

Bible Lessons



“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written ... in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”

Luke 24:44-45

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Quarterly Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Volume 51

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No 4

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Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of Jesus Christ and His Church

This series by Bro. Leslie Busbee

In this issue: *Reflections* contributed by Sis. LaDawna Adams, Bro. Fari Matthews, and Sis. Angela Gellenbeck, with one *Reflections* article from the writings of Sis. Marie Miles

NOTICE

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THEME FOR 4TH QUARTER 2019

PROPHECIES OF JESUS IN THE PSALMS

For this quarter I am once again delving into the archives and finding another scriptural treasure chest—a study of the prophecies of Jesus found in the Psalms. As you may remember, my father was ever a lover of Bible prophecy. I, too, am thrilled and inspired by the PROOF that prophecy offers our faith when we see the marvelous fulfillments.

My father (Bro. Leslie Busbee) wrote: “Jesus said in Luke 24:44 to His disciples before He was taken up from them into the heavens: ‘All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.’ The glorious majesty of His everlasting kingdom, His work of redemption, atonement for sin, and His sufferings, death, and resurrection are found in clear prophecy in the Psalms. It will help us to see Christ more as He really is, and when we are able to grasp the vision of Christ more brightly, it will inspire us to love Him more than ever and be steadfast for His cause.”

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

OCTOBER 6, 2019

EMBRACE THE SON

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

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

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

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

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

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

7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art

my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

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

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

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

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

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 2:1 "A vain thing": emptiness (Hebrew).

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

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

Psalm 2:4 "Have them in derision": mock, scorn, or hold in contempt (Hebrew).

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

Psalm 2:8 "Heathen": the nations.

Psalm 2:12 "Kiss the Son": a token of subjection and friendship.

Another expression is "worship purely." The Septuagint (Greek) translation says, "Embrace [His] discipline." "When his wrath is kindled but a little": stiffness and rebellion against Christ (in the face of all that He suffered in paying the price for our redemption) which will arouse His sore displeasure.

LESSON BACKGROUND

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

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

The glorified Christ Himself in Revelations 2:26-27 said, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of

iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." These New Testament scriptures very vividly show the great importance of the second Psalm as a prophecy of Jesus Christ, our Lord and King.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

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

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

Today the challenge and decree is to us: submit to God in reverence and love and embrace His Son and His discipline completely. May we not hesitate or linger in indecision.

Hear the gospel. Believe it. Obey it and cling to Christ forever. He

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

Acts 17:31 states, "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man who he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men." We have a personal Savior who not only calls us His friend, but sends comfort and grace through the Holy Spirit. However, there will come a day when He will stand as our Judge. We cannot save ourselves; therefore, we must ask redemption of the Savior who paid for our sins by His sacrifice.

Jesus was "tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin". He passed all of the tests victoriously so that we can too. Jesus is the final authority, and we will be weighed in the balance. Have we availed ourselves of the blood of Jesus? Have we utilized his grace in each situation? Will we be found wanting? Time spent here on earth is our only chance to prepare for that eternal life. Embrace the Son while there is opportunity!

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

OCTOBER 13, 2019

ALL THINGS PUT UNDER HIS FEET

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

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

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

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

with Him unto everlasting life.

WORD DEFINITIONS

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

Psalm 8:4 "Mindful": to mark; to recognize; to remember and think upon. "Visit": to make a special point or effort to go see and commune with someone.

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

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

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

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

for all in this world who seek after Him. We know, however, that the time is coming when His enemies WILL be subjected and destroyed.

LESSON BACKGROUND

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

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

1. Viewing our lesson, what would you say has been put under Christ?
2. What was man's original created state before God?
3. How and why did man lose this blessed dominion?
4. What did Jesus do to regain it and redeem fallen mankind?

5. Why are all things not yet put under Christ, and when will they be?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

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

Thankfully, God was not willing for this to continue forever. He promised to send a Savior to earth to redeem mankind and restore him to the glory and power he once had. Jesus Christ came to earth on this very mission. He was the second Adam, and He came to pay the ransom price to get us back on our feet again to reign as God originally planned. He came down to take upon Him human flesh and form. He accomplished the will of God completely all the way to the death of the cross. God brought Him up from death and the grave and gave Him all power in heaven and earth. All things were put under His feet. Satan and sin were defeated, making it possible for death and the grave to be destroyed.

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

“One we hail as King immortal, He did earth and hell subdue; and bequeathing us His glory, we are kings anointed, too.” As I pondered over what I might contribute to this lesson, these lyrics by D.S. Warner from the song “Reigning in This Life” rang in my head over and over.

The foot throughout the ages has often been used to delineate victory. Ancient kings would place their feet on the neck of their enemies to signify their supremacy, and the Bible itself refers to this custom. In later years, the foot was used by kings and other nobility to mark lands and territory, eventually leading to the modern imperial unit of “feet” to measure distance.

When Jesus was crucified, I am sure the enemy thought he had won a great victory, but he was mistaken. As God had promised in the Garden, he was only able to bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, but Jesus crushed his head when He stepped on the serpent’s neck! He didn’t stop there, either, for we, His followers, have been bequeathed this victory over the enemy from our great King and Commander. In Revelation 3:21a it reads, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne...” I don’t know about you, but that’s one of the experiences of Heaven to which I am really looking forward. I love reigning here on earth, but to reign with Him for eternity, I don’t think there are enough words to express how wonderful that joy will be!

—Bro. Fari Matthews

OCTOBER 20, 2019

JESUS, CONQUEROR OF DEATH AND CORRUPTION

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

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

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

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

names into my lips.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: He seeing this before spake of the
resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his
flesh did see corruption. —**Acts 2:31**

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 16:1 "Preserve me": hedge me about (Hebrew); guard;
protect; defend and attend to me. "Put my trust": to flee for refuge;
confide in.

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

Psalm 16:4 "Hasten": to hurry and run after willfully. "Their drink
offerings of blood will I not offer": evidently a prophetic utterance of
Christ refusing and bringing an end to the animal sacrifices offered

under the law. He was to offer Himself as the supreme sacrifice for sin; therefore the sacrifices of bulls and goats offered under the law no longer avail with God. Those who hold to the carnal ordinances of the law system are worshipping a false god. Jesus came to fulfill the law in the sacrifice of Himself.

