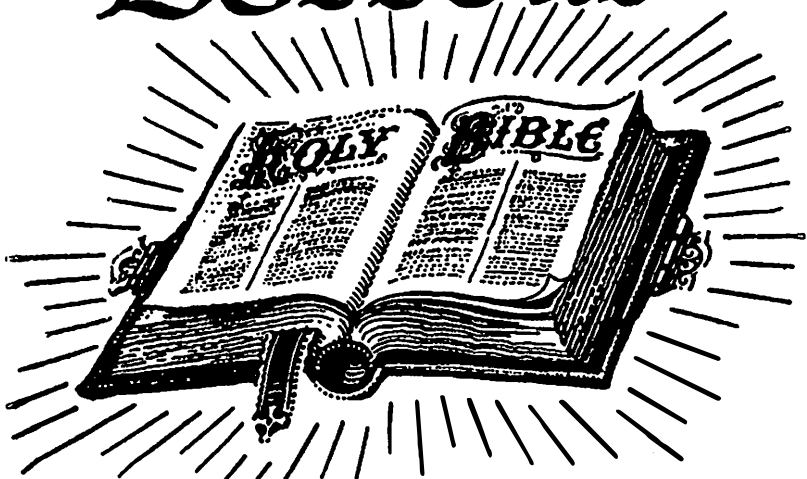


# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 45, No. 3  
July, Aug., Sept.  
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**Table of Contents**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LESSON TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
July 7	God's Righteous Dealings .....	1
14	Not Drawing Back in Unbelief .....	6
21	Praise and Thanksgiving for God's Great Mercy .....	10
28	Gifts of Ministry in the Church .....	15
Aug. 4	The Reign of the Lord's Anointed .....	20
11	Remembering God's Workings in Ages Past .....	24
18	Mount Zion, The New Jerusalem .....	29
25	Praises to God for His Goodness .....	34
Sept. 1	Prayer of the Afflicted for Zion .....	39
8	Bible Story of Naomi and Ruth, Part 1 .....	44
15	Ruth Meets Her Future Husband .....	49
22	Boaz and Ruth Come Together .....	53
29	Boaz Obtains Ruth for His Wife .....	58

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

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Sis. Angela Gellenbeck and Bro. Bob Wilson.**

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## **BIBLE LESSONS FOR THIRD QUARTER, 2013**

### **STUDY THEME FOR THIRD QUARTER**

We are inspired for this series of studies from the Holy Scriptures with several more of the wonderful Psalms. Very much soul food and spiritual blessings are found in these inspiring writings of the Old Testament. But for the last four Bible Lessons we were sweetly inspired of the Lord to present studies from the wonderful story in the book of Ruth of the account of the Israelite family of Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, and their sojourn to Moab in the days of famine, and the wonderful outcome that God brought about. We will see the sorrow and loss they suffered, but we are greatly inspired with the blessings they received and enjoyed. May the Lord bless these lessons to the good of all who partake of them. —Bro. Leslie Busbee



**JULY 7, 2013**

### **GOD'S RIGHTEOUS DEALINGS**

Psalm 94:1 O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

14 For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

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

18 When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

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

20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?

21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.

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

23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

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

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The godly and righteous are many times condemned and persecuted by the wicked and sinful people of the world. But God is faithful to stand by and preserve those who please Him, and will in the end reward them with everlasting life and cast the wicked into everlasting fire.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 94:1, "*God, to whom vengeance belongeth*": God has the power and authority to punish the wicked for their evil ways. "*shew thyself*": Shine forth Thy holiness and power and make known Thine anger and displeasure with man.

Verse 3, "*wicked triumph*": The evilungodly people rejoice and leap for joy in their evil ways.

Verse 5, "*afflict thine heritage*": Persecute and seek to harm Thy true people.

Verse 7, "*regard*": See and take notice of.

Verse 11, "*vanity*": Empty, displeasing, and utterly unsatisfactory.

Verse 12, "*chastenest*": Instruct, correct, punish, and reform.

Verse 13, "*rest from the days of evil*": Relieve and undertake in the times of hardship and trouble. "*until the pit be digged for the wicked*": Jesus said that He would say to them on the left hand, "...Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41

Verse 15, "*judgment shall return to righteousness*": God's judgments shall bring righteousness and holiness for the benefit of the soul.

Verse 17, "*almost dwelt in silence*": Nearly been silenced by the opposition of the ungodly.

Verse 20, "*frameth mischief by a law*": Make evil to be required as a law.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

It is not certainly known just who the author was of this Psalm nor in what age or time it was written. But the very essence of its message declares that it could fit about any period of time in the ages of this world. We have pictured the wicked and ungodly standing up against the fear and worship of the true and living God. Man and his stubborn will and vain thoughts have brought much evil and sorrow to this earth. Verse 11 of our lesson was quoted by the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 3:19-20. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." So we have the conflict enlarged and truly shown in this Old Testament writing. How many vain and ungodly people have wrought trouble and God's sore displeasure because of their vain and selfish ideas and ways! Think of Cain, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, Pharaoh of Egypt, Haman in the time of Esther, and many others portrayed in the Holy Scriptures who set themselves against the fear and wisdom of God! And we are certain that there are many more who have been foolish and ignorant of the fear of God that have made their ugly mark on the scroll of time!

Let us especially notice the encouraging statements concerning those who will yield themselves to the God of Heaven. As verse 12 says, "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law; That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked." And, oh, how blessed it is for the multitude of

sweet thoughts within affording comforts and delight to our souls! The Holy Spirit can inspire and comfort the soul of man in the deepest sorrow and adversity that we may encounter on this short pilgrimage of earth! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What causes wicked people to boast themselves in their evil?
2. Why do they not think that God is beholding them?
3. How has God shown Himself to draw people to Him?
4. What man is blessed of God and how is that blessing gained?
5. What is going to be the end of all who are ungodly and vain?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We live in a world that is dominated and overruled by the wickedness of man. It has been in this depraved and ungodly condition for many ages of time. After man fell into sin through disobedience against God, this woeful state has grown worse and worse. Many generations of righteous and godly people have had to cope with the evil and ungodly lusts that rule the majority of humanity. In our lesson today the writer earnestly prays for God to show Himself and make manifest His power and goodness to people so that they may be awakened to their sinful condition and seek after their Creator as they should. He also puts forth a plea to the brutish and foolish to understand and be wise. He states that the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vanity and not worth while. He declares that a man who is chastened, disciplined, and taught of the law of God is blessed. The purpose expressed of being thus taught of God is to be blessed in the days of adversity and escape the awful judgment that will fall upon the wicked for eternity. The Lord will work and bless all who will receive His discipline and be taught by His holy laws. He will enable them to overcome sin and transgression and live a holy and unblameable life in all godliness and honesty. His judgments will be for the faithful and righteous a means of returning to righteousness and overcoming the power and dominion of sin.

God will bless and help all who follow and obey Him to rise up and stand for Him against the workers of iniquity. We can be overcomers in all points of purity and godly honesty and

character. If we encounter problems and hard places, we will find help and victory through earnest prayer and faith in God. The LORD will be our defense and rock of refuge. But the wicked shall be cut off from God's salvation and hope. It surely pays great dividends to seek the LORD and faithfully follow Him and His precious Law! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

While viewing a serene setting of nature, one can hardly fathom why there is so much strife, evil and heartache in the world. Land, water and sky seem to be in peaceful harmony magnifying the Creator. While there are times that storms of a violent nature make their way across the land, we know that all of the elements of nature are subject to the physical laws of God. Man, however, has been given a will that allows him to choose to either be subject to the moral laws of God or be influenced by the evil powers of satan.

From the time of Adam and Eve, these two kingdoms have existed in God's earthly creation, at times it has become so evil that God had to destroy cities and nations, and in the days of Noah, even the world. There have been dark periods of time that it seemed evil was winning. One of those dark times occurred in the Garden of Gethsemane as our dear Savior bowed to the will of His father and submitted Himself to the torture of crucifixion at the hands evil men. The hearts of His disciples and followers were torn and their dreams were dashed at the death of their Master. The One who they based the hope of their eternal future and believed would deliver them from the bondage of Roman occupation was now lifeless and gone from their midst. But God was not conquered by the forces of evil, No, He had a plan that was to deliver men and women from the power of satan that ruled in their hearts. His blood became an atonement that allowed the source of evil to be cleansed from the heart and fellowship with God to be restored.

While the forces of evil still reign in this world, God's power is able to deliver those who will seek Him and translate them from the kingdom of this world into the Kingdom of His dear Son. It may seem at times that evil is winning, but may every soul hold fast to the Savior that will be the final judge of this world. —Bro. Willie E. Murphey

**JULY 14, 2013**

**NOT DRAWING BACK IN UNBELIEF**

Psalm 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I swore in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Hebrews 3:5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.)

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.



14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

**MEMORY VERSE:** For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; Hebrews 3:14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Let us be very diligent to hold fast our faith and confidence in Christ all the days of our life, and never be moved by the influences of this world of unbelief from the blessed hope of eternal life.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 95:1, "*joyful noise*": Shouts of joy.

Verse 2, "*psalms*": Hymns and spiritual songs. Colossians 3:16

Verse 3, "*all gods*": All other powers and influences in the world.

Verse 4, "*In his hand*": He possesses. "*strength of the hills*": The heights of the mountains.

Verse 6, "*worship and bow down*": Fall down in humility and honor.

Verse 7, "*sheep of his hand*": The people under God's love and care.

Verse 8, "*provocation*": The time when Israel provoked or stirred God's anger by quarreling with Moses and Aaron and drawing back from going to possess the Caanan land. "*day of temptation*": The time of being tried and put to the test.

Verse 11, "*not enter into my rest*": Not possess the land of Caanan that God wanted them to have.

Hebrews 3:7, "*(as the Holy Ghost saith)*": As the Holy Spirit inspired to be written,

Verse 8, "*Harden not your hearts*": Do not allow your hearts to be stiff and unyielding to God's will.

Verse 12, "*evil heart of unbelief*": A rebellious attitude coming from failure to count God faithful.

