

The Messianic Psalms



by

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The Messianic Psalms 1.0



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Preface

"You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me" (John 5:39).

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The Messianic Psalms

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Psalm 2 - Kiss the Son All Ye Nations

Nations in Rebellion Against Christ



We live in times of political chaos where madmen grip the helm of government. Against the surf and foam of political strife is the Source of peace and prosperity. Before us is the reason for all political conflict in the world today, and the solution to every political problem in seed form.

The Psalmist Speaks

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

The word “why” is an interrogatory that can be translated “how” or “what” or “how much.” It is a question asked for our benefit. The word “heathen” should be translated “nations.” The word “go'em” is translated “people” and “nations” in Genesis 10:5. In Jewry, the term *goy* is a derogatory term for non-Jews, but that is not the case here. Jews are part of the rebellion.

The verb “rage” (*raqash*) is only used here, and it means to be in “tumult” or “commotion.” The psalmist is asking, “Why are the nations always in a furor, a frenzy, a constant state of irritation, full of madness and hostility?”

The word “imagine” is the imperfect Hebrew verb “hagah.” It is translated “roar” or “moan” or “growl” in Isaiah 31:4 of a lion roaring over its prey. It is translated “plot” in the ESV and “meditate” in Psalm 1:2.

The word “vain” is the Hebrew verb “reek,” used adverbially. It is translated “armed” in the KJV and “led forth” in the ESV in Genesis 14:14. It is translated “the seven empty ears” blasted with east wind which is a reference to the seven years of famine in Genesis 41:27; and, “emptied their sack” in Genesis 42:35. The idea here is of kings “emptying their nets” of destruction and mercilessly killing people. We need only look at the madness of the Bolsheviks, Lenin, Stalin and others to grasp the harvest of this rage against God.

Before us is the question of the ages:

Why can't nations live in peace? Why are nations always at war, always in an uproar, always existing in the surf and foam of the sea of conflict?

As we listen to the news, it seems that there is always a regional dispute, a political debate, an infringement, a group of rebels protesting some perceived inequity, a nation in political chaos ravaged by civil war. Some nation somewhere is “emptying his net” aggressively shelling another country for power and wealth and revenge, or defending itself against rocket fire with weapons of mass destruction.

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

The kings have set themselves against the LORD.

The name “LORD” is the Tetragrammaton and clearly refers to God’s sovereignty and authority.

The title “anointed” is the Hebrew name for Messiah, *mashiyach*, meaning “anointed”—a reference to Christ, the Son of God. Several facts about the verb “set” needs to be noticed.

First, the verb “set” (tithyetsebu) is a Hebrew Hithpael, reflexive verb; that is, the kings of the earth are stirring themselves up. The hostility clearly resides in the kings who are constantly declaring war against the LORD God; that is, they want to be gods among men and the only sovereigns on earth.

Second, the verb “set” is in the emphatic position in the sentence and clearly emphasizes the intense, independent, rebellious nature of kings.

The preposition “against” is properly translated, but could also be worded “upon” or “over” the LORD; that is, the kings of the earth have stationed themselves as masters over men. They claim sovereignty over matters pertaining to the LORD God. The rulers of the earth do not recognize the authority of God and His Law-word over them. They see themselves as the only sovereign.

When Chief Justice Roy Moore placed the Ten Commandments in the corridor of the Alabama courthouse and explained that it represented the need of all Judges to surrender to the authority of the LORD God and His Law-word, the federal judge would have nothing to do with it. The Federal Court declared that, “the state may not acknowledge the sovereignty of the Judeo-Christian God”(morallaw.org).

Before us is a continuation of the question:

“Why have the kings of the earth set themselves up as lords and masters in opposition to the sovereignty of God and His anointed King, the Lord Jesus Christ”?

The Rulers of the Earth Speak

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

Now the kings speak to one another. The Hebrew Piel, plural verb “let us break” is cohortive in form and meaning . . . and it is in the emphatic position. The Piel verb communicates intense determination to break from Puritan Christianity. Being in the emphatic position this verb clearly communicates the excessive vigor and profound madness of political leaders united in a new world order that incites rebellion against the Triune God and His law-order.

The term “their bands” is a feminine plural, a reference to the Trinity.

“Their” would be a reference to the “us” of Genesis 1:26-28.

The words “bands” and “cords” refer to chains or ropes that tether animals. These terms designate the Claim the Creator-God has on all the people of the earth. They are used metaphorically of the sovereignty of the LORD God and the absolute binding authority of His law over mankind.

The new world order encourages rebellion against the authority of Christ and His Law-word, and is hell-bent on initiating dramatic changes to build the utopia of despots — wealth, power, and control of man’s destiny.

Are there any rulers who have taken an oath to the LORD God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to uphold His law? Maybe one, the Queen of England. But, she has so violated her oath. Isn’t this treason against God and the British people? At best, kings take oaths to uphold the laws of man—which by the way, are almost always hostile to God’s law-order.

Heaven’s Response to the Rebellion

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

To an informed Christian the hostility of congressmen and our nation’s leaders is like a burr under our saddle. Righteous men are constantly irritated and agitated by the insanity of our political leaders. Rightly so! Thus, we pray, “Hallowed be thy name; thy Kingdom come;”

How does God respond to the sociopathic madness of kings? Well, He certainly isn’t threatened by any . . . or all of them! “He laughs!”

The term “laugh” (shachaq) is translated “to make sport of” in Judges 16:25. It is a term of contempt. The word “derision” (la-ag) means “to mock” and is translated “laughed thee to scorn” in 2 Kings 19:21. The temporal power of weak, proud rulers is no threat to the omnipotent power of the eternal God.

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

What is the future of the rebel kings? He has a message for them.

The verbs “speak” (Piel) and “vex” (Piel) in Hebrew poetry are complementary terms. Both clearly state intense energetic action.

The word “vex” is translated “troubled” (Genesis 45:3), “dismayed” (Exodus 15:15) and “terrified” (ESV 1 Samuel” 28:21). God is not some sweet, indulgent passive Santa Claus type figure. Before us is a reflection of deliberate, controlled, intense action of an angry God.

The word “wrath” and “sore displeasure” are also complementary terms.

The Hebrew word for “wrath” is “nostril” (aph); that is, when a man feels wronged, his nostrils flare.

The Hebrew word for “sore displeasure” means “heat” or “burning anger.” The imagery before us is that of an angry dragon with flared nostrils blasting balls of fire upon his adversaries. The sudden stroke and death of Lenin (1924) after his order (1922) to starve five million Russian peasants comes to mind.

To put it bluntly, God is not happy with the rebel nations. Is there any government committed to His law-order? Consequently, He is opposed to the proud, humanistic states. It is not his will that any of them succeed. All will fail. He will vex them in His wrath.

The Father Speaks

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

“I have set” is the Hebrew Qal perfect verb *nacak* which means “to pour out.” The imagery before us is that of a metallurgist heating iron ore in a blast furnace at a smelting plant to pour hot iron into a mold to make steel. The Father emphatically states that He has His king, and He has installed him permanently on His holy hill.

The “holy hill” is a reference to the Heavenly Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the assembly of the saints, the heavenly Jerusalem of which carnal Jerusalem was a type.

This is a decree “written in stone!” It is an iron-clad, perpetual, indisputable fact. In contrast to antlers that fall among deer and elk every season, are permanent horns of power like that of a ram. In contrast to the changing winds and the sands of time are the eternal shores; in contrast to the fading grass on the prairie are the mighty rocks and boulders of the earth; in contrast to the fragile tents of man are the pyramids of Almighty God. In contrast to fragile, weak, temporal rulers is God’s eternal, immutable, anointed King. In contrast to the weak, flawed egotists that arise to power out of the sea of politics to ride the wave of temporal power to the sand castles of nations is God’s chosen King, the Lord Jesus Christ, established forever on God’s holy, eternal mountain. God rules, not man!

Before us is the SOLUTION to all political disputes — recognition of and submission to the Lord Jesus Christ as Head of the Nations. Oh, that the kings of the earth were humbly submitted to the authority of Christ, under oath to obey His Law-word. How different the evening news!

The Son Speaks

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

A public notice is given. The term “decree” refers to a resolve, order, or statute.

The first usage of the word “decree” (choq) is in reference to land given to the priests by Pharaoh which Joseph, Vice-regent of Egypt, was not permitted to seize or sell (Genesis 47:22); that is, Pharaoh’s decree was set in stone. His decree was absolute and permanent. It is like an executive order, but more firm. Thus, God’s decree to the Son is absolute, permanent, forever, immutable, and unchangeable.

The decree is one of relationship. The Son is the God-man, very God of God, eternal, from the beginning. But, at a point in time, if we dare use the term “time,” the Father declared His relationship to the Second Person of the Triune God as that of a father to a son. He is now “The Son.” The term “begotten” does not refer to an actual birth, but the genesis of a legal relationship.

In the movie “Ben Hur,” Ben Hur wins the affection of a Roman Senator, receives his freedom, and is declared a son. He existed before the declaration. The decree did not initiate his existence; only a new status. The same is true between the Father and the Son. The Second Person of the Triune God was declared a Son.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

Favored by the Father, the Son is granted special favors. All He has to do is ask, and the nations are His.

This is the Spirit’s way of informing us that Christ claims jurisdiction over all men and their institutions. Both the right and power to rule the nations belong to Christ: “Who is the head of all rule and authority” (Colossians 2:10). But, Christ has done more than ask. He has purchased the nations with His own blood, the currency of the spirit world. The iron scepter is in nail pierced hands. The nations are as fragile as pottery. The One who made a whip and cleansed the temple will use His rod of iron to smash the nations. Rebels who will not bow the knee will be broken into hundreds of pieces.

