

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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Table of Contents

DATE	LESSON TITLE	PAGE
Jan. 6	God Our Refuge and Strength	1
13	Warning Message to All Humanity	5
20	Offering Sacrifices Acceptable to God	10
27	The Goodness of God Shone Forth	14
Feb. 3	Seeking Earnestly for God's Help and Grace	19
10	God's Faithful Help in Trouble	24
17	Waiting on the Lord to Possess the Land	28
24	Wise Attitude Toward this Mortal Life	33
Mar. 3	Marriage Hymn of Christ and the Church	39
10	Beholding the Prosperity of the Wicked	44
17	God's Help in Old Age	49
24	Joyous Love for God's House	53
31	Resurrection of Christ to Victory	58

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Jesus Christ and His Church**
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BIBLE LESSONS FOR FIRST QUARTER, 2013

THEME FOR FIRST QUARTER, 2013

For our studies this quarter we are inspired with several of the Psalms. We have been greatly inspired and blessed through the years with the truth and praise to God that has been expressed in them. We pray the Lord will bless this series of lessons to the good of everyone. —Bro. Leslie Busbee



JANUARY 6, 2013

GOD OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH

Psalm 46:1 ...God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 *Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.* Selah.

4 *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.*

5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, *and that right early.*

6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

MEMORY VERSE: Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The Almighty God, who created the heavens and earth, is our refuge and the strength of our life, and we need not fear what comes our way in this world that will one day pass away.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 46:1, "*refuge*": Shelter and protection. "*a very present help*": A help very much. "*trouble*": Distresses and adverse conditions.

Verse 2, "*though the earth be removed*": When life on earth changes from one state to another. "*mountains*": Compared to the heights of man's accomplishments. "*carried into the midst of the sea*": Be brought to nothing.

Verse 3, "*waters roar and be troubled*": Humanity wars and fights among themselves. "*mountains shake*": Heights of lust and pride, war and tangle. "*swelling*": Being lifted up with mortal pride. "*Selah*": Pause for thoughtful meditation.

Verse 4, "*streams*": Its flowing currents. "*make glad*": Fill with great joy. "*the city of God*": The people who truly serve God and are obedient and faithful to Him. "*the holy place of the tabernacles*": The hearts of men who are consecrated and obedient to God. "*most High*": The Supreme Almighty God and Creator of all things.

Verse 5, "*in the midst of her*": Enshrined in the heart and affections of her people. "*not be moved*": Not be affected or changed. "*right early*": At the dawn of the morning, as expressed in the Hebrew text.

Verse 6, "*heathen raged*": Nations fought and strove with each other. "*kingdoms were moved*": Rulers were shaken and changed. "*he uttered his voice*": God spoke. "*the earth melted*": Dissolved and passed away.

Verse 7, "*LORD of hosts*": Jehovah; the God of all who truly love and serve Him. "*with us*": On our side and for us. "*refuge*": This refers to a lofty place that is safe and not reached by the enemy.

Verse 8, "*desolations he hath made*": Ruins and destruction God causes to come about. "*in the earth*": Among humanity.

Verse 9, "*maketh wars to cease*": Brings peace and love in the hearts of men. "*bow, spear, and chariot*": The vain and useless weapons of war that men produce. "*cutteth in sunder*": Breaks apart and renders useless.

Verse 10, *"Be still"*: Humble and silence your hearts from selfish pride and strife. *"know that I am God"*: Be aware and acknowledge that God is over all. *"I will be exalted"*: God will have over-all control regardless of man's vain strivings.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Not much seems to be known of the author or origin of this 46th Psalm, but it surely has been a great encouragement to the children of God through the years. It has been a great help in my own spiritual life, and it has a vital message for the soul of the Christian and child of God who seeks to serve the Lord God Almighty in this time world.

Just the first verse is a great uplifting message to us. How much help and strength is needed by the children of God in this troublesome world! And how precious it is to be able to go to the Lord in prayer and seek for that refuge and strength to be able to meet the difficulties and adversities of this mortal life! Because of God's wonderful help that He has promised to give, we do not need to fear or be dismayed at the mountains of trouble and distress that we may face from time to time! Regardless of the troubles we face in life, there is a river of water of life flowing from the Heavens above, coming down into this earthly realm for us to drink and partake of, and be refreshed and gladdened as if bathing in refreshment and comfort. How needful we are of comfort and strength from day to day to rise over care, fear, and distress! Regardless of what may boil in the worldly society we live in, we can have peace and quiet rest in our hearts and minds, because we know that God is our refuge, strength, and a present help in trouble!

We can live every day in that city of God, in His Church, under the shadow of His wings! This city is a spiritual city, the home of the soul of man that we enter through being born of the Spirit of God and the Word of God. Our lesson declares that God brings peace to our hearts and minds, and stills the strife and turmoil that satan would have upon us. He can bring stillness and calmness in our spirit, and we can know that God is over all and is caring for us. I remember dear Bro. George Stephenson, who was a faithful minister of the Lord, tell how that in a time of distress and agony the Spirit of the Lord spoke these words to his soul: "Be still and know that I am God!" Oh, how it lifted him up above the troubles that were around him!

Thank the Lord for the victory and peace that we can always have within!
—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do we need a refuge and strength from God?
2. What is that river whose streams will make our hearts glad?
3. What is going to happen to this earth one day?
4. What value is carnal weapons in the battles of life?
5. What attitude and frame of mind do we need to have?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Our world and society is in turmoil today. It has a troublesome effect on the mind as we hear and behold what is being sought to pass upon us in this awful time! But we have been inspired by the Lord to not allow our hearts to be cast down and depressed. As Philippians 3:20-21 states: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile (corruptible) body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious (immortal) body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." The word "conversation" here means "citizenship." Our citizenship is a heavenly one. We are citizens of the United States, but that is just a temporary matter just for this present world. It will soon pass away. Let come what may in this terrible world and society around us, it will all pass away when Jesus makes His glorious appearance and comes to change us to immortal bodies and to live with Him forever! Oh, what a blessed hope we have! No matter what develops in America, we have something far better to look forward to! As Titus 2:11-13 says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We are in a time when people are living stressful lives. It seems that there are so many demands placed upon us that

we must learn to deal effectively with them to keep from being overwhelmed. The psalm in our lesson today can help us maintain our equilibrium in the midst of hard times.

Make God our refuge and strength. When we place our trust in God, we have enlisted the greatest power in Heaven and earth. God loves His children and will never fail them, even in times of trouble. Go to Him in prayer and, with thanksgiving, bring our needs to Him.

Keep our eyes on the Lord and not continually focused on our surroundings. Things around us in the world are always going to be breaking down and deteriorating, but God is a Rock of stability that we can always depend on.

Know that there is a river that flows from the throne of God, and continually partake of it. This river brings cleansing, healing, deliverance, and refreshing to the soul of man.

Behold the works of God. The handiwork of God can be seen about us. We need to open our eyes and observe the blessings of life that are continually evident; from the beauties of nature, to the laughter of children. No doubt all of us could tell of ways the Lord has miraculously worked in our lives. Take time to remember them, count our blessings and give Him thanks for His goodness unto us.

Be still and know that I am God. There are times that we need to back off and allow God to work out the situation we may be facing. Being still can be one of the hardest things to do when our mind is screaming to do something on our own. However, God can work things out in a much more satisfactory manner when we give Him time and opportunity to work.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



JANUARY 13, 2013

WARNING MESSAGE TO ALL HUMANITY

Psalm 49:1 ...Hear this, all *ye* people; give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world:

2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Earthly wealth and prosperity is but temporal and will soon pass away forever. But, if we will seek for Bible salvation and live for Christ and things eternal, we will be rewarded with the resurrection from death and the grave unto everlasting life with Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 49:3, "*wisdom*": Godly fear and reverence. "*understanding*": This word in the Hebrew means to separate and

distinguish. In the Greek it means to put together. Such is life and the need of understanding to distinguish and clearly see each of the details of living and also to clearly see how to put them all together.

Verse 5, "*iniquity of my heels*": This means the sin of my ambushers or those who are trying to trip me up or do me harm.

Verse 7, "*redeem*": Release or save. "*give to God a ransom*": Pay the price for His salvation.

Verse 8, "*redemption of their soul*": Saving of their life. "*precious*": Weighty and valuable. "*it ceaseth forever*": Earthly wealth has no power to save; and seeking after it will cause us to be lost eternally.

Verse 9, "*not see corruption*": Not escape the pit of eternal damnation.

Verse 10, "*brutish*": Foolish and on the level of an animal.

Verse 11, "*inward thought*": Personal attitudes and ideas. "*their houses shall continue forever*": Earthly possessions are not to pass away. "*after their own names*": For their own honor and remembrance. Their desires and affections are centered on this earthly temporal life.

Verse 12, "*abideth not*": Shall not remain to live forever.

Verse 13, "*their folly*": Utter foolishness. "*posterity*": Those who follow after them.

Verse 14, "*the grave*": The world of the dead. "*the upright shall have dominion*": The saved of Christ shall be triumphant. "*in the morning*": When Christ comes in power on that final judgment morning.

Verse 15, "*redeem my soul*": Deliver and resurrect to life eternal.

Verse 18, "*he blessed his soul*": Counted himself to be all right. "*doest well to thyself*": Take good care of yourself and prosper in this life.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is dealing with a very serious situation that faces all of us pilgrims and sojourners on earth. That is why the writer is so seriously calling our attention. It is a message that every human being needs to hear and attentively take heed to. One of the greatest (if not the greatest) temptations of this mortal life is the attraction to seek for earthly wealth and financial prosperity. Jesus Christ, our Lord and

Savior spoke much about it in His teachings. And the apostle Paul spoke much of it in his writings. It just seems to attract the mind and heart of a person. Money, wealth, ease, prosperity, and material earthly gain has a way of ruling the affections of a person. Satan uses this tool to draw the sons and daughters of men into his snare. He used it on Eve in the garden, getting her attention off of what she already had and getting it onto something else.