Verse 13, "*exhort*": Comfort and encourage. "*To day*": This day of grace in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Verse 14, "*are made partakers*": Will surely possess.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a combination of exhortation to rejoice and sing with joyful praise to our God for His great power, love,

and grace toward us and solemn warning to be on our guard against satan and the temptations of sin and unbelief in the world around us. The writer in Psalms calls us to sing, worship, and lift up our God with thanksgiving for His great goodness that shines all around us in His creation of the heavens and earth. But at the same time we are given the solemn warning to not allow the influences of this world to cause us to harden our hearts against the will of God as some have done. He speaks of the provocation, and the day of temptation in the wilderness, which was the time as recorded in Numbers, chapters 13 and 14. This was the time when 10 of the 12 spies that Moses sent to spy out and survey the land of Caanan that God had promised to the children of Israel came back with an evil report of the land. Although the other 2 spies, Joshua and Caleb, sought to encourage the people that God would help them, it just seems that this evil report prevailed over the people's minds and they lifted up their voice, cried, and wept through the night, wishing that they had died in Egypt or in the wilderness they had passed through. They even talked about making a captain to lead them in a return to Egypt. And though Joshua and Caleb tried to encourage them, they refused to listen. God's anger arose and He told Moses that He would smite them with the pestilence and disinherit them. When Moses besought God for mercy, God withdrew his threat, but steadfastly ordered them all to be sent back to the wilderness and there to die.

Our lesson is a warning to us that we must hold fast our confidence and hope regardless of the pressures and tribulations we meet in life, and be faithful to God to the end of this life. Let us take heed to this warning and in all of our trials and tests of life hold fast to the Lord and His holy way.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why should we come before our God with joy and gladness?
2. What all can be seen of His greatness and goodness to us?
3. What serious warning is given in our lesson for us to take heed to?
4. How did Israel provoke and grieve God so grievously?
5. What must we do to escape God's wrath and displeasure?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Our writer of the epistle to the Hebrews brought out how God had spoken unto us by His beloved Son who had given Himself for our sins, and who at the present was at the right hand of God, above the angels and filling the position as our merciful and faithful high priest. He encourages us to consider Christ Jesus in His power and glory and hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of hope that we have in Him unto the end of our pilgrimage in this world. Knowing that the power of satan and the evil influences of lust, pride and worldliness would be contesting our faith and patience in Him, the writer quotes from the 95<sup>th</sup> Psalm and the warning that it contains, a very serious and solemn warning. The writer in Psalms refers to the time when the children of Israel rose up against Moses, Joshua and Caleb concerning going over to possess the land of Caanan, which God had labeled as their possession. These very people had been with Moses and the nation of Israel as they had been liberated from the dominion of Egypt and domineering power of Pharoah. They had witnessed the Red Sea opening up for them to cross over, the blessing of daily manna, the opening up of water from the Rock, the deluge of quail that the Lord had sent upon them, and other wonderful and miraculous blessings. But at this time referred to in our lesson, labeled the "provocation and day of temptation in the wilderness", the children of Israel had risen up in unbelief against Moses after hearing of the great walled cities and giants in Caanan they would have to face. Instead of holding fast to their faith and remembering the miraculous deliveries and help they had witnessed from the hand of God already, they rebelled and had thoughts of returning to the land of Egypt. This was a woeful time. They had wept through the night in anger and sorrow, and the Almighty God was angry. Our lesson from Psalm 95 and Hebrews 3 is warning us to not cast away our confidence as these people of Israel had done. We can heed this warning if we will earnestly hold fast to our confidence and faith. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When Jesus asked, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" I believe He looked ahead and knew the severity and danger of all the challenges to our faith that we would face. (Luke 18:8).

Prolonged physical suffering can severely try a person's faith. The nerves grow weary, and pain, which never seems to leave, wears away at the strongest resolve. Heavy grief over the loss of a loved one can deal a blow to faith, like no other. The coldness of death seems to hold the heart prisoner in an emotionally numbing, icy grasp. Pat answers and trite words no longer satisfy, and the mind reels at the cruelty of death, the unanswered questions, the apparent senselessness of it all. Disappointment in people on whom we counted, the betrayal of a close friend, fellow Christian, spouse, or family member, finding that someone whom we trusted has been unfaithful or deceived—all of these can seem to shake our firm hold on belief and trust in God. We question: how can we know we are going the right way? Who can we place confidence in anymore? If this one fell, and he was so strong, what hope is there for me?

When Jesus told Peter, prior to His crucifixion, that satan desired to sift Peter as wheat, He added, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:32). I believe that Jesus intercedes for us as well, that our faith would not fail *completely* (for this is the true meaning of this passage), and though, like Peter, we may have times of failure, He wants us to seek for and attain such victory, through the converting power of the Holy Spirit, that we may then be able to strengthen others in need.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**JULY 21, 2013**

### **PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S GREAT MERCY**

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

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

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

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

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

6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways unto Moses, and his acts unto the children of Israel.

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

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

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

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

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

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

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

15 *As for* man, his days *are* as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

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

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

**MEMORYVERSE:** Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust. Psalm 103:13-14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The goodness and mercy of our Creator, is so great and unailing toward us poor and helpless creatures, that we need not ever doubt His willingness to forgive and bear with us in our human infirmities.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 103:1, "*Bless the LORD*": Kneel in reverence and loving adoration to our eternal God Jehovah. "*O my soul*": With all my heart and spirit that He put within me. "*his holy name*": The name of His holiness; His holy position and character.

Verse 2, "*his benefits*": The kind and helpful blessings and rewards that He so graciously bestows upon His children who love and obey Him.

Verse 4, "*redeemeth*": Pays the price for our salvation. "*crowneth*": Encircles and guardingly protects.

Verse 5, "*satisfieth thy mouth*": Fulfills the appetites of the body and soul with beneficial nutrients. "*thy youth is renewed like the eagle's*": It is like an eagle oppressed with old age and his beak crusted over so that he cannot eat, smites his bill against a stone and breaks the crust so that he is able to eat again the food needed and regains his strength. So Christ takes away from us our old age of sin and death, and gives us to eat that bread which comes down from heaven; and thus gives us a new life in Himself.

Verse 6, "*executeth*": Works efficiently. "*oppressed*": Under the weights of sorrow and distress.

Verse 8, "*gracious*": Kindly favorable and helpful. "*mercy*": Kindness, help, good will, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, and unfailing goodness.

Verse 9, "*chide*": Opposes and strives against. "*neither will he keep*": Will not retain his anger, but will release the soul in mercy.

Verse 13, "*pitieth*": Love with tender compassion.

Verse 14, "*knoweth our frame*": Respects our mortal weakness.

Verse 18, "*keep his covenant*": Faithfully follow what is required of them in His Word. "*do them*": Diligently obey what is commanded of them.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is one of David's wonderful Psalms. It shows so wonderfully the goodness, mercy, and benefits that God so graciously bestows upon those who trust and obey Him. And it shows the forgiveness and mercy toward us concerning our sins and shortcomings. With the great mercy that this Psalm portrays of the disposition and attitude of our Creator, we never need to doubt Him and draw back from coming to Him. This Psalm shows how we can praise Him and rejoice in His loving favor.

David innumerate the benefits of the LORD. First, He forgives all of our sins and unrighteous deeds committed

against His holy laws. He knows that all have sinned and come short of His glory, but He has made it beyond all question and doubt that He is ready to forgive all sins committed against Him. Second, He healeth all diseases. Yes, these are diseases of the heart and soul in the transgressions against His holy Word. And He is also able and willing to heal all sickness and diseases of the physical body as well. Many are the testimonies down through the years of Christ's healing of the soul and body! Third, He redeemeth our life from destruction. He gives us the blessed hope of being raised from the dead unto eternal life. Fourth, He crowns and protects us from danger and harm with His lovingkindness and tender mercies. We are shielded everyday under His watchful care. Fifth, He fulfills the desires of the soul and body for the necessary food. There is no reason why we must lack and be found deficient of spiritual and physical nourishment and health.

God's mercy, forgiveness, grace, help, protection, and loving care is promised without fail to us if we will be diligent to fulfill our responsibility to obey fully His blessed commandments. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What blessing does God desire us to render unto Him?
2. What blessings does He faithfully bestow upon all who fear Him?
3. What has God done concerning our sins against Him?
4. What kind of pity and compassion does God have toward us?
5. Unto whom is the mercy of the LORD promised to be?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

How thankful and blessed we are to have such a wonderful and merciful God to look to, trust in, and live for! The writer of this Psalm 103 knew much about the mercy of God. From his youth he had sought after and looked to this God of mercy for His help and strength. Even when he had failed the LORD and sinned against Him, David found that God was merciful and he had no reason to give in to discouragement or despair. God proved to David that He was a merciful God and inspired this wonderful Psalm to be written for the ages to be encouraged and benefited from!

Just survey the different ways that God has shown His mercy and goodness! If it wasn't for God's mercy none of us poor helpless human beings would have a chance. Sin had us all in its destructive snare before we realized what was happening. But the mercy of God worked out a salvation that will bring fulfillment and escape for our poor helpless souls. Oh, let us never doubt His mercy!

I will never forget a message that I heard when I was young in the Lord and endeavoring to serve Him. It was a message preached by dear Brother Isaac Chandler in a revival meeting in Oklahoma City. This 103<sup>rd</sup> Psalm was the text of Scripture that Brother Chandler used in that wonderful message. At that time in my experience the devil was coming against me with accusations and discouragement. But the message that this dear man of God brought that night helped to lift me up from the depression of the devil. It assured me of the tender mercy and goodness of my heavenly Father. I took new courage and confidence to press on in my Christian life and ministry. And I cherish the memory of that message and endear the memory of that precious man of God who brought it so sweetly and with Holy Spirit anointing!

If there would be any who read this 103<sup>rd</sup> Psalm with this lesson and are troubled with doubts and discouraging thoughts, may the LORD of mercy help you to take hold of confidence and courage to hold on to Jesus and trust in His mercy and grace to guide and sustain you through this short earthly life. Be faithful to Him, and do your very best to obey His voice and let His will be done in your life! The mercy of the LORD our God will prove to be the sustaining power of your life.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"Who redeemeth thy life from destruction..." Psalm 103:4.