The Spirit Speaks

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

The Spirit of God gives sweet counsel to the rulers of the earth. The objects of instruction are kings, presidents, parliaments, public officials in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. They are exhorted to be wise and receive the following instruction.

Unfortunately, however, the nations seems to be in the hands of fools and madmen.

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

The word “serve” means “to work” or “to labor” or “to obey.” The kings of the earth are exhorted to serve the LORD; that is, to obey His Law-word.

The command “rejoice” refers to voluntary service. Holy fear ought to mix with joy and the privilege of serving the LORD God. Ancient Israel found out how great a sin it is to not serve the Lord with joy.

Deuteronomy 28:47 “Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity...”

Governments are in place to serve the interest of Heaven and the law of the LORD God; to protect human rights and freedom; and, to punish those who infringe on the rights of others.

The phrases “with fear” and “with trembling” is a call to careful and precise obedience to His commands and purpose (Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:2, 13, 24; 8:6; 10:12, 20; 13:4; 17:19; 19:20).

The Spirit is calling for allegiance to the Word of God, not allegiance to a political party or the new world order or to the U.S. Constitution. Oh, what a different place the world would be if we had Christian leaders committed to the will of God and served His purposes to the best of their knowledge and ability. Today, however, it seems we have madmen ruling nations who are hell bent on serving their own lust or Marxist program or the agenda of the new Zionist world order to mention a few.

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

“Kiss” refers to the ancient tradition of subjects kissing the ring or scepter of a king — of demonstrating devotion and loyalty to the crown. Kings take no pleasure in rebels. To arouse the wrath of a king is to perish like Haman before Xerxes. After the Earl of Essex “half” drew his sword against Queen Elizabeth, she ordered him to be executed.

All the kings of the earth all called to “kiss the Son:”

Kiss Him as the Son of God, the historical Christ who appeared in Bethlehem.

- Kiss Him as the Creator for “by Him all things are Created.”
- Kiss Him as the King of the rulers of the earth.
- Kiss Him as the only Lawgiver, King, Priest, and Prophet.
- Kiss Him as the Savior King Who gave His life to save His people from their sins.
- Kiss Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
- Kiss Him as the Gateway to God.
- Kiss Him as the Mediator between Heaven and Earth.
- Kiss Him as the Lamb of God, the Sin-bearer.
- Kiss Him as the Way of Salvation.
- Kiss Him as the True Israel of God, the fulfillment of all OT promises.
- Kiss Him as the Head of the Church.

- Kiss Him as the risen, ascended Savior and Lord sitting at the Right hand of God.
- Kiss the Son lest He be angry you perish in the way.
- Kiss the Son that you may be truly blessed of God with eternal life and enter His kingdom.

“Kiss the Son” is equivalent to invitation terms like “receive Christ as Lord and Savior,” “believe,” “repent,” “bow the knee to Christ,” and “Confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raise him from the dead” (Romans 10:9). The psalmist is telling us to “look to Christ” and be saved. To reject Christ is to perish, for “whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (John 3:18).

The term “blessing” refers to salvation. To “kiss the Son” is to be reconciled to God and to possess eternal life and the blessings of the age to come.

A blessing is promised to rulers and all those who put their trust in him. Trust here is more than an occasional glance toward heaven, but a genuine commitment to trust and obey. “In God we Trust,” is our nation’s motto. Oh, that it would be more than mere words. Oh, that we might acknowledge there is only one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

The schism between the United States and Russia or between Hamas and Israel are the result of nations rejecting God’s Law-order. The solution between the United States and Russia and between Gaza and Israel is for all parties to “kiss the Son.” There is peace at the cross. If Jews and Gentiles can find peace at the cross, so can Arabs and Jews, Americans and Russians.

Before us is the reason for all political conflict in the world today, and the solution to every political problem known to man in seed form. The problems are not political, but spiritual; likewise, the solution is not political diplomacy or war, but confession of and surrender to the Son. Kiss the Son and be reconciled to God.

Source: Stockton, (2015). “Towards Exegetical Eschatology”

Psalm 8 - What is Man?

Thou Has Set Thy Glory above the Heavens



This is a psalm of David and it has the smell of the outdoors all over it.

In looking at the stars and moon, David perceived the greatness of the transcendent Creator. Because He also saw God at work providing for man and beast, he marveled at God's intense concern for men. Perhaps, he asks the most important question a person can ask, "What is man that Thou, O Glorious God, art concerned about him? Why did You make man a king and give him stewardship over the earth and over all creatures that fly above, that walk on the earth, and swim in the waters of this world?"

We have a crisis in anthropology! Because modern man sees men as masses of protoplasm crawling out of some antediluvian swamp who needs to be exterminated to achieve "sustainable development," the truth of this psalm becomes of ultimate importance.

The Greatness of God

Psalm 8:1 <To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.> O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Barnes notes that "Gittith" refers either to a musical instrument played by the Gittites, the people at Gath, or tunes on an instrument sung by those stomping grapes at the wine presses (gath) in Israel.

"O LORD our Lord" — O LORD (YHWH) our Lord (Adonai). The name "LORD" is Elohim's personal Name that separates him from all the alleged gods — a reference to His eternal nature — "I Am that I Am" -- a contrast to gods that do not exist.

The title "Lord" (Adonai) implies a relationship between the Creator and His creatures . . . as one of Master and Commander, Ruler and Owner, Governor and Overseer.

The idea behind "excellent" is greatness, majesty, and glory.

"in all the earth" implies the universality of God; that is, He is not a local deity, but the God of all mankind. Yes, He is the God of Israel, but He is also God of the Nations (Isaiah 13:1-20:6).

"Who hast set thy glory above the heavens" — "hath set" is in the imperative mood; "Set Thou Thy glory . . ." The idea being that God's Name should be exalted to the highest degree above the Sun, Moon, and stars. The application is to men — that men should reverence His Name in such a way that it is void of profanity, vanity, casualness, and the pedestrian — that men use the name of the LORD God carefully with honor, reverence, and dignity.

The Smallness of Man

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

“babes” and “sucklings” is a metaphor for the people of Israel. It does ***not*** refer to literal babies or children. Babies are the smallest human creatures among us. Thus, the greatness and grandness of God is contrasted with tiny infants. Oh, that all men would see themselves as they are — humble, perishable, vulnerable little-children created by the LORD.

“Out of the mouth of babes” appears to be a reference to the adult children of Israel singing praises to God — “Hosanna to the Son of David,” against the objections of the Pharisees and Scribes, and is perhaps alluded to by him in Matthew 11:25” (Barnes).

“Hast thou ordained (yasad) strength” — The word “ordained” means to lay a foundation as in a stone building (Ezra 3:12; Isaiah 54:11).

“strength” refers to the power that God gives to pious men who serve Him. The best pastors among us are little children endowed with power from on-high.

“because of thine enemies” — The idea here is that God uses humble people devoted to Him to confront political giants standing on soapboxes of arrogance and haughtiness.

“still” (shabat) = desist, still, or rest. We get the word “Sabbath” from this word. As a Hiphil verb it means “to cause to rest.”

“that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger” — God is pleased to use humble men, women, and children to “silence” His enemies. And, His enemies are our enemies.

“avenger” refers to violent, cruel, angry men . . . men who abuse political power.

Praise is to God is what complaining is to the Devil. God loves it, the Devil hates it. Praising God brings out the roar in corrupt men of political power.

The Grounds of the Greatness of God

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

“fingers” — David personifies God. The use of the term “fingers” seems to imply skill and dexterity rather than raw power.

The original draft of this psalm may have been composed at night when David was observing the starry sky.

The word “ordained ” refers to something built, constituted, or appointed. The accuracy of these traveling stars is nothing short of stunning. We set clocks by their precision. In fixing

these stars in their course across the heavens shows His astounding glory: power, accuracy, skills, engineering precision, and kingly majesty.

4-8 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

This may be the most important question that man can ever ask. It is also asked in Psalm 144.

What is it about tiny, finite man that is of such interest to Heaven? Why has God endowed him with so much honor and subjected earth to his control? We could go on: Why does God look at him? Listen to him? Answer him? Why does God want to save men? Why did He send His Son to redeem men? The answer of course is that "God is love." He loves, not because who we are, but because of Who He is — a God of love!

"mindful of him" implies that God thinks about man, loves man, and attends to his needs in innumerable ways.

"son of man" refers to any descendants of Adam.

"visits him" informs us that He is an all-caring Creator — a personal God Who knows, thinks, considers, and attends to the needs and wants of men.

"lower than the angels" not only refers to man's spatial limitations, but to the fact that man does not have the agility and powers of an angel; that is, in his capacities, man is inferior to angels. He saves men, but not fallen angels. Why?

"crowned him with glory and honor" refers to the fact that the triune God made man in His image and gave him kingly dominion over the earth; that he shares the Lord's transient attributes: mind, emotions, volition, and sentient conscience that reflects the holiness of God; that He put "all things under his feet" addresses man's authority; his given authority over animals, plants, birds, fish, and earth. God made man to be a prince, not a peasant; a sovereign not a subject; a ruler, not a slave (Genesis 1:26-28).

The animal list of "sheep," "oxen," "beasts of the field," "fish," and "birds" inform us with particularity that man has authority over the animal kingdom in the sky, earth, and seas — a slap in the face to strict vegetarian "Mother Earth" religious fanatics (Genesis 1:26-28).

Note: that at the fall Eve and then Adam subjected themselves to the serpent, to nature, to animals, and to the spirit behind the serpent.