We have clearly brought out in our lesson that the redemption of one's soul is by far the most important thing to seek after. It is shown that the earthly attainments will soon pass away. But people fail to look at it that way, and are drawn and attracted by fleshly lusts and desires for wealth and carnal security. But the warning in our lesson is very vivid. Death is coming. These earthly possessions are going to pass away. We must stand in that last day and give an account of what we have sought for in this life. Let the worldly crowd seek the vanities of this life, we have something far more valuable and important to seek for. While the earthly treasures and pleasures will soon be gone we can have, through the grace of God in Christ, the riches of eternal life and happiness in that blessed world to come!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the main thing that we are warned about in this lesson?
2. Why is earthly wealth and possessions such an attraction?
3. What is the most important matter that we should see about?
4. What is going to happen to the soul who neglects it all?
5. What is man in honor without God likened unto?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The New Testament has many things to declare and warn us about concerning the danger of wealth and earthly riches. Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-21, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." And we

can add to that: Where your heart is, that is where you will be. It is the great duty and responsibility of parents to earnestly hold before their children this important truth of seeking for wealth in eternal blessings of salvation and faith in God. It is a vivid part of the Holy Scriptures that point us to eternal blessings instead of these earthly things that are soon to perish.

In answer to one who asked Jesus to speak to his brother about dividing the inheritance with him, Jesus said, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." And then He spoke the parable about the rich man who conceived big plans for his own financial ease, and was called out that very night to leave this life. And Jesus said, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:13-21.

Paul counseled Timothy: "...They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things: and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness." I Timothy 6:9-11.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Here are some last words of a few rich and famous people in history; a shocking reality illustration for today's serious lesson:

"All is lost. Monks, monks, monks!" —Henry VIII, King of England (1491-1547).

"All my possessions for a moment of time." —Elizabeth I, Queen of England (1533-1603).

"I've had eighteen straight whiskies. I think that's the record." —Dylan Thomas, Welsh poet and notorious alcoholic, (1914-1953).

"Codeine. . . bourbon." —Tallulah Bankhead, American actress, (1902-1968).

"Drink to me. Drink to my health. You know I can't drink anymore." —Pablo Picasso, French Artist, (1881-1973).

"Don't you dare ask God to help me!" (cursing, in response to her housekeeper who began praying aloud)—Joan Crawford, American Actress, (1905-1977).

"Money can't buy life." —Bob Marley, Jamaican rock/reggae musician, (1945-1981). —Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



JANUARY 20, 2013

OFFERING SACRIFICES ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

19 Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name." Hebrews 13:15.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: God was not completely satisfied and pleased with the animal sacrifices that Israel offered unto Him according to the law given by Moses. He is more satisfied and pleased with praise, thanksgiving, obedience, and complete faith and trust in Him in all of our burdens and needs of life.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 50:1, "*the LORD*": The word LORD in capital letters in the Old Testament refers to the Eternal Self-existent Jehovah, the Creator of the heavens and earth. "*called the earth*": Speaks out first; approaches and addresses all mankind all day long.

Verse 2, "*Out of Zion*": The word "Zion" which was applied to Jerusalem is defined as meaning the shining summit of glory and power. So "*out of Zion*" Means that God is shining forth to humanity in great glory and His Almighty power.

Verse 3, "*Our God shall come*": Our Creator and Giver of life to our being draws near to speak to us. "*a fire shall devour before him*": Our God is a consuming fire, as it is stated in Hebrews 12:29. "*very tempestuous*": Greatly stormy, exerting great activity and strength.

Verse 4, "*judge*": Rule, control, and deal righteously with.

Verse 5, "*Gather my saints together unto me*": This is what God desires to do with the souls of men. The prophecy of Jesus in Genesis 49:10 declares: "The scepter (rod of ruling power) shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet (of Judah's offspring), until Shiloh (the rest-giver) come;

and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." *"made a covenant with me by sacrifice"*: Offered sacrifices commanded in the law of Moses.

Verse 6, *"the heavens shall declare his righteousness"*: God's righteousness is declared from Heaven through the ministry of Jesus Christ. *"God is judge himself"*: God is the only judge we must submit to.

Verse 7, *"testify against thee"*: Endeavor to bring thee correction.

Verse 8, *"I will not reprove thee"*: I do not condemn or reject the sacrifices you have offered; but they are not the real sacrifices I desire from you.

Verse 10-13, *"Every beast, the cattle, all the fowls, and wild beasts of the field are mine"*: These you offer are already mine.

Verse 14, *"Offer unto God"*: Here is what I want offered by you: *"thanksgiving"*: Gratitude, praise, honor, love, appreciation, and devotion. *"pay thy vows unto the most High"*: Fulfill what you really owe to God of love, worship, praise, thanksgiving, obedience, and joyous service.

Verse 16, *"take my covenant in thy mouth"*: Talk about and make high profession in word only.

Verse 17, *"hatest instruction"*: Rejects and disobeys my commandments.

Verse 23, *"ordereth his conversation aright"*: Sets before him the holy way of God to follow and obey.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The heading of this 50th Psalm states that it is a Psalm of Asaph who was one of the chief singers in the temple in the time of David. He was the author of Psalms 73-83. He must have been a godly man in touch with the Spirit of God.

Our lesson today brings out several special and important points that we need to take very seriously. God Almighty is speaking to the sons of men to enlighten them concerning what He desires from His created beings. Many animal sacrifices were made in those days of long ago, and perhaps there was some value for that service rendered. But God is testifying in this Psalm that the animal sacrifices that were continually offered to Him by the people of Israel were not what He really did desire. He declares that these animals were already His, and they need not be offered unto Him. What He really desires

must come from the earnest and loving heart of a person, thanksgiving being a prominent feature. We owe God everything. In Him we live and move and have our being. Acts 17:28.

And then God speaks to the wicked and disobedient. He makes it clear that He is not pleased with what people were doing and how they were living. Men and women need to repent of their sinful ways and attitudes, and conform themselves to God's righteousness and holiness. Praise, worship, thanksgiving, and honor must be daily given to our wonderful Creator and loving Heavenly Father. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is speaking in this Psalm and to whom is he speaking?
2. How did God feel concerning the animals sacrificed to Him?
3. What did God really desire from mankind?
4. Why is God highly displeased with the wicked?
5. To whom will the salvation of God be made known to?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The message that the apostle Paul preached to those at Athens, Greece in Acts 17:24-31 is very impressive and greatly applicable for us today. It goes right along with the message of Almighty God found in our lesson today. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply (earnestly) they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because He hath appointed a day, in the

which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that man whom he hath ordained* (Jesus Christ); *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead." This is a message that we today need to diligently receive and take heed to!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams." These were the words spoken by the prophet Samuel in dealing with the disobedience of King Saul. Saul was more interested in following his own desires as well as yielding to the counsel of the people around him. All of this was done under the pretense of obedience. This decision proved to be the detriment of King Saul. From this point on, he was plagued with depression, lack of victory and distance from the very GOD who had chosen him.

In observing the Christian world around us we observe this same "Saul-syndrome" It sometimes seems easier just to go through the motions of a Christian rather than actually *being* one. Many times we follow our own course of action even after the Lord has instructed us otherwise — while still under the guise of obedience. The Lord desires for us to 'be perfect' rather than to 'look or act perfect'. The Lord draws us to Himself through our being holy rather than doing holy things. It is not just actions but true heart intent that really matters.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



JANUARY 27, 2013

THE GOODNESS OF GOD SHONE FORTH

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

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

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

4 Blessed is *the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee*, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall

be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. Psalm 23:6.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The Almighty God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, is worthy of all of our praise, honor, worship, and faithful obedience as we behold His many blessings and faithful loving care to the soul of man and His blessings upon the earth and all it produces.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 65:1, "*Praise waiteth for thee*": Quiet, calm trust is acceptable praise to God. Isaiah 32:17 says, "...the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." "*in Sion*": In the hearts of God's people. "*the vow be performed*": What is promised and pledged to God shall be accomplished by His Saints.

Verse 2, "*all flesh come*": All humanity has the blessed privilege to come to the Lord in earnest prayer.

Verse 3, "*Iniquities prevail against me*": Things of iniquity are mightier than I. "*thou shalt purge them away*": God will freely forgive. "For thou, Lord, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." Psalm 86:5.

Verse 4, "*Blessed*": How happy! "*choosest*": Accepts and graciously receives. "*causest to approach*": Will attract and bring near.

Verse 5, "*terrible things*": Awesome and reverent ways and workings. "*confidence*": A refuge and source of security and assurance. "*the ends of the earth*": All humanity.

Verse 6, "*setteth fast*": Establishes and makes erect. "*girded*": Held together.

Verse 7, "*tumult*": Great commotion and strife.

Verse 8, "*tokens*": Evidence and signs. "*outgoings*": Shining forth.

Verse 9, "*visitest*": Kindly oversees and takes care of. "*prepest*": Provides and blesses. "*corn*": The various kinds of grain. "*provided for it*": The earth prepared to abundantly produce the harvest of grain.

Verse 10, "*ridges*": Furrows and places for the seed to germinate and grow. "*makest it soft*": Causes the soil to receive the grain planted to sprout and grow. "*springing*": Sprouting and bringing forth fruit.

Verse 11, "*thy paths*": God's ways of blessing. "*fatness*": Abundance.

Verse 12, "*rejoice on every side*": Covered all over with joy.

