hast the dew of thy youth"*: This denotes eternal youth, beauty, power, strength and triumphant life which has been given to our blessed Jesus in His glorious resurrection.

(Psalm 110:4), *"Priest"*: One who mediates or intercedes between God and man. *"After the order of Melchizedek"*: After the manner, suit or style of Melchizedek, who was the priest of Salem in Abraham's time, to whom Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils he had taken from battle, and received blessings from. Melchizedek was a priest, not because of lineage as the Levitical priests were, but because of his faithfulness and righteous life before God and man. Thus Christ was designated to be High Priest after this order, because of His obedience and faithfulness to the will of God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

This Psalm 110 is quoted from in the New Testament about as much as any one scripture in the Old Testament. It is one of the main supports of the Holy Scriptures of the truth of Christ, but it is one that is greatly discredited by opponents of Christianity. It is a Psalm of David who wrote it under weighty inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Jesus quoted from it in Matthew 22:44. Peter applied it to Christ in Acts 2:34-35. The writer of the book of Hebrews quoted from it and dwelt extensively on the two

thoughts contained therein, namely, that of Christ being at the right hand of God, and the priesthood that Christ had been given of God. Paul mentioned it in his writings. Mark 16:19 said, "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." All of this was in accord with and a fulfillment of this 110th Psalm.

The entire Psalm is about Jesus and can be applied directly to His work at the right hand of God. As Intercessor and High Priest He is attending to the needs of His people who are calling upon Him daily. The heavens will hold Him until the Father says, "It is enough." Then He will come in power and glory, destroy this present earth and heavens and bring mankind to the judgment. Christ fulfilled this prophecy when He ascended up to the right hand of the Father to intercede for the saints until it comes time for God to make His enemies His footstool.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Who were the two "Lords" mentioned in this Psalm 110?
2. What was Christ to do at the right hand of God?
3. In what way was He to rule in the midst of His enemies?
4. What kind of people were to work for Christ?
5. When will the Father make Christ's enemies His footstool?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The Lord God almighty spoke in prophecy to His Son our Lord Jesus Christ and commissioned Him to sit at His own right hand in the heavenly places until it was time for His foes to be subjected unto Him. Jesus had been faithful and obedient to the heavenly Father while He was on earth and had offered His body on the cross of Calvary as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Because of this obedience God rewarded Christ by highly exalting Him and giving Him a name which is above every name in heaven and earth. He gave Him the power to ascend up through the veil that hangs between the realm of earth and the eternal realm of heaven. He ascended up to the side of His Father, Jehovah.

From there Christ was to wield the rod of His strength, His Word and Holy Spirit, to the executing of His will and good

pleasure upon all who would believe and follow Him. He was given the authority and power to pour out the Holy Spirit upon His Church and all who would be added to His Church. He would reign at the right hand of God while the world went ahead in its cycle of wickedness and unbelief. He would work with souls to their salvation and to their destruction if they persisted in their sinful way. And there at the right hand of God He would appear on the behalf of all who would come unto God by Him in prayer and supplication.

What a wonderful treasure we have in Christ as our Saviour and Friend at the right hand of God appearing in the presence of God for us! Since that day that He ascended up out of the sight of His adoring disciples into the heavens, it has been an unending and uninterrupted ministry on His part to the souls of men in this world. There has been no let up, no break, and certainly no vacation for Him. But in His power and glory He is well equipped and able for the great office He is invested with.

The day will soon come when His Father will say, "The time has come for Your enemies to be made Your footstool!" Through all of these 2000 years God has lengthened out the day of grace to take in whosoever will. But His day will come and we who are ready and love His appearing will be gathered together in one mighty throng to live and reign with Christ, our heavenly Bridegroom forever and ever. May we live to be accounted worthy of this royal honour!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Christ will never grow old for "...thou hast the dew of thy youth." Just as dew signifies life because of its moisture, there will always be a freshness about Christ.

We are told in John 1:14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." The Word will always have life.

That is why it is opposed by society today; why the ten commandments are not allowed to be posted in public schools; why the manger scene cannot be displayed on government property; why "God Bless" cannot be written on school marquees. It is because the Word is yet alive and strong in its power to convict people of sin.

Once a missionary in India put a drop of water from the allegedly sacred Ganges River beneath a microscope and said to a Hindu, "Take a look."

The Hindu was horrified when he saw tiny wriggling, creeping things in the water.

"In seeking spiritual rest and forgiveness of sin, you and a myriad of others in India bathe in water like this," said the missionary.