Man's inability to answer the question, "What is man?" has created a crisis in anthropology. Modern men in their anger see people as a "fungus on the surface of one of the minor planets" (Daphne Du Maurier); as a "cancer on the earth" (Julian Huxley) or as a "hairless ape" (Arnold

Schoenberg). It's a lot easier to kill a bug or a cancer or an "unwanted fetus" than men made in the image of God.

9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

"What words can reach his praises, who has a right to our obedience as our Redeemer?" (Matthew Henry).

Like a good composer, the psalmist returns to his key note (Spurgeon)

"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name . . ." repeats the thought expressed in verse one. The difference being we are able to see the foundation of the psalmist's reasoning in verses 2-8.

These words are a good way to end our thoughts about God during the day . . . our prayers at night . . . and our benedictions at church. May they be the first and last words on our lips.

Psalm 16 - The LORD Is My Portion Forever

In thee Do I Put My Trust



This psalm has rays of sunshine that burst through the clouds of darkness presenting to us the hope of immortality and the process of becoming a “holy one.”

A Prayer for Preservation

Psalm 16:1 Michtam of David.

That David is the author.

The title “Michtam” is uncertain. Most likely it is a musical term whose meaning has been lost in history. Some think the word comes from the Hebrew word “kethem” which refers to “gold:” that is, the psalm expresses David’s golden thoughts about the Lord.

The strange element about this psalm is its lack of parallelism. Because it lacks repetition and contrasts, it is sometimes difficult to interpret.

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

“trust”: As far as we can tell, David was the first to give the word “trust” (batash) a religious meaning. See Psalm 56. But, here the word “trust” is better translated “refuge.” Because David found refuge in God, He expected God to “preserve” (shamar = guard) him. Apparently, as was often the case with this soldier-prince, he felt like he was in some danger that threatened his life.

A Promise to God

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

“O my soul” is not in the text. It appears to be a gloss added by translators to give the text an intelligible reading.

Moreover, the NIV, ESV, and NASB translated the text, “I said unto the Lord” (Adonai, and not YHWH). David acknowledges God has a right to rule over him because He is the sovereign Lord.

Barnes renders the text this way: “Thou art my Lord – Thou hast a right to rule over me; or, I acknowledge thee as my Lord, my sovereign.”

“My goodness extendeth not unto Thee” is another interpretive challenge. What does the psalmist mean by “goodness?” Is he referring to moral character or happiness? Is David saying he has no goodness that benefits God or is he saying he has no happiness without God?

Some think that David is renouncing his own merit.

Ellicott notes the insertion of the word “extendeth.” This word introduces the fine thought that “Merit lives from man to man; and not from man to God.” Others think David is saying that he has no goodness apart from God; or that his happiness is not beside the Lord nor separate and independent of Him; that all his happiness was grounded on his relationship to the Lord.

The Latin Vulgate renders it: “My good is not given unless by thee.”

Barnes puts it this way: “My good is nowhere except in thee; I have no source of good of any kind – happiness, hope, life, safety, salvation – but in thee. My good is not without thee.”

A Passion for the Saints

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

The word “saints” and “the excellent” refer to God’s people.

David appears to be saying that his love for the saints is further evidence of his devotion to the Lord. Since David’s happiness was centered on God, his happiness extended to the company of God’s people. Though his piety did not profit the Shepherd, it did benefit the flock. A man who delights in the Savior will also delight in His saints. The man who is wealthy in Christ enriches the people of God. The one who loves the Lord will also love his people. Thus, the true mark of the Christian man is his attachment to Christ and His church.

A Perspective on Idolaters

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

“Sorrows” (atstsebeth: plural) refers to the miseries and troubles caused by accepting the doctrines of idols. Sorrows (pain, injury) and idols are metonyms.

Verse 4 is a contrast in thought from verse 3. While David was devoted to the saints, he denounced idolatry. He took umbrage against idols and the worship of false gods. A man cannot love truth unless he hates lies. He cannot love God unless he hates evil.

The word “hasten” (maw’ her) refers to the impetuous, thoughtless adoption of the rules and customs belonging to a particular idol-system. It is used of “purchasing a wife” (mother) in 1 Samuel 18:25. Ideas have consequences: that is, those devoted (married, contracted) to other gods multiply their troubles.

The Hebrew word “multiplied” (rajah) means “to become great or numerous.” Those who serve pagan gods multiply their miseries. Those who mine gold in heaven are the richest men on

earth. There are no gains to those who secretly worship idols or make up their own religion. Idols would include Baal-paganism, Hindu gods, and modern man's pursuit of money, fame, and power. "A rich man without God is just a poor man with money."

The "libations of blood" refers to the hideous rites of Moloch and Chumash, but since David was a good Hebrew he would not even mention the name of Baal. It was forbidden to do so among God's people.

Christianity is a bloody religion: "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." But, pagan religions abused and perverted blood sacrifice, whether by killing beasts or babies or by drinking blood and bathing in it — acts banned by the LORD God.

Uncomfortable in the company of the wicked, David found joy among the community of the saints. He is not only committed to God and His people, he detested idols and pagan rituals. He wouldn't even defile his lips by mentioning their gods and contemptible practices.

David was a man of deep love and deep hate. He loved the Lord and His people, and he hated lies, idols, and their contemptible practices.

5 The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintains my lot.

The pleasant thoughts in verse 5 & 6 are contrasted to sorrows associate with the practice of idol-worship in verse 4.

The word "portion" (ma'nah) means "lot." It is an inference to Numbers 18:20 where God said to the Levites: "I am thy portion and thine inheritance." In contrast to the sorrows associated with adopting the rules and customs of an idolatrous system, David considered his wealth in the Lord.

What does a Christian lack since the Father has given all things into the hands of the Son (3:35). He who owns Christ possesses all things. What a comfort for the disciples who picked up the cross, forsook all, and followed the Lord (Luke 14:33). Moreover, consider the integrity and brevity of the Ten Commandments in contrast to rigid, exhausting, multiplicitous statutes of governmental systems.

The word "cup" is a symbol for the "conditions of life" (Psalm 11:6).

The term "lot" refers to pebbles (dice) jiggled in a cup and dumped on a table to determine one's fortune.

The participle "maintainest" (tamak) means "to hold, embrace, grasp, or support;" that is, David's destiny was not in the hands of chance . . . or his choices . . . or the gods of chaos, but in the sustaining work of the Lord his Maker.

A Personal Perspective on God's Dealings in His Life

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

The word “lines” refers to boundaries or territories of one’s estate.

The word “pleasant” (na’iym) means “sweet, lovely, beautiful, and delightful.”

David was a man blessed with the presence and knowledge of God. As he looked at his place in the Land of Milk and Honey, he considered himself to have been given a pleasant portion. While he wanted more of God, he did not want more than God. Having resolved to live in the Land of Light, Life, and Love, David realized that his lot was considerably greater than the puny allotment of idol worshippers. He was in Immanuel’s Land under Immanuel’s Love. What more could a man want?

A Positive Persuasion on How to Live Life

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

“bless” means “to speak well of” and “to adore.”

By “counsel” David refers to God’s choices and guidance in life.

The term “reins” refers to the heart or the mind of the inner man. The word “instruct” includes warnings, rebukes, and hard lessons learned during classes at God’s Night School. “Night” is a metaphor for the difficulties and adversities experienced in the University of Life.

David is saying that in devoting himself to the LORD he was not abandoned to his own idealism and delusions; rather, God disciplined, instructed, and trained him in the way he should go. Under His law, David became a better man — a man fit to be king of Israel.

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

“At thy right hand” is a place of privilege. It is a military term referring to a commander’s chief of staff or “right-hand man.”

David set the LORD before him; that is, he was guided by the counsels of the LORD, and not the passions and pouting of the wicked. Because David built his house near the throne of God, neither wealth, business, sorrows, or the cares of this world could derail him from following his Commander.

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

The “therefore” takes us back to how David built his house on the Rock of God’s presence and not on the sand of fake promises made by idols.

The word “rest” can be translated “tabernacled;” that is, David found a home in God’s hope-promises.

“Heart,” “glory” (reins, heart, or bowels) and “flesh” are metonyms for the personal possession of hope. Using all his members, David rejoiced in his Savior and lot in life.

Secure and feeling secure, David's heart was glad. Because there was joy and hope in his heart, his cup ran over with confidence and a sense of security.

A Positive Perspective on the Future

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

The "thou" is the LORD God.

The word "leave" means to commit, abandon, or forsake.

"Hell" refers to sheol, the unseen nether world of the dead (Psalm 6:5).

The appellation "holy one" means chosen one, favored one, and beloved one. It refers to a person separated unto God by a contract:

"Gather my faithful people to me, those who made a covenant with me by offering a (blood) sacrifice" (Psalm 50:5).

God deals with men through contracts. All contracts have two parties, consideration, and obligations. The consideration in a contract / covenant with God is blood — the currency of the spirit world.

The Hebrew word "corruption" (shakkath) refers to sinking into a "pit, grave, or abyss." It refers to utter destruction and not partial corruption. It is used of a lion being trapped into a pit during a winter snow-storm in 2 Samuel 23:20. The meaning of the passage is clearly that the LORD will **not** abandon His beloved to death.

Man's fundamental problem is that he is going to die. "To be left to Sheol" and "to see the pit" are synonyms for "to die," and "to never see life" (Ecclesiastes 9:9). This is a sunrise text that breaks through the darkness holding out the hope of immortality — a text which comes with a claim and proof of claim at high noon through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

The text is applied to Jesus since he is "the Holy One" by virtue of His life and resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:27). Since He defeated death and solved man's fundamental problem, we who have been made "saints" by his work for us and in us. We too will share in the victories of His resurrection from the dead.