Oh, how I marvel and stand in awe, dear Lord, at your love and mercy to me. When I remember that I am a twofold being, created first a physical body made of the dust and then when life was breathed into me, I became a living soul, housed in that physical body, I behold the finished product in amazement. Your decree for my physical body is that it shall return to the dust from whence it came and that my spirit part shall return to God who gave it. Your decree for my soul is, that the



soul that sinneth, it shall die. I understand from that, that it will be cast away from Thee, oh Lord, and you are the fountain of life, thus of course it could not live, yet it does not go into oblivion to exist nowhere nor be conscious of nothing. Your Word tells us that the sinful soul will proceed to a place of torment where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. When I remember that your Word has declared all as having sinned and come short, then I realize how acutely we are in need of a redeemer. They of old were commanded to stone to death the transgressor of law and thus be purged of sin in their midst. Oh, how we praise Thee, dear Lord, for the marvelous plan that you brought, that is able to separate between the soul and body, forgive the offending body, and purge the sin defiled soul, so that they may both be presented blameless before Thee at Thy appearing, preserved from destruction.

*"The Meditations of my Heart"* by Bro. Clifford W. Wilson

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



**JULY 28, 2013**

### **GIFTS OF MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH**

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

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 *There is one body*, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

**MEMORY VERSE:** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Ephesians 4:11-12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ was prophesied to ascend up in triumphant power to the right hand of God to direct the function and operation of His Saints in their work and service for Him. The apostle Paul speaks of the various gifts that are given by Christ to the various members of His followers for the success and well being of His cause in the earth.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalms 68:18, "*ascended up on high*": Went up from earth to the right hand of God in the eternal heavens. "*led captivity captive*": Conquered and subdued the power of satan who had captivated mankind with transgression and sin. "*received gifts for men*": Been given authority to bestow various gifts of workings and functions upon faithful men.

Ephesians 4:1, "*prisoner of the Lord*": One in prison for the cause of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. "*walk worthy*": Live and conduct one's self appropriately and up to the right standard. "*vocation*": The power and position that Christ has called and invited you to fill.

Verse 2, "*meekness*": Gentle humility. "*forbearing one another in love*": Kindly putting up with one another.

Verse 3, "*Endeavouring*": Diligently seeking and trying. "*keep*": Preserve and maintain.

Verse 7, "*every one of us*": Each individual. "*the measure of the gift of Christ*": What Jesus determines personally to give.

Verse 8, "*Wherefore*": For this purpose.

Verse 9, "*descended first into the lower parts of the earth*": This means that Christ allowed Himself to be crucified and buried in the tomb.

Verse 10, "*fill all things*": Reign in power and be the head over all the workings of the Church.

Verse 11, "*apostles*": Delegates, ambassadors, and commissioners. "*prophets*": Inspired to foretell future events. "*evangelists*": Those who preach and proclaim the Gospel of Christ. "*pastors*": Those who shepherd and feed the souls of the children of God. "*teachers*": Those who instruct and give counsel from the Word of God.

Verse 12, "*perfecting of the saints*": The developing of believers to fullness and complete furnishing in the work of God. "*edifying*": Building up and adding strength.

Verse 13, "*come in the unity of the faith*": Be united in spirit and doctrine of the Word of God and the faith of Christ. "*perfect man*": Full grown and mature.

Verse 14, "*children*": Babes or infants. "*sleight*": Deceptive ways.

Verse 15, "*grow up unto him*": Develop into the likeness of Jesus.

Verse 16, "*compacted*": Truly and firmly united. "*maketh increase*": Promotes growth and development.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

For our lesson today we draw a part of another Psalm that is attributed to be the writing of David. It is really a wonderful Psalm. Adam Clarke commented, however, that he did not know how to comment on this Psalm, and that it was the most

difficult of all. But I have been richly blessed by this Psalm, and, seeing how the apostle Paul quotes from it, we can be assured that it was inspired of the Holy Spirit. The first part of this Psalm has some inspiring thoughts, such as verse 11: "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it." But, most of all, how Paul applied it to the Church and the various gifts that Christ through the Holy Spirit has given is sufficient to accept it as a vital part of God's word.

Paul's epistle to the Ephesians has been a rich source of encouragement to our hearts through the years. It is filled with inspiring truths of Christ and the New Testament of the Gospel of eternal salvation and hope. He vividly presents Christ in the first chapter as being raised from the dead and set at God's own right hand in the heavenly places. Then in chapter 2 Paul shows how by the love and mercy of God we are quickened from the dead state of sin and raised up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter Paul speaks of what the gospel of Jesus has made available to mankind by His Spirit in the inner man helping us to comprehend all things.

Then, in chapter 4 Paul pictures the Church of God as the body of Christ with the various gifts and functions of His ministry bestowed on various ones. There is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one God and Father of all. And he brings out how that grace is given to all as the Lord sees fit to measure out His grace. He brings with this the text in Psalm 68 about the gifts given to men, and labels these various gifts. So, let us take in this wonderful truth of the working of the Holy Spirit and live close to Him so that He can work His works in each one of us.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does Christ minister to us from the right hand of God?
2. What are the gifts that He has given to work in the Church?
3. What must we endeavor to do to be a part of this great Work?
4. What powers and influences must we be on guard against?
5. What are the two unities that we need to strive for?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

In our lesson today we have wise counsel to take heed to. We must be very careful to walk and conduct ourselves in a worthy manner before others in the world and among the believers in Christ. This calls for careful behavior and godly attitude. With all lowliness and meekness and longsuffering we must bear and forbear with other Christians who are striving to follow the Lord. We must do this with an effort to hold fast to the unity of the Holy Spirit. He is calling for love, mercy, kindness, patience, and sweet attitudes of learning to properly relate to other Christians and our fellow man in general as well. It is a very strict and careful life that we must exercise ourselves with. How sad that there has been so much strife, division, and lack of real unity among the professors of faith in Jesus through the years of history! Just take a look at professed Christianity. So many churches are manifest to public view! Is that the way God planned for it to be! It is a shame and disgrace. Oh, how careful and prayerful we need to be that God will help us to be what He really wants us to be! Let us let Divine love blend fervently with all of our profession of faith in Jesus! Seek God earnestly in daily prayer for His inspiration and guidance in our hearts and lives!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

God has a beautiful plan for His church and His people. It is His desire that His people be able to deny self and pride and let God's spirit transform them into becoming like Jesus. He wants us to have love, patience, longsuffering, and the characteristics of Jesus so that we can encourage and be a help to others, and so that we can make the way of God attractive.

God also has a special plan for each person to fulfill in His church. He made each individual with different personalities and gifts so that they can do a specific work for Him. As we submit ourselves to Him and His way, accept His will for our lives, and get a vision of what He wants us to be, then He is able to work these things out in our lives and perfect us to be beneficial and productive people in His work.

Please Lord, help us to be ready and equipped for the work you have for us to do! Help us to not be a hindrance or stumbling block to anyone but to be builders in your kingdom!

—Sis. Lucinda Wilson



**AUGUST 4, 2013**

**THE REIGN OF THE LORD'S ANOINTED**

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

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

3 The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

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

5 They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

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

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

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

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

10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

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

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

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

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

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

16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like

Lebanon: and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

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

18 Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

19 And blessed *be* his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and Amen.

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

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the King of kings and Lord of lords. His kingdom is forever and a refuge for the poor and needy souls of mankind. Through Him we can be saved from all sin and have a blessed hope of reigning with Him forever in the world to come.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 72:1, "*the king*": Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. "*the king's son*": All who are born from above through Him.

Verse 3, "*mountains*": Rulers and leaders. "*little hills*": People who are saved and converted to righteousness through Him.

Verse 4, "*oppressor*": The devil, satan.

Verse 6, "*like rain*": As showers: Christ's blessings of Holy Spirit comfort and inspiration upon the souls of men.

Verse 7, "*flourish*": Prosper and abound with grace and overcoming strength. "*abundance of peace*": Jesus said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Verse 8, "*dominion*": Everlasting rule and authority.

Verse 9, "*wilderness*": The barren hearts of men under the dominion of sin. "*enemies shall lick the dust*": The souls of men under the bondage of sin will either bow in obedience to Christ for salvation or suffer eternal damnation in hell.

Verse 10, "*shall bring presents and offerings*": Just as the wise men came from the east to worship the Christ-child, as recorded in Matthew 2:1-2; so shall all who believe in Him present their bodies, hearts, and lives to Him.

Verse 11, "*all kings, all nations*": All mankind will have access to His grace and salvation.

Verses 12, 13, "*poor and needy*": The humble, lowly, meek, and poor in spirit. Matthew 5:3, 5.

Verse 14, "*redeem from deceit and violence*": Save and deliver from transgression and ungodly lusts.

Verse 15, "*gold of Sheba*": The pure gold of love, faith, and obedience given from the hearts of all who sincerely believe in Him.

Verse 16, "*handful of corn*": Abundance of the fruit of righteousness. "*upon the top of the mountains*": Up above this world of sin and evil. Isaiah 2:2 speaks of how "...the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

### LESSON BACKGROUND

The Bible heading for this Psalm 72 says: "A Psalm for Solomon", and is generally accounted as the writing of David, and perhaps the final of his writings. As 1 Kings 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter records, David named his son Solomon to be king after his death. But through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit this wonderful Psalm is a very good prophecy of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ who was of the lineage of David. Jesus fulfilled the main spiritual essence of this psalm. It portrays His Kingship in a beautiful and encouraging manner. His judging, delivering, sparing, saving, and redeeming the poor and needy from deceit and violence and their blood being precious in His sight is so graciously expressed. His deliverance of our souls from the oppressor, which is satan, is clearly brought out. His dominion covering all the earth, those dwelling in the wilderness of sin, and His enemies "licking the dust" is truly fulfilled in Christ. Prayer shall be made for Him, that is, "toward Him", continually. *Ever since our Lord Jesus sat down at the right hand of God in Heaven, prayers and supplications have ascended to Him from those upon earth calling upon His name and power for salvation and help.* The abundance of spiritual food of the "Bread of Life" above this dark and dismal world has been the nourishing factor of spiritual health all down through the years. Those of His city, His Church, have flourished on His spiritual blessings so wonderfully. His name has continued ever since and will continue as long as the sun shines and on into the eternal



world of everlasting life. All nations have been blessed in Him, and are continuing to be blessed in Him today!