Verse 13, "*flocks*": Herds of cattle, sheep, and goats. "*shout for joy*": Show forth the goodness and blessings of the Almighty God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

What a wonderful lesson we have from the writings of David, the man after God's own heart! The goodness of God is shown and made manifest in the spiritual blessings of salvation from sin and the blessings of being in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God, (I Timothy 3:15) and then including the earthly blessings of God's great creation. We can have our sins forgiven and washed away

through the blood of Jesus Christ. We can come to the Lord in earnest prayer and worship Him in His holy service. What a blessing to draw near to God and feel the comfort and strength of His Holy Spirit dwelling within us! Then let us look around at the wonders of nature! See the sunshine coming up in the morning, traveling across the sky, and going down in brilliant beauty at the evening. How sad that mankind, as a general rule, lives their daily lives with very little sense or thought of what a wonderful blessing that sun is to us.

Then notice, as is stated in Acts 14:17, "...He (God) left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Look at the lovely fields of wheat, rye, oats, barley, and corn! These are the gracious gifts of God to mankind. Take notice of the herds of various kinds of cattle, and sheep and goats! Consider the various wild animals on display in zoos across our country. Look at those lovely giraffes, the lordly elephants, and other creatures. Think about the various fruits: oranges, apples, grapes, figs, dates, pears, peaches, plums, and the lovely vegetables: carrots, peas, beans, celery, and potatoes! Oh, how good the Lord is. The Lord gave this fall a wonderful crop of okra from the gardens. Let us love, reverence, worship, and faithfully obey our wonderful Lord and Giver of life, breath, and being!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What are some of the blessings of goodness given by God?
2. What has God done about our transgressions against Him?
3. What noise and tumult is there among humanity?
4. How should we relate and deal with such a wonderful God?
5. How does God manifest Himself to us in return for our worship?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

How wonderful that we can behold the beauty of the Almighty God in His creation! Psalm 19:1-4 brings out: "...The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth

his handiwork. Day unto day (Day after day) uttereth speech, and night unto night (night after night) showeth knowledge. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.* Every day and every night the heavens are broadcasting the great reality of the living God! Jesus stated in Matthew 5:45 that God "...maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." The witness of the reality of a Supreme Being is everywhere. Look at all the beautiful trees, trees of so many various shapes and sizes! It all is a witness and declaration of the goodness and reality of our Creator.

The wonders of creation make up a gospel that is vividly preached to all humanity. Paul quoted from this 19th Psalm in Romans 10:18, "...Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." He was speaking of the preaching of the gospel and how that they have not all obeyed it. God's goodness is seen everywhere. We need to open our eyes and our minds to face the reality of the Eternal God! But mankind in general are all taken up with the material things of earth and what man has invented, such as houses, furniture, appliances, food, eating, sports, automobiles, airplanes, motorcycles, and the lusts of pride, and ungodly habits. The old television and the Internet are the things people are going after and indulging in. And, in so doing, they are overlooking the message that is being preached to them every day. Oh, that men and women, boys and girls would wake up to the message that is being preached to them every day and every night!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; stilleth the noise of the seas; waters the earth; enriches it with the river of God; blesses the springing thereof; crowns the year with goodness. All these phrases depict a dynamic, active, caring heavenly Father that is very much involved with caring for humanity upon this earth. Psalm 145:15-16, "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."

He prepared a great fish for Jonah, sent bees on Israel's enemy, held the sun still for Joshua, rained fire and brimstone on Sodom, opened the sea for Moses, a talking donkey for Baalim, used flies, frogs, locusts, hail, manna. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. It is all at His command and disposal to accomplish His purposes.

"O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." Psalms 104:24.
—Bro. Bob Wilson



FEBRUARY 3, 2013

SEEKING EARNESTLY FOR GOD'S HELP AND GRACE

Psalm 27:1 ...The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I be confident.

4 One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

7 Hear; O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 *When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face: my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

9 Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

13 *I had fainted*, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

MEMORY VERSE: One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. Psalm 27:4.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: It takes strong and determined decision to resist the devil and the temptations of the flesh and the world and faithfully follow the Lord Jesus Christ in His beautiful and holy way of faith, hope, and love.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 27:2, "*eat up*": Devour and put to death. Such was the purpose of the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ. "*stumbled and fell*": Failed and were defeated, just as when Christ came forth a victor from the grave.

Verse 3, "*will I be confident*": I am trusting.

Verse 4, "*desired*": Requested and diligently sought for. "*seek after*": Search and diligently strive for. "*dwell*": Remain permanently never to leave. "*beauty of the LORD*": Grace and delightful splendor of Jehovah. "*inquire in his temple*": To dig, search, and inspect earnestly God's holiness.

Verse 5, "*hide me*": Shield and keep in secret. Colossians 3:1-4: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who* is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "*pavilion*": Shelter.

Verse 6, "*lifted up above*": Given the victory over. "*yea, I will sing*": I will not fail to sing even in the most difficult times.

Verse 8, "*my heart said*": I made my decision. "*seek*": Feel after earnestly. Acts 17:27, "That they should seek the Lord,

if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us."

Verse 10, "*take me up*": Take good care of me.

Verse 11, "*a plain path*": A straight and level way of truth and right.

Verse 12, "*cruelty*": Hatred and violence.

Verse 13, "*I had fainted unless I had believed*": My faith sustained me and I did not fail, but held on for God to bring me out.

Verse 14, "*Wait on the LORD*": Hold fast to your hope in Jehovah. "*be of good courage*": Be strong to hold fast in Him. "...Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Ephesians 6:10

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is from one of the songs that King David wrote inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. Surveying the life of David, we can read of times and places in his life when such wonderful expressions of love and joy in God could well have been written. These times would include his life as a shepherd boy, his experience with the giant Goliath, his difficulties and sorrows being hated and pursued by King Saul, the deliverance and victory God gave him in bringing him through it all. The 40 year reign as king of Israel contained many scenes that showed the goodness of being in God's house and beholding the beauty of the Lord and lessons learned of His blessings and help.

The LORD God Almighty was David's light and salvation. It brought him through many trying and difficult times. Oppressed by enemies and hosts of trouble and sorrow, his earnest desire was to dwell in God's house and be a witness to His help and strength in times of trouble. He experienced the help of the Almighty and the security of being hidden in the secret of His tabernacle and being set upon a rock. His head was lifted up above all of his enemies round about him and he was able to offer the sacrifices of joy and praises unto the LORD. He was diligent to seek the face and loving countenance of his God. That is something that God wants us to do, as our quote from Acts 17:27 in the Word Definitions shows. People who neglect to seek God in earnest prayer and devotion are

missing the greatest blessings of life. God will not hide His face from us if we will diligently seek Him. We need to be taught of the Lord and led in the paths of His truth. Thus we can be delivered from our enemies, and have a believing faith to see the goodness of the Lord as we wait on Him and keep good courage in Him.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How was David able to keep courage in the face of trouble?
2. What was the ardent desire that he had in his heart?
3. What was the beauty of the Lord that he sought to behold?
4. What do we need to inquire and seek God about?
5. How can we keep from fainting and losing out with God?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

I will never forget one afternoon when I, as a young Christian, was going through some difficult places in my life and the devil was pressing me with accusations and discouragement. I went to the chapel there in Guthrie, Oklahoma where I lived, to seek the Lord for help and victory in my soul. As I sought the Lord in prayer, calling upon him in deep earnestness of soul, this scripture from Psalm 27 came forcibly to my heart and mind. "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I be confident. One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. (And then the next scripture really helped me to get the victory that day): And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacles sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD." Oh, how my heart rejoiced and was strengthened to overcome the trouble that the devil was throwing against me! I will never forget the victory that I gained that day!

And this scripture has been a special message of encouragement and comfort to my soul ever since!

I also want to stress the importance of verse 8 and how important it is for us to earnestly seek the Lord's face. We can see God's power and goodness everywhere in this earth and the heavens He created. But to really get in touch with Him we must diligently seek Him in fervent prayer often. If we will seek Him with all of our hearts, He will be found, sweetly and richly found, by us! It pays to seek and feel after Him, wait patiently for Him, and keep good courage all along the way.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The first and last verses of song number 142, "Nearer the Lord," skillfully weaves thoughts from the Psalm 27 into beautiful poetic form.

The Lord is my light and the strength of my life,
Then of whom shall I be afraid?
He hideth my soul from the troubles that roll,
In the cleft in the rock He has made.

I ever would dwell in the temple of God,
Where His graces so rich unfold;
Contented to fill just the lowliest place,
That His beauty my eyes may behold.

What loving parent does not remember times when severe weather was passing over, lightning and thunder was causing the house to tremble, and their young children came to their room and wanted to snuggle in close to their father and mother. Children seek and find security and help for their needs from their parents, this is God's plan. Adults, and children alike, seek and find security and help from their heavenly Father, this is also God's plan. When we take God's plan for our lives and continually dwell in His presence, we live in a realm of grace that empowers us to overcome the tempter of our souls. This causes us to mature and abound in the joy and graces of our wonderful Savior. We are handsomely rewarded for seeking the Lord. —Bro. Willie E. Murphey

FEBRUARY 10, 2013

GOD'S FAITHFUL HELP IN TROUBLE

Psalm 34:1 ...I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad.

3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.

6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

8 O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.

9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is* no want to them that fear him.

10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 What man *is he* that desireth life, and loveth *many* days, that he may see good?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

16 The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 *The righteous cry*, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

19 Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

MEMORYVERSE: What man is *he that* desireth life, and loveth *many* days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. Psalm 34:12-14.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: If one will be aware of his soul's need of God and His loving favor, he or she will depart from all evil, and seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness with a yielded and willing heart to do what is pleasing in His sight.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 34:1, "*bless*": Praise, honor, and worship.

