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A Christadelphian publication devoted to gleaning and heralding the Truth concerning the problem of life, here and hereafter, the restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land, the return of Christ as King of all the earth, and the signs of the approaching end of Gentile times.

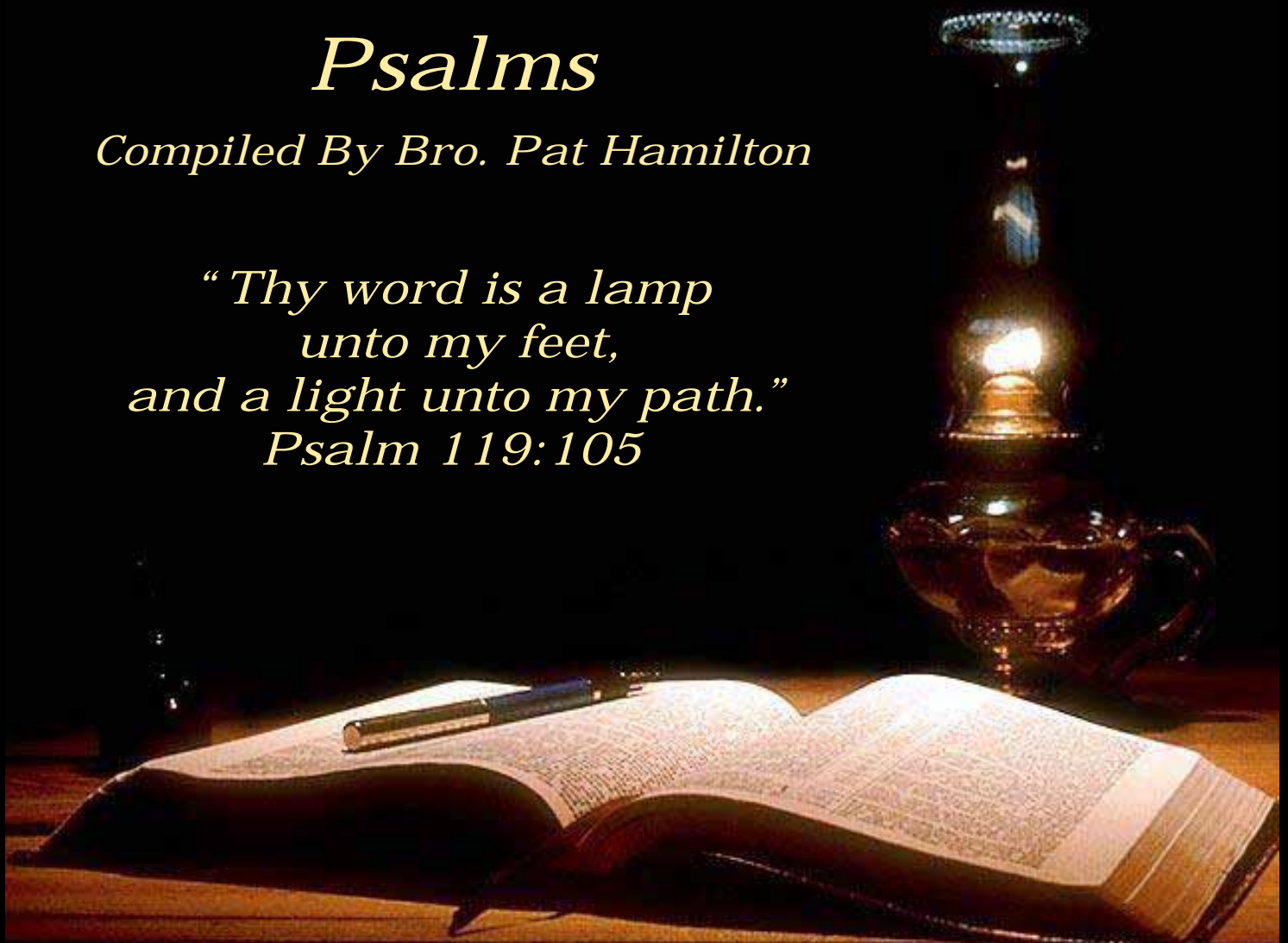
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Psalms

Compiled By Bro. Pat Hamilton

*“Thy word is a lamp
unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.”
Psalm 119:105*



This article will first lay the groundwork, structure, and vocabulary of the Psalms, followed by a consideration of how the Psalms mirror the structure and Divinely-inspired message of the Pentateuch. This purposed pattern, as we shall see, is to be searched out by those most honored among men, Yahweh's covenanted ones, for its message of help in this life and of hope for life hereafter in the Age to Come. As with any message of enduring value, the Psalms must be spiritually discerned.

Psalms

Right: A collection of 41 Psalms (chiefly from Psalms 101-150) from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Library of Congress Photograph



The Hebrew title of the book of Psalms is appropriately **Tehillim** (*Praises*), for praise is a central feature of the poems that comprise this collection. Although this word in its singular form, **tehillah** (*praise*), occurs many times in the Psalms themselves, it only occurs once as a title to an individual Psalm (Psalm 145, "Praise of David"). The major Greek versions rendered another Hebrew word, **mizmor** (*song*), found often in the titles of individual Psalms, as **Psalmos**, and they gave the book the title *Psalmoi*, or "Psalms". This was the title by which the New Testament writers knew the book (Luke 20:42; Acts 1:20). The common English title, of course, is **The Psalms**, and we readily see its derivation from the Greek versions.

Another popular English title, **Psalter**, comes from Alexandrinus, whose fifth-century A.D. copy of the Greek translation (known as the Septuagint) called the book **Psalterion**, meaning "stringed instrument". The word *Psalterion* actually occurs several times in the Greek text of the

Psalms where it is translated from the Hebrew word **kinnor** ("lyre"), and sometimes **nebel** ("lyre"). Alexandrinus elevates this word to the title of the book.

The Dead Sea Scrolls

In the spring of 1947, in the Judean wilderness near the northwestern corner of the Dead Sea, ancient manuscripts were found which have helped us to reconstruct the history of pre-Christian Judaism. They have also given us our oldest manuscripts of most of the Old Testament. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls was one of the monumental events of the twentieth century. Never before had scholars the opportunity to examine and compare such ancient copies of Old Testament manuscripts. Those scrolls predated previous finds by about one thousand years, but at the same time confirmed in large measure the accuracy of the texts we already possessed. They provided a marvelous testament to the hand of Yahweh at work.

But there is another fact about the scrolls that is less well known.

Since the initial discovery in 1947, excavations have continued, and all kinds of fascinating documents have been discovered. One book of the Bible has dominated these discoveries; the number of copies and fragments of it that have been found outweigh those of any other book, even the Law of Moses itself. That book is the Book of Psalms. And along with the Book of Isaiah, the Book of Psalms is the most frequently quoted part of the Old Testament in the New.

Most, if not all, of the Psalms were originally songs, but a song with no music is a strange concept, and the original music to which the Psalms were sung has long been lost to us. It is helpful to begin, therefore, by thinking of the Psalms as poems. Songs are, in a sense, poetry set to music; since we have no music to the Psalms, what we are left with is the poetry.

In our own time, The Christadelphian Hymn Book has a special section devoted to the Psalms. If we look in the Old Book, hymns 1-36

are devoted to the Psalms. In the New Book, hymns 1-41 are devoted to the Psalms.

Music played a large part in the life and worship of the people of Israel; **“the songs of Zion”** and Israel’s singers were famous throughout the world. As we read in Psalm 137:3, *“For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.”* Sennacherib demanded as part of Hezekiah’s tribute “male and female singers”. David had 4,000 Levites trained as singers and instrumental musicians (1 Chron. 23:5) divided into 288 courses under the leadership of Asaph (*gatherer*), Jeduthun (*expressing praise or choir of praise*; also called Ethan, *enduring or ancient*), and Heman ‘a singer’ (*faithful*). These courses in turn were divided into 24 groups of 12, teachers and leaders over the whole 4,000 (1 Chron. 25:1-8). David was an inventor of musical instruments (Amos 6:5), and in the Temple service of later days an impressive orchestral accompaniment was available for Divine worship. Most of them are mentioned in the Psalms. They fall into 3 groups – stringed, wind, and percussion instruments.

In the group of Stringed Instruments were:

The Harp – from *kinnor* – “to twang”.

The Psaltery – in the smaller version, probably an 8-stringed lyre.

The Nebel – a skin bag.

In the group of Wind Instruments were:

The Trumpet – the horn of a ram or a goat (the *shofar*).

The Cornet – probably a brass treble wind instrument with a cup mouth-piece.

The High-Sounding Trumpet – so called because of its “quavering note”.

The Organ – a reed instrument of music. A pipe instrument; its exact nature is not now known.



Above: A harpist depicted upon a stone relief from the ancient Middle East.

“I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.”



Left: A Ram’s horn (the shofar)

The shofar was to be blown on the Day of Atonement in the jubilee year:

“Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land” (Lev. 25:9).



B. Norraba



B. Norraba

In the group of Percussion Instruments were:

The Timbrel – it indicates a drum, something like the modern tambourine.

Cymbals – a clatter or clanging noise; four small plates of brass, two to each hand, which when struck hard together made a loud noise (*above, center*).

Sistrum – a jingling instrument of thin metal frame, shaken from side to side (*right*).