Later the Hindu came and bought the microscope from the missionary. He threw it violently on the pavement, breaking it. Walking away, he thought he had destroyed the truth.

People yet oppose Christ and His Word because of its power. But they cannot destroy Him. He sits in triumph at the right hand of God where nothing can nullify His power.

—Wayne Murphey



MARCH 24, 2002

THE REJECTED STONE BECOMES THE FOUNDATION STONE

Psalm 118:1 O give thanks unto the Lord; for *he is good*: because his mercy *endureth* for ever.

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

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

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

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

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

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

14 The Lord *is* my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

16 The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth vallantly.

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

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

22 The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

24 This *is* the day *which* the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

26 Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.

MEMORY VERSE: He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. John 1:11-12.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The Lord Jesus was rejected by His own people and their leaders, but was chosen of God and made to be the foundation of the Church of God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 118:5), The Hebrew reads: "From the distress I called Jehovah: Jehovah answered me in the large place of Jehovah." Distress means a tight and strait place of adversity and trouble. Such was Christ in this world, withstood, opposed and constantly under pressure from His enemies. But His heavenly Father heard Him in His bountiful power and goodness and delivered Him. He set Him in a large place, in the eternal heavens with Him.

(Psalm 118:6-7), "*The Lord is on my side*": and "*The Lord taketh my part*": Both of these expressions in the Hebrew say simply, "Jehovah is for me." "*With them that help me*": The Hebrew says, "among my helpers." Christ was able to say, "Jehovah is for me among my helpers." Who were the helpers of Christ Jesus? The angels surrounded and accompanied Him all the time: at His birth (Luke 2:9), in temptation (Matt. 4:11), and in the agony in the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43). These ministering spirits were standing by, ready to come to the Saviour's aid. Jesus even said in Matthew 26:53 that He could pray to His Father, and He would presently give Him more than twelve legions of angels!

(Psalm 118:10), "*Will I destroy them*": The Hebrew says,

"Surely I will cut them off." Christ, because of His faithfulness and obedience to God, brought to naught the vain resistance of the Jews and brought down the wrath of God upon them to the uttermost.

(Psalm 118:18), "*Chastened me sore*": "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him." Isa. 53:5. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." Isa. 53:10. Yes, it was the will of God for Christ to be chastened and bruised to make His soul an offering for sin. But He did not give His Son over unto death. He let Him die, but death could not hold the Chosen of God. God will let us, His followers, be bruised, also, in the course of our lives for Him. But with us also will it be, not given over to death. We will share in Christ's triumph.

(Psalm 118:24), "*The day which the Lord hath made*": This day is the great day of salvation, the time and opportunity for men everywhere to be saved from the power of sin. The Jews and the old law system could not extend to men that kind of deliverance. But in Christ as the solid Rock and Cornerstone we hail a new day and we will rejoice and be glad in it.

(Psalm 118:26), "*Blessed*": This is an expression of worship, meaning to kneel and praise God, accepting His Son who comes in the name of Jehovah.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have in our lesson today another wonderful and clearly expressed prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ. The key that unlocks the door to the real meaning of this Psalm is how it is quoted and applied by the writers in the New Testament. In the first place we note that our Lord Jesus Himself quoted verses 22 and 23 to the Jews as is recorded in Matt. 21:42, Mark 12:10-11, and also Luke 20:17. This was when He gave the parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen who shamefully treated the servants who had been sent by the owner of the vineyard to get some of the fruit. He brought out that they also killed the owner's Son whom He had sent, hoping they would reverence Him. When He declared that the lord of the vineyard would come and destroy those husbandmen and give the vineyard to others, the Jews said, "God forbid." Then Jesus quoted this scripture and applied it to Himself as being rejected of the Jews and the wrath of God coming on them.

The apostle Peter in Acts 4:11 declared to the unbelieving Jewish leaders concerning Christ that "this is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Then in I Peter 2:7 he said again, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner."