How blessed and wonderful to have access to the throne of grace, to which we can boldly come and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need! (Hebrews 4:16.) He is our King of kings and Lord of lords! (I Timothy 6:15.) Praise and adoration and honor be to Jesus Christ forever!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. To whom mostly is the ministry of Christ made available to?
2. Who is the oppressor and enemy He delivers us from?
3. Who will flourish and what will be in abundance in Him?
4. What kind of gold is Christ desiring to receive?
5. How long and for what purpose will His name endure?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

How wonderful is this everlasting King that reigns in eternal glory and is accessible to us poor and needy creatures in this troublesome world! Oh, what a refuge we have in Him as our intercessor before God and our Great High Priest! He came down and took upon Himself our mortal likeness and suffered death on our behalf. As Philippians 2:5-11 so sweetly states: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God (counted not equality with God to be held on to): But made himself of no reputation (emptied Himself), and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore 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, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear; what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!"

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" Colossians 1:12-13.

It is a blessed privilege to be a part of the kingdom of God's dear Son, Jesus Christ. We rejoice that in the reign of God's Anointed One, His tender mercies overshadow all the members of His righteous kingdom. Nothing touches our lives but what He is watching and permits. His eye is on those who are poor and needy and His hand is against those who would oppress and destroy His trusting children. We praise God for His goodness unto the children of men.

"When lost in the darkness of sin and despair, sore cankered in heart by the sin that was there. Lo, Jesus then found me and gave me release. He lifted me up to the plane of His peace." Much of our praise to God's dear Son is expressed through song. We sing about Him for all of His goodness and for all of the lovely things He has done by saving our lost souls from the clutches of satan. Songs like, *He Lifted Me Out* and *Jesus Paid it All* express gratitude for deliverance and for paying the price for our redemption. Peace and joy are happy emotions that we feel because of Him and they are enjoyed in a precious way while we sing and tell the story of His love.

His holiness and power are virtues we extol in praise and worship. Truly, the Anointed One has touched the life of every child of God in a beneficial way giving hope and bright anticipation for the good things He has in store for His people. Blessed be the name of the Lord! —Bro. Willie E. Murphey



AUGUST 11, 2013

### REMEMBERING GOD'S WORKINGS IN AGES PAST

Psalm 77:1 ...I cried unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

3 I remembered God, and was troubled; I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.

6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

7 Will the Lord cast off for ever? And will he be favourable no more?

8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth *his* promise fail forevermore?

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, This *is* my infirmity: *but I will remember* the years of the right hand of the most High.

11 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

13 Thy way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary: who *is* so great a God as *our* God?

14 Thou *art* the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

15 Thou hast with *thine* arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

17 The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.

18 The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

19 Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

20 Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

**MEMORY VERSE:** I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. Psalm 77:11-12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** In times of distress and adversity when all seems dark and hopeless, we must call to remembrance how God created the world in the beginning by His

Word of power, and how He has worked and helped His people down through ages of history, and that He is still able to bless and help all who call upon Him with all their hearts.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 77:2, "*my sore ran in the night*": The Hebrew words' meaning: My hand was stretched out through the night in prayer to God. "*and ceased not*": Did not grow weary or numb.

Verse 3, "*complained*": Pondered and thought deeply about. "*overwhelmed*": Fainted in sorrow. "*Selah*": Pause for thought and meditation.

Verse 4, "*holdest mine eyes*": Kept me watching, not able to sleep.

Verse 5, "*considered*": Thought deeply and seriously about. "*ancient times*": God's workings in times of long ago.

Verse 6, "*commune with mine own heart*": Meditate, think about, and consider the state and condition of my soul. "*made diligent search*": Really faced up to the truth of myself.

Verse 7, "*Will the Lord cast off for ever?*": Is there any hope of His help and mercy? This is the writer's wonder and troubled thoughts in verses 7 to 9.

Verse 9, "*gracious*": Kind and favorable.

Verse 10, "*This is my infirmity*": This is my troubled state or condition.

Verse 11, "*I will remember*": I will call to mind and not forget. "*thy wonders of old*": How God helped so many in times past.

Verse 12, "*meditate*": Give earnest thought and study about. "*thy work and talk of thy doings*": Make mention verbally so others will hear of His creation and blessings in the past.

Verse 13, "*Thy way is in the sanctuary*": Thy loving and kind ways of goodness is portrayed in the law of Moses and the worship system Thou hast bestowed on him and the children of Israel.

Verse 14, "*the God that doest wonders*": The great wonders done for Israel in times past. "*declared thy strength*": Manifested thy great power.

Verse 16, "*the waters saw thee, O God: the depths also were troubled*": In the creation God parted the waters by a firmament (or opening), (Genesis 1:6-7) and opened up the Red Sea for the children of Israel to pass through on dry land. (Exodus 14:21-22)

Verse 17, "*clouds poured out water*": Rain comes from the clouds, thunder sounds and the lightning flashes across the skies.

Verse 19, "*Thy way is in the sea*": The way for Israel to pass went through the depths of the Red Sea. "*Thy footsteps are not known*": Thy ways are beyond the comprehension of man.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Jeduthun and Asaph to whom this Psalm is attributed were active singers in the time of David, and according to Adam Clarke, there was a person named Asaph in the time of the captivity at Babylon. But, whoever these people were, there is portrayed in this Psalm 77 a valuable and beneficial disposition of heart and attitude that is for us today to consider.

The writer starts out speaking of the day of his troubles overwhelming him and how he complained and remembered God's blessings in past times of the history of Israel. He pressed against his infirmities and sorrows to see and consider how God worked with Israel in their deliverance from bondage in Egypt. This is a very wise and helpful state of mind and purpose to have today. We have the Holy Bible as a great history of God's great workings and blessings upon mankind, beginning from the great and wonderful story of His creation of the universe and all down through the ages. The troubles of life weigh down heavily upon us frail human creatures, and God wants us to look away from adversity and discouragement to behold His goodness in ages past and that He is still the great, wise, and all-caring God that He was before. Yes, it may seem that God has cast us off forever and that He has forgotten to be gracious. But it has proven over and over and we must reckon it so, that God will bless and help all who call upon Him with a sincere and humble heart.

It is wise to call to remembrance His wonders of old. We have found to the delight of our soul great encouragement studying and meditating on the wonders of His creative power in bringing forth the heavens and the glorious light of the sun, moon, and stars. Then reading about how God worked in the past for Abraham and his posterity clear on down through the history of Israel and on up to the coming of Christ Jesus, our Savior, we find so much wonderful assurance of His good and

faithfulness for us today. May we do as the writer: remember the works of the LORD and His wonders of old. His way will often lead us through the seas of sorrow and difficulty, but He will always make a way for us to go through safely.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is it good to seek the Lord in times of trouble?
2. What Bible events do we have that will comfort and inspire us?
3. How can we be assured that God will not cast us off?
4. What are some of the ways God has helped in times past?
5. What are the things we should meditate on and talk about?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” Hebrews 13:8. And we can say the very same with great comfort and assurance that the Almighty God, who created the world and all things therein, is still the same wonderful God that He was to humanity in the ages past. What a wonderful privilege we have to look up to Him and daily pray and give Him thanks and praise for His wonderful blessings and help. But we must exercise confidence and trust in His goodness and great power and loving kindness and good will to us. We must not look at conditions and how things appear. We must glorify Him as the great Almighty Creator and be positive in our confidence in His goodness toward us. From the beginning of the world He has manifested His love and mercy and goodness to mankind. And with His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at His right hand in the Heavens above, we have unfailling hope and confidence that He will care for us and help us through these fleeting mortal years we are passing through.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

What phrase is repeated three times in our Scripture passage? *“I will remember.”* This is key to working through our afflictions and trials to victory. First of all, we need to acquaint ourselves, especially if we are newly come to the faith, with the

many stories in history of God's miraculous workings, building a strong and secure foundation for our faith. Besides the Bible stories, there are wonderful books written down through the years by saints who have proven God true in many difficult circumstances. *Martyrs' Mirror*, *Fox's Book of Martyrs*, *Touching Incidents and Remarkable Answers to Prayer*, *Divine Physical Healing*, and *Living Faith*, are just a few examples to start with.

"I call to remembrance my song in the night." Many Saints keep a personal or family journal, recording daily or weekly needs and burdens brought before the Lord, Scriptures or songs the Lord gives during the trial, and praises for the many answers to prayer. I've seen individuals who were going through a "new" series of trials, who found great encouragement by reading their diary from previous years. A "short" way to remind ourselves, when God inspires a portion of Scripture to us during a battle, is to note the date and incident in the margin of the page of that particular verse.

It is important to give public testimony to what God is doing in our lives. Not only is it good personal spiritual exercise, but it also strengthens the faith of our brothers and sisters. We can learn from each others' experiences both how to avoid pitfalls and take hold of God's answers and solutions. We can help each other *remember*. —Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**AUGUST 18, 2013**

### **MOUNT ZION, THE NEW JERUSALEM**

Psalm 48:1 ...Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

9 We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

10 According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let inount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad. because of thy judgments.

12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide *even* unto death.

Psalm 87:1 ...His foundation *is* in the holy mountains.

2 The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

3 Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

5 And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.

6 The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, *that* this *man* was born there. Selah.

7 ...All my springs *are* in thee.