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

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

Psalm 16:7 "My reins": the inward man tuned to the will and pleasure of the heavenly Father. "Night seasons": times of adversity and opposition from the world.

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

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

Paul quoted from this in his message at Antioch in Pisidia in Acts 13:35, speaking of Jesus: "Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Oh, what a wonderful prophecy of our blessed Jesus is found in our lesson today! Every part of it belongs to Christ and can be ours as well, if we will love and obey Him. God sent Jesus into the world and He preserved Him from the evil and wickedness that came against Him. Even so we can overcome this world as we follow Christ and put our trust in Him. God can be Lord to us just as He was to Jesus.

Christ's goodness was not apart from His Father and His sole delight was the people whom He would cleanse and purify from sin, making them saints in light. Christ worshipped and served the true God. He did not fall in line with the compromising elements of fallen Israel and their corrupt leaders. He stood out against them, and that is why they hated Him so. It is the same today when we stand fast for truth and holiness and refuse to conform to this present evil world. The Lord is our portion. We are following Jesus and not seeking for the wealth and pleasures of this life. Our inheritance is in Him and He will maintain us in this blessed possession. Our boundaries are in the

pleasantness and true beauties of holiness.

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

We must also be of the same mind, not seeking for the outward beauty with its vanity and pride. The hidden man of the heart—that which is not corruptible—must be our objective. Thus, Christ in His body could "rest in hope." He was not afraid to die. Death held no terror for Him. He knew the crucifixion would kill this mortal body, but He knew that immortality would be His portion. We, too, can share in this hope. He went to paradise when He committed His holy and righteous spirit to the hands of the Father, and the repentant thief on the cross went with Him. Jesus knew that His soul would not remain a disembodied spirit, but would come back to a glorified body that had known no corruption. He had truly walked the path of life in His short sojourn on earth and thus He knew that His portion would be God's presence of fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

This is truly a marvelous hymn of resurrection hope and glory, the essence of which permeates the song from beginning to end. It is a song about Jesus, but what is true about the Savior He also shares with us!

I remember when Psalm 16 came alive to me. I was a new mother and my baby had been sick for several days. There had been sleepless nights and I was rocking my baby during yet another. I was bone weary and my spirit needed a comforting touch. I can't tell you just how the words of this Psalm began their magnificent chorus in

my mind, but all during those midnight hours, “Oh, the glory did roll!”

“The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.” Indeed, because of salvation, I was heir to the richest of blessings. God had been good to me. I had married my childhood sweetheart and ours was a happy home. God had supplied all our temporal needs, fed and clothed me and my family, and now we had a precious baby boy. In the night seasons of my life, the Word which had been hidden deep in my heart came back to comfort and instruct me. God had shown me and was leading me in the path of abundant, satisfying life.

That has been over 30 years ago. I can still sing that song. We have endured many more afflictions. God has never failed us. The baby grew to be a man who loves God, and the heritage which passed from my grandparents to my parents to me lives on in the hearts of my children. It is the heritage of the truth about the very life and Spirit of Jesus—Christ in me, “my hope of glory, anchor of my trusting soul.” Truly, in His presence is fullness of joy and life forevermore!

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

OCTOBER 27, 2019

OUR LORD’S CRY OF ANGUISH ON THE CROSS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live forever.

—Psalm 22:26

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 22:1 "The words of my roaring": the tone of his speech because of his sorrow and suffering; groaning and moaning.

Psalm 22:3 "Inhabitest the praises": God loves and cherishes the loving worship and praise that comes from the hearts of those who are proving true and faithful to Him.

Psalm 22:7 "Shoot out the lip": The slander, criticism, and ridicule that poured from the mouths of the Jewish leaders against our Lord as He hung in reproach and shame upon the cross.

Psalm 22:14 "I am poured out like water": The wicked men who

hated Christ and instigated His cruel death on the cross thought no more of it than of spilling water on the ground. "All my bones are out of joint": our Lord's mental and emotional struggles coupled with the physical abuse. It brought such anguish and grief to His whole system that the form and structure of His mortal body was wrecked and marred out of shape. "My heart is melted in the midst of my bowels": his heart which was broken and melted in grief and terrible sorrow because of their hatred and rejection of Him; also, because he was bearing the wrath of God against their sins.

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

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

Psalm 22:20 "Darling": my only one (Hebrew). This means His precious life, the only one of it, the only one like it in purity and holiness before God.

Psalm 22:30 "A seed...a generation": the New Testament Church, the holy Bride of Christ. We are the seed, the outgrowth and planting of Christ and His gospel, as in I Peter 2:9: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people."

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

The 22nd Psalm is, beyond all doubt, a clear and direct prophecy of Christ and His humiliation and suffering, followed by His triumphant victory. It is quoted several times in the New Testament. Christ uttered the first phrase while suffering on the cross (Matthew 27:46); the last phrase is quoted in John 19:30. The scornful Jewish leaders unwittingly quoted part of this Psalm almost word for word (verse 8) in Matthew 27:43, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God." Verse 18 was literally fulfilled as Matthew 27:35 stated: "And they crucified him. and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." Verse 22 was quoted in Hebrews 2:11-12 like this: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

Seeing then that the New Testament writers emphatically applied this Psalm to Jesus Christ and His sufferings, we can be assured that it was truly so. We can see the rest of the Psalm, as a whole, to be fitting to the humiliation and reproach that Christ bore for us. The authorship is attributed to David.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Christ was divine—but He was also human. He suffered anguish of heart and tortuous sufferings in His flesh. It was terrible what He went through. He truly had a broken heart, crushed and beaten by

the abuse and mistreatment of those who rejected and hated Him. His holy saints have had to suffer similar things down through the ages.