*See notes on Psalm 16:8-11 as a type or figure of the resurrection of Christ in the addendum below.

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

We have in this verse the same thought which dominates the psalm — the thought of happiness and hope for those in covenant with God. Terms like "fulness of joy" and "pleasures evermore"

express the joy and peace associated with those dedicated to God . . . those separated from idols and their abominations.

All who know Christ can enjoy the sunrises of hope bursting through the clouds of despair in this dark world. This psalm holds out the hope of immortality and instructs us on the process of obtaining this hope.

Terms like “trust,” “thou art my God,” “not taking the name of other gods upon our lips,” (being instructed by God,” “setting the Lord before” me,” and becoming a “holy one” by covenant express matters of faith that save the soul — the gospel invitation terms in this psalm. Those who have the Lord as their “portion” have the “bread of life” and are the richest people on earth.

Maclaren pleads well: “Oh, my friend, ‘why do ye spend your money for that which is not bread?’ The life of faith on earth is the beginning, and only the beginning, of that life of calm and complete felicity in the heavenly places.”

Addendum Notes:

16:8-11 On the resurrection of Christ:

“Consider Psalm 16:8-11. Here the psalmist sets the Lord before him, as his rock and assurance, his gladness, joy, and security. He takes comfort knowing that God will not abandon his soul to sheol or “let your holy one see corruption.” This psalm, however, not only provides future hope to the Israelite in David’s day, but it also is applied to Christ, even predicting his resurrection.

During Pentecost Peter applied Psalm 16 to God raising Christ from the dead (Acts 2:22-28). Peter points out the obvious, namely, that David is dead in his tomb to this day (2:29). But not so for Christ! “Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he(David) foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses” (2:30-32). The apostle Paul agrees. Proclaiming the gospel at Antioch in Pisidia, he appeals to Christ’s resurrection by quoting Psalm 2 and 16. Like Peter, Paul observes that David is long dead, but God raised Christ up and he did not see corruption (Acts 13:34-37).” (Matthew Barrett, Credo Magazine, “The Resurrection of Christ in the Old Testament,” 3-26-2013).

Psalm 22 - The Afflictions and Consolations of Messiah

The Sufferings of Christ



David is said to be the author of this psalm, and there is nothing in the poem that would contradict this conclusion.

Psalm 22 has been categorized as a Messianic Psalm because it mirrors our Lord's suffering on the cross; that is, the agony that David expressed metaphorically was literally fulfilled in our Lord's afflictions at Calvary.

David felt the shadow of the cross in his pilgrimage on earth; but, for a brief moment in time and for what seemed like an eternity, the Son felt the burning heat of what it was really like to be cut off from fellowship with the Father, "My, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Psalm 22, 23, 24 present a trilogy of Messianic themes:

Psalm 22 is picture of the Good Shepherd suffering to save his flock ([John 10:11, 14](#)); and,

Psalm 23 is a picture of the Great Shepherd providing for his flock ([Hebrews 13:20](#)); and,

Psalm 24 is a picture of the Chief Shepherd coming to take his flock home ([1 Peter 5:4](#)).

The key, therefore, to interpreting this Hebrew chorus is to feel the suffering of David and to consider how the imagery was ultimately fulfilled in Christ. David had the privilege of sharing in the suffering of the Lord in his own journey:

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:21). David's afflictions were a prophetic forecast of the afflictions of the Good Shepherd fighting to save His people at the cross.

However, this psalm is not just about doom and gloom; it is about what Christ had to endure to redeem you and me. Before us is the theme of salvation and glorification of the Son.

The Psalm begins with a trial, but ends in triumph; it begins with pain, but ends with prosperity. This hymn shows our Lord's suffering at midnight, but ends with the sun rising on the great congregation.

1 (To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.)

Superior songs call for a composition constructed by the chief Musicians.

The term “Aijeleth Shahar” literally means “the hind of the morning dawn.” A composition style known to the psalmists of David’s time, but unknown to modern men. Possibly, it refers to the sunrise and the horns of light extending across the eastern sky.

Many psalms begin with a positive thought like “Surely, God is good to Israel” (Psalm 73:1). But, this psalm begins abruptly with the unthinkable and incogitable: God forsaking man . . . His creation . . . the greatest affliction to ripple through the hearts and minds of men. How can this be?

Affliction Caused by God

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

The word “roaring” (sheagah) refers to the distress-call of a lion caught in a trap. It is used here to describe the agonizing feelings of King David as well as the distress call of our Lord upon the cross (Isaiah 5:29; Ezekiel 19:7; Zechariah 11:3).

“God” is in the vocative and it is used twice: Eli, Eli (Hebrew); O Theos, O Theos (LXX) — a literary tool to communicate the level of anguish experienced by our Lord. The pronoun “my” implies a private, personal relationship with Theos — a private pain with a despairing tone — or, as St. Mark has it, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.*

“Me” -- We can understand God forsaking the wicked and the pathetic, disheveled, self-centered beggar . . . but “Me” your beloved?

The Hebrew word “why” (lama) turns the sentence into a question — NOT because our Lord was seeking an answer to His query. Jesus knew why He was suffering. The question is for our benefit, so we might contemplate the reason our precious Lord was upon the cross — an innocent lamb made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him . . . because the chastisement of our peace was upon the Lamb when God laid on Him “the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.

We receive more insight into the suffering of Christ on the cross: “I cry” day and night without intermission, but “thou hearest not.” Is there a greater agony among men? Oh, the prayers of those in hell that will never be answered!!

Because Christ was a man, He could suffer for us; because He was God, He could suffer enough! Selah.

But, the story does not end without hope. Christ was heard in that he feared (Hebrews 5:7).

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

Now we are given a reason for the Lamb's affliction. God is *holy*. When our sins were imputed to Christ on the cross, the Holy Father turned his back on the Son. Selah.

There is another perspective. The conjunctive "but" in English adds hope. In spite of seeming desertion, the psalmist believed his state of suffering was not permanent. He could still trust the Holy One. All those in a storm know that suffering has an end. The rain, thunder, and lightening will stop. The Sun will come out. Night will turn into day. This is our heritage in Christ.

"Thou inhabitest the praises of Israel:" The "praise of Israel" is not the choruses of His people. Rather, the "praises of Israel" refers to the Ark of the Covenant, the throne of God, His position as King between the cherubim; that *God is there* (Jehovah-Shammah) was the privilege, honor, blessing, glory, and praise of Israel. In a secondary sense, "the ever-ascending praises of His people become a throne for the Divine King, and take the place of the outstretched wings of the cherubim" – Ellicott.

4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. 5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

That the Father did not deliver the Son from the horrors of Calvary have mystified men through the centuries. The LORD delivered Abraham, Jacob, Gideon, and Hezekiah. Why didn't He deliver Christ from death on the cross? The answer lies in the greater victory of His resurrection from the dead — proof that death is not Lord — proof with strict proof of claim that He has the keys of life and death — proof that Christ discharged our debt.

This is an argument of David . . . of Christ . . . and all of God's people. Your people trusted you and were delivered; I trust you like you have taught me. Why shouldn't you answer my prayers? Your holiness (faithfulness, et al.) is the commonwealth of Israel. You delivered Gideon, Samson, and Samuel. Surely, you will deliver me. . . . but when? Oh, the "when" of deliverance!

My prayer: You are my Praise . . . my Hope! I am your child. I trust You. And, now I claim my inheritance in the commonwealth of the true Israel of God. Deliver me, O God, from my affliction.

Affliction Caused by Men

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

David expresses his true feelings. Instead of feeling like he was a prince among his people, he feels like a worm soon to be crushed under the feet of men — a reproach (taunt) of men — something despised (contemptible) by the people. It is one thing to be despised by government

officials or madmen in power . . . but, by the people of God? Who can understand why one is attacked by the sheep?

What holy, righteous, outspoken servant of God has not experienced inexplicable rejection by God's people?

Here is one answer: Christ was delivered to death by three government institutions. "When government is god in the minds of Christians, you cannot expect them not to betray you."

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

"laugh me to scorn" means "shoot out the lip" (patar) – see a description of our Lord's suffering at the cross (Luke 23:35; Matthew 27:39). Instead of meeting pity and compassion, our Lord was met with contempt and insult. Furthermore, the mockers seemed to have no restraint or shortage of insults. O, the blindness of man . . . and the wisdom of God!

Let us remember that the world does not hate Christians. It hates Christ because He exposed their evil (John 7:7). In the early days of our Lord's ministry, the people did not hate the disciples . . . BUT, after three years of discipleship . . . when they matured and became like Christ, the world hated them (John 15:18). Likewise, the world does not hate Christians. It hates disciples carrying a cross.

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

This is a taunt muttered towards Christ on the cross by his enemies.

The word "trusted" (galal) is a Hebrew imperative meaning "to roll away;" i.e. to roll one's burdens onto the LORD (Psalm 37:5; Proverbs 16:3); that is, Christ submitted to the will of the Father and trusted Him to deliver him from death.

The word "deliver" is a Piel verb meaning "to escape" fully and completely. The grounds of this trust is that the psalmist (Savior) delighted himself in the Father. Surely, God will deliver those who belong to Him and love Him! But, the Jews used this perception to taunt the Redeemer in a sarcastic and mocking way: if you are truly God's Son, come down from the cross ([Matthew 27:43](#)).

9 But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. 10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.

To further heighten the tragedy of being forsaken by God, the psalmist infers his relationship to God and his trust in God began while he was still in his mother's womb . . . upon her breasts. That is, the psalmist is no "Johnny come lately," or "fair-weather friend."