Galatians 4:26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

Hebrews 12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name. Revelation 3:12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Zion and Jerusalem of old are not the true city of God. What is spoken in the Old Testament in our lesson of Zion is a prophecy pointing to the New Jerusalem in the New Testament. And this is the Church of God that Jesus founded upon the Rock of Himself and His truth. We enter this New Jerusalem by being born from above



by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. And all who are truly inhabitants of this holy Mount Zion live and walk holy before God always and are faithful till death.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 48:2, "*Beautiful for situation*": Lovely and shining on high, situated on a mountain of holiness above this world of sin and darkness. "*the joy of the whole earth*": The true delight for all humanity to enjoy. "*Zion*": The word "Zion" is from the Hebrew word "*tsee-yone*" and is defined as meaning conspicuous, eminent and glittering from afar. This relates with how God's holy Saints are in their godly faithful lives to Him.

Verse 3, "*refuge*": Shelter; place of safety and hope.

Verse 8, "*establish it for ever*": Build it on the Rock Christ Jesus.

Verse 9, "*thought of thy lovingkindness*": Pondered, meditated, studied, and embraced thy merciful love and goodness. "*in the midst of thy temple*": In the very center of thy presence.

Verse 10, "*according to thy name*": As thy name is, "*so is thy praise*": So will be thy honor and glory. "*unto the ends of the earth*": Wherever man is found.

Verse 12, "*Walk about Zion*": Explore and survey the beautiful City of God. "*tell the towers thereof*": Count up and remember her outstanding blessed benefits. "*mark ye well*": Set your heart upon and never forget. "*her bulwarks*": Her steadfast defenses.

Psalm 87:1, "*His foundation*": The solid basis of God's overwhelming truth. "*in the holy mountains*": In His purity, honor, and strength.

Verse 2, "*The LORD loveth the gates of Zion*": The LORD God has great joy and is well pleased in the holy standards of His Church. "*dwellings of Jacob*": The tents used by Abraham and his offspring in Caanan land.

Verse 3, "*Glorious things*": Rich, weighty, and honorable truths. "*city of God*": The people who truly love and worship God Almighty.

Verse 5, "*This and that man was born in her*": This is referring to the spiritual birth of the Holy Spirit that Jesus spoke of in John 3:3.

Verse 6, "*my springs*": Source of happiness and satisfaction.

Galatians 4:26, "*Jerusalem which is above*": Spiritual Jerusalem made up of all who are born of the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we are putting forth the truth of what the real true Jerusalem and Mount Zion that God owns and blesses as His people and true Church is in this world. David captured the city of Jerusalem and chose the hill of Zion for his dwelling. Now the name of Zion was brought forward to the New Testament, where it was spelled as "Sion". Isaiah 28:16 is a prophecy of Zion quoted in Romans 9:33 and I Peter 2:6. So we can see that Zion and Jerusalem are the same in the New Testament, referring to the Church that Jesus built. The Holy Spirit inspired these scriptures in our lesson and others about Zion and Jerusalem. In our text in Galatians 4:26 and 27 Paul spoke of Jerusalem which is above as our spiritual mother, and quotes from Isaiah 54:1. Isaiah mentions Zion and Jerusalem several times in prophecy of the New Testament Church. We can see how the Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled in the great spiritual truths and blessings brought out in the New Testament. What is said in the Old Testament Zion and Jerusalem can be applied to the New Testament. It is a wonderful truth that we need to understand and take hold of. In our world today, sad to say, many people believe that old literal Jerusalem over there in Palestine is still the city of God. Many believe that when Jesus comes He will set up His kingdom in old literal Jerusalem. This is false doctrine. The Jerusalem that God recognizes and works in is the spiritual Jerusalem that is from above, spiritual and anointed with the Holy Spirit. Romans 2:28 and 29 declares: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly;...But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly;..."

Our text in Hebrews 12:22 and 23 very plainly declares that we are "...come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,...". And our Memory Verse is from Christ's own words in His message to John declaring that the name of the city of His God was "new Jerusalem". Oh, what a wonderful truth to understand and get a hold of!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the true and real Jerusalem and Zion for men to seek?
2. What can we see and behold in the new Jerusalem?
3. How can we become a part of this holy city of God?
4. How can we walk about Zion and learn of her towers?
5. What kind of people live and inhabit this new Jerusalem?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

In Revelation 21:1-3 the apostle John tells us, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." In verses 9 and 10 John tells more, how an angel came to him, saying, "...Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." This is the same city that is mentioned in the scriptures in our lesson. This is the Church of God that Christ purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:28. This is the New Jerusalem, the holy people who, down through the ages, have been united with Christ in Holy Spirit anointing and inspiration and who have followed Him all the way.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

When Jesus was in the judgment hall of Pilate he announced, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18:36. He also said in Luke 17:20-21, "...The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here!, or lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Jesus was not interested in political standing, government power or military forces. The world did not understand or accept this concept then nor do they understand and receive it now. The Lord Jesus superceded each earthly realm to establish something even greater. He created

a kingdom that can dwell within each heart now as we look forward to the heavenly kingdom that is established forever. The little 'earnest' that we have here will match the 'investment/reward' over there. Praise the Lord, this kingdom is above any other force, including satan's demonic power!

Daniel prophesied that "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

"There's a scene of its grandness before me,

Of its greatness there can be no end;

It is joy, it is peace, it is glory,

In my heart, how these riches do blend.

I am lost in its splendor and beauty,

To its ne'erfading heights I would rise,

Till I see the King come to receive me,

And explore it with Him in the skies

What a pleasure in life it is bringing,

What assurance and hope ever bright.

Oh what rapture and bliss are awaiting,

When our faith shall be lost in the sight!"

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



**AUGUST 25, 2013**

### **PRAISES TO GOD FOR HIS GOODNESS**

Psalm 92:1 ...*It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:*

2 *To show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,*

4 *For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.*

5 *O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.*

6 *A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.*

7 *When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever:*

8 *But thou, LORD, art most high for evermore.*

9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like *the horn of an unicorn*: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

11 Mine eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.

12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

15 To show that the LORD is upright: *he is my rock*, and *there is no unrighteousness in him*.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing. Psalm 92:13-14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The profits and benefits of obeying and being faithful to the will of God in one's life are far beyond the profits and benefits of this old wicked, vain, and deceitful world that so many are so foolishly following after.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 92:1, "*O most High*": Supreme above all else.

Verse 2, "*lovingkindness*": Tender mercy and gracious help.

Verse 4, "*I will triumph*": I will shout with victory.

Verse 5, "*thy thoughts are very deep*": Thy purposes and plans are profoundly wise and very good.

Verse 6, "*brutish man*": Stupid and foolish person.

Verse 7, "*spring as the grass*": Grow and spread out big. "*flourish*": Break forth and blossom with outward beauty. "*destroyed for ever*": Cast into outer darkness for eternity.

Verse 8, "*high*": Exalted in power and strength.

Verse 9, "*scattered*": Turned to disorder, loss, and shame.

Verse 10, "*my horn*": The power and ability that God bestows upon me. "*unicorn*": A wild ox. "*fresh oil*": Inspired strength from close communion with the Spirit of God.

Verse 11, "*see my desire*": Behold and experience my victory over those who come against me.

Verse 12, "*flourish*": Prevail and overcome. "*grow like a cedar in Lebanon*": Increase in height and strength like the beautiful cedar trees that grow in the mountains of Lebanon.

Verse 14, "*fat and flourishing*": Rich, fertile, and fruitful in spiritual blessings from Heaven.

Verse 15, "*To shew that the LORD is upright*": To prove that God's holy way is fully the right and best way to go.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

This 92<sup>nd</sup> Psalm is headed by these words: "A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath day." The Sabbath Day in Israel was the day that no work was done and it was the day that people would spend in worship and pursuing spiritual inspiration and comfort from the LORD. In the New Testament Christ instituted the spiritual Sabbath, which was a ceasing from the works of self and worldly pride and lust unto holiness, humility, meekness, and quietness from selfish gain and enterprise. And the blessings mentioned and described in this Psalm can be really experienced as we enter into the rest of faith that Christ brought out for us to have.

Giving thanks daily to our Heavenly Father, singing praises unto His name, and manifesting in our hearts the same lovingkindness that God has shown to us, is all surely a wonderful plan to follow and fulfill. In this great salvation that Christ perfected for us to have and enjoy, we can triumph and have victory over sin and transgression that Satan brings upon the soul of man. God's thoughts and works are very wise and deep. It is for us to open up our minds and hearts to His Word and Holy Law, and learn of His gracious ways and attitudes of heart. We must not cater to the ways of the world around us in their lust and brutish ways of life. Yes, we can see how the worldly people prosper and abound in earthly material gain, but we can be sure that it will all end up in eternal darkness and damnation. The Lord is most high forevermore, and if we follow the example of Christ who humbled Himself to be obedient to the cross His Father wanted Him to bear, we can share in the eternal glory that God exalted Him to in being raised from the dead and lifted up to the right hand of God in eternal power and glory.

And although we may be cast out and criticized by the worldly and proud current of society, we can and will flourish in the eternal blessings. We will possess a hope of endless joy and happiness in the world to come. In the time of old age as our mortal body decays and becomes infirm and afflicted, we can still bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, which is, "...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance: against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23. Thus we can manifest the image of our holy Heavenly Father of uprightness and holiness of heart and mind and body. Our Psalm shows the benefit and prosperity that we can have as we live the life of a Christian, following the footsteps of Jesus.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the good thing our lesson says for us to do?
2. What kind of triumph and victory will the Lord help us to have?
3. Why does the brutish man not know the holy way of God?
4. What is going to happen to the workers of iniquity?
5. What can we show forth in the time of old age?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It surely pays to seek the Lord in one's youth and be willing to give up the world and its pleasures and wealth. A person may have godly parents and many good influences around him or her, but the world around about will have an influence that will really have a bearing upon the heart and mind. The love of pleasure, money, worldly honor, and the lure of the opposite sex is the downfall of many young people today. Personally, I can look back in my youth and see different influences and pressures that could very well have overcome and stifled all the godly influences that God put in my life. A girl friend, worldly attractions, sports, and vanities of pride and fashion had a great drawing to my heart and mind. I had a godly mother, attended a godly assembly of Saints on Sundays, Wednesday nights, camp meetings, assembly meetings, and revival meeting, but I was drawn and attracted to the worldly way of life. But God permitted me to have a mishap one evening and I fell on my face and blooded my nose so severely. I ran to the house to my mother. She laid me down, padded me

with cloths to help stop the blood flowing from my mouth and nose. She called our pastor, Bro. O. C. Porter, and he and his wife and daughter came to pray for me. And, thank the Lord, I was doing business with God. I promised God that if He would undertake for me and stop the bleeding, I would give my heart to Him and live for Him in my life. In just a few minutes the blood stopped. That summer I gave my heart to Jesus, started living for Him, and seeking to go the way of the Saints that I knew. That winter I sought the Lord in a service at the Guthrie Assembly Meeting and He filled me with His Holy Spirit and I have followed His leadings ever since. I gave up a worldly girl friend, and began to seek God's guidance in all my plans of life. The Spirit of the Lord led me to choose the right young woman for my wife, and has led us in the service of the Lord for going on 53 years. I am still happy and satisfied in the Lord as my Guide and everlasting Hope! I am pressing on the upward way, new heights I'm gaining every day! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What does it mean to be flourishing in God? To be "fat and flourishing" in this context to me means to be rich and abounding in good things. It means to have the fruits of the spirit and wisdom in our lives.