We can picture Him there on the cruel tree, and as we weigh the prophecy of this suffering, we are made to realize the awfulness of it all. Thank God for the victorious end of it all! His prayer for deliverance was answered. He exhorts us to praise the Lord, "for He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted." God was not unmindful of what Christ was suffering; neither had He forsaken him as it may have seemed to the human sense. Rather, He was working out His eternal purpose. A people would be born and become a great nation for Christ—the people of His choice, His Bride of love, forever and ever! The meek, the holy, the pure, and the righteous would prevail and stand with Him in the favor of God forever. Many people of many nations would hear the gospel and be saved, and turn to the worship of the Lord.

Yes, there is victory here—victory for Christ and victory for all who will love and obey Him. Even if we suffer as Christ suffered, we will all be glorified together. Thus, He really finished and brought His great plan of redemption to a perfect fulfillment.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

The bitterest element in all suffering is the sense of desertion. It hurts deeply when the one you love does not respond to your pleadings any longer, nor gives you a look of love. Your heart is torn into shreds when your cry goes out and returns to you again unfulfilled. The unanswered "whys" re-echo, and the solitude of suffering becomes very oppressive. Our Lord did not have any "why" of impatience or despair, nor the sinful questioning of one whose heart rebels against his chastening, but rather the cry of a lost child who cannot understand why his father has left him, and longs to see his father's face again.

Who can fathom the depths of the feelings of the solitary Sufferer of Golgotha? Those around Him laughed at His suffering, saying, "He trusted the Lord; now let Him deliver Him." Oh, the love Jesus had for His Father, yet in His affliction God was powerless to answer! Oh, how inexpressibly keen must have been the sufferings of

the Sinless One as He listened to the reviling of those who gloated over His crucifixion! As poured-out water dissolves on the ground, so His strength was dissolved. He was utterly spent. His bones, the support of the physical frame, were sundered and displaced, involving unutterable agony. The sap of life was dried up like the moisture out of a burnt-out vessel of clay that is taken from the furnace. His excessive thirst was miserable. His tongue was sealed to His jaws. As a last act of indignity, as though He were already dead, they raffled off His clothes. Yet at any moment our blessed Lord could have called for ten thousand angels to deliver Him from this horrible death. His great love for us caused Him to say, "Not my will, but thine be done." He was willing to take our sins upon Himself, who was innocent, so you and I could have eternal life. Oh, how we love and adore His matchless Name!

Verse 22 marks a change in the tone and spirit of the Psalmist. Light breaks in upon the forlorn sufferer. Despair gives place to hope; and the prospect of speedy and certain deliverance animates the soul with gratitude and joy.

No person who can pray will ever stay in the depths of suffering for long. While you are drinking the dregs of sorrow God is preparing a blessing for you. Never forget that He is near and has His eye upon the scene. You can come out with victory just as our Savior did. He arose from the grave with victory and power. Today He is sitting on the right hand of God interceding for you and me. Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

—Sis. Marie Miles, 1979

NOVEMBER 3, 2019

THE KING OF GLORY ASCENDS UP ON HIGH

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

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

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

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not

lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10a That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow

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

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

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalms 24:1 "The fulness thereof": everything and every living creature, including man, who is absolutely the sole property of the Creator.

Psalms 24:2 "Founded it upon the seas": properly, "above the seas and the floods." In the beginning, God, as Psalms 104:6-8

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

Psalm 24:4 "Vanity": evil (as destructive and bringing to ruin); guile; idolatry and uselessness or vanity" (Hebrew).

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

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

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

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

The 24th Psalm is generally believed to have been composed on the occasion of the bringing of the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to Zion (II Samuel 6:12). It is also a very fitting type of Christ; although it is not quoted directly by the New Testament writers, we see a mirrored image of Christ overcoming the powers of sin and death, ascending up the hill of the Lord and calling for entrance to the eternal world above.

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

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

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus Christ fulfilled all the requirements of being found worthy to ascend up on high as the King of glory. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners (Hebrews 7:26). He offered Himself as an "offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling [acceptable and well-pleasing] savour" (Ephesians 5:2). He "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Peter 2:22). He was rewarded for His humility and obedience to God in that He was brought back to life and given the power to ascend up to the highest heavens and to sit at the right hand of God. We who believe in Him and follow Him are likewise given access to sit and reign with Him in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). Oh, the glory and blessing of reigning with Christ! He was strong and mighty in battle, overcoming this world and all of its sin and evil, and sharing His blessedness with us who trust and obey Him!

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

An atheist was asked what she thought God would say to her upon her arrival in heaven. She surmised that God would say, "Well, I guess you were wrong! I do exist." What a flippant answer, and it will fail miserably on that final Judgment day of Jesus' return!

Every atheist and believer will bow before the majesty of God. The rich and the impoverished will acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords on that day. The saint and sinner alike will bow before Jesus, the Judge of all.

Our only hope of eternal life will be if we have repented of our sins and applied the blood of Jesus to the doorposts of our hearts. Bowing our knees in repentance and submission to the Lord before Christ's return will keep us in good working order for that final Judgment Day.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

NOVEMBER 10, 2019

CHRIST'S SACRIFICE SUPERSEDES THE LAW

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

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

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

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

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

9a I have preached righteousness in the great congregation.

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

Hebrews 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those

sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 40:6; Hebrews 10:5 "Mine ears hast thou opened;" "A body hast thou prepared me": two phrases which mean the same; the first being from the Hebrew and the second being from the Greek *Septuagint* translation. What was translated "ears" in the Hebrew is translated as "body" in the Greek. Adam Clarke believed that in the Hebrew writing of this text there was a mistake caused by a mar in the writing, causing the Hebrew expression to mean "ears." The translator translating it into Greek detected the corruption and

identified the right word as "body." Be that as it may, it is evident that the inspired writer accepted the Greek translation as authentic. We are safe to thus believe it that way. This is a prophecy of Christ coming into the world to inhabit a human body that would be the sacrifice which accomplished the will of God.

Psalm 40:7; Hebrews 10:7 "Volume": a roll. Books in olden times were rolls positioned on sticks that permitted such to be read by rolling the fabric from one stick to the other.