Verse 2, "*make her boast*": Brightly and clearly shine. "*humble*": Lowly and feeling unworthy.

Verse 3, "*magnify*": Speak highly and honorably of.

Verse 4, "*sought*": Diligently ask after, seek for, and pursue.

Verse 5, "*lightened*": Greatly cheered. "*faces not ashamed*": Countenances not clouded with disappointment.

Verse 6, "*poor*": Afflicted, depressed, and greatly in need. "*cried*": Called out earnestly. "*troubles*": Distressful needs and heavy burdens.

Verse 7, "*encampeth*": Is stationed by God to be near for protection.

Verse 8, "*taste*": Seek to experience and find out. "*blessed*": How happy! "*trusteth*": Seeks for refuge.

Verse 9, "*fear*": Reverence, honor, and high respect. "*want*": Lack.

Verse 10, "*seek the LORD*": Earnestly and frequently follow after God for His help.

Verse 12, "*desireth life*": Wants real life. "*see good*": Experience special blessings.

Verse 13, "*guile*": Deceit and lies.

Verse 14, "*pursue*": Do your best to take hold and possess it.

Verse 18, "*nigh*": Very close and near.

Verse 21, "*contrite*": Crushed and heavy with sorrow.
"*desolate*": Condemned or held guilty.

Verse 22, "*trust in him*": Seek refuge in God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a beautiful and inspiring Psalm of praise and gratitude to the great Creator and Giver of our life and being. It is good to have these expressions of worship and loving praise a reality in our hearts and lives. It is good to bless the LORD and praise Him for His wonderful blessings and daily help that He gives us. He is so good, merciful, and kind. As we are aware of our weak and mortal state, and have need of His mercy and grace to help us to overcome the world, satan, and sin, we are so glad and thankful for the goodness that God bestows upon us. It is necessary for us to seek the LORD and feel earnestly after Him. He has manifested to us mortals His grandeur and glorious power in the creation of the heavens and earth. And, as we reach our hearts out to Him earnestly, He responds by manifesting His goodness and help in both our inner and outer beings. And we need to return to Him much thanksgiving and praise for all He so kindly does for us.

When we taste and experience the spiritual influence of God in our heart and inner man, it brings a joy and sweetness that nothing else can give. This Psalm teaches us the true loving reverence that we owe to our Maker. As verses 12-16 brings out, if we desire life and many days that we may see good, we must keep our whole being under the control of God's will and favor. This part of our lesson is quoted in I Peter 3:10-12. This first thing mentioned to be kept is our tongue. James 3:2 declares that if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able to bridle the whole body. And the rest of that chapter deals extensively about the potential of the tongue. Also we want to notice that verse 20 is quoted in John 19:36 as being fulfilled by the soldiers refraining from breaking our Lord's legs. So our lesson has much spiritual value and is worthy of our attention and regard. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do we owe so much gratitude and praise to our God?
2. What are some of the blessings that we receive from Him?

3. What condition of heart and mind must we have?
4. What must we do to have life, and see good for many days?
5. What part of our lesson is a prophecy of Christ?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The great Almighty God, who created the heavens and the world and all things therein, is a gracious and kind Father who loves us with a great and everlasting love. Jeremiah 31:3 declares this: "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." We are attracted to God when we behold His goodness and mercy. This 34th Psalm expresses so well the tender and loving goodness that God has toward us mortal creatures.

I so ardently remember what Bro. Ostis Wilson told about that happened to him and his wife, Opal, while they lived at Anthony, Kansas so long ago. He came in from work one evening and found her suffering in her stomach as she had often been other times. He went over and prayed for her. She did not get any better. He prayed again, and she still did not get any better. He said that he was two-thirds sick himself, so he went into the other room and threw himself down on the couch. He was burdened and sad, and felt so poor and needy of God's help. All of a sudden it came into his mind with a bang: "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles." It came with such inspiration that Bro. Ostis said he knew it was from God. He rose up and went in to his wife and prayed with faith and courage: "Lord, I'm that poor man", along with his prayer. His wife was healed and got up and went to her duties. The Lord loves to help the poor and needy, and we need to recognize that we are poor, destitute, helpless, and needy creatures before Him. It is never that we are worthy of His help, but that we are so needy and poor that His pity and goodness is reaching out to us. And, oh, how sweet it is to be visited by the blessing of the Lord in our bodies and in our souls by the precious workings of His Holy Spirit! We can look down our journey of life and recall many, many wonderful blessings that the Holy Spirit has poured out upon our soul in the times of trials and heavy burdens that were upon us. As we sought Him in earnest prayer, He visited us

with His help, healing, and comfort. Oh, how we need to love, worship, fear, and obey Him faithfully all the way!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I love the picture this chapter paints of a child of God. The first thing of note is the joyful spirit and countenance. Looking deeper, the praise is not empty and self-promoting, but the boast is always made in the Lord. Deep contentment and quiet satisfaction characterize this person, who can't help but attract others of humble mind. It is ever his or her desire to reach out and invite others to enjoy the sweet experience of praising the Lord and fellowshiping *together*.

Not far from the lips of any devoted child of God is his or her latest testimony of God's deliverance. As the years go by, more and more experiences are added to the collection, until the life story is just one miracle, one answered prayer, one precious visitation from the Lord, after another. Why, if they were all written down, what an amazing book it would be! Here, I was miraculously spared. There, I was saved. Here is where I cried, there is where He heard me, and over here is where He cheered me when I was in despair.

At this point the testimony literally erupts in spontaneous eagerness for the reader to also experience the blessing—"*OH! Taste and see that the Lord is GOOD! Oh, fear Him! You will never lack for anything!*"

The next part, words of counsel to children, those in the next generation, make me keenly aware that in order to really impart these important, life-giving principles to our children, we **MUST** have our daily lives paint this beautiful picture, that through us, they may indeed **TASTE** and **SEE** that the Lord is good.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



FEBRUARY 17, 2013

WAITING ON THE LORD TO POSSESS THE LAND

Psalm 37:1 ..Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good: so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked *shall not be*: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it *shall not be*.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth: and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.

23 The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him* with his hand.

25 I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

26 *He* is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

30 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it*.

35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.

36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

37 Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that man* is peace.

MEMORY VERSE: Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. Psalm 37:8-9.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: No matter what the wicked and ungodly people around us do and seem to be prospering, we know that it is all just temporary. We can be wholly assured that being faithful and obedient to God and His holiness will bring, in the end, eternal life and happiness with Him and His Saints.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 37:1, "*Fret not thyself*": Be not fired up with anger. "*neither be envious*": Do not be jealous.

Verse 3, " *dwell in the land*": Possess the life and blessings of God's holiness. "*verily thou shalt be fed*": Will be faithfully pastured.

Verse 4, "*Delight thyself*": Richly enjoy.

Verse 5, "*Commit thy way*": Let God fully guide you. "*shall bring it to pass*": Will work.

Verse 6, "*bring forth*": Cause to be clearly seen.

Verse 7, "*Rest in the LORD*": "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10. "*fret not thyself*": Do not be bothered. "*prospereth in his way*": Seems to be getting along fine and happy.

Verse 8, "*Cease from anger*": Do not allow your displeasure in what others do cause you to take action against them.

Verse 10, "*consider*": Look for.

Verse 11, "*The meek shall inherit the earth*": The gentle, lowly, humble, mild, and loving of men will possess the blessings of life eternal, as Jesus spoke this in Matthew 5:5, "*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*"

Verse 23, "*ordered by the LORD*": Established from Jehovah. "*he delighteth in his way*": God is very well pleased with the holy way of godliness. It is that narrow way that Jesus said leads unto life, "and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13-14.

Verse 24, "*Though he fall*": Even though he stumbles. "*not be utterly cast down*": Will not entirely be turned away. "*upholdeth*": Supports and sustains.

Verse 26, "*lendeth*": Shares with others in need.

Verse 31, "*The law of his God is in his heart*": It is his utmost desire to keep and obey the holy commandments of his God. The New Testament declares that this is how God's people will live and conduct themselves. Jeremiah 31:31-34 prophesied of this and Hebrews 8:8-12 shows it to be fulfilled. "*slide*": Slip or go astray.

Verse 34, "*keep his way*": Be diligent to heed and obey the holy, righteous counsel of God.

Verse 35, "*spreading*": Showing off. "*green bay tree*": Handsome native tree.

Verse 37, "*Mark*": Watch and observe carefully.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Just as David lived in a world dominated by lust, greed, and evil, we also have similar, if not worse, conditions to deal with in our present society. To be a true child of God Almighty, we must take our stand against the current of this present evil world and strive to live holy, humble, meek, godly, righteous, and sinless lives of purity and honesty. This brings us in conflict and variance with the most of humanity. It seems that most people live solely for the fulfillment of material gain, prosperity, and pleasure. Our society is dominated and controlled by darkness and ignorance of the good will of our Creator. Thus it was back in David's time and thus it is now.

But in this 37th chapter of the book of Psalms we find encouragement and comfort to be able to steadfastly choose and hold to the principles of holiness, humility, faith, obedience to God, and the upright way of life. We are not to "fret ourselves", but to keep an attitude of mercy, love, and tender concern for our fellow creatures of earth. Our lesson brings out repeatedly that our associates here on earth, that are in darkness and evil passions, are soon going to be cut down like the grass. Isaiah 40:6-8 declares and is quoted by Peter in I Peter 1:24-25 "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass, The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the Word of the LORD endureth for ever...." This is what we must keep in mind as we live in this

world. We want to strive for something better than just old literal fleshly fulfillment and pleasure. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why should we not fret because of evildoers?
2. What should we rather do for our good?
3. What kind of land should we want to dwell in?
4. Why should we have our steps ordered by the LORD?
5. What will be the end of the perfect and upright man?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

There is so much unrest, murmuring, strife, contention, and evil generating in this present world. It has been that way ever since man fell into the pitfalls of sin. But Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior brought salvation and victory for us to possess with great joy and a bright hope of something beyond this life. Faith, hope, and love can be the ruling principle of the journey we are taking. We do not have to continue in the course of strife and ungodly ways that we find ourselves in. We can overcome this wicked world by following in the footsteps of Jesus.