Jesus quoted from verse 26 of this Psalm 118 in Matthew 23:39 when He remonstrated the Jews for their rejection of Him. Woe after woe He had pronounced upon their proud and hypocritical spirit in the preceding address to them. Finally He burst out in the anguish of His heart to Jerusalem of His desire to help them. But they would not. "Behold," He concluded, "your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." And then He walked out of the temple, never to return again. Can we not see what this means? We must kneel and bless God in our acceptance of Him whom He has sent. And we will never see Him until we do. Sad to say, so many reject the living Stone, and His Spirit leaves their house desolate.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What were some of the distressful things Christ suffered?
2. Who were Christ's "helpers" who surrounded Him all the way?
3. What was the main reason why Jesus was a rejected Stone?
4. What did He, the rejected Stone, become?
5. What happened to those people who refused to bless this One who came in the name of the Lord?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Christ was prophesied in Isaiah 53:3 to be despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He met with much opposition from those who professed to know God, yes, from those who were in reputation as leaders of God's people. But it was a hidden wisdom, a deep spiritual perception of truth and righteousness, that Christ had. And the carnal minds filled with covetousness and pride that lived in that

Jewish society just could not accept Jesus. They marveled at His power to heal, but when it came to believing and accepting what He stood for, very few were really able to receive Him. Like so many today, this nation had long grieved and vexed the Holy Spirit and the heavenly Dove could find very few who were receptive to His workings. One old gentleman, Simeon, recognized Jesus as a little baby in the temple one day. The Holy Spirit was upon him, and He had a revelation of the Spirit. That is why He was able to know the Saviour even as a little baby.

It still works like this today. Christ is still the living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. To us who have a spiritual perception of Him and are willing to take up our cross and follow Him He is precious, but to those who refuse to obey Him He becomes that rejected Son, and He becomes a Stone of stumbling and Rock of offense to those who are not obedient to Him. The things of the world, pride of life, and the worldly desires for ease and gain causes many to reject Him. The lowliness and simplicity of Christ and His saints is offensive. Modesty of dress and godly life styles cause many to reject the strait and narrow way. It is born in man's sinful nature to be proud and lifted up before people. We must die to these things that we might be able to receive this Stone and let Him be the solid Rock and Foundation of our lives.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Those to whom Christ first came did not think Him suitable to be their Messiah. So they refused to accept Him, and nailed Him on a cross instead. But now what do we behold? That same Jesus whom they thought unfit to be their king God has made King of glory, Lord of heaven and earth. All things are in His hands,—all power, all mercy, all judgment. The very rulers who rejected Him and demanded His crucifixion, when they awake on the judgment morning, shall see as their judge the same Jesus whom they thus despised and condemned to die.

"A great many people now think Christ unsuitable to be their Master. They do not consider it an honor to be called a Christian. They blush to own His name or to enroll themselves among His followers. They do not care to model their life on His holy and perfect life. All such should remember that Christ has

highest honor in heaven. No angel is ashamed to speak His name. Redeemed spirits praise Him day and night. God the Father has exalted Him to the throne of eternal power and glory. Why, then, should sinful men be ashamed to own Him as Lord?

"They should remember further that God has made Him the Cornerstone of the whole building not made with hands. No life which is not built on Him can stand. There is no other Rock on which to rest a hope. If they ever are saved it must be by this same Jesus whom they are now rejecting."

(Taken from *Come Ye Apart.*)



MARCH 31, 2002

CHRIST SEATED UPON DAVID'S THRONE

Psalm 132:11 The Lord hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.

12 If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

II Samuel 7:12 ...I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son....

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

Luke 1:30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Acts 2:30 (David) therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

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

MEMORY VERSE: Jesus Christ our Lord, was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Romans 1:3-4.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The Lord God promised David that He would set his son upon his throne forever. Jesus Christ fulfilled this, being of the lineage of David, by being raised from the dead and ascending up on high to sit at the right hand of God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(II Samuel 7:12), "*Out of thy bowels*": More properly expressed, "From the fruit of your body, or of your lineage."

LESSON BACKGROUND

This is our final lesson from those Psalms that are prophetic of Christ. From Psalm 132 we have taken two scriptures, and combined them with others to bring out the truth of Christ as the fulfillment of God's promise to David that of the fruit of his body He would set One upon his throne. We have also drawn from II Samuel 7 some more promises that God gave David through the prophet Nathan concerning his son sitting upon his throne. On the surface it would seem that God was speaking of Solomon, who actually was placed on the throne even before David died. But in reality God was speaking of Christ as the writer in Hebrews 1:5 quoted from and applied this to Christ from II Sam.

7:14, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

Then we have included the announcement of the angel Gabriel to Mary concerning her Son Jesus and how He was to be given the throne of David, and of His kingdom there would be no end. These are very important truths that show us that the throne of David was in reality a spiritual dominion and power far surpassing just a literal throne and an earthly reign.