The Psalms teach us an important lesson that ***hymns do matter***. The abundant references the Psalms contain to making music, the repeated invocations to ‘praise Him with such-and-such an instrument,’ to ‘sing a new song’ unto Him, and ‘to be glad in His works’ show beyond all doubt that music is important in worshipping Yahweh. The Psalms would not contain so many references to worshipping Yahweh with music and singing if it did not matter. The singing of hymns and the worshipping of Yahweh through the emotional medium that music provides are a part of our communal life which should not be considered trivial or downplayed.

All of the Psalms are spiritual songs that were written to be sung in praise. The singing of Psalms and hymns are songs of praise to Yahweh and are appointed for His glory. They encourage joy and gladness, just as the day that Jesus was born, when the heavenly host praised God saying, “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*” It is worth remembering, too, that hymns and Psalms are not just for formal communal worship. “*Is any merry?*” asks James in chapter 5, verse 13, “*let him sing psalms.*” And the Psalmist himself wrote, “*Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds*” (Psalm 149:5). Bed might seem like a strange place to sing a Psalm, but the verse well emphasizes the appropriateness of praising our heavenly Father at all times and in all places in our lives.

There are a number of references in the Psalms (and elsewhere) to singing a “new song”, i.e., Psalms 33:3; 40:3; 96:1-2; 98:1, 144:9; 149:1. Is this new song associated with the occurrence of Revelation 5:9? It is something to consider.

Vocabulary of the Psalter

In considering the Psalms, we should become acquainted with some of the definitions of the words used.

Doxology: An expression of praise to Yahweh

Midrash: A method of interpreting the Bible that ranges from the literal meaning of a text to the hidden meaning of a text, with emphasis on the hidden. Stylistically, many of the midrashim (pl.) seem to have been sermons on the biblical text. The term refers both to the method and the various collections of these interpretations, the latter rang-

ing from the second to the twelfth century. One of the major collections is the *Midrash on the Psalms*, most likely edited during the Talmudic Period of Judaism.

Mizmor: A title of literary or musical genre meaning “psalm”. It suggests a poetic form intended for musical accompaniment. In the LXX this word is normally rendered *psalmos* from which we get our word “psalm”.

Selah: An enigmatic word that occurs seventy-one times in the Psalms. It also occurs 3 times in Habakkuk 3. Traditionally associated with “always, everlasting” (Norman H. Snaith, “Selah,” *vetus testamentum* 2 [1952]: 55), it may be more a liturgical term than a theological one. Snaith has proposed, based on 1 Chr. 16:41, that *selah* marked the end of the strophe or stanza, identifying the spot where the Levites responded, “Give thanks to the LORD for he is good, for his mercy endures forever”. (Snaith, 43). While the Levites made that response, the congregation of Israel would prostrate themselves before the LORD (Snaith, 56). Others say *Selah* means to pause and reflect and may apply to the future campaigns of the immortalized Saints (Hab. 3:9).

Torah: Yahweh’s revelation of His character and covenant as recorded in the first five books of the Bible. At its heart is the law which Yahweh gave to Israel on Mount Sinai, a law already written on the heart of their ancestor Abraham (Gen 26:5). In the Psalms, this concept takes on many companion terms, the sum being that God’s will for human life is divinely revealed and historically implemented in the story of Israel and mankind. Here in the Psalms, discussion of law or Torah takes on at least three forms: God’s Ways, God’s Works, and God’s Words.

The Fifth Gospel

The Psalter has been described as the fifth gospel, and there is much truth in this. The gospel accounts say little about Jesus’ feelings during his suffering; the details are presented in a matter-of-fact way, and it is left to the reader to imagine how he must have felt. But in one sense, what the gospels do not say did not need to be said, for the Psalms had already said it with remarkable detail and poignancy. Here in the most powerful language, Jesus’ sufferings and experiences are brought home. Many Psalms may be claimed as Messianic in character but the chart to the right mentions only some of those that clearly are so.

I. Messianic Psalms and Their Message

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Primary Message</i>
2	The Psalm of the Son of God
8	The Psalm of the Son of Man—written upon the death of Goliath (connected with Psa. 144)
16	The Psalm of the Holy One
21	The Psalm of the King
22	The Psalm of the Suffering One
24	Speaks of the Christ-body as Yahweh-Tzvaoth (LORD of Hosts – He who will be armies) and the Ark entering the new Temple (see Ezekiel 43)
40	Speaks of the complete dedication of the Son
45	The Psalm of the Bridegroom
68	Tells in inspiring language the invincible progress of Christ and the Saints from Sinai to Zion, the establishment of his Kingdom, and the subjugation of the nations
69	The trespass offering Psalm; i.e., an offering of “those who reproached Thee”; “The zeal of Thine house has eaten me up.”
72	David’s prayer for Solomon his son will be complete in his greater Son, the Redeemer of his people, the Saviour of the world.
91	Messiah’s vow of service and trust
95	The Psalm of the Rock
110	The Psalm of the Priest
118	The Psalm of the Victor
132	The Psalm of the Son of David

PSALM 40: 1-5

TO THE CHIEF MUSICIAN, A PSALM OF DAVID

*I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.
 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.
 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.*

II. The Psalms As Corresponding To The Pentateuch

<i>Psalm Book</i>	<i>Psalm No.</i>	<i>Comments Relative to the Pentateuch</i>
1	1-41	The Book of Genesis – Concerning man and his relationship with God. All blessing is bound up in obedience. This book closes with a benediction and double Amen. The concluding doxology is Psalm 41:13: “Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.”
2	42-72	The Book of Exodus – Concerning Israel as a nation. The counsels of God concerning Israel’s ruin, redeemer, and redemption. Closes with a benediction and double Amen. The concluding doxology is Psalm 72:18-19: “Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.”
3	73-89	The Book of Leviticus – Concerning God’s sanctuary. Closes with a benediction and double Amen. The concluding doxology is Psalm 89:52: “Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.”
4	90-106	The Book of Numbers – Concerning Israel in relation to the nations. Closes with a benediction, Amen, and Hallelujah. The concluding doxology is Psalm 106:48: “Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.”
5	107-150	The Book of Deuteronomy – Concerning God and His Word. Closes with five Psalms, each beginning and ending with Hallelujah. The concluding doxologies are found in Psalms 146 - 150: “Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.”

It is generally considered that the Psalms are divisible into five books, answering to the five books of Moses. This arrangement could not simply have been the work of cunning men, since differing writers (if uninspired by Yahweh) could not have arranged the times and events for which the Psalms were written as directly relating to the Divine model of the Pentateuch. Hence, the Psalms are as a “Song” of truth concerning the authority and divinity of the true author, Yahweh, God of Israel. The chart above outlines this connection.

The *Midrash on the Psalms*, codified in the ninth century A.D., attests to this fivefold division and draws an analogy to the five books of the Torah. Again, Midrash means “*a method of interpreting the Bible that ranges from the literal meaning of a text to the hidden meaning of a text, with emphasis on the hidden.*” While we cannot be certain when this division was introduced, it was very likely an early feature of the Book since the divisions are quite obvious by the concluding doxologies of each book. The last five Psalms may be seen as an echo, reminiscent of the whole of the five books (see chart below).

III. The Midrash on the Psalms

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Comparison of Concluding Psalms with Genesis - Deuteronomy</i>
146	Genesis: Compare Psa. 146:4 with Gen. 2:7; cp. Psa. 146:5 with Gen. 2:8; cp. Psa. 146:6 with Gen. 1:1
147	Exodus: Compare Psa. 147: 4 with Exod. 1:1; cp. Psa. 147:2-20 with Exod. 1:7-10
148	Leviticus: Compare Psa. 148:14 with Lev. 10:3
149	Numbers: Compare Psa. 149:5-9 with Num. 14:21 and 24:17-24
150	Deuteronomy: Compare Psa. 150:2 with Deut. 3:24

IV. Number of Psalms Ascribed to Authors

<i>Book</i>	<i>Psalms</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Psalms Ascribed to each Author</i>	<i>Total per Author</i>	<i>Total Psalms Per Book</i>
1	1-41	David	2-32, 34-41	39	41
		Others	1, 33	2	
2	42-72	David	51-72	22	31
		Korah	42-45, 47-49	7	
		Asaph	50	1	
		Others	46	1	
3	73-89	David	86	1	17
		Korah	84-85, 87	3	
		Asaph	73-83	11	
		Heman	88	1	
		Ethan	89	1	
4	90-106	David	95-96, 101, 103, 105	5	17
		Moses	90, 91	2	
		Others	92-94, 97-100, 102, 104, 106	10	
5	107-150	David	107-110, 124, 131-133, 138-145	16	44
		Solomon	127	1	
		Hezekiah	120-123, 125-126, 128-130, 134	10	
		Others	111-119, 135-137, 146-150	17	
Total Psalms - Books 1 - 5					150

Who Wrote the Psalms?

While the Psalms are generally ascribed to David, written as a collection of inspired accounts of the events of his life, we are aware that Yahweh also inspired others who added to the Psalms a collection of writings that confirm the Divine authorship. This necessary detail gives comfort to us as seekers of Truth in the same manner that a single Author has confirmed His plan and purpose for the ages by revelation of one message through many prophets of Israel living during different times and events. Through it all, Yahweh's message of hope does not waver.

Having now completed a general review of the structure of the Psalms above, we now turn to consider in more detail the following selected Psalms within each of the Five Books of Psalms, and the valuable lessons held in store for the wise who will search them out. It should be noted before we begin, however, that this study is really but the "tip of the iceberg" when one considers the entire spectrum of the Psalter. The treasures within the book as a whole are untold, and it is up to you, dear reader, to search them out! We will begin with the chart on the following page in order to outline our course of study. We would encourage the reader to refer back to this as a reference point during this study as necessary.