And this is what the main message in our lesson is all about. "Trust in the LORD, delight thyself in Him, commit thy way unto the LORD, and rest in Him. The wicked in a little while shall not be, but the meek shall inherit the earth. The expressions; "inherit the land" and "inherit the earth" are the very same of meaning and direction. It all points to overcoming death and disfavor with God to live for Him in holiness and righteousness so that we can inherit eternal life in that world to come. It is so encouraging knowing that if we will do as is brought out: Trust, commit, delight, rest, and wait on the LORD God and please Him, we will be rewarded at the end with eternal life. Wait on the Lord, mark the perfect man, behold the upright, and follow faithfully the way of righteousness and true holiness, and thus we will be rewarded with eternal life in that blessed world to come. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There are a lot of books, lectures and lessons given on the subject of investing and how to create financial wealth. But

there has not yet been an earthly plan devised to stretch that financial dollar into the eternal world. You simply cannot take it with you. All accumulations gained in this life stay in this life. It will not cross over into eternity.

We must ask ourselves: what is a worthy investment? Is it in this earth? In real estate? In stocks and bonds? In our mortal bodies? In politics? In governments? We see that political powers fall; bodies die and economies fail. This earth and all that is contained therein will one day melt with fervent heat. So what then is worth investing in?

Let's take a look at investing in eternal life. An investment in heaven is forever safe and cannot be stolen or lost. It will not deteriorate by oxidation or insects. This treasure reaps dividends now in this life as well as in the eternal realm above. We can safely 'put all of our eggs in this one basket'. Yes, this is indeed a worthy investment to pour all of our time, energy, money and very life into. Maybe that is why the writer in Proverbs 11:30 said "he that winneth souls is wise" — a wise investor that is.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



FEBRUARY 24, 2013

WISE ATTITUDE TOWARD THIS MORTAL LIFE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Proverbs 13:3 He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

Proverbs 21:23 Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.

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

CENTRAL THOUGHT: After refraining from speaking even when sorely tempted to, the Psalmist finally offered an earnest prayer to God for Him to make him aware of how short and uncertain is his life and how needy he was of God's help and guidance.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 39:1, "*keep*": Restrain; bring under control. "*is before me*": I have to deal with.

Verse 2, "*dumb with silence*": Keeping still and not talking. "*held my peace even from good*": Did not speak even when it seemed I should. "*my sorrow was stirred*": I suffered mental agony and grief.

Verse 3, "*My heart was hot*": Oh, how I was tempted to say something! "*musings*": Feeling like complaining. "*the fire burned*": The fire of the Spirit of God inspired me.

Verse 4, "*know mine end*": Realize that I must soon die. "*measure of my days*": The limit of my human existence. "*frail*": Poor and so soon to die and leave this earthly life.

Verse 5, "*Behold*": I am made to see. "*as a handbreadth*": Very short and fleeting. "*mine age is as nothing*": My earthly life is as if it does not exist. "*at his best state*": In the height of his mortal strength. "*altogether vanity*": Without doubt soon to pass away. "*Selah*": Pause and consider.

Verse 6, "*in a vain show*": Like a shadow. "*disquieted in vain*": In useless uproar of talk and anger. "*heapeth up*": Collects for himself. "*knoweth not who shall gather*": Is unaware of who will get them after he is gone. God said to the rich man: "...*Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou has provided?*" Luke 12:20.

Verse 7, "*what wait I for*": What am I really concerned about? "*hope*": Future expectation.

Verse 9, "*because thou didst it*": God caused such to be.

Verse 10, "*Remove thy stroke*": Turn away the trouble you have brought. "*I am consumed*": I am finished.

Verse 12, "*hold not thy peace*": Do not turn away from me. "*stranger, sojourner*": A pilgrim passing through this short earthly life. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" I Peter 2:11.

Verse 13, "*spare me*": Remove your displeasure. "*recover strength*": Have grace to overcome. "*go hence, and be no more*": Die and leave this mortal life.

Proverbs 13:3, "*keepeth his mouth*": Guards and controls his speech. "*openeth wide his lips*": Has no control over his talk.

Proverbs 29:11, "*keepeth it in till afterward*": Holding back, quiets it.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today has some very vital and important instructions and counsel that every human being needs to seriously consider. This earthly life is so short and fleeting, and can be snatched away so quickly and suddenly. The fear and godly reverence we should have in our hearts will help us to be wise and fully aware of the vanity of this earthly existence. Instead of being a big talker and loud mouth, we should be solemn and reflective of the frail beings we are, and how we need the counsel and guidance of Almighty God. As

our lesson brings out, we need to take heed to how we walk and conduct ourselves that we sin not with our tongue. Yes, we need to keep our mouth and speech with a bridle in the face of the perils and danger of losing our eternal soul. Notice how the Psalmist refrained from talk in the face of great temptation until, when he did speak, it was an earnest prayer to God for his own spiritual good to be aware of how short this life is and how frail he was. He was made aware of the brevity of his mortal days, and how, at the very best, we are "altogether vanity." This goes along with Ecclesiastes 2:11 that the writer expressed after speaking of all he had done and gained in life. "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all *was* vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun."

We need to take this lesson very seriously and pray, as the Psalmist did, for God to help us to "recover strength" for what is good and acceptable in His sight before we "go hence, and be no more."

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the Psalmist refrain his tongue and lips from?
2. What caused him to want to be so conscientious about it?
3. After his holding back his words, what did he finally say?
4. What does every man at his best state really amount to?
5. What do the terms mean referring to us as *strangers and sojourners*?
6. What strength do we need to recover before we "be no more"?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Oh, how serious and solemn is the counsel brought forth in our lesson today! This earthly life is just a sojourn, a short and fleeting journey so soon to be over and finished. As John Greenleaf Whittier expressed in one of his poems: "Death comes, life goes: the asking eye and ear are answerless. The grave is dumb, the hollow sky is sad with silentness." Think about the countless millions who have trodden these earthly vales before us. They were alive and active and full of vigor and

excitement. But it all comes to the end of this earthly life. It is not the end of us. There is a great eternity looming up before us. As Hebrews 9:27 declares: "...It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment." The wise counsel of Ecclesiastes 12:14 declares: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be good*, or whether *it be evil*."

Humanity is so prone to be carried away and so deeply involved in material activity, possessions, labor, responsibilities, and problems. It is wise for us to be sober minded to weigh up the proposition that we have before us: Where am I going to be in eternity? "Before I go hence, and be no more", I need to seek the Lord God for His salvation and grace to be able to overcome this wicked world and live for eternal treasures and values. I need to be careful with my words and how I use my tongue. Remember what our Lord Jesus said in Matthew 12:36, "...Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment." The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom and a conscientious heart before Him is a most valuable treasure to possess.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Oh! why should the sprit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around, and together be laid;
And the young and the old, and the low and the high
Shall molder to dust and together shall lie.

The infant a mother attended and loved;
The mother that infant's affection who proved;
The husband that mother and infant who blessed,—
Each, all, are away to their dwellings of rest.

The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, in whose eye,
Shone beauty and pleasure,—her triumphs are by;
And the memory of those who loved her and praised
Are alike from the minds of the living erased.

The hand of the king that the sceptre hath borne;
The brow of the priest that the mitre hath worn;
The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave,
Are hidden and lost in the depth of the grave.

The peasant whose lot was to sow and to reap;
The herdsman who climbed with his goats up the steep;
The beggar who wandered in search of his bread,
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

The saint who enjoyed the communion of heaven;
The sinner who dared to remain unforgiven;
The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just,
Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

So the multitude goes, like the flowers or the weed
That withers away to let others succeed;
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that has often been told.

For we are the same our fathers have been;
We see the same sights our fathers have seen;
We drink the same stream, and view the same sun,
And run the same course our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking our fathers would think;
From the death we are shrinking our fathers would shrink;
To the life we are clinging they also would cling;
But it speeds for us all, like a bird on the wing.

They loved, but the story we cannot unfold;
The scorned, but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved, but no wail from their slumbers will come;
They joyed, but the tongue of their gladness is dumb.

They died, ay! they died; and we things that are now,
Who walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
Who make in their dwelling a transient abode,
Meet the things that they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea! hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
We mingle together in sunshine and rain;
And the smiles and the tears, the song and the dirge,
Still follow each other, like surge upon surge.

'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud,—
Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

By: William Knox

—Submitted by Bro. Bob Wilson

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MARCH 3, 2013

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 scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.

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.

9 Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

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.

12 And the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.

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: But unto the Son *he saith*", Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter 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: Jesus Christ the King, has overcome this world of sin and evil in righteous obedience to God, and has been given a beautiful bride, a people pure and holy within, and will one day receive her with gladness and rejoicing in His heavenly palace for ever.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 45:1, "*inditing*": Joyfully inspired with. "*things which I have made touching the king*": My activity and relationship concerning the king. "*ready writer*": Diligent and skillful recorder or witness.

Verse 2, "*fairer than the children of men*": Most holy and beautiful of all mankind. "*grace is poured into thy lips*": Thy teaching and doctrine is filled with righteous counsel and wisdom.