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

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

The New Testament book of Hebrews is a wonderful and spiritually enlightening treatise on the work and accomplishment of Christ in the flesh as our Redeemer and King. Its glorious truths are very well-worded and inspired by the Holy Spirit. It shows the Lord Jesus fulfilling the prophecies and the end of the old order of the Law, with its sacrifices and ceremonies. It clearly shows the old Levitical priesthood being taken away and the everlasting priesthood of Christ taking its place. In our lesson today, the quotation from Psalm 40 shows Christ coming into the world to accomplish these wonderful benefits for the welfare and salvation of our souls. In the

volume of the book—in the Old Testament types, shadows and prophecies—it was foretold and written concerning Him who was to be the Savior of the world.

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

1. For what purpose did Christ come into the world?
2. Why were the animal sacrifices not desirable to God?
3. What was the only sacrifice that would really atone for sin?
4. What was the book that was written of Christ and His work?
5. What was the “first to be taken away,” and the “second to be established?”

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

It is wonderful that the Holy Spirit inspired David to prophesy of Jesus in the 40th Psalm so accurately. The writer of the book of Hebrews was just as inspired by the Holy Spirit to rightly apply this prophecy to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The old law system had proven to be so full of faults and shortcomings that it was destined to be done away with. It could never make the ones under its rule perfect because it was weak and insufficient to reach the real source of man's trouble—that which was in the very center of his being—the heart. A much greater sacrifice than the animal offerings of sheep and cattle was needed. Thousands and thousands of animals were slaughtered and offered as sacrifices upon the Israelite altars through the years. It became an empty custom; a form; a creed and a routine that was too often done with shallowness of mind and little or no real spiritual comprehension of what it really meant or that it

pointed to anything of greater importance.

The fulfilling of this prophecy was not without violent upheaval and resistance by the Jewish community and leadership. To come right out and declare that the animal sacrifice ceremonies were to be terminated was a reproach and a serious offense in the eyes and ears of the Jewish nation. This was the main reason Jesus was rejected and condemned to death, and also why His followers were so hated and persecuted. Without spiritual inspiration and understanding they saw no need for a change in the law system; neither did they see how the prophetic writings were fulfilled by Christ. The Jewish leaders knew not the wisdom from above. They were covetous, lustful, and full of arrogant pride. They knew not this Nazarene who was, in their estimation, usurping Himself above their religious beliefs. His holy manner and humble bearing was repulsive to them, so their carnal reaction was anger, hatred, and murder. However, to those who were hungry and thirsty for righteousness, the Lord Jesus brought freedom and deliverance from the empty ordinances of the law, and ushered in a new age of spiritual grace and victory.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

During a recent campmeeting, with the saints in attendance, I was privileged to participate in the service where we follow Jesus' example of washing each others' feet and partaking of the Lord's Supper. The minister described the fellowship and commitment Jesus sought, not only from His disciples, but from those of us that would follow them as the Gospel spread throughout the world and down through history. As the minister continued speaking, equating our regular participation in communion as being similar to the vow renewals often done by couples that have been married for many years, my heart was truly touched and my commitment to my Lord was further confirmed.

Finally, as the congregation sang the closing hymn, "A Little Farther", I was overcome with gratitude and emotion as the lyrics we were singing described just how far Jesus was willing to go as the one supreme sacrifice bringing salvation to mankind! When the song was completed there was a hushed solemnity over the congregation, and

even a few watery eyes and hoarse throats, as those in attendance felt a renewed oneness with their Savior.

Many in the religious world today say that it is impossible to live free from sin, and many are stuck in the cycle of transgressing and then repenting for their transgressions, living in much the same way those under the law lived. Yet, Christ died to provide a greater power than that! Those who live in fellowship with Him, who rely upon His atoning blood and abundant grace, have power to live in obedience to God with the same attitude Jesus had: "Lo, I come...to do Thy will, O God." This was God's original intent for man, to live in harmony with Him daily just as He walked with Adam and Eve in the beginning. May we truly cherish the significance of Christ's sacrifice and all that it provides to us!

—Bro. Fari Matthews

NOVEMBER 17, 2019

A ROYAL MARRIAGE HYMN OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

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

Psalm 45:2 "Thou art fairer": In Hebrew, "Thou art the fairest."

"Grace": graciousness, favor, kindness, goodness and beauty.

"Poured into thy lips": the beautiful doctrine of Christ. This is the wisdom and virtue of heaven to bring light to those in darkness and healing to those diseased by Satan. The people "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke 4:22).

Psalm 45:3 "Thy sword": the Word of God which Christ wielded in His holy doctrines. "Majesty": magnificence, splendor, excellency, honor, noble greatness, and authority.

Psalm 45:4 "Ride prosperously": to go forward; make good; be profitable, successful, and triumphant. "Because of": on the matter or cause of. Christ did go forth triumphantly in the truth of God, in meekness and obedience to the will of God, in submitting to the death of the cross, and in righteousness and all that was just in the fear of God.

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

Psalm 45:7 "Above thy fellows": surpassing all associates; above the angels; above all the saints and godly of the earth.

Psalm 45:10 "Forget thine own people": the redeemed in Christ leaving all the world and severing earthly ties to be solely and ardently united to Christ alone.

Psalm 45:11 "So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty": the inward beauty of the faith and holiness of the wholly sanctified soul for which Christ is seeking.

Psalm 45:13 "All glorious within": beautiful and rich in the heart and the spirit; an inward value and weightiness of true worth. Peter called it "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Peter 3:4). "Wrought gold": that which is artfully woven through the trials and difficulties of this mortal life. This along with "needlework" in verse 14 refers to the beauties of the heart that are wrought by the Spirit of God as we are led and inspired by Him in our faithful walk with God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Hebrew title for this beautiful Psalm is "To the chief Musician on the Lilies, for the sons of Korah, a contemplation [instructive poem], a song of the Beloved." The author is unknown, but we have a definite clue as to whom this Psalm is referring. The writer in the first chapter of Hebrews speaks concerning God's Son and quotes from various places in the Old Testament that prophesy of Him. He declares that Christ is made so much better than the angels. He quotes from Psalm 104:4 what God says of the angels as ministering spirits and a flame of fire; then he emphatically states: "But unto the Son he saith—" and quotes, from this 45th Psalm, verses 6 and 7. This tells us that by the revelation of the Holy Spirit this Psalm was speaking of Christ, the Son of God. With this in mind, the whole Psalm takes shape and goes together. It is the royal marriage hymn of Christ and the Church, which He purchased with His own blood. It is for the joy of each of us to weigh and prayerfully consider the good matter that the ready writer of this Psalm brought forth. There are wonderful truths—the sum of which we have not space here to give. But let each one look and behold them for himself, and rejoice to know that we are included in this Song of our Beloved Christ.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus Christ our Lord is the fairest of the fair; the chiefest among ten thousand. Grace pours forth from His blessed lips, and God has blessed Him with immortality and life forever. He wields His sword, the blazing Truth of God's Word anointed by the Holy Spirit. With it He has ridden prosperously and gone forth for the salvation of all