V. Outline of Our Consideration of the Psalms as related to the first five books of the Bible

BOOK 1 – GENESIS: Psalms 1 - 41

Psalm 1	Individual responsibility and the way of the righteous
Psalm 8	The crown of creation
Psalm 23	The LORD as Shepherd
Psalm 37	The estate of the righteous

BOOK 2 – EXODUS: Psalms 42-72

Psalm 42	Hope in God
Psalm 72	Hope in a Redeemer

BOOK 3 – LEVITICUS: Psalms 73-89

Psalm 78	Teaches the Wonders of God
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BOOK 4 – NUMBERS: Psalms 90-106

Psalm 95	Let all the People Praise God
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BOOK 5 – DEUTERONOMY: Psalms 107-150

Psalm 121	The LORD our Keeper
Psalm 146	Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob

1st BOOK OF THE PSALMS CORRESPONDING TO GENESIS

PSALM 1: If we compare Psalm 1 to the Book of Genesis, we will find examples of faithful and righteous Abraham (Gen. 17:1-4, 7 & 8; Gen. 22:17 & 18), as well as Joseph (cp. Psa. 1:3, Gen. 39:3). In their example may be found the path of wisdom and perseverance that evades the masses but is a treasure store to the righteous wherein true joy and consolation is found.

Human beings look everywhere for happiness. Yet the songs of the Psalmist proclaim that true happiness can only be found in the joy that comes from living in the way of the righteous. Three things are necessary for a righteous life: 1. Knowing Yahweh by spending much time reading, studying and reflecting on His Word; 2. Following Yahweh by faithfully obeying His Law (manifesting His Word); and 3. Rejecting the ways of the wicked by refusing to associate with ungodly companions or to emulate their ungodly ways. Only then will we be equipped to look upon life with the oil of gladness and appreciate the wonders of His creative power exhibited in all that He has made.

This Psalm of wisdom emphasizes that human beings are happy and joyful when they spend most of their time delighting in meditation on Yahweh's

Law instead of following the advice of the ungodly (vv. 1-2). *Blessed* is the translation of a Hebrew expression meaning “*O how happy!*” These people were like well-watered, fruitful trees (v. 3).

When wheat is threshed, the crushed sheaves are tossed up in the air and the wind blows away the lighter part called chaff. When times of suffering, trial, and tribulation come, the ungodly are like the chaff which the wind blows away (v. 4). They will perish (v. 6b), but the righteous will stand firm in times of trouble, like well watered fruitful trees (v. 3) that are secure on the solid foundation of Yahweh's Law (v. 6a).

The Lesson For Us: The Psalmist's hymn contains a final admonition of impending doom and judgment for anyone who chooses the way of sinners instead of the righteous way of Yahweh's Law: “*Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*” (vs. 5). It also contains a message of hope and deep assurance to those who choose Yahweh's righteous way: “*For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous...*” (vs. 6). If the people persisted in their study of and obedience to God's Word, they would become grounded in their faith. Romans 10:17 reads, “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Upon this sure foundation of faith they would have the strength and endurance to grow into strong trees that bring forth good fruits.

PSALM 8: Compare this Psalm to Genesis 1, the account of creation, and in particular to verses 26 and 27, the creation of man and woman.

All things were created by Elohim. In the first two chapters of Genesis we are given a thorough account of creation and read where Yahweh establishes humans as the caretakers of His earthly creation, thus giving us great responsibility and honor. This responsibility comes because humans alone were created in the “*image of God*” and with a natural affinity to their Creator. With the introduction of sin into the world, however, this natural affinity has been clouded with the reign of error and superstition. Nonetheless, this responsibility establishes a created hierarchy in which humans are placed below angelic beings, but are above all other creatures.

The Lesson For Us: What a sobering thought to be reminded that we as humans are the crown of Yahweh’s creation, and He has entrusted us with the management of His earthly creations. The thought of such responsibility is overwhelming and should cause us to seriously consider how carefully we are doing what we have been commissioned from the beginning to do. It should also be a reminder to us that all things under our care are creations of an Almighty God.

But that is not all. We well know that man is not tending to God’s creation in the way he should be, nor has he displayed Godly attitudes in the way he has treated His world. Instead, man squanders and plunders its resources. We are a far cry from the days when the Elohim brought all the animals peacefully before Adam to see what names he would give them.

The message of Psalm 8 does not stop on that note. There is still hope. Psalm 8 is, of course, a prophecy of one who would come, the Lord Jesus, to whom all things would be made subject. Jesus exercised control over the natural elements as well as the temptations of “the devil” (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) during his forty days in the wilderness, and after his resurrection he was able to say that “*all power and authority*” had been given him. Hebrews 2, indeed, quotes Psalm 8 to show that it has been fulfilled in the exaltation of our Saviour. 1 Corinthians 5 and other New Testament passages pick up on the same theme. It is Christ, the last Adam, the firstborn of the new creation, who is the true Lord of creation – exalted and made such by his Heavenly Father.

The Son of Man was to be invested with the Word of his Father, and in him Yahweh was to visit His people. “*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself...*” (2 Cor. 5:19). This work of reconciliation, writes Paul, was not to be wrought in one who had the nature of

an angel but in one who knew the meaning of human weakness. He had to be of the seed of Abraham, partaker of human flesh and blood that he might grapple with and destroy the Goliath of sin, “the devil”! Yahweh prepared a deliverer who could conquer human nature that he might “*deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*” and in doing so “*bring many sons unto glory*”.

Well might the Psalmist exclaim, “*What is man that thou art mindful of him?*” What has man done to deserve that Yahweh should visit the fallen race in Christ? Why should He have given His only begotten Son to die for us? Consider what the Psalmist says, “*O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!*”

We should also be moved to praise Yahweh, realizing that every thing that has been placed under the care of humanity was created from Yahweh’s own underived energy by His will. Such an awesome and powerful Creator is worthy of every praise that our voices can raise.

PSALM 23: The 23rd Psalm was written by David. It is probably the best-known, best-loved of all Psalms, and is read in time of sorrow, loss and death by most of the world. It pictures Yahweh as the Good Shepherd. The shepherd image is often used of Yahweh throughout Scripture. We can see this throughout the Psalms. Psalm 28:9, “*Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.*” Psalm 77:20, “*Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.*” Psalm 78:52, “*But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.*”

We read in Isaiah 40:11, “*He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*”

We find in Ezekiel 34:11-15, “*For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of*

the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD."

Now we know that Jesus is the manifestation of his Father, the Father being the One and only True Living God. Furthermore, we know that Jesus took on the identity of both a Lamb and the Good Shepherd, for we read what John the Baptist said about Jesus in John 1:34-36. "And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!" We have a wonderful example in Christ Jesus of a lamb manifesting to perfection the name of the Good Shepherd. Christ is our best example of a shepherd-sheep.

In John 10:9, Jesus said, "***I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.***" And in verse 11, "***I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.***" Notice what Jesus said; it is only through him that eternal life is obtained. There is no other way. This requires belief, and a proper understanding of the name of Jesus Christ, the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and finally a covenant relationship obtained through the waters of baptism which symbolizes Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

Have you ever noticed that the 22nd Psalm exhibits "*that great Shepherd of the sheep*" as laying down his life for the sheep; that the 23rd Psalm exhibits "*the good Shepherd*" with all his sheep around him happy and restful; while the 24th Psalm represents "*the chief Shepherd*" who shall appear in due time; and when he does appear, then shall his sheep also appear with him in glory.

The Lesson For Us: Yahweh is not willing that any should perish and as proof of His loving kindness has already given His Son to die that sinners might be saved through His Son's redemptive work. Hardness of heart, however, will incur His wrath! Those who feed upon His pastures will be led to "still waters", their souls will be



The Valley of Jezreel today is but an earnest of the "green pastures" that will be well watered in the Kingdom Age to come, when the chief Shepherd shall appear and the Truth will flourish.

"restored", and they will join the Psalmist in saying, "*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever*" (Psalm 23:6).

PSALM 37: Consider in the Book of Genesis faithful Noah and the destruction of the Antediluvians; faithful Abraham and righteous Lot and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Consider the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and compare these to Psalm 37:22.

The context of this Psalm is the contrast between the wicked and the righteous. The Psalm focuses on the wicked prospering now and the righteous suffering now. Even though the wicked appear to prosper, their end is certain: "*I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found*" (verses 35-36).

On the other hand, the righteous may suffer trouble, but the LORD shall grant them salvation in the end: "*But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him*" (verses 39-40). In Psalm 11:1 we read, "*In the LORD put I my trust...*" Our salvation is possible only through His son, Jesus the Christ. We read the words of

~ EDITORIAL ~

*The Pitch for Peace**Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Speech at the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit, February 8, 2005*

With the demise of Yasser Arafat, an unprecedented opportunity for possible peace between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East is being seized upon by all sides. By their own estimation, the Palestinian “intifada” is over. These are not merely the words of a hopeful Israeli press, but the words of the intifada leaders themselves, who see themselves spending Palestinian blood for a cause they cannot win, and whose local supporters are dwindling. Meanwhile the leaders of Jordan, Egypt, and the newly elected Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas have gathered together to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to discuss the new feeling of cooperation and prospects for Middle East peace. Below we present in its entirety the speech delivered by Ariel Sharon at the February 8, 2005 Sharm el-Sheikh Summit. As watchmen of the political heavens, we cannot help but see a connection with the mood for “pseudo-peace” in the land and with Ezekiel’s prophecy of an end-time state of peace and safety (Ezek. 38:8,11), as well as the Apostle Paul’s warning that such a time would exist just prior to calamity and to Messiah’s entrance upon the world scene as a thief (I Thes. 5:3). While we cannot foresee the future, we are charged with discerning the “signs of the times” (Matt. 16:3). Thus, while it may sound somewhat assuming to declare at this early date, that yes, this is absolutely the appointed time to which the Apostle Paul and prophet Ezekiel both refer, we must on the other hand sound the trumpet in recognition of the signs in the political heavens that warn of the prospects for Messiah’s return. We must stand ready at all times!