We also are bringing into our lesson today part of the message that Peter brought forth to the people on the Day of Pentecost concerning Jesus and His resurrection. Let us notice how Peter combined what David said in Psalm 16 with what was prophesied in Psalm 132. He had just quoted David's prophecy of Christ in Psalm 16 concerning Christ and His soul not being left in hell, neither His flesh seeing corruption. Then Peter brought in about God's oath to David that He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. It all adds up to the fact that when Jesus ascended to the right hand of God He fulfilled the prophecy David had spoken and the promise God had given to him of the fruit of his body sitting upon his throne. In other words, **JESUS CHRIST IS SITTING ON DAVID'S THRONE TODAY!** Praise His name forevermore! —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was to sit on David's throne?
2. What is the real throne of David?
3. How was Christ given the throne of David?
4. What is Christ doing on His throne?
5. How can we sit with Jesus on His throne?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

There is but one way to really reign over men, and that is by loving them and winning their love, devotion and affection. History is stained with the evils and lust of the pride of men's hearts to be the "big wheel" and have dominion over people. Alexander the Great had a passionate desire to rule the world, and he could not even rule himself, for in a fit of anger he killed his close friend. Adolph Hitler had a dream of ruling the world, and he was a slave to lust and self. Both of these ruthless men died in shame.

We have the example of the greatest King that ever lived. His

name was Jesus. He was a poor man and sought not for worldly honour and the dominion of this world. He sought to please His Father, His God. He submitted to obey the Father's will and allow evil men to nail Him to a cross unjustly, and without a fair trial, and murder Him. He did not fight back nor seek for revenge. He let them have their day and permitted Himself to be the victim. He was a perfect example of true and tender love and compassion and of humility and meekness. He was to have the throne of David, according to the prophecy, and He knew it. But He sought not to be king. When, after seeing how Jesus could miraculously feed them, the people sought to make Jesus a king, He withdrew Himself from them. (John 6: 15.) He told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world. (John 18:36.)

A literal throne and physical, earthly power was not what He sought for. The rule He sought to have was a power to rule Himself and submit to the perfect will of God. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto the death of the cross. He emptied Himself of all the praise of men and the lust of power. For a reward of His obedience to God's will, Christ was resurrected from the dead and highly exalted far up above all heavens. He was given a name which is above every name that there ever was or ever will be. He holds the highest position of power and authority that man could ever have. He truly sits on the throne that fulfills to the uttermost all that the throne of David typified.

He has power, all power in heaven and earth. He will one day exert that power and destroy the present heavens and earth. He will bring all men back to consciousness and awareness to stand at His tribunal of judgment. He will judge them and reward them in righteousness. One day all of His enemies will be made His footstool. But until that time He allows His enemies to have their hay day while He sits beyond the veil in the spiritual realm to minister to the poor and needy of earth, all who seek for His help and grace. Prayer is made to Him constantly and daily. He is our great High Priest and we have the royal invitation to come to Him in every time of need. He also has the power and authority to pour out blessings and the precious gift of the Holy Spirit upon those who will love and obey Him. He truly sits on the throne that fulfills to the uttermost all that the throne of David was a type and shadow of.

We who love and obey this King of kings and Lord of lords have the glorious privilege to share with Him in His eternal

triumph. Though we are despised and rejected of the pride and vanity of this world as He was, we have the blessed hope of sharing His Father's eternal inheritance in that blessed world to come. Let us hold fast to Him and be faithful unto death, and He will give us a crown of life.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

David had an extraordinary life. Very few people accomplished his feats. His life was packed with adventure, romance, courage, sorrow, triumph, poverty, adversity, nobility and success. He was truly a man after God's own heart. God chose him as king, and made this choice when no one else, perhaps not even David himself, was aware of what God had in mind. It was the working of God in a humble heart that vaulted David to a reign of wealth and power.

When God spoke to David through His prophet, Nathan, (II Samuel 7:12-17) we notice something unique. To other prophets, revelations of the Messiah were made objectively apart from themselves. Most of them were shown Christ and His day afar off. When revelations of the Messiah were made to David, they were usually connected with something in his own life, such as history or experience. They had a shadowy foundation in something personal to him, with that thing constituting the revelation of Christ.

Christ's life is a close parallel to David's. As did David, Christ inherited a throne, as well as earned it, and it is typified by a rule of righteousness, power and wealth.

The life of a Christian also has a semblance to David's experiences and Christ's reign on His throne. There is adventure, romance, courage, sorrow, etc. wrapped up in a life for God. There is also the power and wealth that accompanies salvation. The full reward of it will be realized when this life is over and we reign in God's presence forever. —Wayne Murphey



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