who will believe and obey Him. Because of His truth and meekness and righteousness He has accomplished the will of God and prevailed over the powers of Satan. His arrows have pierced our souls and we have surrendered all to His dominion. His throne is forever and ever and His kingdom is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. He was faithful to God and triumphed in His heart over iniquity; therefore God set Him on high and gave Him a name which is above every name. His garments are fresh with sweetness and perfumed with the fragrance of the sweet Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley.

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

After the Roman Empire adopted Christianity as its state religion in AD 391, the Temple of Jupiter in Damascus, Syria, was converted into a Christian (Catholic) church dedicated to John the Baptist. In 634, after the Muslim conquest of Damascus, the building became a mosque. Walking around the mosque to the south wall, today you can still see a remnant from the Christian church, above a doorway that is now blocked. In Greek, the language of the eastern Roman (or Byzantine) empire, deeply cut into stone, an inscription from Psalm 45 reads, “Your Kingdom, Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.”

How marvelous it is that an eternal truth—inscribed though it was by professors of a Christianity who were fast deteriorating into

apostasy and whose earthly dominion soon fell beneath the marauding Mohammedans—towers high above the kneeling Muslims centuries later, proclaiming to any or all who would take note, “The foundation of God stands sure! His Kingdom is an everlasting kingdom!”

I like what commentator Alexander MacLaren said about the rule of Christ’s kingdom: “His rod is no rod of iron and tyrannical oppression, His own personal character is righteousness. Righteousness is the very life-blood and animating principle of His rule. He loves righteousness, and, therefore, puts His broad shield of protection over all who love it and seek after it. He hates wickedness, and therefore He wars against it wherever it is, and seeks to draw men out of it. And thus His kingdom is the hope of the world.”

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

NOVEMBER 24, 2019

CHRIST LEADS CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 68:6 "God setteth the solitary in families": from the Hebrew, "God makes the lonely dwell at home."

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

Psalm 68:17 "Chariots": something to ride on. It could be a vehicle or an animal. Revelation 19:11-16 pictures Christ and His Church as a cavalry on white horses, which denotes perfect holiness and Holy Spirit power.

Psalm 68:18 "Led captivity captive": a clear prophecy of Christ conquering and subduing the power of Satan and sin that had the sons of men in woeful bondage. As Jesus said in John 8:34-36, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

"Received gifts for men": a statement that Christ, because of His

obedience to God in suffering the death of the cross was not only given the power to ascend upon high, but was counted worthy to be able to pour out the Holy Spirit upon His people and bestow spiritual powers and abilities for the various offices and positions in His Kingdom. "Yea, for the rebellious also": from the Hebrew, "And also the rebellious to dwell among, O Jehovah God." This is a direct prophecy of Christ coming down to inhabit a human body and live among sinful humanity.

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

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

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

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

Psalm 68:35 "Terrible": awesome; to be revered and held in holy fear and regard.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The 68th Psalm is a glorious Psalm written by David under the great influence of the Holy Spirit. Adam Clarke confessed that he did not know how to comment on it. He said there were things in it beyond his understanding and power to explain, yet of the composition itself he had the highest opinion; that it was sublime beyond all comparison, and that it would take no small influence of the Holy Spirit that was upon David to give its true interpretation.

Personally, I stand in awe at this Psalm. It is fascinating and overwhelming. It glows with truth so spiritual and divine that it captures my deepest admiration and joy. It comes forth in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in waves of glory and light. Paul used the 18th verse in bringing forth the truth of the various gifts and functions in the Church, the Body of Christ, in Ephesians 4:7-16. It is truly a masterpiece of spiritual art and beauty. We have not space to

include the complete text, and we leave it to each Bible student to take the liberty and time to pursue the deep truths contained therein.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

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

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

How glorious was the Lord's ascension on high! Think of the power that the Father has invested in His holy Son! He has the power

to save souls from sin and death. He has the power to do wonders and miracles in the earth. And He is endowed with the power and authority to destroy this earth and the heavens and bring the whole world back from their graves to be judged by Him! No one will escape. We would be wise to take heed to the warnings in the gospel to be fully prepared to be accepted of Him in that day.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

Have you noticed in this Psalm the frequent references to the “rebellious,” the “enemy,” the “wicked,” or the one who “goeth on still in his trespasses?” They would be scattered, or flee, or melt away, or perish, in contrast to the righteous, who would rejoice.

However, do you see the ray of hope offered by Christ, even to the rebellious? In the descriptive language of military conquest, the Psalmist foretells how Christ would take captive the power that held the rebellious person captive! He would subdue the opposition; yes, even that opposition that holds a man captive even against his own best interests and his will. He would rob the “strong man” of the armor in which he had trusted to protect him. He, the “stronger man,” would cast out the unclean spirit, the rebellious spirit, the infirm spirit; and return the oppressed man to his rightful mind. Then he would take that man who had been ruled by passion, pride, fear, or anger and give special gifts to him so that the life which had been pent-up and imprisoned could now be free and overflowing, a blessing and a benefit to all around him.

I’m reminded of J. W. Van Deventer, the author of the hymn, “I Surrender All.” He wrote: “The song was written while I was conducting a meeting at East Palestine, Ohio. For some time, I had struggled between developing my talents in the field of art and going into full-time evangelistic work. At last the pivotal hour of my life came, and I surrendered all. A new day was ushered into my life. I became an evangelist and discovered down deep in my soul a talent hitherto unknown to me. God had hidden a song in my heart, and touching a tender chord, he caused me to sing” (From an account cited by hymnologist Kenneth Osbeck).