Ariel Sharon’s Sharm el-Sheikh Summit Speech

“Good afternoon. I would like to thank you, the President of Egypt, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, on your welcome initiative and the kind hospitality for this important summit. We all hope and pray that this day will be remembered as the day on which the process began to move forward towards completion, towards the goal of a tranquil, dignified and peaceful life for all the peoples of the Middle East.



Before an array of leaders from Arabic and Muslim nations of the Middle East, Ariel Sharon makes his case for a new era in relations between their respective peoples, an era of peace and security for Arabs and Jews alike. Can it last?

I also wish to convey special congratulations to Your Majesty, King Abdullah, on the birth of your son Hashem and on the occasion of your birthday. May you live a long life filled with joy, and will be able to lead your people to tranquillity and prosperity, and hopefully we can, together, strengthen the relations between us.

Congratulations are also due to you, the Chairman of the Palestinian Authority, Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, on your impressive victory in the Palestinian Authority elec-

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tions. Your victory and the path on which you wish to lead your people can mark a direction of real change to your people, which will affect the entire region. I hope that you will be able to lead your people on the path of democracy and maintenance of law and order, until the establishment of an independent and democratic Palestinian state.

2005 began as a year of great opportunity for all the peoples of the region, first and foremost for Israelis and Palestinians. We must all ensure that this opportunity is not missed.

We have an opportunity to break off from the path of blood which has been forced on us over the past four years. We have an opportunity to start on a new path. For the first time in a long time, there exists in our region hope for a better future for our children and grandchildren.

We must move forward cautiously. This is a very fragile opportunity, that the extremists will want to exploit. They want to close the window of opportunity for us and allow our two peoples to drown in their blood. If we do not act now, they may be successful in their scheme.

There is only one answer to them: we must all announce here today that violence will not win, that violence will not be allowed to murder hope. We must all make a commitment not to agree for a temporary solution, not to allow violence to raise its head, but to act together, determinedly, to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, to disarm and subdue it once and for all. Only by crushing terror and violence will we build peace.

I have no intention of missing this opportunity - because we must not let the new spirit, which grants our peoples hope, pass us by and leave us empty-handed.

That is why we have acted quickly and with determination, with an understanding of the needs of the Palestinian side. Over the past few days, we reached a number of

understandings with our Palestinian colleagues, which will enable us to grant both peoples tranquillity and security for the near future.

Today, in my meeting with Chairman Abbas, we agreed that all Palestinians will stop all acts of violence against all Israelis everywhere and parallelly, Israel will cease all its military activity against all Palestinians anywhere. We hope that today we are starting a new period of tranquillity and hope. Furthermore, we agreed on a process of transferring security responsibility for Palestinian areas. I informed Chairman Abbas of our intention to take a series of confidence-building measures: soon we will release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and also establish a joint committee to explore future release of prisoners. We wish to conduct genuine and honest dialogue in order to transform these first steps into a sound basis for the foundation of our relations.

“We in Israel have had to painfully wake up from our dreams, and we are determined to overcome all the obstacles which might stand in our path in order to realize the new chance which has been created.”

I am determined to carry out the Disengagement Plan which I initiated. The Disengagement Plan was initiated by a unilateral decision. Now, if new change does emerge on the Palestinian side, the disengagement can bring hope and become the new starting point for a coordinated, successful process.

The Disengagement Plan can pave the way to implementation of the Roadmap, to which we are committed and which we want to implement. We are prepared to actively fulfil all our obligations, and expect the other side to carry out all its obligations. Only actions and not words; this is the only way to attain the vision of two states living side-by-side in peace and tranquillity.

With your permission, I wish to address the citizens of both peoples: To our Palestinian neighbors, I assure you that we have a genuine intention to respect your right to live independently and in dignity. I have already said that Israel has no desire to continue to govern over you and control your fate. We in Israel have had to painfully wake up from our dreams, and we are determined to overcome all the obstacles which might stand in our path in order to realize the new chance which has been created.

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You too must prove that you have the strength and the courage to compromise, abandon unrealistic dreams, subdue the forces which oppose peace, and live in peace and mutual respect side-by-side with us.

To the citizens of Israel, I say, we have passed difficult years, faced the most painful experiences and overcame them. The future lies before us. We are required to take difficult and controversial steps, but we must not miss the opportunity to try to achieve what we have wished for, for so many years: security, tranquillity and peace.

And one final call to our hosts and to the Arab leaders of the region: come let us join hands and create a new atmosphere of openness and tolerance in our region. Together we can build a dam against the radical forces of yesterday which threaten to carry us all into a whirlpool of blood and hatred. Together, we can promote relations between us and ignite a first ray of hope for all the people of the Middle East. Together, we can ensure our peoples lives of freedom and stability, prosperity and peace.

May we all be found deserving of this great opportunity which we have been granted."

Comment

We note particularly the statement that "*We in Israel have had to painfully wake up from our dreams, and we are determined to overcome all the obstacles which might stand in our path in order to realize the new chance which has been created.*" What is the "obstacle" to which Mr. Sharon refers? Is it the religious obstacle? Is it the obstacle of the promises to Israel through Abraham? Is Mr. Sharon saying as much that Israel needs to put aside its "religious hang-ups"?

Following the summit, on Thursday, February 10, Israeli leader Ariel Sharon said that conditions were right for an "*historic breakthrough*", and that if Palestinians did their part, then Israel could move forward with a U.S.-backed "road map" meant to lead to a Palestinian State. "I believe the conditions have been created to permit us and the Palestinians to reach *an historic breakthrough, a breakthrough that will lead us to security and peace,*" Sharon told a business forum.

On February 12, Al-Ahram Weekly ran a story entitled: *Hope At Last*. "The Sharm El-Sheikh summit on Tuesday gave the region a new spirit of optimism," writes

Ibrahim Nafie. "The first top-level meeting between Palestinians and Israelis since Camp David II in 2000, the Sharm El-Sheikh summit at last brought within reach an end to four and a half years of bloodshed and destruction."

We watch these developments with intense interest as the blind shepherds of Israel draw the nation closer to a national judgment by trading God-given land for Palestinian peace. Again, we note that Ezekiel's prophecy of the latter days (Chapter 38) calls for achieving a "pseudo-peace" in the land at large just prior to Gog's descent upon Israel. Verses 11 and 12 read, "*And thou shalt say, 'I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil and to take a prey'...*" Are the events we are now witnessing a step towards this condition foreseen by the prophet?

While the prospect of Middle-East peace between Israel and other current occupants of the Abrahamic land grant is very pleasing to the eye of flesh (even tempting for believers to be pleased with), such compromises by Israel are in opposition to the promises that Yahweh made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As such, we must not be lulled into any sense of relaxation on account of "peace talk", for meanwhile, a hot cauldron brews in both Syria to the north (a leading sponsor and conduit of violence in Iraq), and Iran to the east, desiring to join the "nuclear club" with full cooperation (and re-armament) from Russia (cp. Ezek. 38:5).

Will Yahweh be pleased with the blind shepherds continuing to give away the land? Will the land continue to *decrease* for the sake of peace? Will the Prime Minister and the current democratic government of Israel continue to dominate the policies which govern the fate of the Promised Land? Isaiah has the answer:

"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. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:7).

HISTORICAL

The existence of an ancient Israel has been the subject of debate ever since the Jews have claimed a right to the Holy Land based upon the history of Israel over the last three millennia. Regardless of the so-called "debate", Yahweh has not left Himself without witness. Enter exhibit "A", the so-called "Merneptah Stele". This stele was discovered in 1896 in a mortuary temple in Thebes by Flinders Petrie and has since found its place in the annals of archaeological history, ranking with the "Moabite Stone" as irrefutable evidence of an ancient Hebrew kingdom, and colonization of Canaan in the 13th century B.C.

The Merneptah Stele, now in the Cairo Museum, is probably the most analyzed ancient text outside of the Bible because its validity strikes to the very heart of Israel's claim to the land for over 3000 years.



The stele is a poetic eulogy to Pharaoh Merneptah, who ruled Egypt after Rameses the Great, ca. 1212-1202 B.C. What is so significant about the stone to Christadelphians is a short section at the end of the poem describing a campaign into Canaan by Merneptah in the first few years of his reign. One line mentions Israel: **"Israel is laid waste, its seed is not."** Here we have the earliest mention of Israel in recorded history outside the Bible and the only mention of Israel in Egyptian records. **Moreover, the timing of the writing of the stele is irrefutable evidence to the validity of the Judao-Christian faith**, which holds that the Bible is not merely a theological record or allegorical myth, but an accurate record of actual historical events. To that end we take note that the stele corresponds precisely to the days of the Judges of Israel. So what is so significant about that? It is significant because it refutes the "post-modern" theories that claim the Hebrews emerged from peoples **indigenous to Canaan** centuries later, not from a mass exodus from Egypt in the 15th Century B.C. If the former is true, then Biblical history and chronology prior to 1150 B.C. would have to be abandoned.