Verse 3, "*Gird thy sword*": Put on your heart and life the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12. "*majesty*": Splendor and authority with overcoming power.

Verse 4, "*ride prosperously*": Go triumphantly forward. "*terrible things*": Awesome and wonderful things of reverence and godly fear.

Verse 5, "*fall under thee*": Bow down with submissive love unto thee.

Verse 6, "*scepter*": Rod of power. "*right scepter*": Rule of righteousness and holiness.

Verse 7, "*above thy fellows*": Superior to all mankind.

Verse 8, "*out of the ivory palaces*": From the holy realms of Heaven.

Verse 9, "*upon thy right hand*": Close to your heart and soul. *the queen*: Your holy Bride. "*in gold of Ophir*": Pure gold from the land in the east noted for its top grade of gold. This is symbolizing the pure gold of holiness and purity from Heaven.

Verse 10, "*forget thine own people*": Put all else behind and embrace the Bridegroom of your soul. Forsake the world and your own ways.

Verse 11, "*greatly desire*": Richly embrace and enjoy. "*thy beauty*": The beauty of perfect holiness.

Verse 13, "*all glorious within*": Holy and brightly beautiful in heart and soul and mind. "*wrought gold*": Skillfully woven with the purest of gold in the heavenly places.

Verse 14, "*brought unto the king in raiment of needlework*": Presented unto Christ and "...arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Revelation 19:8.

Verse 15, "*enter into the king's palace*": Pass joyfully into the eternal realms of glory, "When he (Christ) shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe..." II Thessalonians 1:10.

Verse 17, "*make thy name to be remembered in all generations*": "...God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,...And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have for our lesson today a vivid and beautiful prophecy of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, the King of kings and Lord of lords. I Timothy 6:15 and Revelation 19:16.

We have this wonderful Psalm quoted in Hebrews 1:8-9 which the writer quoted, along with other Old Testament scriptures and applying them to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Notice he states: "But unto the Son he saith," and then quotes from this 45th Psalm. Seeing that the writer in Hebrews applies this quotation from Psalm 45 directly to Christ, then we can see how the rest of the Psalm can be applied to the union of the Savior of the world to His holy Church. As was also stated by Paul in Ephesians 5:25-27, "...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

So we can behold the beautiful picture of Christ and the Church of God as His holy bride. It pictures the Church as the Queen in gold, forgetting the earthly past and being the beautiful Bride of His love. She is all glorious within, pure and holy in life and character. She is united to Him now in the Spirit, and will one day be with Him forever and ever in that blessed world of eternal life to come. How wonderful that we can give up the world and its folly and vanity and be united with our precious Savior to live and be together with Him and all of His holy redeemed Saints forever! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was this good matter the Psalmist was inditing?
2. To whom does the writer in Hebrews apply it all to?
3. Who is this Bride that the Lord Jesus Christ is united to?
4. How is it that this Bride is "all glorious within"?
5. What can we look forward to in being a part of His Bride?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The Biblical truth and teachings concerning Jesus Christ, the Son of God and His chosen Bride is one of the great high lights of the Gospel of the great salvation that Jesus died and rose again to bring to us. He gave His life to purchase for Himself a spotless Bride that is made up of the souls of mankind who believe, obey, worship, and love Him with all the

heart, soul, mind, and strength. How wonderful that Jesus loved us and loved His Heavenly Father to be willing to come into this sin cursed world and suffer and die as atonement for our sins and disobedience! It will mean so much for the soul of man to give up sin and the world, and follow the Lord Jesus all the way through this vain and fleeting earthly life completely to the end!

Jesus gave it all for us, and His Father rewarded His obedience to the death of the cross by raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His own right hand in Heaven there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Oh, let us open our hearts to receive Christ and consecrate to follow in His footsteps all the way to the end of this time world. To meet Him in that glory world will be worth all we ever have to suffer or endure.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It has been said that, "The Gospel is the greatest story ever told, about the greatest offer ever made, by the greatest person who ever lived." Many romantic stories have been written about some poor neglected maiden who meets and marries a handsome, wealthy man. However, no other story can compare with the wonderful story of love that unfolded upon this earth. Jesus, the precious Son of God, came from Heaven by an humble birth, gave His life to redeem fallen mankind, was resurrected by the power of God, and then proposes to marry those who partake of His marvelous plan of salvation.

Young ladies sometimes have hope chests in which they store special treasures—things they plan to use in their new home. The bride of Christ also stores up treasures for their new homewhere moth and rust does not corrupt. They do this by giving of their means, time and possessions to others in need and to the work of God.

Those who are in love enjoy getting acquainted, sharing dreams and helping each other. They dream of how things will be in the future. The bride of Christ also does these things by reading the Word, meditating, and doing the will of God. A true Christian is blessed with a bright hope for the future.

This psalm portrays Christ as riding prosperously because of truth, humility and righteousness. How rare to find one so honored and glorious, and yet be filled with humility.

No doubt many who admire Him feel so inadequate and unworthy, yet His love reaches even them. All should fall in love with this majestic rider! —Bro. Willie E. Murphey



MARCH 10, 2013

BEHOLDING THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

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

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

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

15 If I say, I will speak thus: behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children.

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

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

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

21 Thus was my heart grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

22 So foolish *was* I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.

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

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

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

26 My flesh and my heart faileth, *but* God *is* the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, *but* God *is* the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. Psalm 73:24-26.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: We need to know and remember that worldly prosperity and self-confidence is deceitful and people who reject the fear and reverence they ought to have in God are going to find themselves in a lost world of eternal destruction. What we suffer as a Christian will be greatly rewarded when Christ receives us in eternal glory.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 73:2, "*were almost gone*": Had nearly stumbled.

Verse 3, "*envious at the foolish*": Jealous of the proud.

Verse 4, "*no bands*": No suffering. "*firm*": Fat and healthy.

Verse 5, "*not plagued*": Not bothered or affected.

Verse 8, "*are corrupt*": They scoff. "*loftily*": Lifted up self-esteem.

Verse 9, "*against the heavens*": Contrary to the fear of God. "*tongue walketh through the earth*": Big talkers everywhere they go.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a vital one that it will pay us all to carefully consider and keep in mind. The writer of this Psalm believed in the Almighty God and Creator, but he was affected in his mind and thoughts by seeing and beholding the earthly gain and prosperity of those who did not believe in God. His language is plain and very impressive. He was envious and jealous of the ungodly that he beheld around him in the world. He describes them clearly. There were no bands in their death, no suffering of pain. They were strong and healthy and having very little trouble or sorrow. They were wrapped up in pride and self-sufficiency. They were able to get and possess everything they wanted. They spoke with self-confidence and looked down on people who believed in the Higher Power. They were big talkers, going about spreading themselves, as Psalm 37:35 said, "as a green bay tree." They questioned the existence of God, saying, "How does God know?" They prospered in the world and had more than heart could wish. They looked down on godly people and shamed them.

Then the writer expressed what his reaction was for awhile. What had cleansing his heart and washing his hands in innocency done for him? For every morning and all day long he was plagued and chastened with adversity. It just got too painful for him. But he went into the sanctuary of communion with God, and the Spirit of God opened his eyes to the real truth of the matter. Our scripture text is lengthy but it is filled with spiritual help and comfort. He was made confident of hope and assurance of great reward in the glory of Heaven. Being guided by God's counsel would keep him from being deceived by looking at the prosperity and vanity of unbelief and pride. Though his earthly strength and mortal prosperity would fall short, he found that God was his strength and his eternal portion.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the prosperity of the wicked cause trouble and doubt?
2. How can we gain understanding and consolation concerning this?
3. What is going to be the end of the ungodly?
4. What is our bright future going to be if we are faithful to God?

5. What is good for us to do in the face of this world's troubles?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

There is something about worldly pride and love of wealth and pleasure that captivates the heart and affections of a human being. Earthly possessions of houses, lands, fine furniture, automobiles, entertainment, fine food, stylish attractive clothes, and many other material things crowd into the heart and mind of humanity and exercise great control over a person's life. Sports, exciting trips and journeys, big bank accounts, and gratification of fleshly appetites hold sway in most people's hearts and lives. The whole world of humanity is caught up in this surging tide. From early childhood a person faces this attraction that is beckoning from every direction. Worldliness, style, inventions of all kinds, and so many devices satan has to captivate and have control.

In the last hundred and fifty years man has come up with so many inventions and devices that allure and captivate the mind and heart. Motion pictures, movies, radio and television programs, phonograph and tape recordings, magazines, newspapers, books, pictures and photography is the tide of human captivity and excitement. Big department stores and businesses of all kinds are alluring to the hearts of human kind. Yes, we are all drawn to these places to purchase things that we need, such as food, clothes, tools, appliances, and many other things. Jesus spoke about Noah's time and how the people "...did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Then he mentioned about how it "...was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all." Then Jesus said, "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:26-30.

Those who seek to follow Christ in His holiness need to remember what Paul said in I Corinthians 7:29-31. In speaking about marriage and how we must let godly fear have such in God's order, he stated: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as

though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as not abusing it: (not using it to the full or more than what is proper and needful) for the fashion of this world passeth away." Then Paul added in verse 35, "...that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." So we must be careful to keep every thing in the Lord's control as we pass through this fleeting world of time. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Let not thine heart envy sinners, but *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long." Proverbs 23:17.

It seems that we, as humans, just never learn to be as watchful and mindful as we should of satan's tricks—the same ones he got Eve with, and many, many other faithful followers of Jesus down through the ages. The danger today is that the perception of the two worlds, or kingdoms, of light and darkness, are being merged, in the lives of many. Satan is not deceiving people to leave Jesus' kingdom and come over to his own, but he's contented to allow people to feel that they can have Jesus and him too. An illustration I wish I could make—but I'd need a projector and screen to do this—would be to take a dark circle and a transparent one, each representing the kingdoms, of darkness and light, and slowly bring them together until they are one. Which one will you see when you look at the merged circle? Only the dark one. The transparent one is totally lost in the merger.