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

DECEMBER 1, 2019

THE REIGN OF THE LORD'S ANOINTED

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The kingdom of Jesus Christ, our Lord,

Savior, and King is a kingdom of righteousness, peace, judgment, and everlasting salvation to all mankind, especially to the poor and needy who sense their need of Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

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

Psalm 72:9 "Lick the dust": an expression meaning completely subdued and conquered.

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

Psalm 72:15 "Prayer also shall be made for him continually": more properly expressed, "prayer also shall be made unto Him for His help and grace constantly." This is a prophecy of the eternal, unchanging priesthood of Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, and it has been fulfilled. I am persuaded that since Christ ascended to the right hand of God He has been interceding to God on behalf of the souls of men, hearing their prayers coming up from the ends of the earth and relaying them to the Father, continually, without a break or vacation. He has been given that holy office and the power to fill it unfaithfully.

Psalm 72:16 "An handful of corn": from the Hebrew, "A fullness of grain." This denotes fullness of bread, supply, grace, help or mercy, of which the children of His kingdom have need. "In the earth upon the top of the mountains:" within man's reach but elevated up

above the sinful realm of life upon the mountains of holiness and divine love. "The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon": a reference to Lebanon, which is noted for its massive, spreading cedars. The fruit of righteousness shall wave and be spread forth in that copious and beautiful manner.

LESSON BACKGROUND

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

Noteworthy are the expressions of care and regard for the poor and oppressed. This is very much fulfilled in Christ, as it says so in various places, namely, Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." Matthew 11:5 says, "The poor have the gospel preached to them," as also Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and James 2:5, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" The truly poor in heart and attitude are the ones who are most sensitive and receptive to the grace of the Lord Jesus. The proud and self-sufficient have very little response to the gospel of Christ. It is the poor and depressed in mind and spirit, lowly and meek, humble, and broken in spirit who are able to receive the grace of God for their eternal good and salvation. This is a very important factor not to be overlooked.

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

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

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

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

Jesus lives today, and after nearly 2,000 years have come and gone in this age of mercy, He still is at the right hand of God interceding for all who come unto God by Him. Prayer is rising from the ends of the earth constantly. He neither slumbers nor sleeps. He reigns in the righteous might of His Father. He will live forever and ever and men shall continue to bless themselves in and through Him.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

Jesus chose to live this life in an impoverished state so that he would not be distracted by the cares of life or false security of riches. He told the account of two men who had very contrasting lives: one was a rich man; the other was a poor man named Lazarus. The irony of this account is that the end of these two men had a reversed effect. "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments..."

The rich man was blessed with this world's goods and had a comfortable living. His eternal destiny was not determined by the fact that he was rich. It is obvious that he did not bother to make preparations for his eternal destination while there was time and opportunity. The tragedy is that the torment for the rich man is still ongoing.

On the other hand, Lazarus did not inherit eternal life just because he was poor. He made certain that his calling and election was sure with God. This world's goods did not interfere with his decision. Lazarus is continuing to enjoy eternal rest and peace.

Once we have drawn our final breath, we have no chance to change the decision we made while in this life. Life is a precious commodity; use it for the Savior. Put all of your energy and resources into eternal life, for yourself, as well as the world that surrounds you. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

DECEMBER 8, 2019

HOPE FOR THE PRISONERS APPOINTED TO DEATH

Psalm 102:12 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.

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

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

their prayer.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 102:13 "Set time": the time appointed and decreed by God that would come to pass.

Psalm 102:20 "The groaning of the prisoner": the sighing of the contrite captives in the prison house of sin, who are longing for deliverance and salvation. "Those that are appointed to death": simply, "the sons of death" (Hebrew). This refers to all of us who are

under the universal sentence of death on account of sin and transgression.

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

Psalm 102:25 "Of old": before the created realm came into sight; the Word and Spirit of God moving and preparing for the heavens and the earth.

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

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

We cannot include in our text the entirety of this touching and inspiring Psalm 102. We mainly want to consider the prophetic phase of the Psalm and that to which it points; it is also good to consider the first part which describes the mournful and heartrending situation that was the background of the writer. Consider Adam Clarke's comments on this: "The Hebrew, and nearly all the versions, give the following title to this Psalm: 'A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and pours out his sighing before the Lord.' There seems to be little doubt that this is the prayer of the captives in Babylon, when, towards the end of the captivity, they were almost worn out with oppression, cruelty and distress."

It was a time of sorrow, and the days of the writer were drawing to a close. His language is ardent and hopeful, despite his hardships

and sorrows. He foretells the coming of the Lord, not just for the liberation of the captives in Babylon back to literal Jerusalem, but He points to Christ who would come to Zion—to spiritual Zion, or those who are seeking to serve the Lord in truth and righteousness. The writer in Hebrews 1:10-12 quotes from this Psalm and applies verses 25, 26 and 27 directly to Christ and the establishment of His kingdom of grace.

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

1. About what was the prophet prophesying?
2. What was the real Zion that Jesus wanted to build up?
3. What were the things from heaven of which the Lord took note?
4. What did He purpose to do and who did He purpose to help?
5. What was the Lord going to accomplish on our behalf?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

God's people have had to endure much sorrow and suffering in the process of waiting patiently for the Lord to come to their rescue and fulfill His wonderful promises. Psalm 102 surely shows this. The heading says, "A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord." We behold in his

expressions and description of his troubles a woeful plight that he is enduring. The beautiful temple of God that Solomon had built was in ruins, and so was the city of Jerusalem, but his tears give place to comfort and peace at the prospect of what God is revealing to him concerning that which is to come.

God was shining a light of hope that He would arise and have mercy on Zion. The real fulfillment of this prophecy was the coming of the Messiah, the Christ. Ezra and Nehemiah, with the returning captives from Babylon, would rebuild the temple and the walls of Jerusalem; however, that was not to spell the end of the woes of the Israelites.

Another 400 years would go by; silent years in which little is known. The writer of this Psalm went to the grave with all the others, but the day did come when God brought His prophecies to pass in a wonderful way. All the sorrow, grief and suffering had not passed His notice and attention. He had heard the groaning of the prisoners and beheld the death and misery that stained the earth.