An important detail of the Merneptah inscription is that the word for Israel is followed by the determinative sign for a people, as opposed to a city-state or kingdom.^{***} Thus, the Israelites are identified during the period of the Judges as a distinct ethnic group, yet prior to their formal establishment as a "kingdom" proper. These Bible facts that revisionists wish to discard as myth, the Merneptah stele unequivocally confirms!

LEFT: The Egyptian word for Israel is enlarged.

Psalms ~ Continued



The salvation of the righteous is of the LORD. The LORD shall help them and deliver them from the wicked because they trust in Him. Therefore, do not fret or be envious, as we read in Psalm 37:1, “Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.”

Jesus in John 10:9, “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”

In Psalm 27:1-4 we read, “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.”

The Lesson For Us: The salvation of the righteous is of the LORD. The LORD shall help them and deliver them from the wicked because they trust in Him. Therefore, do not fret or be envious, as we read in Psalm 37:1, “Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.” Have faith in the LORD: “Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed” (vs. 3). We see this in the teachings of the Master in the Beatitudes found in Matthew 5:1-12. The multitude was fed both spiritual and temporal food. Six times in Psalm 37 the righteous are promised the earth (or land).

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

Verse 9: *Those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.*

Verse 11: *But the meek shall inherit the earth...*

Verse 22: *For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth...*

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

Verse 34: *Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land...*

Therefore, as we just read in verse 34, if we **WAIT** on the LORD, and **KEEP** His way, He shall exalt us to **INHERIT** the land. Is it any wonder then that the theme of Psalm 37 is (as recorded in verse 1), “Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers on iniquity”? The respective destinies of the righteous and the wicked are put forward as the means whereby we may (if we have faith) live happily without worrying (fretting) about the material wealth of others or their wicked ways.

As we read in Psalm 37, if we are able to:

Verse 3: *Trust in the LORD, and do good*

Verse 4: *Delight thyself also in the LORD*

Verse 5: *Commit thy way unto the LORD*

Verse 7: *Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him*

Then why should we fret ourselves? For assuredly as we read further:

“Human life is one of changes. There are days filled with joy and days that are void of it. As the Psalmist did, we often feel absolutely alone in the midst of our sorrows and pain. In his time of despair, the Psalmist turned to Yahweh in desperation. His prayers to Yahweh were honest and forthright. His feelings were real; he could not get past that, for his need for Yahweh was like an unquenchable thirst. After reasoning through his problem, he realized that Yahweh alone was the source of true hope.”

Verse 9: *For evil doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.*

And as we read in Psalm 14:4, *“Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.”* And verse 5, *“There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.”* And verse 7, *“Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.”*

Then in Psalm 25:5, we read, *“Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”*

2nd BOOK OF THE PSALMS CORRESPONDING TO EXODUS

PSALM 42: Compare to Moses, and the Exodus from Egypt.

The believer’s hope in Yahweh is based on all that He has done for His people, because Yahweh has redeemed His people from physical and spiritual bondage (Exod. 14:30; Rom. 6:20-22; 8:2,21). Yahweh wants His children to place their hope in Him and realize that however desperate things may be, He is in control.

Psalm 42 (which was originally conjoined to Psalm 43) is a Psalm of lamentation. This and other Psalms in this category depict a cry to Yahweh for help in the midst of trouble.

The authorship of Psalm 42 has been attributed to the Korahites, a group of musicians in the court of King David. The authorship of the Psalms has long come into question, for it is often unclear whether the name associated with a specific Psalm is that of the author or of the person for whom the Psalm was written. In either case,

the inspiration of the Psalms still originates with Yahweh. We find the Psalmist in this song in the midst of a tumultuous turn of affairs. In the depth of his despair, his cry goes out to Yahweh, who is found to be his hope and the only One who can return joy to his heart. In verses 1-4, we see despair apart from Yahweh. In verse 5, we see a call for hope. In verses 7-11, we see him discovering the Source of hope.

In verse 11, we are reminded of all that was mentioned in the Psalm: the sorrow, waves of trial, taunts of his enemies, loneliness. All these things seem to overwhelm him for a moment, but then they seem to transform into reasons for praise. And so our trials are reasons to rejoice, for they produce both present and eternal blessings (Job 23:10; II Corinthians 4:17; Hebrews 12:11). And truly what better reflection of praise can we give than a countenance that is lifted up? Our faces express the feelings of our hearts, and who is the health of our countenance but Yahweh? We see in this Psalm a movement from despair to hope, followed by a return to dejection and once again a call for hope in Yahweh. The theme of despair in this Psalm is universal, as is realization that Yahweh alone is the source of hope.

The Lesson For Us: Human life is one of changes. There are days filled with joy and days that are void of it. As the Psalmist did, we often feel absolutely alone in the midst of our sorrows and pain. In his time of despair, the Psalmist turned to Yahweh in desperation. His prayers to Yahweh were honest and forthright. His feelings were real; he could not get past that, for his need for Yahweh was like an unquenchable thirst. After reasoning through his problem, he realized that Yahweh alone was the source of true hope.

We should also be encouraged not to feel that our pain or suffering is something that we alone face. Because of the effects of sin on the world, suffering is a part of human life. We will encounter opposition and ridicule, and at times we will feel as if no one else cares. But we must remember that however lonely we feel in our times of

depression, Yahweh's hand is guiding us, and He is an ever-present help.

It is impossible to speak for other people where the topic of personal prayer is concerned, because by definition personal prayer is personal and private. But if our public prayers are anything to go by, it seems the Psalter has a more wide range of emotions than our prayers often do today. The Psalms are usually more open in their expression both of fact and of emotion than our own. Lament and praise in the Psalms really are extremes. Reading through the Psalter is an uneven and jolting journey; it is not the smooth ride that our prayers to Yahweh sometimes are. It is worthwhile considering why this should be and whether anything can or should be done about it. Is it because we have been lulled into a false sense of well being and security by modern life-styles? Is it because we have been taught by the world to rely on ourselves when things go wrong, and to congratulate ourselves when things go right? Is it an indication that we do not find it as easy to pour out our hearts to Yahweh as, perhaps, we ought? Is there a danger of being too self-conscious and not sufficiently focused on Yahweh while we pray?

Another practical point worth raising is the fact that the joys and sorrows expressed in the Psalms, so intense and real, are never simply indulged in for their own sake. The pouring out of joy and sorrow before Yahweh is never an end in itself. Rather the joy or the sorrow always brings into focus the Psalmist's relationship with Yahweh, whether he feels near to Him or far away. Everything in the Psalmist's life affects this relationship; everything in the Psalter is seen in relation to the LORD. This is a crucial point. Prayer is not just another way of expressing ourselves, a way of obtaining psychological release. It is a vital part of spiritual life because it brings into focus our relationship with Yahweh.

A greater familiarity with the peaks and troughs (valleys) of the Psalter can help us with all of these points by increasing our spiritual sensitivity and God-centeredness, and by teaching us to express ourselves

more openly and more honestly in prayer and praise. The Psalter can teach us a great deal about how to pray.

Does Yahweh always hear our prayers? When presented to Yahweh in humility and in Jesus' name, the prayers of His children are a pleasing aroma ascending to Heaven. Jesus promises that our prayers will be heard and answered when they are presented in a manner that is in accordance with His will (Luke 11:9; John 15:7). But this does not mean that the answer to our requests will always be "yes", for even the fervent request of Paul was denied (2 Corinthians 12:8-9) because it was not in Yahweh's plan. There are many people in Scripture whose prayers were answered. A review of the prayers of some of the following people may provide some insight into the question at hand: Hannah (1 Samuel 1:27); Solomon (1 Kings 9:3); Hezekiah (II Kings 19:15-19, 32); Zacharias (Luke 1:13); the early ecclesia (Acts 4:31).

"Another practical point worth raising is the fact that the joys and sorrows expressed in the Psalms, so intense and real, are never simply indulged in for their own sake. The pouring out of joy and sorrow before Yahweh is never an end in itself. Rather the joy or the sorrow always brings into focus the Psalmist's relationship with Yahweh, whether he feels near to Him or far away."

Without Yahweh we have no hope. He has done so much for His children that we could pose the following question, "Why would we not hope in Him?"

PSALM 72 – Hope in a Redeemer. Compare to Exodus 13:11-16; Isaiah 43:1; Job 19:25.

A striking foreshadowing of the Kingdom of Yahweh under the rulership of the Lord Jesus Christ is seen in the establishment of the Kingdom of Israel under David's son, Solomon. The promise made to David concerning the house which God would raise up for him had a deliberate ambiguity, referring ultimately to Christ but having a preliminary fulfillment in Solomon. Yahweh covenanted with David to establish a universal, glorious, and everlasting kingdom on the earth. We read about this in II Samuel 7:12-14. We also read where Yahweh spoke to David through Nathan and made a promise in I Chronicles 17:11-15.

These passages show that the seed will be King in God's Kingdom, and that David will be raised from the dead to see these things. The worldwide nature of the

As an instructor to his son in the ways of Truth, the Psalmist gives us an example of the responsibility we each have for instructing our own children.

“For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth” (Prov. 4:3-4).

Kingdom is spoken of in Psalm 72 where David prophesies that Messiah will judge with righteous judgment and his reign will be as lasting as the sun and the moon, extending all over the world. Through Ethan the Ezrahite (*enduring or ancient*) in Psalm 89, Yahweh reveals that the promised seed of David will be His (God's) first-born and higher than the kings of the earth. In 1 Chronicles 28:5-8, we read about David's son, Solomon, and his role in God's plan. In verse 5 we read that Solomon was chosen by Yahweh to “sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel”.