How can we become a flourishing Christian... "like the palm tree" or a "cedar in Lebanon"? We can grow bountifully and flourish in our spirits if we are careful to nurture our spirits and feed our souls good things. This takes some diligence and humility in our lives. We all want to flourish, but to be successful and prosperous in our Christian life is something we have to work on. We have to work on it by submitting all of our self and our will to God, and by cultivating our relationship with Him through meditating on His Word and spending time in prayer with Him. However, the actual

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flourishing is the work that God is doing in us. He is the One who gives the increase. Our part is to yield to Him. His part is to work and make something beautiful out of our lives.

Praise and thank the Lord for His goodness and mercies to us! That He could take such a person like me and take interest and care to want to make me fit for His use and His kingdom...it is hard for me to believe sometimes, but I thank the Lord so much for His mercies and goodness! May He help me to praise Him always and let Him work a good work in my life that I might be able to be a part of His creation that radiates praise and glory back to Him! —Sis. Lucinda Wilson



**SEPTEMBER 1, 2013**

**PRAYER OF THE AFFLICTED FOR ZION**

Psalm 102:1 ...Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

2 Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day *when* I call answer me speedily.

11 My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.

12 But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

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

14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

15 So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. Psalm 102:16-17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Viewing the destruction of earthly Jerusalem, the afflicted and overwhelmed soul is inspired to prophecy and foretell of the new Jerusalem that would be built through Jesus Christ. This is a spiritual city made up of people of all nations, all who truly serve and obey God as holy people born from above and led by the Spirit of God.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

The title heading of this 102<sup>nd</sup> Psalm says: "A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed (faint; clouded with grief and sorrow), and poureth out his complaint (thoughts and meditations) before the LORD."

Psalm 102:11, "*a shadow that declineth*": Like one's shadow that is stretched out and lengthened at sundown. "*withered*": Disappointed and ashamed.

Verse 13, "*Zion*": This refers to ancient literal Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel. "*settime*": The time appointed by God.

Verse 14, "*her stones and dust*": What was left of Jerusalem after being destroyed by the armies of Babylon.

Verse 15, "*the heathen and all the kings of the earth*": All other nations and rulers.

Verse 16, *"build up Zion"*: Make it a real and everlasting city. *"he shall appear in his glory"*: This is a prophecy of Jesus Christ coming to manifest His power and grace.

Verse 17, *"regard"*: Turn toward in mercy and favor. *"destitute"*: The poor and needy souls of men who sense their great need of mercy, forgiveness, and help from God. *"despise"*: Scorn or count lightly.

Verse 18, *"generation to come"*: Spiritual people born of the Spirit of God. *"people which shall be created"*: The souls of men created in righteousness and true holiness. (Ephesians 4:24.)

Verse 19, *"height of his sanctuary"*: The eternal heavens far above this vain and fleeting world.

Verse 20, *"groaning of the prisoner"*: "Agony and sorrow of a soul in the prison house of sin. *"loose"*: Liberate and set free. *"appointed to death"*: Sentenced to death on account of sin and transgression.

Verse 21, *"Zion: Jerusalem"*: Spiritual Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem. Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 3:12.

Verse 22, *"people gathered together"*: This is pointing to the nations that were gathered at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost to worship God, as recorded in Acts 2.

Verse 24, *"take me not away"*: Let me not die. *"in the midst of my days"*: Before I become aged and full of years.

Verse 25, *"thou shalt endure"*: Thou art eternal.

Verse 27, *"thou art the same"*: Never changing nor failing.

Verse 28, *"their seed shall be established"*: These are the spiritual people in Christ Jesus, the true and holy Church of God.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have the account of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army recorded in II Kings 25 and II Chronicles 36. Besides slaying many of the people, "they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof." It was a sad and disheartening time for many. The writer of this 102<sup>nd</sup> Psalm was probably one of the sad and distressed souls who witnessed it. But in the depth of his sorrow the writer of this Psalm had an insight and revelation of the wonderful blessings of a future day when God would have mercy and build up Zion. But it is a truth so wonderful

to behold the fulfillment of his prophecy as portrayed in the writings of the New Testament. We find the writer in Hebrews 1:10-12 quoting from verses 25-27 of this very Psalm along with other Old Testament scriptures and applying it to our Lord Jesus Christ. And then with other New Testament scriptures, some of whom we have already mentioned in other lessons, we see that the fulfillment of this scripture is the New Jerusalem that is a spiritual city made up of the redeemed of Christ, that was also seen of John as recorded in Revelation 21:2 as coming down from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. How wonderful to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit to understand that it is no longer old literal Jerusalem that we are beholding, but rather the Jerusalem which is above and made up of born again, Holy Spirit fed and led people!  
—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the writer of Psalm 102 looking forward to?
2. In what way was God going to build up Zion in His glory?
3. What kind of city was the new Zion going to be made up of?
4. What was going to be a blessing to the poor and destitute?
5. Who were the prisoners and those appointed to death?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The destruction of old literal Jerusalem was without question a sad and disheartening sorrow that pierced many hearts. It was because of the sin and iniquity of the Israelite people and nation that brought this terrible calamity upon them. But, in the midst of all the trouble and sorrow, the Holy Spirit inspired the writer of the Psalm of a better day to come, even though it would not come to pass in his day, but far in the future. And, thank the Lord, the New Testament declares that there is a New Jerusalem, a spiritual city made up of spiritual people who experience that new birth that Jesus spoke of and the blessing of being filled with the Holy Spirit and to be led and blessed by Him.

It is true that we no longer look at old literal Jerusalem over in Palestine as the city of God. It is the New Jerusalem,

a spiritual city and people who are lifted up from the degraded depths of sin and worldliness to a plane of holiness and victory and peace with God. The New Testament has strong and unflinching witness of this New Jerusalem that we enter into by being made new creatures in Christ, old things passing away and all things becoming new. (II Corinthians 5:17.) We no longer look to the literal Jews as being the people of God, but all nations have the privilege of being and enjoying the membership of the Jerusalem which is above, as the mother of us all. (Galatians 4:26.) We can be a part of this Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem by being delivered from the power of sin and being led by the Spirit of God and bearing the fruits of the Spirit, which "is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance: against such there is no law!"

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The old city of Jerusalem is looked on by many with nostalgia. Many visit there and think of the times that it housed the temple of the Lord. In times past, God manifested Himself from the temple in a mighty way, but when Jesus died the spirit of the Lord departed from the temple, even rending the veil to the holy of holies. Some years later the temple was completely destroyed, and today only a little bit of the foundation wall in that area remains.

However, these changes were not the end of God's goodness to mankind, it was only a new beginning. Just as a landowner tears down an old structure to build a new more magnificent building, so God allowed the old Jerusalem to be destroyed to build a wonderful spiritual kingdom where His spirit dwells in the hearts of those who have been cleansed by the atonement of Jesus' personal sacrifice for sin. This new kingdom will include every Jew who experiences a new birth in Jesus Christ and it reaches much further to include every Gentile who will do the same. We, who were once foreigners to the grace of God are now made fellow citizens!

"And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the

saints, and of the household of God;" Ephesians 2:17-19.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Revelation 14:6.

Praise God for making His great salvation and membership into His heavenly kingdom available to "whosoever will!"  
—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**SEPTEMBER 8, 2013**

### **BIBLE STORY OF NAOMI AND RUTH, PART 1**

Ruth 1:1 Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

2 And the name of the man *was* Elimelech, and the name of his wife, Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

3 And Elimelech Naomi's husband died, and she was left, and her two sons.

4 And they took them wives of the women of Moab, the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

5 And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them, and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

6 Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread.

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of *you* in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? *are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?*

12 Turn again, my daughters, go *your way*; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, *if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;*

13 Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? Would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15 And she said, Behold thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, *Is this Naomi?*

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *thencallye* me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest.

**MEMORY VERSE:** And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God. Ruth 1:16.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Ruth refused to forsake her dear mother-in-law, Naomi, and promised to live with her, have Naomi's people as her people, and her God, the true and living God, as her God.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

Ruth 1:1, "*sojourn*": Live temporarily.

Verse 2, "*left*": Separated by death.

Verse 13, "*stay*": Refrain from marriage.

Verse 14, "*kissed*": Gave her a good-bye kiss. "*clave unto her*": Remained close to her, refusing to depart.

Verse 16, "*Entreat me not*": Do not beg me to leave you. "*lodge*": Live or stay.