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

The Isle of Patmos in Greece. Devil's Island in French Guinea. St. Helena Island in the South Atlantic. Alcatraz on the west coast of the United States of America. Throughout history, there have been many notorious prisons to which famous historical characters were exiled, with no likely hope of escape. Napoleon Bonaparte was banished to

St. Helena by the British after his defeat at Waterloo. Alcatraz, a small, rocky island in the middle of the San Francisco Bay, from 1934 to 1963 housed numerous notorious American criminals, and escape attempts were few and nearly always unsuccessful.

Yet, there is an even greater prison—with an accompanying sentence of eternal death—to which all mankind had been banished when the world was plunged into sin by the fall of Adam. There was no hope of escape from this prison, nor any remedy to deliver mankind from our deserved death sentence. But thank God for Jesus Christ! I am reminded of a song I often listened to as a child, sung by the Phillips family of Wichita, Kansas on one of their albums. A line from "He Bore It All" states, "I stood condemned to die, but Jesus took my place. He bore it all that I might live."

Yes, thank God for His Salvation! He always hears the cry of every soul that is bound in sin, and in His mercy and wisdom reveals to each one who truly seeks His face the remedy to escape eternal damnation. As another of our songs states, truly "how dark" was our "prison house of sin", but by God's mercy, Jesus' love beamed into our hearts "sweet rays of hope" for our deliverance! Praise the Lord!

—Bro. Fari Matthews

DECEMBER 15, 2019

THE ETERNAL PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his foot stool.

—**Hebrews 10:12-13**

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

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

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

Psalm 110:3 "Willing": spontaneous; a Hebrew word which means acting in accordance with or resulting from a natural feeling, impulse or tendency, without any external constraint, cause or influence. The influence is there but it has been wrought within the

heart and causes a joyful and cheerful response. The people who are His own are free-will offerings, who are happy to present their bodies as living sacrifices unto God. "In the day of thy power": the Gospel day of His going forth to gain those who will believe in and obey Him. "In the beauties of holiness": the elevated magnificence of a pure and sinless life obtained through the blood of Jesus and the indwelling Holy Spirit. "From the womb of the morning": an endearing expression meaning the compassion and cherished love (as is felt in a mother's heart for the child of her womb) for Christ and the souls of men. It causes the light to break forth as the dawn and the Daystar to arise in the hearts of those who are sitting in darkness and yearning for the light. "Thou hast the dew of thy youth": eternal youth, beauty, power, strength and triumphant life which has been given to our blessed Jesus in His glorious resurrection. The entire verse speaks to the early morning of the Church of God, which was established on the day of Pentecost.

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

Psalm 110 is quoted in the New Testament about as much as any one scripture from the Old Testament. It is one of the main supports of the Holy Scriptures of the truth of Christ; however, it is greatly discredited by opponents of Christianity. It is a Psalm of David, who wrote it under weighty inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Jesus quoted from it in Matthew 22:44. Peter applied it to Christ in Acts 2:34-35. The writer of the book of Hebrews quoted from it and dwelt extensively on the two thoughts contained therein, namely, that of Christ being at the right hand of God, and the priesthood that Christ had been given by God. Paul mentioned it in his writings. Mark 16:19

says, "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." All of this was in accord with and a fulfillment of the 110th Psalm.

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

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

From there Christ was to wield the rod of His strength, His Word and Holy Spirit, to the execution of His will and good pleasure upon all who would believe and follow Him. He was given the authority

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

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

In this Psalm the writer speaks of Christ having the dew of youth. In Hosea 14:5, God promised that He would be "as the dew unto Israel." The dew was described by commentator Alexander MacLaren in this way: "Heavy night-clouds that come upon the wings of the south-west wind, to diffuse moisture and freshness over the parched plains, in the very height and fierceness of summer." How often, in the parched times of our lives, we have experienced the refreshing comfort of Christ's Spirit, along with His Word, as in Deuteronomy 32:2 we read, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." There is nothing so pure as this distilled liquid shining morning by morning upon every leaf and blade—each droplet like a prism, reflecting its own little rainbow—and reviving the blossoms that, by the end of the hot, weary day, were drooping their heads to the dust!

It is common in Scripture that as a writer describes the characteristics of Christ, the description is carried on to His followers as well; so this beautiful, refreshing quality was also foretold of God's people: "And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass" (Micah 5:7).

Not only does Christ possess this in Himself, He also imparts His refreshing dew into our lives, and only as we live in Him and by Him can we impart this sweet influence to the world around us. I can only bring life and cheer to others as I am daily refreshed and invigorated by His Word and Spirit.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

DECEMBER 22, 2019

THE REJECTED STONE BECOMES THE FOUNDATION STONE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—**John 1:11-12**

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

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

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

Psalm 118:10 "Will I destroy them": from the Hebrew, "Surely I will cut them off." Christ, because of His faithfulness and obedience to God, brought to naught the vain resistance of the Jews and brought down the wrath of God upon them to the uttermost.

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

triumph over death, as well.

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

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

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

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

Jesus quoted from verse 26 of Psalm 118 in Matthew 23:39, when He remonstrated the Jews for their rejection of Him. Woe after woe He had pronounced upon their proud and hypocritical spirit in the preceding address to them. His desire was to help them, but they

would not. Finally, in the anguish of His heart to Jerusalem, He burst out, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Then He walked out of the temple, never to return again.

Can we not see what this means? We must kneel and bless God in our acceptance of Him whom He has sent. We will never see Him until we do. Sad to say, so many reject the living Stone, and His Spirit leaves their house desolate.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Christ was prophesied in Isaiah 53:3 to be despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He met with much opposition from those who professed to know God; yes, from those who were in reputation as leaders of God's people. However, it was a hidden wisdom, a deep spiritual perception of truth and righteousness, that Christ had. The carnal minds, filled with covetousness and pride, who lived in that Jewish society just could not accept Jesus. They marveled at His power to heal, but when it came to believing and accepting what He stood for, very few were really able to receive Him. Like so many today, this nation had long grieved and vexed the Holy Spirit, and the heavenly Dove could find very few who were receptive to His workings. One old gentleman, Simeon, had recognized Jesus as a little baby in the temple one day. The Holy Spirit was upon him and gave him had a revelation. That is why He was able to know the Savior even as a little baby.