In my Bible under Psalm 72, the superscription reads *A Psalm for Solomon*. A number of Psalm superscriptions show the words “*A Psalm*” in italics. It is believed that these words do not properly belong there. Under Psalm 72, it probably should read “*For Solomon*”. It is almost certain that this was David's prayer for his son Solomon at his coronation. We read this prayer in I Chronicles 29:10-19.

Psalm 72 starts out by saying, “*Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.*” This verse is a prayer for the king, even the king's son. We may apply it to Solomon in that David is asking Yahweh to make him a good man and a good king. It is the prayer of a father for his child, a dying blessing, such as the patriarchs bequeathed to their children. The best thing we can ask of Yahweh for our children is that He will give them wisdom and grace to know and do their duty. We know from scripture that Yahweh appeared to Solomon and said unto him in I Kings 3:5-10,

“Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his

throne, as it is this day. And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.”

So here we see that Solomon learned to pray for himself, just as his father had taught him. It was a comfort to David that his own son was to be his successor, but more so that he was likely to be both judicious and righteous. David had given him a good education as we read in Proverbs 4:3-5,

“For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.”

David had taught him good judgment, but Yahweh gave him wisdom for judging. Psalm 72 is a prayer of a king for his successor. David had executed judgment and justice during his reign, and now he prays that his son might do so as well. ***Such a concern as this we should all have for our posterity***, desiring that those who come after us may do Yahweh more and better service in their day than we have done in ours. This is a principle of truth that should be manifested in all the ways that we organize and conduct ourselves (individually and collectively); not in a manner that is based upon trivial and unthinking rules of man's making, but upon a prayerful consideration of the Word alone.

This Psalm is also a prayer of subjects for their king. David wrote this Psalm for the use of the people, that they, in singing, might pray for Solomon. As stated earlier, this Psalm is also a prophecy of the millennial reign of Christ and applies to the Lord Jesus. It is a prayer for sending the Messiah as the King on the holy hill of Zion. This will be a time of blessing. The following descriptions of life and conditions during Messiah's reign need no comment:

“He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth... Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight... 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).

Isaiah also describes the equity and goodness of this reign in Isaiah 11:1-4:

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and 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: and he shall smite the earth



The harvest begins at a Kibbutz in Israel
“The days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed...”

with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.”

The coming Age will know no want; no famines will cause anxiety and distress. *“The days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed...”* (Amos 9:13). Men shall say, *“This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden...”* (Ezek. 36:35).

In the establishment of such an era (time) of blessing, divine wisdom will prevail. Yahweh declared to Moses: *“As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD”* (Num. 14:21). Men will acknowledge His goodness, and the words of Yahweh through Habakkuk will be fulfilled: *“The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea”* (Hab. 2:14).

The Lesson For Us: Reading the words of our future King, whose millennial reign is prophesied in Psalm 72, let's turn to Revelation 22:16 where Jesus says, *“...I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.*



These Phylactery Cases, excavated from a site in Israel, are over 2000 years old.

And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” And concluding with verse 20, “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

3rd BOOK OF THE PSALMS CORRESPONDING TO LEVITICUS

PSALM 78: Teaches the wonders of Yahweh. Compare verses 56 and 58 with Leviticus 26:30.

Psalm 78 is the story of Yahweh’s wrath against the disobedient. Laws and ordinances were given to the people such that they might walk in the light of Yahweh’s truth and avoid evil and eternal death. The reader of this Psalm is left with no doubt at all: Salvation is of Yahweh! Yahweh gives His people varying degrees of responsibilities. But perhaps the most sober responsibility given to us is the instruction of our children. For it is this instruction that will help them understand who Yahweh is and what He expects of them.

The word *maschil* that appears in many translations of the Bible as the heading for this Psalm has an uncertain origin and meaning (Bible margin — “to give instruction”). Most accept this class of Psalms as *songs* which provoke meditation on the specific thought presented in

the song, and certainly this Psalm requires serious thought. This Psalm specifically deals with the great responsibility that is placed on the parents of each generation to instruct their children in the ways of the LORD. Singing these facts would certainly make them memorable and would help the audience better retain the information. In Psalm 78, verses 1-4, there is the command to teach children. In verses 5-6 is the information the children are to be taught. In verses 7-8 we are told the purpose for teaching children.

In Jewish custom, children were taught in the home beginning at a very early age. Children were taught to memorize the Mosaic Law, for it taught

them who they were as a nation under Yahweh, and it was also used simply to teach reading. From the institution of the Mosaic Law, Yahweh commanded the people of Israel to diligently instruct their children in the Law and to recall to them all the great things that Yahweh had done for them in their exodus from Egypt and in their journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 4:8-9; 6:6-7).

But this instruction was not limited to a designated period of teaching each day. The teaching and learning process was perpetual, beginning each day when the children awoke and continuing until the children lay down to sleep each evening, as demonstrated in Deuteronomy 6:5-7. *The Word of God was so important to the Jewish people that they would write passages of Scripture on small pieces of paper and place them in a small box called a phylactery (or frontlet) which men and boys tied to either their forehead or their left arm.* The phylactery served as a constant reminder of the Law of God which was to guide their every step (Deuteronomy 6:8; 11:18).

This Psalm has the most amazing conclusion in that, despite the utter and complete failure of Israel, Yahweh’s purpose is accomplished! The people are established in the land but it is only because of His integrity and by His skill. Such is the confidence we can have:

He will never leave us nor forsake us if we will but believe and follow His counsel. Or as the Psalm opens: *“Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old.”* The call of Jesus is no new call; its roots are to be found deep in the Old Testament and especially in the Psalms.

The Lesson For Us:

- This Psalm shows the complete waywardness of man.
- Man is saved only because of God’s integrity.
- Lack of parental control and instruction (primarily by example) leads to wholesale destruction.
- The sins of Israel which are listed are typical of man in general; therefore, the lessons are for today.
- The Psalm provides a good summary of Israel’s history and should be remembered along with Psalm 106. It also fills in some details for that period.

The content of this passage has many applications. For parents, there are few passages in Scripture that more clearly state the importance of the instruction of children. We must realize that “Sunday School” and “Meeting” on Sunday mornings are not enough instruction for developing the character of our children. We have to recognize that a daily, even moment-by-moment, instruction in the Word of God is vital to their spiritual development. We also need to see the importance of sharing with our children the history of Yahweh’s people in the Bible and how He has worked in our lives in special ways. By so doing we can return unto Yahweh the glory and honor due unto His name, walking separately from the world and its evil (and empty) enticements of wealth, luxury, and pleasure.

If we neglect to properly instruct our children, each generation will grow farther and farther away from the LORD. And we will not be able to blame them for their irresponsibility and lawlessness. It is the responsibility of each present generation to instruct the next. The issues that are seen in society (whether they be good or bad) are

a direct result of the guidance of the preceding generations. Popular culture, as manifested in the way that people of the world dress, act, speak, work and prioritize their daily lives (which is world-centric), is manifestly anti-truth, anti-God, and anti-life. Where do we stand? Transformed, or conformed?

We must instruct our children in the ways of the LORD, for He has given us the responsibility to do so. Scripture makes the following promise in Proverbs 22:6, *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”*

4th BOOK OF THE PSALMS CORRESPONDING TO NUMBERS

“If we neglect to properly instruct our children, each generation will grow farther and farther away from the LORD. And we will not be able to blame them for their irresponsibility and lawlessness. It is the responsibility of each present generation to instruct the next. The issues that are seen in society (whether they be good or bad) are a direct result of the guidance of the preceding generations.”

PSALM 95: Let all the people praise Yahweh.

In Psalm 95, it will become clear that it makes reference to the smitten rocks at Rephidim and Kadesh but in such a way that the lesson is for all time. We shall see, too, how Paul places the emphasis upon its application to those in covenant rather than upon those who perished through unbelief.

The Apostle Paul’s application of this Psalm is seen in his letter to the Hebrews. He has a severe warning for us, but he also shows how the Psalm, in a most unexpected way, has a message of Yahweh’s great mercy.

In Hebrews 4:11 we read, *“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”* This warning is more serious than a first reading might suggest. There were two major factors in which the people of Israel had a distinct advantage over us and yet they failed. First they had witnessed all the miracles of the Exodus, and then second, they had been separated from all the natural attractions of the world. Everything was so arranged that it would be natural for them to appreciate their Saviour and Deliverer. And yet they failed! How much more difficult for us!

In this Psalm the lesson is centered on the two occa-

sions when a rock was smitten to satisfy the people's thirst, occasions which were separated in distance and time of wanderings. At the first, their grumbling was ignored and their thirst satisfied; at the second when they should have known better, they were condemned for "not knowing God's way" and for their "unbelief".

Paul's exposition of the two incidents invites us to look a little more closely into the records. He writes, "*The rock which followed them was Christ.*" With this inspired comment we can look back to Rephidim where Yahweh commanded Moses to take the rod, which he had used before Pharaoh and which therefore had "serpent" associations, and smite the rock with it. In doing so, he acted out a parable showing how Jesus would be smitten by the serpent power before the water of life would be available to all who thirst. On the second occasion the rod was a different one, it was "...from before the LORD..." (Num. 20:9), the one kept in the Ark. It was the symbol of divine choice, having burst forth into blossom and had yielded almonds. It was Aaron's rod which Yahweh had caused to blossom and bud miraculously as proof that Aaron was His chosen servant.