I understand what it means to have "well-nigh slipped." I'm sure there have been many of us who almost went under at this place, if Christ had not come and rescued us when we were drowning. Countless others I have known—young people, looked at adults out there in the world, who seemed to have it all, weren't troubled and burdened as the Saints were, looked glamorous and gorgeous all the time, didn't have to be careful and strict about their lifestyle; and secretly admired them and desired that life, sometimes for years before they actually took steps in that direction. And then when the slide began, it was astounding how fast they went to the bottom and how deep the pit became, until in just a short while, it seemed impossible to ever come back.

The secret that will keep us from slipping every time is that visit into the sanctuary—the presence of the Lord. Oh, let nothing hinder us from abiding in that heavenly refuge!

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



MARCH 17, 2013

GOD'S HELP IN OLD AGE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

18 Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have showed thy strength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that is* to come.

19 Thy righteousness also, O God, *is* very high, who hast done great things: O God, who *is* like unto thee!

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: *Thou*, which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Psalm 71:20.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The LORD GOD Almighty is worthy of all praise, thanksgiving, confidence, and trust that we can render to Him for His righteousness, salvation, deliverance, and protection from the evils of this present world. He is also our steadfast hope of being in that resurrection day, quickened to live forever with Him and all of His Saints.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 71:1, "*putto confusion*": Be disappointed or ashamed.

Verse 3, "*strong habitation*": Solid rock of strength. "*continually resort*": Always come to in prayer for help and deliverance.

Verse 6, "*holden up*": Strengthened and held in place. "*bowels*": The womb.

Verse 7, "*as a wonder*": Like a miracle.

Verse 8, "*honour*": Admiration and worship.

Verse 15, "*numbers*": How long I shall live.

Verse 17, "*hitherto*": Up until now.

Verse 19, "*very high*": Heavenly.

Verse 20, "*quicken*": Resurrect me from death and the grave.

Verse 21, "*my greatness*": Strength of my soul.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Although there is no heading concerning the author of this wonderful Psalm of praise to Almighty God, it is generally believed to be the writing of David. Psalm 31:1-3 is similar to the first three verses of our lesson. It is surely a worthy expression from "a man after God's own heart." I Samuel 13:14

and Acts 13:22. Although David had his faults, failures, and sins, yet he showed a reverence and adoration of love, praise, and honor to God that brought him much favor and help in his life.

Our lesson is full of worthy expressions of gratitude and worship to the Creator of life and our being. Putting our trust in the LORD GOD is expressed many times in the scriptures. Psalm 118:8 declares that "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." Experiencing deliverance and escape from sin and the world is surely a wonderful blessing to obtain. To be saved is to be greatly sought after and desired. And then, to have God as our strong habitation that we can continually and always resort to: what a privilege! And God is our hope, a hope that we need to flee for refuge to in our youth. David surely did that as the account of his first appearance in the scripture text shows. He was not afraid to face the giant Goliath after experiencing God's help and victory as a shepherd boy.

How needful and beneficial it is for a person to remember their Creator in their youth, as Ecclesiastes 12:1 counsels us. Many pitfalls and sorrows are avoided when a person gives their heart and life wholeheartedly to God in their youth. The years of life go by so swiftly and old age comes on. But through one's lifetime of living for the Lord much is learned of the God of Heaven and His wondrous help and goodness. Speaking from personal experience, I rejoice and praise the Lord very often for His goodness to me since I gave Him my heart and life in the days of my youth. And now 56 years have flown by, but it has been filled with blessed memories of God's blessings and helpful goodness. Old age is on me now, but the richness of the Holy Spirit's inspiration and comfort and guidance fills my heart with joy and rejoicing every day! Oh, if I could help more young people to take heed to the counsel of the Lord and lay hold of His grace and salvation! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What are some of the things we need to escape from?
2. Why do we need God to be our rock and protection?
3. What is the hope that we have in Him?
4. Why is it so important to live for God in our youth?
5. What causes a person to greatly rejoice and sing unto God?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

I am so glad and thankful to God and happy for the decision I made in my youth to give my heart to Him and live my life in His service. I graduated from High School in May of 1956. I had a girlfriend that I loved very dearly in school, but I knew that I must give her up and give my heart to God and let Him lead me in my decision of marriage and every other choice that I must make. I did just that, and counted the cost on every other point in my life and doings. I can recall seeking the Lord in prayer continually. I prayed to God for mercy and His salvation while I was out on a tractor working for my uncle, and while I was in the car going home on the weekend. I made my decision to get right with God and live all my life for Him. I prayed through and the Lord saved me that summer. That winter at the Guthrie, Oklahoma Assembly meeting I sought the Lord for the infilling of the Holy Spirit and He filled my soul so sweetly and completely. I sought His guidance and gave up my plans for college and the Lord called me into the ministry. He gave me clear and unmistakable guidance in the choosing of a lifetime companion in marriage. Sister Sylvia Forbes, who had left her job in California and had come to work in the Faith Publishing House that summer in 1956, was the godly woman that God gave me for a wife. We have had 52 happy years of married life. I sought Him for guidance on where to live and labor for Him. He has wonderfully been my Guide through life. And now old age has caught up with us. My wife will soon have her 80th birthday and I was 74 recently. This 71st Psalm is a reality to my soul. I can blend with the expressions of the writer of this chapter so sweetly. Yes, I am in the time of old age, grayheaded and with a few infirmities of the flesh to deal with. I have much to be thankful for, and I am glad to be able to go and do what I am still able to handle. My hope is bright and I am looking forward eagerly for that heavenly home in glory with Jesus and all of His saints. Let us all be of good courage and press on and be faithful until we close our testimony in mortality and rejoice in hope of immortality in the world to come! It will be worth it all to see our Lord coming in the clouds of heaven and experience the change to eternal glory! Praise the Lord God Almighty and His Son Jesus forever!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We live in a world today that is obsessed with being youthful. It seems people are still looking for that 'fountain of youth' the explorer Ponce de Leon looked for many years ago. We see it in the millions of dollars spent on cosmetics and surgeries to preserve youth. But alas, time marches on for everyone. Death is destined for each life from the moment of birth. And unless we plan on dying young, we will all grow old one day.

As we near the end of our journey things start to change: vitality languishes, energy flags and ordinary tasks become more difficult. It becomes harder and harder to get around as we start to experience the aches and pains of a body simply growing old. But do not be disheartened by this process. This is a necessary part of gaining eternal life with our Lord and Savior. Every gray hair is a reminder that life is changing. Each ache and pain is telling us to look forward to that new body that the Lord has for us. Treat each burden and trial as a stepping stone to gain Heaven at all costs. A life well lived for the LORD is such an encouragement for those following for it shows what success in the journey looks like. The Lord's blessings rests on the dear child of God who has endured the tests of life and is endeavoring to press on. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." Proverbs 16:31. Oh how beautiful is the 'elderly' Saint of God!

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



MARCH 24, 2013

JOYOUS LOVE FOR GOD'S HOUSE

Psalm 84:1 ...How amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

3 Yea, the sparrowhath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

4 Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

5 Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee, in whose heart *are* the ways of *them*.

6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

7 They go from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God.

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer, give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

12 O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

MEMORY VERSE: One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. Psalm 27:4.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: It is a lovely, happy, blessed, and rewarding life for a person to be delivered from this world of sin. To be a true member of the household of God through Jesus Christ our Savior and the Holy Spirit living within the heart revealing the beauty of the LORD and His precious truth.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 84:1, "*amiable*": Lovely, enjoyable, and very dear.

Verse 2, "*even fainteth*": Desires more than life itself. "*crieth out*": Shouts for joy.

Verse 3, "*Yea, the sparrow*": Even the bird. The birds: the lowly sparrow and swallow find a place in the tabernacle of the Lord to build their nests. "*thine altars*": Thy place of worship.

Verse 4 and 8: "*Selah*": A pause for consideration and thought.

Verse 5 and 6: The Septuagint (Greek translation) renders these two verses like this: "Blessed is the man whose help is of thee, O Lord; in his heart he has purposed to go up the valley of weeping, to the place which he has appointed, for there the law-giver will grant blessings." The valley of Baca is defined as the valley of weeping.

Verse 7, *"go from strength to strength"*: Develop from one stage and accomplishment of faith to the next. *"every one of them in Zion appeareth before God"*: Adam Clarke states that the true translation from the Hebrew text renders this: "The God of gods shall be seen in Zion." The term Zion refers to a part of Jerusalem, a type of the New Testament Church. And we know that all who are true members of the Church, the Body of Christ are in open view to Him at all times.

Verse 8, *"LORD God of hosts"*: God of a great multitude that is shown as "a great multitude, which no man could number" in Revelation 7:9.

Verse 9, *"our shield"*: Our Guard and Protector. *"the face of thine anointed"*: This can be referred to anyone who is anointed of the Holy Spirit, but we know that the main One is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Verse 10, *"a day in thy courts is better than a thousand"*: One day in God's fellowship is better than a thousand days spent in sin without Him. *"I had rather be a doorkeeper"*: The Hebrew says, "I have chosen to stand at the threshold of the house of my God." To be just inside the House of God and fill the lowliest place is far better than living in sin and worldliness.

Verse 11, *"a sun and shield"*: The LORD God Jehovah is a blessed light for us to behold and be illuminated by, and a wonderful Protector from evil and harm. *"will give grace and glory"*: God will give mercy and help to us in our times of hardship and sorrow in this present world, and He will also reward us with a place in glory with Him in that blessed world to come.