Verse 20, "*Naomi*": Pleasant. "*Mara*": Bitter.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

We feel inspired for the next few lessons to cover a beautiful and inspiring story from Holy Scripture. It portrays the blessing of love and affection in people and how it will work such happiness and gladness in their lives. In our story we see a famine, a time of crop failure and lack of food and provision, in the land of Israel. We have pictured the family of Elimelech with his wife and two sons going eastward from Israel around the Salt Sea (Sea of the Plain) and southward to the country of Moab. The famine was not raging there and they were able to find a place to live, and whatever else they would have need of. But the unexpected rose up before them, as Elimelech, the husband and father, was taken in death from their midst. The two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, both found young Moabitish women to marry and have love and happiness. But then more sorrow and bitter grief visited the family circle. The two sons were taken in death. This left three widows in a difficult and desperate situation. Then the widow mother, Naomi, got word that things were better in Israel, and so she decided to take the journey back to her homeland. She entreated her two daughters-in-law to remain in Moab and hope for new husbands. Orpah decided to remain, but Ruth refused to leave Naomi. Her words of loving purpose of decision and faithfulness is so inspiring. So she went with Naomi and they came to Bethlehem and were greeted by friends and kindred. Notice Naomi's



expression of having been dealt very bitterly by the Almighty. But we will see in our remaining lessons how it all proved to work for the good of all.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Naomi's family move to Moab?
2. What sorrow came to her there?
3. Why did she decide to go back to Israel?
4. Why did Ruth decide to go with her?
5. How did Naomi feel about her sorrows?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It is so wonderful to read and learn about God's providential working in the lives of humanity, especially of those who sought His face and were faithful to follow His leadings and Holy Law. And also to behold the wise dealings of the Almighty and the things that He permitted to come to pass that were seemingly difficult and greatly, as Naomi put it, bitter affliction. Looking back in Bible History we can find various people's lives in which God worked, seemingly very bad and disruptive way, but in the end proved to be a great benefit. There is the story of Joseph, as recorded in Genesis 37: 39-46, in which is the account of 17 year old Joseph, hated and despised by his brothers, sold by them for twenty pieces of silver to merchants who took him to Egypt as a captive slave. How terrible and awful were the things that came his way! But in the end, it all worked out for the best for everyone. God works His wisdom in our lives, and we need to learn patience and faithful steadfastness in our trust in God through all the adversities of life.

Naomi's sorrow in the death of her husband and two sons was so great and was a bitter experience to suffer. Here she was as a widow with 2 young women to see after. It is no wonder that she tried to get them to go back to their own people again. But, while Orpah decided to go back, we find Ruth's loving spirit motivated her to stay with her mother-in-law, Naomi, and go with her back to her homeland. Even though her homeland was a foreign land to Ruth, her decision was that Naomi's people would be her people, and her God would also be her God.

Ruth's decision is quite similar to the decision and purpose we should all have before God and His people. We should behold the goodness and blessing of the Lord and the happi-

ness and peace His Saints enjoy, and look beyond the trials and afflictions to the blessed hope of eternal life. So can we make that firm decision to live for the Lord and receive His blessings of love and happiness despite any thing we may suffer and endure.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is a lot of emotion in today's story. You have a widow left without a husband and two boys without a dad. They later married and had ten years of married life, but even then there is an undertone of sadness; no children are mentioned in either home. Finally, there are two young widows facing a major life change along with their mother-in-law. There is weeping and embracing. The prospect of never seeing home and familiar loved ones again. The anticipation of a strange and foreign country, with a different culture and religion.

We don't read this story with condemnation to Orpah. She did, actually, what Naomi tried to constrain both women to do—return to their childhood home and begin a new life there. It isn't that she didn't love Naomi. The emotion is there. She gave an affectionate, heartfelt kiss. But—she returned to her people and to her gods. Ruth, with a steadfast mind, determined to go with Naomi, to know, to experience, even at great personal expense, Jehovah and His people.

The determining factor was something stronger than an emotional pull. There was something more in Ruth's heart than affection for her mother-in-law. In the ten years she had been with this family, she had learned of the true God. She had seen a power stronger than death. She had experienced the call of God, and she was resolved to follow that call.

The call still comes to those who will hear: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he *is* thy Lord; and worship thou Him." (Psalm 45:10-11).

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**SEPTEMBER 15, 2013**

**RUTH MEETS HER FUTURE HUSBAND**

Ruth 2:1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name *was* Boaz.

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after *him* in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

3 And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech.

4 And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD *be* with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.

5 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel *is* this?

6 And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It *is* the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:

7 And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:

9 *Let* thine eyes *be* on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of *that* which the young men have drawn.

10 Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a stranger?

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath full been showed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and *how* thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

12 The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

13 Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

14 And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not:

16 And let fall also *some* of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.

17 So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

18 And she took *it* up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

19 And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? And where wroughtest thou? Blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she showed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, That man's name with whom I wrought to day *is* Boaz.

20 And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed *be* he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.

21 And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.

22 Then Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, *It is* good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.

23 So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of the barley harvest and of the wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.

**MEMORY VERSE:** The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. Ruth 2:12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The LORD God worked and helped Ruth to glean grain for Naomi and her in one of the fields of Boaz, a newly met kinsman of Naomi's husband, Elimelech. Boaz made Ruth feel welcome and lovingly made special provisions for her.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Ruth 2:1, "*kinsman*": Close relative.

Verse 2, "*glean*": Pick up what was dropped by the reapers. "*grace*": Permission and favor.

Verse 3, "*her lap*": She happened. "*light*": Choose to glean.

Verse 7, "*sheaves*": Bundles of grain.

Verse 14, "*reached her*": Handed to her. "*parched corn*": Special roasted grains of corn. "*sufficed*": Satisfied. "*left*": Had some left over.

Verse 15, "*reproach her not*": Do not forbid her.

Verse 16, "*handfuls of purpose*": Bunches of grain especially for her.

Verse 17, "*beat out*": Separating the grain from the straw. "*ephah*": Adam Clarke states that this measure equaled not less than 7 gallons, a good days work!

Verse 18, "*reserved after she was sufficed*": Kept after she herself had eaten.

Verse 19, "*wrought*": Worked and accomplished.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we see how Ruth was willing to go out and pick up sheaves of grain dropped by those who were harvesting and bundling up the grain that had ripened for gathering. It was the practice of the kind and gracious owners of the fields to allow the poor to do so. This willingness to go out to perform this task shows some more of the sweet and willing spirit she possessed along with the love she had for her mother-in-law, Naomi. It was no doubt the providence of God that she chose one of the fields of Boaz, a near kinsman to Naomi's husband. Somehow the word about Ruth, and how she had come with Naomi from Moab had reached Boaz, and he was greatly impressed with the report. And, in our lesson, we see the special kindness he showed to Ruth, and how he felt that the LORD would repay her with great reward for her

goodness. How impressive are the words, "under whose wings thou art come to trust." We see how Boaz made special privileges for Ruth. And then we see Ruth returning to Naomi with a good supply for their food and bright report of the man who had befriended them. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Ruth do to help supply necessary food?
2. Whose field did she happen to light on?
3. How did Boaz feel toward Ruth?
4. What special help did he give her?
5. How did Naomi feel about it all?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

How sweet and beautiful was the spirit of Ruth! She had already given up her family ties and blessings in her home country of Moab, and had taken up to help Naomi in her situation and needs. And in our lesson we see her willing and ready to go out to the fields of barley and pick up what the reapers may have dropped. This willing heart and mind to assume responsibility on the behalf of loved ones is a beautiful trait for a person to cultivate. And it is very certain that God, who is viewing our hearts and attitudes, beheld this lowly maiden as she went out to see what she could find. And so it was His providential plan for Ruth to happen to choose the field of Boaz. We might consider something about Boaz that is interesting to note. In Matthew 1:5 in the lineage of Abraham to Christ we have it stated that Salmon begat Boaz of Rachab. Now this Rachab is believed to be referring to Rahab, the woman who befriended the men sent to spy out Jericho, as recorded in Joshua 2. She and her family were spared when Israel came and destroyed Jericho. She became a part of God's family, and is even mentioned in the New Testament as a woman of faith. Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25. She was the mother of Boaz! How good to have a faith to communicate to our children! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Very precious is the passage in the first chapter of Ruth where Ruth is pledging her loyalty to not only Naomi, but also

to the God of Naomi and Naomi's people: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God."

Even though Ruth was a Moabite, she chose to embrace the life of her mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth chose Jehovah over the gods of the heathen in her homeland. Ruth chose the people of God—people she did not even know—over her own kindred. She followed Naomi to a land that she had never visited, perhaps never to see her own family and friends again. She left behind everything that was familiar and comfortable to accompany and take care of Naomi. No doubt the arrival of Naomi and Ruth created quite a sensation among the people. Here they witnessed the grief of Naomi in losing everything and it is certain that they kept a close eye on that Moabite woman, Ruth. But God was watching over her also and provided all things well for Ruth.

In a way, we see this story unfold before us on a day to day basis. There are modern day "Ruths" who come out of this wicked world and embrace the truth of God and rejoice in it. On the other hand, we also see those that have been privileged to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord turn away from this great salvation. And while we do not always see the potential in unsaved souls around us, God always sees the broken and contrite heart.

No matter our upbringing, whether we were raised in a godly home or a worldly environment, let us follow the example of Ruth and embrace the Lord and all that He has for us in this life: "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God."

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



**SEPTEMBER 22, 2013**

### **BOAZ AND RUTH COME TOGETHER**

Ruth 3:1 Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her (Ruth), My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

2 And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.

3 Wash thy self therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyself known to the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

6 And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.

7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

9 And he said, Who *art* thou? And she answered, I *am* Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou *art* a near kinsman.

10 And he said, Blessed *be* thou of the LORD, my daughter, *for* thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou *art* a virtuous woman.

12 And now it is true that I *am* thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

13 Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, *that* if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then I will do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

14 And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she arose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

15 Also he said, Bring the veil that *thou* hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six *measures* of barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city.



16 And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

17 And she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law.

18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. Proverbs 31:10.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Ruth willingly took her mother-in-law Naomi's counsel and went down to where Boaz was working with the winnowing of the barley and modestly offered herself to him as her kinsman to do to her as the LORD would so have him to do.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Ruth 3:1, "*seek rest*": Desire to provide love and happiness for you.

Verse 2, "*winnoweth barley*": Work to separate the grain from the straw. "*threshing floor*": Open space in the barn to do the threshing.

Verse 4, "*mark*": See or take notice.