With this symbol of divine choice which had silenced rebels years before, Moses was to speak to the rock – the rock (Christ) was not to be smitten a second time, for he would then be the resurrected, immortal, incorruptible Christ (also foreshadowed in new life and fruit budding from a once lifeless rod, now become the scepter of Judah). When Jesus comes the second time it will be to rule as King with the full authority of his Father. Then the command to the kings of the day will be as we read in Psalm 2:12, "*Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little...*"

There are hints of these occasions right from the beginning of the Psalm. We read in verse 1, "...*let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.*" And in verse 4 we read, "*In his hand are the deep places of the earth...*" These hints become certainties as the Psalm develops, particularly with Paul's use of it in Hebrews 3.

In its first application, the rock is Yahweh (He Who Shall Be) who delivered the children of Israel but who had occasion to condemn them for their unbelief, but Paul leaves us in no doubt that the Psalm is Messianic and that the rock represented Christ, and also that the rock followed them!

The two incidents are gathered together in the Psalm, and the 40 years in which Yahweh was grieved with Israel are described as "*the day of temptation*". Taken together, the acted parables show how Yahweh was still with His people even after they had been turned back into the wilderness, and if they had turned to Him in penitence He would have healed them, even then.

The Lesson For Us: Paul's use of the Psalm is to show how Yahweh is longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that the day of opportunity will end! We must respond, whilst it is still today, whilst we still have opportunity!

Notice how in this Psalm Yahweh is the Rock and also the Shepherd, two titles which He confers upon His Son. This is true of all the titles which Jesus holds. Jesus was the complete manifestation of His Father in flesh and blood, and well he could say, "*if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also*" (John 8:19). Note, too, that although there is a severe warning in this Psalm, there is a gentleness which should inspire confidence. Observe the build-up:

- Yahweh is a great King above all gods.
- He is in control of the deep places of the earth, the hills and the sea.
- He is our maker.
- Despite all this greatness, He is as our Shepherd, and we are the people of His pasture.
- In this context, "Harden not your hearts" becomes an appeal, rather than a command, that we should not behave as did Israel.

The severity of the warning is seen in the real meaning of the word "grieved" which is "to burst through, to loathe" and is explained in verse 11, "I swore in my wrath."

5th BOOK OF THE PSALMS CORRESPONDING TO DEUTERONOMY

PSALM 121: The LORD is our Keeper. Compare Psalm 121:8 to Deut. 28:6; 6:1-18; 26:16-19. This Psalm is one of the "Songs of ascent or degrees."

When the Assyrian swept through the fenced cities of Judah and camped outside Jerusalem, Hezekiah stood firm in his trust in Yahweh – a trust that was not misplaced. Of Hezekiah, it is recorded: "*He trusted in the LORD God of Israel: so that after him was none like*

him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him" (II Kings 8:5). Even Rabshakeh acknowledged this when he said, "What confidence is this wherein thou trusteth?" (v. 19). Four times Rabshakeh speaks of trust in verses 20 to 22, and then in verse 30 he appeals to the people to "neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD." But Hezekiah stood firm and Yahweh preserved him from all evil. This Psalm is called a Psalm of Hezekiah, one of the Psalms known as a Song of degrees.

To commemorate the great events of his reign, Hezekiah gathered a collection of 15 Psalms known as the **Songs of degrees**, Psalms 120-134. There is one Psalm for each of the 15 years of life extended to the king. Because the LORD was ready to save him, Hezekiah says, "...we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD" (Isa. 38:20). The songs remain today as a record of praises for His mighty acts.

Later, sojourners sang this psalm (121) as they returned to the city of Jerusalem for festivals that took place in the Temple such as Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. The sojourners would look toward the hill country of central Israel. There lay the city of Jerusalem, their final destination. As they traveled they would prepare themselves for their worship in Jerusalem with singing and dancing. The mood of the songs they sang increased in intensity as they neared the city. The final phase of the "ascent" was the trek up the steps to the Temple doors.

The Psalms used during these journeys were sung responsively. The leader might sing a solo representing Hezekiah: "**I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills; where does my help**

come from?" To which the congregation might reply, "**My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.**" The response to the leader's question is the acknowledgement of Yahweh's sovereign power. The people of God should find great comfort in knowing that the One who provides their help is the Creator of the entire universe. And while this verse is a testimony to the help that Yahweh provides His children, it is also an undeniable testimony that everything in the universe was created by the hand of Yahweh. Neither of these facts can be overlooked or minimized.

One of the features of the Songs of degrees (intended as an aid to the memory) is the use of repetition. The following are examples in this Psalm:

Verses 1 and 2: Repetition of "my help cometh"

Verses 3 and 4: Repetition of "keepeth thee will not slumber"

Verses 5, 7 and 8: Repetition of "The LORD is thy keeper" and "The LORD shall preserve thee" ("preserve" and "keeper" are the same Hebrew word).

The Lesson For Us: Testimony of Yahweh's protection is repeated and emphasized in this Psalm. However desperate the situation, we must trust in Yahweh, for He alone can and will preserve us. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand" (Psa. 37:23-24).

Just as the Psalmist firmly believed this fact to be true, so does the Apostle Paul who states in Romans 8:38-39 that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The

Psalmist reminds us that this protection is ever present during our journeys on earth and that it will continue throughout eternity.

We sing in Hymn 21 (40)

**"The Lord shall keep thy soul:
He shall
Preserve thee from all ill;
Henceforth thy going out and in
God keep for ever will."**

PSALM 146: Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob! Compare verse 9 to Deut. 10:18; compare verse 5 to Psalm 71:5 and Deut. 32:7-9; compare Psalm 146 to Deut. 30:19-20.

Psalms 146-150 are called the **Hallelujah Psalms**, and they fittingly close the Psalter. Each begins and ends with "Praise ye the LORD (Yah)." They are said to be an echo and a reminiscence of the whole of the five books of the Psalter. It is thought preferable to consider these as a group because, built upon Psalm 146 as Exodus through Deuteronomy are built upon Genesis, they tell of a continuing and ascending praise to that One Who is worthy of trust.

In whom should we trust – in man or in Yahweh?

Verses 3-4: In man, there is no salvation – he is mortal.

Verses 5-10: In Yahweh, there is Power – He is immortal.

Twelve reasons are given to trust in Yahweh:

Verse 6: He created. He keeps His Word.

Verse 7: He gives justice to the oppressed. He gives food to the hungry. He releases prisoners (from the grave).

Verse 8: He opens the eyes of the blind. He comforts the downcast. He loves those who serve Him.

Verse 9: He helps those who sojourn. He succours the fatherless and the widow if they will but place their trust in Him.

But Yahweh also will overthrow the devices of the wicked (v. 9); and ultimately he will reign for ever (v. 10).

The Lesson For Us: We must earnestly desire Yahweh's companionship through the Word and through prayer. We must not be content or happy without it. It must be a constant leaning and feeling of need. Sad and bitter experience in this life greatly strengthens this desire. That is one of the reasons it is needed and beneficial. Only Yahweh is dependable. Only Yahweh understands. In His mercy and wisdom, there can be much comfort and support in human beings, but we cannot make our happiness dependent on them, or build upon them, or build on them as our foundation. All flesh is grass. In Yahweh alone is safety and security.

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob." The essence of happiness is to rejoice in what IS – not in the deceptive "will-o-the-wisp" pursuit of what we imagine it might be. And there is plenty to rejoice in if we will take time off from our self-pity, unhappiness and vain desire, to look around us with the eye of faith and love and thanksgiving. We have been assured on the Highest Authority that **"All things work together for good to those that love God."** This is all the assurance we ever need for permanent happiness. If we in perfect faith wholeheartedly embrace this assurance, we shall find, in the marvelous contrivance of Yahweh's love, that we shall more and more be permitted to perceive and comprehend just HOW all things in our life ARE working together for good.

SUMMARY

THE PSALMS SPEAK TO OUR DAILY NEEDS: We will summarize our consideration of the Psalms with a practical outline of their application in the daily lives of believers, for this is their ultimate aim, to build up, to console, to guide, to draw us nigh unto the Father. For then, He will draw nigh unto us.

For Assurance:

Psalm 34:22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

Psalm 73:26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Psalm 89:34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Psalm 90:1 LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Psalm 119:89-90 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

For Charity:

Psalm 37:25-26 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

Psalm 41:1-2 Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

For Children:

Psalm 127:3-5 Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

Psalm 128:3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

For Comfort:

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

Psalm 37:24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

Psalm 37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.

Psalm 46:1-3 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

Psalm 55:22 Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

For Death:

Psalm 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow

of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

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

Psalm 48:14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

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

Psalm 73:26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

For Encouragement:

Psalm 9:9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

Psalm 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Psalm 31:24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

Psalm 37:3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Psalm 37:28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

For Faith:

Psalm 9:10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

Psalm 31:23 O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

Psalm 105:8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

Psalm 119:160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

For Forgiveness:

Psalm 103:3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Psalm 145:8 The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

For Guidance:

Psalm 33:4 For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

Psalm 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

Psalm 48:14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

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

For Growth:

Psalm 63:1-2 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

For Hope:

Psalm 31:24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

Psalm 42:11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Psalm 71:5 For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth.

For Peace:

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

Psalm 85:8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

For Strength:

Psalm 9:9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

Psalm 32:7 Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

Psalm 37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.