It still works like this today. Christ is still the living Stone,

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

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

You were despised; You were rejected;
You were refused by men and cast aside;
Your worth and purpose weren't comprehended
By those who stumbled in foolish pride.
And even I, though taught about You,
Still thought that I could stand alone.
I tried to make it with no foundation,
No source of wisdom but my own.

But now I know I cannot make it; I only stumble, I only fail.
My own efforts—my own wisdom—my own strength will not avail.
And so I flee to You for refuge, to build upon You, my Rock, my God.
My salvation, my foundation, my Staff of comfort, my guiding Rod.

I lean upon You, I find You precious,
Tried and true and never to fall!
My whole life is fixed upon You,
You are my hiding place, You are my All.
Speak—command me—You won't offend me!
I won't reject You; I cling to You!
Be my refuge, be my comfort; Rock of Ages, firm and true.
—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

DECEMBER 29, 2019

CHRIST SEATED UPON DAVID'S THRONE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

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

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

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

WORD DEFINITIONS

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

LESSON BACKGROUND

This is our final lesson from the Psalms that are prophetic of Christ. From Psalm 132 we have taken two scriptures and combined them with others to bring out the truth of Christ as the fulfillment of God's promise to David, that of the fruit of his body He would set One upon his throne. We have also drawn from II Samuel 7 some more promises that God gave David through the prophet Nathan concerning his son sitting upon his throne. On the surface it would seem that God was speaking of Solomon, who actually was placed on the throne even before David died. But in reality, God was speaking of Christ, as the writer in Hebrews 1:5 quoted from II Samuel 7:14 and applied this to Christ: "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

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

We are also referring to part of the message that Peter gave on the Day of Pentecost concerning Jesus and His resurrection. Let us notice how Peter combined what David said in Psalm 16 with what was prophesied in Psalm 132. He had just quoted David's prophecy of

Christ in Psalm 16 concerning Christ; how his soul would not be left in hell, nor would His flesh see corruption. Peter also spoke about God's oath to David that He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. It all adds up to the fact that when Jesus ascended to the right hand of God He fulfilled the prophecy David had spoken and the promise God had given him of the fruit of his body sitting upon his throne. In other words, JESUS CHRIST IS SITTING ON DAVID'S THRONE TODAY! Praise His name forevermore!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

DISCUSSION:

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

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

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

Then there is the example of the greatest King who ever lived. His name was Jesus. He was a poor man who sought not for worldly honor and the dominion of this world. He sought to please His Father, His God. He submitted to obey the Father's will, and allowed evil men to nail Him to a cross unjustly and without a fair trial. He did not fight back nor seek for revenge. He let them have their day and permitted Himself to be the victim. He was a perfect example of true and tender love and compassion, and of humility and meekness. He was to have the throne of David, according to the prophecy, and He knew it. But He didn't seek to be king. After seeing how Jesus could miraculously feed them, the people sought to make Jesus king, but

He withdrew Himself from them (John 6:15). He told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36).

The rule Jesus sought was not political; rather, it was a power to rule Himself and submit to the perfect will of God. Because of this, He was given a name which is above every name that ever was or ever will be. He holds the highest position of power and authority that man could ever have. He truly sits on the throne that fulfills to the uttermost all that the throne of David typified. He has power, all power in heaven and earth. He will one day exert that power and destroy the present heavens and earth. He will bring all men back to consciousness and awareness to stand at His tribunal of judgment. He will judge them and reward them in righteousness. One day all of His enemies will be made His footstool. Until that time He allows His enemies to have their heyday while He sits beyond the veil in the spiritual realm to minister to the poor and needy of earth—all who seek for His help and grace. Prayer is made to Him constantly and daily. He is our great High Priest and we have the royal invitation to come to Him in every time of need. He also has the power and authority to pour out blessings and the precious gift of the Holy Spirit upon those who will love and obey Him.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

REFLECTIONS

There is a golden thread found in Scripture which actually begins with God's covenant with Abraham, that through His Seed (Christ) all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Fourteen generations later (Matthew 1:17), God continued this covenant through the prophecy of Nathan to David, that out of his descendants there would be One who would reign upon his throne forever. It is exciting to discover the golden thread of prophecy in other prophets as well.

One of the most beloved of all is found in Isaiah 9 as the birth of the Holy Child, Jesus, was foretold, and in verse 7 we read: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." Every year at Christmas throughout the world, the words "For unto us a child is born," from the popular oratorio, Handel's Messiah,

ring out—albeit to throngs who are only there for the beautiful music in formal social settings—telling the Gospel story and proclaiming this covenant. The theme is carried on in chapter 11 where Isaiah foretells the reign of the “Branch” who grows out of Jesse’s roots, and in chapter 55 where he promises an “everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.”

The gold gleams again as Jeremiah mentions David’s Branch in chapters 23:5 and 33:16; in verse 17 he links it with the man who would sit upon David’s throne. Ezekiel weaves it into his prophecies of the shepherd who would feed His people Israel, again mentioning David who would be the prince (Ezekiel 34:23-24). In Ezekiel 37:24 we find the golden thread again. Daniel did not mention David’s name, but we do read in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the everlasting kingdom that would be set up in the days of “these kings”, which plainly refers to the Roman empire (Daniel 2:44). Hosea takes up the thread in chapter 5, verse 3, and it shines brightly in Amos 9:11. “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.”

Lastly, Zechariah completes the weaving as three times, in Zechariah 3:8, 6:12-13, and in 12:8-9 the kingly thread is revealed, repeating the “Branch” theme of Isaiah and Jeremiah.

The final golden knot is tied at the very end of the written scriptures, in Revelation 22:16. “I [Jesus] am the root and the offspring of David...” Not only was He David’s descendant, but He existed before David, Jesse, Abraham and Adam as the great I AM and is the WORD who created all things in heaven and earth! Praise, honor and glory be to our great and mighty King of kings and LORD of lords!

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