Verse 7, "*merry*": Felt good and happy. "*softly*": Carefully in secret.

Verse 10, "*followedst not young men*": Did not go after young men.

Verse 11, "*virtuous*": Strong and capable.

Verse 14, "*before one could know another*": Before daylight.

Verse 15, "*six measures of barley*": Adam Clarke says that if the measure was six omers it would amount to about four and one half gallons.

Verse 18, "*not be in rest*": Not be satisfied or content. "*finished*": Fully taken care of.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we have Naomi pictured as a loving mother who was concerned for the welfare of her precious daughter-in-law, Ruth. Knowing that the man Boaz, who had

already befriended Ruth so graciously, was a godly man and willing to obey the statutes and ordinances of the law of Moses. Naomi felt that it was proper and well worth the effort for Ruth to present herself to him who was their lawful kinsman. It is brought out in Deuteronomy 25:5-10 the counsels and things to be done in the event of a man's death. It plainly says that the wife of the dead shall not marry outside the family to a stranger, but that "her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her." So Naomi had a well informed mind concerning this, and she encouraged Ruth about it. And Ruth was quite willing to follow the instructions Naomi had given her. And viewing the procedure that Ruth followed, we see nothing immodest or wrong in it at all. And also let us be aware of the situation these two widows were in of need for support and provisions for life. So it was not out of order to do it.

Boaz would be alone threshing the barley that evening, and Ruth was instructed to go down and observe Boaz in his work. It is evident that she kept herself withdrawn and out of sight, yet present and near enough to see what was going on. Then after the work was done, and Boaz had eaten and laid down to rest for the night, Ruth came quietly and laid herself down at the feet of Boaz, uncovering his feet in the process. At midnight Boaz became aware that someone was lying at his feet. When he asked who it was, Ruth answered and asked for Boaz to spread his skirt over her, stating that he was a near kinsman. Boaz answered Ruth with loving words and accepted her, but stated that there was another man who was of nearer kin than he was. But he assured Ruth that he knew what had to be done, and in the morning he would certainly see about it. Then he graciously gave her a bountiful supply of food to take with her back to Naomi. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Naomi tell Ruth to do?
2. Why did she think that this would be all right?
3. What was Ruth's response to Naomi's word?
4. What was Boaz's response to Ruth's visit?
5. Why did Boaz give Ruth such a supply of barley?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The beautiful and inspiring story of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz greatly illustrates the gracious love of the Almighty for the happiness of man. It shows in the beginning of the creation when God created man and put him in the garden of Eden and presented a woman to him to be his helpmeet and close friend and companion. Taking a rib from Adam's side, God made him a wife to be a great joy and blessing to his life. And we see that still today our God works and blesses all who put Him first and seeks above all else to do His will. We have various men in the Bible who were blessed to have good wives. Think of Noah and his wife and his three sons and their wives. All of these women were good companions to their husbands. They were all present with Noah when he went into the ark that he had built in obedience to God. Then there is Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and others down through history who have been blessed of God to have a sweet, lovely, faithful, and helpful wife. Speaking from personal experience, I can say from my heart that the godly, loving, faithful, and helpful woman that God gave me for a wife has been and still is the greatest blessing in my life, that is, next to the blessings of my precious Heavenly Father and His wonderful Son, Jesus Christ.

It was my choice to consecrate my life to God as a youth and seek His guidance in choosing who would be my lawfully wedded wife. Just as Boaz was happy to have the opportunity to obtain the virtuous Ruth, so was I happy to obtain my wife, Sylvia Jean. Next to salvation and my fellowship with God and His Son, the sweet and happy life we have had together is the greatest joy and treasure in my life. Oh, may we encourage our young people to likewise seek the Lord and let Him guide you in this way, also!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*" Genesis 2:18. It is interesting to note the difference and significance in the creation of Adam and Eve. The Lord caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and He took a rib from his side and closed up the flesh, from the rib the Lord created Eve, and brought her to Adam.

I am sure that Adam was filled with wonderment and joy! He said, "...This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Genesis 2:23-24. From the beginning, the Lord intended, one man and one woman to become one in flesh, heart, mind and spirit working together side by side.

Ruth is also noted for her famous words that are quoted at many marriages today, "...Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried:..." Ruth 1:16-17.

Holy matrimony is one of life's greatest blessings, friendship, companionship, working together and sharing life's sorrows, burdens, and joys together. Good marriages and happy homes are not self-maintaining or automatic, they must be carefully guarded and tended. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;" "...and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband." Ephesians 5:25, 33. —Bro. Bob Wilson



**SEPTEMBER 29, 2013**

### **BOAZ OBTAINS RUTH FOR HIS WIFE**

Ruth 4:1 Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! Turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

3 And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which *was* our brother Elimelech's:

4 And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy *it* before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*: but if thou wilt not redeem *it*, *then* tell me, that I may know: for *there is* none to redeem *it* beside thee; and I *am* after thee. And he said, I will redeem *it*.

5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

6 And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem *it* for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem *it*.

7 Now this *was the manner* in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave *it* to his neighbor: and this *was a testimony* in Israel.

8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and *unto all* the people, Ye *are* witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye *are* witnesses this day.

11 And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, We *are* witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.

13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

14 And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed *be* the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of *thy* life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became a nurse unto it.

17 And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

**MEMORY VERSE:** O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Romans 11:33.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Boaz gave the nearest kinsman of Naomi's family the privilege to redeem their property and to take Ruth for a wife; but when the kinsman declined the offer and urged Boaz to take it for himself, Boaz accepted it and announced that he had bought all that was Elimelech's, and would take Ruth to be his wife.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

Ruth 4:4, "*advertise thee*": Inform thee, and make thee to know. "*I am after thee*": I am next in line to thee.

Verse 6, "*lest I mar mine own inheritance*": Evidently this kinsman already had a wife, and he had no desire to take another wife, lest there should be contention in his home. "*redeem thou my right to thyself*": You take what would come to me for yourself.

Verse 11, "*Ephratah*": Another name for Bethlehem.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our previous lesson we see how Ruth communicated to Boaz as her near kinsman, offering herself to be his wife, and Boaz was very glad to accept her and to redeem the property of her mother-in-law, Naomi. But he stated that there was another kinsman nearer and more in line to redeem it. And he said that he would endeavor the next morning to consult with the kinsman and see if he would let him, Boaz, redeem it.

In our lesson today we have the meeting Boaz arranged with the elders of the city and the kinsman. Boaz explained what it was concerning, and offered the kinsman the right to redeem the property. At first the kinsman said he would redeem it, but when he was told that it involved him taking Ruth to be his wife, he declined and told Boaz that he could have it. So the deal was made, and Boaz was given the permission from the elders and the kinsman to purchase the property of Elimelech and Naomi, and to take Ruth for his wife. It is in Deuteronomy 25:5-10 that redeeming a relative's property and marrying his wife was mentioned. For some reason it was carried out differently with Boaz and the

kinsman, but it was accepted by everyone. The taking the right to purchase the property and to marry the widow of the owner was followed, but the act of accepting the shoe was different. The text in Deuteronomy said that the brother's wife was to come to the one who refused to take her and "loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face". But, somehow, this kinsman of Boaz took his shoe off himself and gave it to Boaz. All was accepted and approved, and Boaz was able to declare to all present what he had purchased and what he was planning to do. The people declared that Ruth would be like Rachel and Leah was as mother of the sons of Jacob and be blessed. So Boaz and Ruth were happily united as husband and wife and a sweet baby boy was born in the process of time, who was given the name of Obed. And this little baby, Obed, grew up to be the father of Jesse, who was the father of David!

My heart has been richly blessed through the years with this wonderful story of sorrow, disappointment, loss, and painfulness of heart and how it all turned out for the best. We are charmed in spirit with the love and faith of Naomi and Ruth. Ruth gave up her family and ties in Moab, and cast her lot in with Naomi and her God and people, whom she found to be wonderful and a great blessing. It is a lesson for us today. Everyone needs to do and to be as Ruth was. We must give up our ways and treasures and give all to our Lord Jesus Christ. We can be a part of His beautiful and loving Bride. It will mean so much, more than what words can tell, to be a faithful lover of the Lord Jesus and be with Him as part of His holy Bride for evermore!  
—Bro. Leslie Busbee

**QUESTION:** 1. What does the story of Ruth testify to us today?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Just as the Bible portrays the wonderful blessings of God upon those who trust and obey Him, we have it shown again in the story of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. Naomi suffered the loss of her husbands and sons, but gained in Ruth, her daughter-in-law, what the women said unto Naomi about her in 4:15: "...thy daughterinlaw, which loveth thee, is better to thee than seven sons,..."! And so it will be today for every soul who gives up the world and its vanities and seeks to follow Christ with all the heart, soul, and mind!  
—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In some of our earlier lessons we have discussed the righteous judgments and works of God. We have studied how the reign of King David was one that delivered the needy and the poor when they cried and how his reign was likened to the reign of Jesus Christ, the Anointed One. Jesus Himself read the passage in Isaiah about preaching the Gospel to the poor; healing the brokenhearted, preaching deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and setting at liberty them that are bruised, (Luke 4:18.)

Now our lesson today is a real life example of God's benevolent rule and works in behalf of poor widows who faced difficult times that rendered them nearly destitute. Yet in the midst of their struggles, they maintained an active faith in the living God. Though their faith was tested and sorely tried, God's benevolent nature came through and brought them into a wealthy place. Naomi's sons had died, but Ruth's love and care was proclaimed to be better than seven sons. and God made Ruth—an humble, devoted Moabitish woman—a part of the lineage of David and of His only begotten Son. The good-hearted favor of Boaz coupled with the faith and devotion of Ruth is a beautiful example of a union that God's blessing and favor shines upon.

The nature and rule of God has not changed toward those who trust Him today. His hand is against those who oppress His trusting children and His ear is open to the cry of the needy and destitute. May we all keep our faith steadfast in Him for He is a merciful and righteous judge that reigneth above all the dominions and kingdoms of this earth.

"Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, The LORD reigneth." I Chronicles 16:31.  
—Bro. Willie E. Murphey





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