Jesus was devoted to the Father *ab aeterno*, and His trust was true, genuine, real, and substantial. Why kind of God would forsake a faithful, devoted Son? Surely, God will rescue those who

delight in Him. While the Father did not rescue the Son from the terrors of atonement and the agony of the cross, He rescued Him from the grave — a greater victory than saving Him from the cross. Moreover, God rescues all those in the faith — the weak and strong.

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

On holy ground, we are permitted to hear the heart-beat of the Son on the cross — “be not far from me.”

Moreover, this is the heart cry of all God’s people: Rescue me when trouble is near . . . when there is none to help.

12 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.

Here the psalmist compares his enemies to well-fed, Spanish fighting bulls (Toro Bravo), the bulls of Bashan, a land northeast of the Jordan; e.g., a metaphor describing the horned animosity of the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees.

13 They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

To help the reader understand our Savior’s helplessness and the power of the enemy, he employs the metaphor “roaring lion.” Few things in life are more frightening than facing a starving lion alone in a forest. Wrongfully arrested by a legion of temple / Roman police, the Lord faced the illegal, all-night trial and false accusations of paid witnesses organized by the Sanhedrin-priests — the roaring lions of legalistic Judaism.

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

“Poured out like water” refers to the suffering of the Redeemer. He compares himself to a jug of malleable water that is so easily disposed of by men; and, his vital organs to being like wax melted under the heat of the cross.

“All my bones are out of joint” refers to the dislocation of skeletal parts — a metaphor for intense pain and the total helplessness of the Good Shepherd.

“like wax” is a simile exposing his mortality and the ease of destroying the manly Savior.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

“My strength” could be translated “my palate.”

The term “potsherd” refers to a part of a dry, broken, clay pot — a pot made out of wet clay.

“cleaveth to my jaws” describes intense thirst.

On the cross the Lord compresses all his suffering into the words, *"I thirst."* Likewise, this text reveals the acute suffering of the Savior, and the manner of his death — death by dehydration at the cross. Oh, the agony of crucifixion! Let us never forget!

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

"Dogs" refer to the enemies of Christ. The psalmist compares the actions of the priests and Pharisees to scavenger dogs that hunt in packs; that is, the terrors of Herod, the Sanhedrin, and Rome's police force punctured him to the bone.

The word "pierced" means "to dig" or "to claw" like a lion. Ellicott believes the best translation of this text should read, "The band of villains (literally, breakers) surrounded me, binding my hands and feet so as to cut them." While David felt like his hands and feet were being cut to the bone, Christ literally, physically experienced the depth of this excruciating pain.

17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

This appears to be a reference to Christ's arms and limbs being extended upon the cross. A spectator could easily identify define his skeletal structure.

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

One should stop and consider how these words were literally fulfilled at the cross where even the soldiers gambled for His one and only cloak (Matthew 27:35).

The Prayer of the Afflicted

19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

Here we see the cries of a desperate, deserted, dying man. All others having forsaken him, the Lord cried out to the Father to sustain and deliver Him.

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

The metaphor of "dog" and "sword" appear again as agents of death. The verb "deliver" is an imperative — the language of prayer.

The word "darling" refers to an only, beloved child. And, Jesus was God's one and only child abandoned at the cross to suffer for the sins of men.

Following the rule of parallelism, the "darling" is a synonym for "my soul."

Dogs shred and devour. The sword severs. The psalmist feared what we fear: having a soul divided by daggers of doubt, the cleaving knife of covetousness, and the paring knife of passion; having his soul devoured by the pit bulls of pride, wolves of wrath, foxes of fornication, the scavengers of strife, hounds of hatred, the rottweilers of revenge, and the like.

[By way of personal application consider how the enemy uses its swords of disinformation to produce divided affections and double motives. Duplicity abounds in hearts and minds. People often have a public life and a private life; a public persona and a private personality.]

Brian White observed “We never really grow up; we just learn how to act in public.” Our life before men and before God is often different. Secret lusts act as a clever to steal our affections and slice away at pure devotion to LORD God. The Apostle James warns of being “double minded;” i.e. having two masters, two souls, two personalities, two ambitions, two motives, two loves — one in heaven and the other of earth.

A prayer: Lord, thank you for Christ’s pure devotion to holiness. Keep my soul intact, and may I serve you with undivided affections. May I be a whole man completely devoted to You.

21 Save me from the lion’s mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

Though abandoned by men, our Lord expresses hope — that the Father would hear his prayers from “the horns of the unicorns” (buffalos) could refer to God’s omnipresence: from sunrise to sunset, from the rising Sun to the going down of the same, from east to west, to the heavens above to the earth below; but, most commentators consider the horns of the unicorns as a metaphor for enemies with horns: water buffaloes, rams, bulls, antelope, and deer — the imagery of angry, frightened wild beasts.

Consolations of the Afflicted

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

Our precious Savior died on the cross, but was raised from the dead. Here we have the consolations of the risen, ascended, glorified Savior sitting at the right hand of the Father.

The “I” is our Savior and Champion Who has passed from death into life. Our precious Lord is head and shoulders above every man. But here, the resurrected Redeemer calls redeemed men his “brethren;” of the same mother with similar DNA in a physical sense; and, in a spiritual sense because we are part of the great congregation — the church — the family of God.

Jesus was a Rabbi, Teacher, and Master to the disciples. In John 15, He called them “friends.” After the God-man rose from the dead, he calls his disciples “brethren” — a term of endearment and intimacy — a name that honors Him and humbles us.

His promise is “I will declare” thy Name (the Father-God) to future generations. If you know the Lord today, it is because Jesus fulfilled His promise and declared “His name” to you; that is, all Christians become his “brethren” because Christ declared to believing men “thy name” “of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” (Ephesians 3:15).

23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

That Christ revealed the Father to men merits a Godly response. Because the Good Shepherd reached out to us who “fear the LORD,” He deserves “praise” (hal’al). The verb “praise” is an imperative. We get the word “hallelujah” from the Hebrew root. Those that “fear the LORD” are Christians.

The “seed of Jacob” and “seed of Israel” is a reference to Hebrews in David’s time, and a reference to the New Israel composed of the spiritually responsive among Jews and Gentiles during the church age.

“Fear him” is a salvation term — an imperative. “Fear Him” and be saved. “Glorify him” is a term of sanctification — an imperative defining the privilege and duty of all the redeemed.

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

The “he” is a reference to the Father; the One “afflicted” is the Son.

Philippians 2:11-13 “He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”

The word “affliction” (enuth) refers to the suffering of the Savior, and in part, to the troubles experienced by Christians. The Father heard the prayers of the Son; and, for this reason believers have grounds to trust Him.

This psalm begins with the Son’s cry of abandonment; however, this text assures us the Father didn’t abandon Christ to the grave. Likewise, no one who trusts Him will be despised or abandoned by God; i.e. He will not forsake those who “roll themselves on to the Lord.”

If the LORD heard the prayers of the Redeemer, He will hear the prayers of the redeemed — your prayers. In the course of life, you may “feel” abandoned, but “feelings” are not reality. He will “never, never, no never, never forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5).

25 My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

The text could be translated “of thee cometh my praise.” The joy of Jesus is His Father. “My vows” refer to our Lord’s obedience to God’s law. “The great congregation” refers to the OT Hebrew nation in a lesser sense, and in an enlarger sense to the church planted among the nations.

The sense of this stanza is my purpose and praise shall be “from you” and “about you;” i.e. I will call to remembrance your mercy and grace; I will unite with others in celebrating your goodness and faithfulness.

26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.

The word “meek” (anaviym) means “afflicted” and “troubled.” This is a general promise to the church that her mission will prosper; that His power will be distributed to the poor and troubled; that the pious will have ample reasons to praise God. There is a power from God given to the weary that overcomes discouraging circumstances (Isaiah 40:21). He can and does make the poor rich and the weak strong.

“Jesus, the true Sacrifice, is the bread that came down from heaven; they who eat of this bread shall never die” (Clarke).

27 All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

The goal of history is the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. History is not going in circles. It is moving toward the Eschaton which includes the salvation of the righteous and judgment of the wicked. The nations easily “forget” God, but here we see a revived gospel— a movement in history that causes men to remember the Lord and His law.

The word “worship” (shachah) means “to bow the knee.” One day all the nations will bend to His will and acknowledge His authority to rule the world. Why wait? Do it now!

Isaiah 2:3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

28 For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations.

This gospel will go to the ends of the earth because the kingdom is the LORD's. By “kingdom” (meluwkah) the Spirit is not referring to a place . . . or an end-time event . . . but to the rule and authority of the LORD.

The issue before us is not whether the LORD has the right to rule mankind, or that He is the governor (mashal = dominion) of the nations, but *whether men will recognize him as such.*

When Christians pray, “Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come” they are NOT praying for a millennial kingdom, but that men might recognize His authority and surrender to it NOW!

29 All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

“All they that be fat upon the earth” refers to all classes of people: the rich and the poor; upper class and the working lower class. Urban and rural people will come and worship the true God -- not the poor and needy only or the afflicted and the oppressed only, but the rich and affluent. Not many wise . . . mighty . . . noble are chosen, but a few are ([1 Corinthians 1:26](#)).

“down to the dust” refers to those who are broken and crushed by the troubles of life.

“and none can keep alive his own soul” seems to apply to those who are sick and dying, the aged and diseased, the feeble and helpless among us. Every dying man that puts his trust in Christ can expect to have eternal life: “he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:25-26).

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

The term “seed” refers to a race, tribe, or family of people who serve God. The “seed” referred to shall be reckoned as a generation or family belonging to Him. There will always be a people of God serving Him on the earth. Moreover, the wicked will not triumph. Their plans will fail.

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

The “they” is the believing generation, the church.