LESSON BACKGROUND

What a wonderful lesson we have in this sweet encouraging Psalm! It was written, as the title says, for the sons of Korah, who were porters and keepers of the doors and singers in the temple. And it has been a very inspiring Psalm to us through the years. Since we have been saved and in the service of the LORD from time to time and in our own private worship and communion with God, we have enjoyed what this Psalm speaks so sweetly about. The tabernacles of God that we enjoy is His precious Holy Spirit that fills, inspires, comforts, and guides us through this journey of life. We love to be in His service and have communion with our God and Heavenly

Father! We love to pray to Him, worship and offer praise to Him, and pour out our hearts to Him for burdens, needs, troubles, adversities, perplexities, and other difficult things we meet along the way of life. As our Memory Verse states, it is our desire to dwell in the House of the LORD all the days of our life, to behold His beauty and to inquire and learn of Him.

I remember one day years ago when I was attending a camp meeting at Green Pastures, Oklahoma and had gone out early that morning to the tabernacle for prayer and meditation. I had been reading from this Psalm and I happened to look up toward the rafters of the tabernacle and saw a sparrow's nest. Oh, that just blessed my soul! As the sparrow and swallow had found a place in the tabernacle of God, so I have been given a place there, also! Let us remember that God wants us to go up the valley of weeping to a place that He wants us to be. That place is in His will and service. The valley of weeping refers to the hard trials and sorrow that we are often called to have. But God will make it a well of spiritual blessings as we yield and hold fast to Him. Oh, the joy of being in God's House, even in the lowliest place! For there we enjoy His light and protection and the many wonderful good things He has for those who walk uprightly. And we can say also: "O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee!"

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the LORD's tabernacles that we can be in today?
2. What are some of the benefits of being in God's House?
3. How can we make a well passing through the valley of weeping?
4. Why is God's House a better place than tents of wickedness?
5. What will the LORD God be to us if we walk uprightly?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

How blessed it is for us to give up the world, and the ways of sin and transgression, and let God have His perfect way in our hearts and lives! The devil seeks to hide this from people and make the flesh and worldly lusts so attractive. We live in a society that is given over to eating, drinking, men and women attractions, styles, fads, inventions, entertainment, sports, travel, and other things that take up a person's time and

affections. The old television is the god that rules many homes and families. And now it is the Internet and its corruption and evil. Oh, yes, there are some good things about it and that can be used thereby. But how we need to be diligent to seek the Lord in prayer and live close to His precious Word, the Holy Bible. To be able to commune with the Lord in the Holy Spirit is far more enjoyable and satisfying than these fleeting lusts and pleasures that dominate most people's hearts and lives. It pays to remember your Creator in the days of your youth! It is sad that so many young people allow the attraction of the world to allure their hearts and minds away from godly fear and heavenly wisdom! But there are those who responded to the call of the Lord in their young lives and experience the joy and satisfaction that we see in this 84th Psalm. Yes, a day in the service of God is better than a thousand days spent in going after this frivolous world. How wonderful that we can be in God's House and be blessed with His light and knowledge and loving protection and care! Let us go all the way with Him and enjoy His fellowship forever! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"A Song of degrees of David. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD." Psalms 122:1-4.

We can be glad also to enter into the presence of the Lord, with the tribes of the Lord, the redeemed. To be able to hear, read, preach, sing, pray, testify in the anointing of the Spirit—what comfort, what counsel, guidance, healing, deliverance, blessing for the soul of man. Faith cometh by hearing.

"Compact together" speaks to me of closeness, a bond, kinship, fellowship. "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted...." Let us thank the name of the Lord and rejoice in His love. His redemption is great and His plan is perfect. Let the redeemed say so! My life has been so blessed, edified and encouraged through God's people. There have been many, many times that I have had needs and it seemed the Holy Spirit would move on someones heart to say, what I needed to hear. The enemy would like to hinder our coming together. In Guthrie, at the old chapel years ago there were

many testimonies of how things came up to hinder and the Saints pressed their way. We realized that the enemy had been working hard to keep us away, we had a wonderful meeting that night.

—Bro. Bob Wilson



MARCH 31, 2013

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TO VICTORY

I Corinthians 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

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.

35 But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

36 *Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain*:

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

MEMORY VERSE: O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 15:55-57.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: When Jesus comes the second time, this present world will pass away in an instant and all the dead will be raised to stand before Him in judgment. All who are truly Christ's people will be changed to immortality and everyone else will be cast into the lake of fire and be lost in eternity's night forever and ever.

WORD DEFINITIONS

I Corinthians 15:20, "*Christ become the firstfruits*": Jesus Christ is the first to be resurrected from the dead unto eternal life.

Verse 23, "*in his own order*": Individual arrangement and succession.

Verse 24, "*the end*": The destruction of this time-world. "*delivered up*": Yielded and transferred; "*put down*": Abolished, and rendered entirely useless.

Verse 36, "*fool*": Ignorant and unbelieving one. "*quickened*": Brought back to life.

Verse 37, *"bare grain"*: Just mere unsprouted seed.

Verse 38, *"to every seed his own body"*: Every seed has its individual production.

Verse 42, *"sown in corruption"*: Planted in a perishable state. This is when a person dies and is buried. *"raised in incorruption"*: Resurrected to a nonperishable state.

Verse 44, *"natural body"*: Fleshly, earthly body. *"spiritual body"*: Body for eternal life.

Verse 51, *"We shall not all sleep"*: Some will still be alive when Christ comes.

Verse 52, *"in the twinkling of an eye"*: In a sudden instant. *"at the last trump"*: The call from God that will resurrect the dead.

Verse 53, *"incorruption and immortality"*: The resurrected state to eternal life.

Verse 54, *"swallowed up"*: Devoured and completely destroyed.

Verse 55, *"sting"*: The destructive force.

Verse 56, *"the strength of sin is the law"*: The condemnation that sin brings. *"the law"*: The law of God's commandments given through Moses.

Verse 57, *"the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"*: The triumphant power to overcome death and the grave by being resurrected to live forever.

LESSON BACKGROUND

On this glorious memorial day of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior from death and the grave, we want to have a lesson on His victory over sin and death and what it can mean to us. We have chosen for our text parts of the statements that the apostle Paul made in I Corinthians chapter 15. It seems that, as he brings out, that there were some among the Corinthian congregation that denied the belief that there was to be a resurrection. Just why there was this belief among the professed Church of Christ we do not know. But Paul goes into a lengthy and very profitable issue of this matter. First he stated that if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Jesus Christ was not risen. And if He is not risen from the dead our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins. And also he stated that, if this be the case, they who have died and fallen asleep in Christ are perished, and that if in this

earthly life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

But then Paul declares earnestly that Christ IS risen from the dead. And, not only that, he states that Christ is become the first fruits and that all who have fallen asleep in Him will be raised also from the dead. At His coming the second time Christ will put down all opposing power of satan and sin and the world, and will bring back to life everyone, the saved and the unsaved. Then we have Paul's explanation of how this resurrection will be performed, using the illustration of the human body being like unto the bare seed that we plant in the ground. This literal seed that is planted will bring forth a plant, and he likens that plant to the immortal body that will come from the body that has died and was buried.

Oh, what a blessed truth! We shall not all sleep. Some will be still alive when Jesus comes, but we shall all be changed. Those in the grave will come forth and we who are alive will be changed instantly to immortality. Paul quotes in verse 54 about the mortal putting on immortality bringing to pass the saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory." This is from Isaiah 25:8 which is part of the prophet's wonderful prophecy of the New Testament salvation in Christ Jesus. Then in verse 55 Paul quotes from Hosea 13:14. He rightly applies it all to Christ's resurrection making it possible for us to have hope of being resurrected from death and the grave to eternal life.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is our state and condition if Christ is not risen from the dead?
2. How was the morning Church persuaded of Christ's resurrection?
3. What earthly thought did Paul liken the resurrection to?
4. When shall this glorious resurrection take place?
5. What does believing in Christ's resurrection bring to us?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Praise the Lord, and what a wonderful truth we can know, be persuaded of, and believe with all of our hearts! Jesus permitted Himself to be nailed to the cross of Calvary and on

that cross He died. He was buried and on the third morning, the first day of the week, He came forth to live forevermore! This is the faith of the glorious gospel of salvation that has been preached, believed, and followed these many centuries since. Let people deny it, ignore it, neglect it, overlook it, mock at it, and let everything else supersede its glorious message, but it is still the truth and will be revealed in that last great day when this risen Christ will burst from eternity to judge the world in righteousness. They will believe it then, but it will be too late!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

After the death of Lazarus, Jesus spoke to Martha and said, "...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" John 11:25-26. Following this conversation with Jesus, Martha went and called her sister, Mary. The two, followed by others who had come to comfort the family, went to meet Jesus. They then proceeded to the grave where the body of Lazarus had been placed, and it was at this time that the compassion Jesus had in His heart toward Mary and Martha, as well as the plight of all humanity, expressed itself in the tears He shed. The shortest verse in the Bible simply states, "Jesus wept." Yet the compassion He felt expressed the love He had for all mankind who suffered from the terror of death. The Son of God was here to change the face of that grim monster and bring victory over death by a resurrection of the body.


Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and proved to the world His great power. It was this event that crystallized the hard hearts of those watching. "Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death." John 11:53. The followers of Satan planned to destroy Jesus, but their efforts only accomplished God's plan to give victory over death. Jesus was crucified, but the power of God raised Him back to life, giving Him a glorified body, and Jesus promises to likewise raise all those who believe in Him. "...Believest thou this?"

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



The Secret of the Singing Heart

by C. W. Naylor



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