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

Psalm 121:1-2 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

Psalm 138:3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

For Truth:

Psalm 51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Psalm 91:4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

Psalm 100:5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

For Worship:

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

Psalm 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

Psalm 103:2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Psalm 118:24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 136:1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

CONCLUSION

When Jesus said, *“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?”*, do we truly comprehend that the mind of Yahweh was manifested in this man? Do we comprehend that the same Word manifested throughout the life of Jesus was before written in the Psalms, and therefore speak to him, of him, and through him in such detail that they reveal his thoughts in time of trial, his call to Yahweh for strength, heavenward praise for deliverance from his enemies, and final purpose and glory in the earth? Do we realize that this same Word will speak to us, and through us, if we will but heed the warning as well as the rejoicing in Yahweh’s Song of hope for the ages? Brethren, the days are short before Messiah again appears, so let us prepare accordingly. May we sing these Psalms continually in our hearts for endurance throughout this mortal veil, and LORD willing, sing them together in His King-

dom for His glory, and honor, and power, before the throne of the Lamb, world without end. Amen.

“And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Rev. 14:2-5).

ANTHEM 1

O praise God in His holiness:

**praise Him in the firmament
of his power:**

Praise Him in His noble acts,

praise Him in His noble acts:

**praise Him according to His excellent
greatness:**

praise Him in the sound of trumpet:

praise Him upon the lute and harp:

**praise Him in the cymbals
and dances:**

**praise Him upon the strings
and pipe.**

**Let every thing that hath breath
praise the Lord.**

BIBLICAL ALLEGORIES

The Man with Four Names David and Araunah - 2 Samuel 24 By Bro. Alex M. Briley

The word of Yahweh is marvelously constructed. It contains both simple and complex themes, which are always capable of inspiring great joy within the believer when we diligently study it. Within the story of David and Araunah is one theme that should cause the Bible student to look closely at what Yahweh is trying to teach us.

It is easily noted from the scriptures that while Araunah is a single character, he is a man of multiple names. The Authorized Version also calls him *Ornan* in the Chronicles account. But, what is not so easily seen is that he is actually identified by four different names in the original Hebrew. The Hebrew text in 2 Samuel 24 reveals that he is called *Avarnah* in the sixteenth verse; *Aranyah* in the eighteenth verse; and *Aravnah* in verses twenty through twenty-four. Any time Yahweh calls a man by four names, we may assuredly know that he is trying to draw our attention to that man. Add the man David to the account, a man typical of Christ, and we must surely have remarkable events to consider.

The subject of the 24th chapter of 2 Samuel is the plague of death brought upon Israel due to David's transgression in numbering the people. Seventy thousand were slain by the angel of death during this plague, clearly indicating to all that the events were the judgments of Yahweh. David was given three choices as to what his punishment would be:

"Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land?" (II Sam. 24:13).

David chose the three days of pestilence, placing himself "into the hand of Yahweh". Famine would not have affected the King, and he had retired from warfare (2 Samuel 21:17). Had David taken it upon himself to choose either of the other two options, he would not have been impacted at all as King of Israel. But David chose a

punishment that he himself was also subject to. In this we see a great truth, as Yahshua the Messiah has also been subject to the plague of death that all mankind are under. *"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). It should be noted that the plague was interrupted by the work of David (v.16) and the events that took place in the threshing floor of Araunah. Yahshua likewise has provided an interruption to the plague of death as a permanent principle for all who are his.

The Threshing floor of Avarnah

(We ask the reader to be careful as they read. We will present many layers of typical events, as we do not feel just one specific event is portrayed allegorically before us, indeed several events are portrayed before us.)

Now, dear reader, consider the dreadful events that are unfolding, and that Yahweh determines that in this man's field the plague will be stayed. What exhortation does the Almighty desire us to learn? It is noteworthy to understand that in the sixteenth verse, the name *Avarnah* means *"to make to shine"*. In this man's field, *one who will be made to shine*, the plague ends. He stands before us as a representative man, a man typical of the resurrected saints, standing in glory before the nations who will have been subject to terrible events (Revelation 19:11-18). Consider what Daniel and Matthew write about the saints at this time, *"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever"* (Daniel 12:2-3). *"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him*

hear” (Matthew 13:43).

The account in I Chronicles also reveals an important point to consider here also. We learn from Ch. 21:20 that “Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves”. Can it really be supposed that the angel of death was unaware of their presence? Can anyone hide from Yahweh? What then is meant that he and his **four** sons were hidden? We find the answer in Isaiah 26:19-21, when Isaiah writes, “*Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: **hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.***” Isaiah tells us that those who are hidden are those who are under Yahweh’s protection. In this, Avarnah and his four sons represent spiritual Israel, made to shine, and protected by the hand of God.

It is also important to recognize that the place of Avarnah’s redemption from the angel of death is the very place that Solomon would later build the Temple (2 Chronicles 3:1). This illustrates an important principle in the allegory. The very place where redemption from death occurred will become the very place that the nations will come to worship in the Kingdom Age. The Temple that Ezekiel speaks of in chapters 40 through 48 will serve to teach men the means by which they can escape the inevitability of death. In this we also see that Avarnah and his four sons represent natural Israel elevated as the first dominion among the nations, redeemed from a national death, and then becoming the place that all nations look unto for deliverance.

“Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the LORD



The very place where redemption from death occurred will become the very place that the nations will come to worship in the Kingdom Age. (Temple Illustration by Sis. D. Essex)

your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim. Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land. But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the LORD dwelleth in Zion” (Joel 3:12-21).

Before moving on, we should point out that Avarnah is called **Ornan** in Chronicles. Ornan means, “**Light Perpetuated**”. This is similar to the meaning of Avarnah, and

demonstrates to us that those who escape death will be illuminating lights to all peoples in the Kingdom.

“And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife... And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:9, 23).

The Threshing floor of Aranyah

The eighteenth verse of the chapter introduces us to another variation of Araunah’s name. Here he is called **Aranyah**, which signifies, *“Joyful singing of Yah”*. Note that the name implies Yahweh’s joy as expressed in singing. As such, the name Aranyah represents those that Yahweh is pleased to sing for joy over. We might reflect a moment on our service to Yahweh at this time. Are we building characters that cause our Heavenly Father joy? Will he sing over us at the marriage supper? If we think not, we must seek to change who we are now!

The joy that Aranyah represents is set forth in the following references: *“The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing”* (Zephaniah 3:17). *“For as a young man marieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee”* (Isaiah 62:5; see also Isaiah 65:17-19; Jeremiah 32:41; Hosea 2:19; and Malachi 3:17).

It is significant to note that 1 Chronicles 21:28-30 reveals that David was trying to get to Gibeon where the tabernacle was then located. But the prophet Gad told David to go to the field of Aranyah to build an altar instead. We believe that this event typifies the sacrifice of Yahshua the Messiah, an event that surely caused “joyful singing of Yah” because of the obedience of Yahweh’s son. It demonstrates a Bible truth. The Mosaic altar in Gibeon could not have stayed the plague of death; neither can the Law of Moses stem the Law of Sin and Death.

But the sacrifice of Christ has brought *“life and immortality to light.”* *“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh”* (Romans 8:3; see also Galatians 3:17-25). We also see in these events the deliverance of Israel that will happen when they come to know their Messiah and Lord:

“For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away” Hebrews 8:8-13).

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The Threshing floor of Aravnah

In verses 20 through 24 of 2 Samuel 24, we find the last variation of the name of Avarnah. There he is called **Aravnah**, which means *“To shout for joy”*. Thus the order of Divine joy is revealed: Yahweh must first joy in us before we will shout for joy in perfection. Or, we might express it this way: Yahweh must find us worth singing with joy over before He will grant us immortality, causing us to shout for joy. The 32nd Psalm portrays this joy for us as follows:

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no

*guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art **my hiding place**; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. **Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.**"*

And Psalm 132 describes our coming salvation thusly:

"Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy. For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed. 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. 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. For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish" (Psalm 132:9-16).

It is at this time that Natural Israel shall also rejoice and shout for joy. Zephaniah speaks of this time saying, "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zephaniah 3:14-15). And the prophet Isaiah, speaking of both natural and spiritual Israel, proclaims they shall all "cry out and shout" (12:6). Thus Aravnah speaks to us of the great joy of the saints when they will

have been redeemed from death and granted immortality. And it speaks to a time when Israel after the flesh will be raised from its state of spiritual death to know the ways of Truth and Life.

The closing verses of 2nd Samuel 24 show in allegory the means by which all this joy is made possible. Only through the obedience of Yahshua the Messiah and his sacrificial death has the plague of death been stayed (in prospect). David paid a price to end that plague of death. He refused to allow Aravnah to donate the place of sacrifice, or the animals for that sacrifice. In this we see two important principles demonstrated. The first is that man cannot redeem himself (Ephesians 2:8), and the second is that Yahshua has purchased us in the redemption process. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [or purchased] people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9; 1 Corinthians 6:20, 7:23).

Through these events David delivered both himself and his people from the bondage of death. That David was also subject to the angel of death is critical, for Yahshua was also subject to death, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15). And as David was also being punished on account of sin, so Yahshua also was redeemed from sin, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

David and Araunah: A King and a king

The last point we wish to cover about this remarkable incident is the references to royalty made to both of these men. In the twenty-third verse we read, "All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king." This speaks to the glorious hope laid before us. Those who are redeemed from death will live and reign with Yahshua as kings, for he is King of kings (Rev. 3:21; 17:14; 19:16). We will be blessed to rule with him over the subjected nations, teaching them the ways of Truth, and administering the righteous judgments of Christ when they disobey.

Araunah is a man of great exhortation to us therefore. Will we, like him, be delivered from death and be so blessed to serve our King?

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