One characteristic of the family of God is that they are engaged in proclamation, reclamation, and education so that the next generation can know the Lord. No man is born a Christian!! Every child, even in Christian families, must be born again. Thus, every generation of believers has the privilege and duty of proclaiming Christ to the next generation.

Psalm 23 - Me Shepherd Psalm



Written by David, this psalm is a favorite among the people of God. It is for sheep, not goats. It is about “me Shepherd” and not “our Shepherd.”

Listen to a [middle English reading](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xZ7ruvySRg) of the psalm –
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xZ7ruvySRg>

Books have been written on this psalm and scores of preachers have read it at funerals.

The perspective: Using the literary device of anthropomorphism, David sees himself as a sheep in green pastures bubbling over with confidence because of the Lord’s tender care.

This is a personal psalm about this sheep’s personal shepherd. The personal pronouns “me,” “my,” “I,” and “mine” are used 17 times in this psalm informing us the Christian life is not so much about religion as much as it is about a personal relationship with the Lord. While there is a communal aspect about Christianity, the bulk of this life is about one’s personal walk with Christ.

Psalm 23:1 <A Psalm of David.> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

This fat sheep looks over the fence at skinny sheep, lifts up his chin, and confidently brags, “The Lord is me shepherd . . .” who provides all that I need. I am well cared for. “I shall not want.” Calamity may come, but I am well protected.

This sheep has a Shepherd and not a shepherder. He is more like a dove than a driver of flocks; tender rather than terrible; gentle rather than hard; caring and not exacting; involved and not aloof; skilled rather than untrained; attentive rather than careless.

David did not find security in riches, wealth, or big bank accounts, but in the care of Good Shepherd.

David is not telling the reader that the Lord is a shepherd at large caring for the whole world. This is a personal testimony and not a global statement for the community. Thus, this psalm is inappropriate to read at most funerals because most men do not seek the Shepherd of Souls. The wicked always want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

“green pastures” = verdant pastures with freshly grown grass. The sheep continues his boasting. My Shepherd leads me to graze on orchard grass in high hills watered by the dew and rain. My Shepherd plans only the best for me. His green pastures never end.

“leadeth me” (nahal) is a Piel verb implying intense action. It means to lead to watering places and cause to rest. The context is the soul not business activity.

“still waters” or quiet waters express feelings of security. This sheep boasts that he lived free of fear . . . that His Shepherd led him to drink water by gentle streams lingering through meadows splattered with prairie grass and flowers. These streams were not rushing waters, hurricanes, or stagnant pools, but spring water fit to drink and easy to cross.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

“restoreth my soul” means “to turn back my life;” that is, He “quickens” me. “restoreth” means “to quicken” or “to revive.” “quicken” me is used nine times in Psalm 119.

“leadeth” (nachal) means to guide and direct; to bring something about. “paths” can refer to “paths, ways, or trenches.” In this case it refers to being guided in right living.

This sheep, like all sheep, became infected with parasites and other diseases. The shepherd revived him and nursed him back to health. He walked to and from pastures on safe trails he calls “paths of righteousness-” not easy, but the best trail for this flock.

Theologically, paths of righteousness refer to a lifetime of sanctification for the justified man — of growing in holiness and Christlikeness — a beautification of the Christian man.

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.

“valley of the shadow of death” may refer to literal sheep trails over deep ravines in Palestine.

Moreover, this is a metaphor for dark and gloomy periods of life lacking in sunshine and comfort. The LORD does not prevent the shadow of death from casting its blanket of darkness over us. But, during those times He is there protecting us from evil.

“walk” implies a steady pace without rushing or running.

The preposition “through” means “moving in one side and out of the other side:” That is, the believer does not live his life under the shadow of death . . . or in the valley of death. Rather, he moves through it into the sunshine on green pastures. Even as we face death, God’s sheep moves through the dark tunnel of despair into the marvelous light of immortality. We do not die! We sleep only to wake up in glory.

We go through the dark waters of the Jordan and emerge into the marvelous light of immortality. We do not die, we do but sleep but awake in glory — “for to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5). Death is not the end, it is the beginning; it is not the finish line, but the beginning of the fullness of eternal life. A believer may pass

under the shadow of death, but never be trampled on by the iron riggings of death. “He that believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?” asked Jesus.

Consequently, “I will fear no evil” – regardless of the darkness, gloom, and shadowy ravines, this sheep had no fear. The presence of the all-powerful, all-caring, ever-present Shepherd relieved him of all fears. Never alone, and never afraid!

“death in its substance has been removed, and only the shadow of it remains ... Nobody is afraid of a shadow, for a shadow cannot stop a man’s pathway even for a moment. The shadow of a dog cannot bite; the shadow of a sword cannot kill; the shadow of death cannot destroy us.” (Spurgeon)

The rod and staff are symbols of discipline and comfort, training and rescue.

“the rod” is a short stick used in combat to drive away enemies. The Shepherd used his rod to protect him from wolves, lions, and bears. Possibly, the rod was used to prod the sheep and to keep him moving, and the staff was used to restrain this adventurous sheep or to rescue him in perilous circumstances – when downcast in a pit or stuck on the side of a hill.

Shadows are dark, but the message of this text is one of victory and comfort.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Passing through the valley of the shadow of death, this flock arrives at a mountain feeding ground. The table here refers to high meadow lands where the green grass grows. . . . and where wild creatures roam. The imagery is that of a luscious banquet. These are not “safe zones” as enemies of the sheep are also there looking on with helpless cattiness.

“anointest my head with oil” refers to the Shepherd applying olive oil to sheep scabs and insect bites.

“my cup runneth over” is a metaphor borrowed from feasts expressing the feeling of personal abundance and cheerfulness.

6 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.

While wolves, lions, and coyotes stalked most flocks, this sheep felt like the Shepherd left him a legacy of goodness and mercy.

“goodness and mercy” are terms that express provision and protection.

“the house of the LORD” could refer to the temple – a figure of being a part of God’s family. To us the term refers to a better place in a better world, membership in the City of God – “the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the

spirits of just men made perfect And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:22-24).

Remember, the Lord Jesus Christ is the "Good Shepherd" Who gives His life for the sheep (John 10:10); the Great Shepherd Who provides, protects, and perfects His sheep (Hebrews 13:10) "the Chief Shepherd" Who cares for all the sheep and all the pastors in every pasture around the globe (1 Peter 5:4).

Psalm 24 - Crisis at the Gates

The King of Glory Shall Come In



This is a psalm about glory that challenges us to be our best.

With so many people on earth many think they are too insignificant for God to care about them:

“And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God? ([Isa. 40:27](#),

NASB)

Others conclude their problems are too complex, their resources too few, and their God too small to fix all that is broken in their life.

This psalm challenges the God-seeker to expand his thoughts about the King of Glory. This regal Person is not small but the man’s perceptions of Him may be. Consequently, considering the grand theme of this song is like taking multi-vitamins to grow in one’s theology.

Psalm 22, 23, and 24 are a trilogy of Messianic Psalms. Psalm 22 presents the suffering of Christ as the Good Shepherd Who gives His life for the Sheep; Psalm 23 presents Christ as the Great Shepherd that protects and provides for His sheep; and, Psalm 24 presents Christ as the Great Shepherd coming to rule over His sheep in the kingdom of God.

The background of this psalm is the time when David brought the ark the Ark of the Covenant from Kiriath Jearim to Jerusalem — an event that was frustrated by the death sentence on Uzzah the priest when he reached out to stabilize the tottering ark — a breach of transport protocol (1 Samuel 6; 1 Chronicles 13:6).

Psalm 24, Psalm 68, and Psalm 132 are dedicated to the glories of the ark coming to Jerusalem.

1 (A Psalm of David.) The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

David begins his introduction of the LORD with the most fundamental facts. He owns the earth . . . and the people . . . and the wealth thereof; that is, He has jurisdiction over everything, and every one. The earth does not belong to governments but to the people.

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

He is not only Possessor of Heaven and Earth, He is Captain of the Seas and its roaring mysteries. All bodies of water were created by Him and for Him. And, out of this water He created the earth. To claim the earth and seas belong to government is an arrogant overreach of authority.

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

This is possibly the most important question a man can ever ask himself.

There are many hills that boast of power and there are many mountains on which men seek the mysteries of life. David, therefore, queries his readers: Who is going to approach God's mountain to learn about Him?

The question is repeated second time with more specificity, "Who shall stand in his holy place?" Holiness? Holiness is the LORD's sensors that detect defiled intruders — a power deterrent warning sinners that death awaits the invader of His sanctity.

His holiness acts like foot soldiers at Buckingham Palace wearing full dress uniforms with red tunics and bear-skins hats authorized to kill trespassers.

It is easier to hold fire in the palm of the hand than to survive contact with pure holiness.

How can a sinner approach this holy God? Or, more significantly, how can One so pure and holy tolerate the unclean in His presence? A none-washed street-person in wrinkled clothes would have a better chance of reaching the Queen of England at Buckingham Palace than for a sooty sinner to touch the Divine presence. In David's first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem, Uzziah reached out his hand to steady the shaking ark and was struck dead. With this tragedy in David's mind he asks, "who shall stand in his holy place?"

Just as relevant, how was this holy God going to live in Jerusalem surrounded by flawed, unholy people?

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

Who shall enter His Holy House? The psalmist provides the answer. Him that hath clean hands. This is so simple, a little child can understand it. The one approaching God must wash his hands . . . and his soul.

As one preacher said, *God loves clean and He ain't crazy about ugly.*

In law, the "clean hands doctrine" refers to a party that is innocent of a crime . . . to the party that has injured no man or his property. Here "clean" and "pure" refers to those (1) who have NOT lifted up their soul to vanity (falsehood), but have lifted up their hand to the Most High God, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth (Genesis 14:1). This has the sense of accepting his rule over one's life; and, (2) rejecting deceit and hypocrisy as a way of life.

The first time Israel attempted to bring the ark to Jerusalem, the Levites neglected movement protocols and Uzzah was struck dead when he reached out to steady the ark.

Numbers 4:15 And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after

that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.

When the Levites brought the Ark to Jerusalem the second time, they did it right. They carried the ark on poles and not a cart. They studied God's instructions on how to carry the ark, and they sanctified themselves by washing themselves, putting on clean clothes, and strict abstinence (Exodus 19:10, 15).

1 Chronicled 15:14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

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

The man who lives by the "clean hands" doctrine before God is promised the blessing of salvation and righteousness from the LORD — a righteousness revealed in the gospel — a righteousness from Theos which comes by faith in Christ — a righteousness produced by the doing and dying of our Lord (Romans 3:21-22).

Job asked the ultimate question, "How can a man be just before God?" (25:4). The answer lies in "justification" by faith — a judicial act whereby God declares a man righteous and treats him as such (Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1).

This is not a self-scrub program, but an act of God that declares a man to have a right standing before God when He believes in the Son . . . a standing with effects that produce a cleans soul. Hebrews 9:14 teaches, the blood of Christ that was shed for our sins, cleanses "our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"

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

This text is addressed to "Jacob," i.e. to the people that know they need God; that know they are sinners; that know they are weak and cannot succeed in life without His blessing upon them.

"to seek they face" means to seek his grace, approval, and favor. Jacob was a man that nobody loved except the Lord. Those that seek the God of Jacob seek the grace of God.

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

Imagine this dramatic scene — an enormous parade of priests robed in white bearing swords marching toward the entrance of ancient Jerusalem carrying the Ark of the Covenant, the holy symbol of Divine sovereignty. As the armed priest approached the city gate, the gate-keepers proudly swing open the weathered doors to receive His Majesty.

But, the psalmist observes an unexpected crisis at the gates. The city gates are too old and too small to receive the King of Glory. The King will have to bow his head and humble Himself passing under the pillars. So, the psalmist orders the gates to "lift up your heads" because your

arches are too low to receive this exalted King — a literary device known as “personification” where by the writer addresses an inanimate object as if it were a person.

These gates are “everlasting doors,” grey with antiquity, hoary with age. Perhaps these weathered gates on this Jebusite city looked down upon Melchizedek, King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God, as he marched his army in the morning twilight to greet Abraham with bread and wine after his slaughter of the five kings. But in all the centuries that followed, these doddering doors had never seen such a grand and glorious King gracing the capital city with His presence (Maclaren).

“Lift up your heads” is Psalmist way of instructing men how to receive the King of Glory as their Lord and Savior. Humble yourself. Bow. Get low.

The lesson is clear: The one who wants a relationship with the King must wake up, wash up, and stand up; that is, the man seeking this King of Glory should rise to the occasion. He should dress honorably, speak with dignity, and behave with integrity. Dress up, wash up, and clean up. “Assume a virtue if you have it not” (Shakespeare).

We are told that Buckingham Palace has 775 rooms. These include 19 State rooms, 52 Royal and guest bedrooms, 188 staff bedrooms, 92 offices and 78 bathrooms. In measurements, the building is 108 meters long across the front, 120 meters deep (including the central quadrangle) and 24 meters high. It has 491 employees. But, even this is too petite for the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Our hearts are too small for this King. Our talents are too few to serve this King. Our gifts are inadequate. Our consciences are too dirty. “Lift up your heads, O ye Gates . . .”

America’s institutions are too complicated, too convoluted, and too corrupt for the King. “Lift up your heads, O ye Gates . . .”

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

Why would the psalmist shout the imperial order for the Gates to Lift of their Heads? Who is coming? Who is the King of Glory whose presence demands we clean up, wash up, and bow to Him?

Now the psalmist introduces us to this King. He is the LORD, strong and mighty. As “the LORD” He is the everlasting One; the Beginning and the End, the One who was, is, and shall be what we need Him to be; the Aleph and Tet (Tav) of all expressions wonderful. This is no ordinary person. He is strong in virtue, strong in justice, and strong in grace. He is mighty in knowledge, mighty in presence, and mighty in power. He is a regal King and those entering His presence should be their best and put on their best. Be humble or crumble.

So that we might know how mighty He is, the psalmist says it gain, “mighty in battle.” He is a bloody King that never lost a battle; a mighty King who defeated single-handedly man’s

greatest enemies: Satan, sin, and death; a bloody King who shed his own blood to save sinners like you and me.

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

This is the psalmist's invitation call for salvation. He repeats the main lesson of the occasion a second time to awaken moronic minds and dopey hearts. The arches above the gates are not tall enough . . . big enough . . . grand enough to honor the King of Glory. Humble yourself.

Make room for the king. Remove your idols. Confess Him as your Lord. Judge competitors. Clean out your heart and enlarge your soul to receive Him as your Master and King.

Churches would do well to ask themselves, "What can they improve so the King of Glory will be pleased to come in to meet with them?"

Psalm 29:1 Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness. The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters.

Psalm 29:9, . . . And in His temple everything says, 'Glory!'

Note: Churches would do well to review their protocols for church. Is attending a worship service in a t-shirt and wrinkled jeans with coffee up in hand the way to receive the King of Glory?

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

In case the reader fails to grasp the grandeur of the moment he ask the question a second time, not because he does not know the answer, but because he understands human minds are like bowls of Jell-O.

Likewise, for the dull of heart, he repeats the answer: Who is this King of glory? He is the Lord of Hosts, the Master and Commander of the Universe; the Captain of the armies of Heaven; the One who spoke and brought the heavens and earth into existence by His word. He is the King of Glory, the King of Righteousness, the King of Holiness, the King of Purity, the King of Humility, the King of Goodness, the King of Justice, and the King of Mercy. He is, He is, He is the King of Glory.

The King of Glory is coming to establish His kingdom on earth. "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). Is He your King? Do you have clean hands and are your Gates lifted up high enough to receive Him?

Psalm 40 – Mine Ears Hast Thou Digged



The inscription indicates David to be the writer of the psalm. It is addressed to the chief Musician” to whom David entrusted to create a composition fit for public worship.

We don’t know the occasion for this psalm, but it was written after some trial. Great trials, lead us to great lessons in life; and great thoughts drive the sensitive to compose great songs such as the one we have here. David was in the “pits.” Like the woman who spent all her money on physicians and then found the Great Physician, David found Christ at the bottom of his purse.

This is a messianic psalm. The suffering that happened to David in part was totally fulfilled in Christ — a suffering that led to our Deliverance from the Deep, Dark, Dank Well of Despair.

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39).

In reading this psalm, look for the wonders of the Son.

David Speaks

Deliverance from the Deep, Dark, Dank Well of Despair!

“He brought me up also out of an horrible pit”

Waiting Patiently

Calamity Described

Psalm 40:1 <To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.> I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

“I waited patiently” (qavan) is perhaps the most difficult discipline to master. It is a Piel verb meaning “to endure” or “to be still with expectation” during one of life’s afflictions. And, to endure in godly silence with virtue is the great triumph.

2 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.

Is there anything worse than being stuck in a dark, wet, muddy abandoned well alone without a rope? The word “horrible” hardly does justice to such dire circumstances.

3 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.

Being delivered from certain death in an abandoned mine shaft and sitting on a rock in broad daylight would create new songs for sure. But, this new song is not just about deliverance, but about the One who delivered Him. David wants all men to know that he prayed; that the God of the Covenant heard him, and the LORD liberated him from his dark, wet prison.

Confidence in the LORD

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

In David's mind, there are only two courses in life: to trust the proud, or to trust the LORD; to listen to God's Word in the quiet hours of the night or to listen to arrogant personalities spitting out lies and deceit about fake science, fake medicine, fake religion, and seductive politics.

In an age of lies finding the truth is rigorous, and speaking the truth is dangerous.

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

What a positive, healthy attitude David has about the LORD! His trials did not make him bitter; they made him better. Without weary troubles he would have never learned the wonders of God's tenderness.

Words like "many" "wonderful" "cannot be reckoned" and "more than can be numbered" describe a God Who thinks about us all the time. Who can conceive of such a caring Father . . . and, who among us really believes it? David did!

The noun "thoughts" (machashebeth) refers to thoughts, intentions, plans, or good purposes.

"many" (rab) means "great," "abounding," "more numerous than," and "exceedingly great."

"wonderful" (pala) refers to something extraordinary, surpassing in number or excellence or beyond one's power to calculate.

The infinitive "reckoned" (arak) means to arrange in a row, to calculate, number, or recount. It is negated by the adverb "not" (en) meaning all of humanity cannot count or number God's tender affections toward us.

"more than can be numbered" (caphar) is a Piel verb implying the impossibility of counting God's good plans for His own; that is, it would be easier to count the grains of sand on the beaches of the world than to count God's thoughts toward us. Shallow words like "unfathomable," "incalculable," and "infinite" come to mind.

This text can be claimed by every man lowered into a dark, wet, miry grave. God will not abandon us. He will resurrect us and set our feet on a rock. Thus, we get the title of this commentary: "Deliverance from the Deep, Dark, Dank Well of Despair!"

Moreover, this text applies to His Beloved Son.

The Messiah Speaks

Diving into the Deep, Deep Well of Christ's Devotion to the Father

A Look at the One Who Delivers Us from the Deep, Dark, Dank Well of Despair!

Captivated by God's Will

The Spirit of God moves David to describe the heart of Christ. The Person captivated with the will of God is the Messiah, David's Greater Son.

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

"Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire" expresses pure truth — that God desires devotion, not donations; subordination to His will, not contributions to His work; dedication, and not displays of emotion.

"mine ears" is the voice of Messiah. The ear is the instrument of hearing . . . of learning . . . of respect and submission. The word "ear" is used 25 times in Psalms; the word "ears" 9 times; and the word "hear" 57 times.

The word "ears" is plural and the word "opened" means "dug" like a well.

"mine ears has thou opened" refers to the fact that God gave His Son the capacity to hear the Father's will . . . that His ears were opened wide like a well dug into the earth to find the water of His Word, to hear it, and to do it. Most people's ears are clammed shut to His Word, but both ears of Christ were wide open to Hear the Father. (Pray for big ears!)

Moreover, "mine ears has thou opened" (pierced or bored) may refer to the tradition requiring voluntary slaves who loved their master to be singled out from the crowd and to have their ear pierced with an awl as a public sign they were devoted servants . . . as a public symbol that their master was a man of integrity and worthy of total dedication (Exodus 21). In the case of Christ, we should view Him as a man with both ears open, with both ears pierced, with both ears dedicated to hear and to do the Father's will.

In the Book of Hebrews the quote was changed to "You did not desire sacrifice and offering, but you prepared a body for me" (Hebrews 10:7). The term "body" expands the "open ear" analogy to include the fact that every organ . . . every cell in our Lord's body was devoted to and sacrificed to the will of God.

Most men are all tongue and no ears; all talk and no walk; and, a windbag with all motor and no sail. Many try to power their boat through the waters of life with their tongue tied in the middle and flapin' at both ends. Unlike many sinners plagued with "cerumen impaction" our Lord did not suffer from earwax blockage.

Our Lord's ears were not only opened to hear the Father, a metaphor of pierced ears inform us that our precious Savior was the true "Servant (doulos) of the LORD" with double-devotion to our Heavenly Father.

All burnt offerings and sacrifices in the Levitical system were merely a type of Christ's actual obedience to the will of God. Think of it! One man on earth totally, utterly, completely, fully dedicated to the will of God even unto death. What an interest to Heaven! Jesus was truly the joy of the LORD . . . the fulfillment of the voluntary offerings . . . the Bread of Heaven, "My Bread" according to the Father – (Nehemiah 8:10; Numbers 28-29).

Most men listen to the news and are in tune with world events, but our Savior's ears were in tune with Heaven. He was Heaven's crowned Prince assigned the cardinal task of redeeming the world through Calvary. Our Savior did not contribute to the plan of God, He completed every detail of the will of the Father even till His last breath on the cross; He not only found the will of God, He fulfilled it; He did not subsidize it. He totally satisfied His law. He not only did the will of God, he doubled down on obedience with both ears open and both hands on the plow. No wonder the Father announced, "This is my beloved Son. Hear ye Him!"

Though there was a complete sacrificial system in the Old Testament dispensation, every sacrifice typified the supreme devotion of our Lord to the Father's will. While it is our privilege to lend our talents, voices, and wealth to the gospel, let us remember Christ gave His precious all. What a Savior! What a Son!

An American pastor was visiting a Scottish sheep rancher with a friend when the shepherd whistled to his dog. His companion stated, "Your dog is all ears." Immediately, the pastor understood the meaning of obedience — obedient Christians are all ears.

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

Again, we hear the voice of the Savior. See Hebrews 10:7. Every law and every command in the Holy Scripture is an expression of His will; that is, every law and every command represents the heart and character of our Lord Jesus; that is, He is the fulfillment of Old Testament dreams, expectations, and hope.

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

Many seek the will of God. Some do it partially; but, our Lord took pleasure in pleasing the Father and fulfilling every aspect of "thy will." Only one man can say this — the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior.

What is His will? His will is expressed in His law. Christ obeyed the law, not to go to heaven; but, because the law is from Heaven. His law is the objective expression of the will of Heaven; Christ is the subjective expression of His will on earth. One man on earth totally, completely dedicated to the will of God. What an Interest to Heaven!

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

This text can only apply to the Lord Jesus Christ who was a preacher of righteousness . . . who came to fulfill the law and not to abolish it . . . Who had both ears “digged” to hear His Father than to faithfully teach the masses who “were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority” (Mark 1:22).

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

The adverb “not” negates the verb “hid.”

It is a crime to be silent when one has a duty to speak, and to speak when one has a duty to be silent. He did not speak too much or too little. He spoke just enough. It is difficult to speak truth to those who believe lies, and to speak truth to those who have power to crush you. But, Jesus did it. He did not kowtow to the Pharisees to be safe or humble the weak with his knowledge and power. He never said a swear word or complained to men about men.

“I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation” – Christ taught us that the Father counts the hairs of our head, attends the funeral of every sparrow, and loves us personally. Our Lord taught us to see God as our “heavenly Father” “Who so loved the world that He gave us his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish.”

“I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.”

Our precious Lord showed the whole world the Father’s love . . . a love that led His One and only Son to the terrors of Calvary.

1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

2 Thessalonians 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

1 Peter 4:19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Lamentations 3:22–23 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness

David Speaks

Claiming Deliverance from the Deep, Dark, Dank Well of Despair

11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

The Spirit shifts from His Messianic theme back to prayers relevant to David. Having been lifted up into the heavenlies to behold Christ, he seems to come back to earth where he renews his concerns about his need for deliverance.

The verb “withhold” (kala) means “to end” or “to finish.” It is negated by the adverb “no”; that is; do not shut off your mercy to me!

The word “mercy” (racham) refers to feelings of compassion; and, the word “lovingkindness” (he’sed) means “love” or “mercy.” Possibly, David feels like he’s exhausted God’s mercy with his sins and wearied Him with his failures. Knowing he has no strength on his own, David prays that God’s mercies might preserve and sustain him . . . that the LORD would be faithful and true to His mercy.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

Now we see why David pleaded with the Lord to be merciful. This text explains his prayer of desperation in verse 11.

“evil” (ra’ot) is plural. David faced multifarious evils on numerous fronts — inside and out; up and down and all around. Possibly, He’s thinking about his adultery with Bathsheba and His order to have Uriah murdered on the battlefield as a cover up for pregnant Bathsheba.

“Innumerable” (micpar) means “too many to count.”

The analogy of “more than the hairs of his head” express the magnitude of his sins. According the “Scientific American” the average person has between 90,000 to 150,000 hairs on their head . . . and, this is not counting one’s eyebrows or beard.

“compassed me” (aphaph) means to surround or encircle. David was so ashamed of his iniquities (depravity) he couldn’t even look up. With chin down, he groaned over his wrongs. He had more sins than the hairs of his head, and the stress effected his heart — the kind of stress that causes a heart attack, high blood pressure, and strokes.

What an encouragement for sensitive souls who bite their lip because of guilt. . . for pastors with a hypersensitivity to peccadilloes — for distressed souls ferrying around a bucket of guilt — kind of like carrying a dead chicken around the neck.

“The best saints see themselves undone, unless continually preserved by the grace of God” – Matthew Henry.

David was not better or worse than other men. He faced the same challenges all men face. Likewise, our sin-problems and shadows of guilt are not unique to us. Psychologists are wrong when they teach every person’s bugbears are unique to them . . . to their circumstances . . . to their upbringing. Men have more in common than they have differences. And, this is why Scripture speaks to all men everywhere. It is the only work that addresses man’s struggle with sin.

If this sin-burdened king with more moral failures than feathers on a chicken could plead the mercy of God, SO CAN WE! His need and claim on mercy ought to give all men hope.

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

Matthew Poole seems to have the sense of this text correct: “deliver me from my sins, and the punishments due to them.”

New Testament Christians need to claim the word “all” in 1 John 1:7 and then rest by faith; “and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Confound My Enemies

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

David feared that he might be put to shame by his sins, but his prayer is, let my enemies, who have not repented, be ashamed (disappointed) and “confounded” (surprised and distressed) — jussive in meaning; that is, this is not a wish. David testifies of their destiny: “They will be ashamed and confounded.”

“driven backward” means “turned back” due to frustration and driven to the rear of the column.

“be put to shame” (kalam) means to be “insulted” and “humiliated” like a braggadocios boxer knocked out in the first round.

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

“desolate” (shamem) = “to be stupified, stunned, and shocked.”

“shame” (bosheth) refers to some kind of public, painful humiliation.

“aha, aha” is the voice of frivolous exaltation by enemies who express triumph and satisfaction for suddenly finding a pedantic fault with what another says or does.

The Devotion of Those Delivered from the Deep, Dark, Dank Well of Despair

Console the Righteous

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

David could not serve God alone. Turning from prayers of punishment for his enemies, he prays for the prosperity of the pious in pursuit of God.

“Let” is a jussive . . . a mild command and not a wish. While God’s enemies wanted the worst for His people, David wanted the best for them . . . “joy” and “gladness” in the Lord. “Let them find Thee and the joy they seek.”

17 But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

The pronoun “I” is either a personal pronoun referring to David or the literary “I” referring to the people of God as “poor” . . . and “needy” of grace and mercy . . . of ones with their only resource in God . . . of those delivered, from the dark, deep, dank well of despair. David calls Him “my help” and “my deliverer”; Haggai calls Him “the joy of all nations” (2:7) Luke records Him as “the glory and consolation of Israel” (Luke 2:25); Christians call Him “My Lord and Savior.”

Hurry to help is the cry of the pious. Hurry to make us holy . . . to open our ears to the will of God . . . to save us from our sins.

Psalm 41 - Heal My Soul

I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.



This psalm is ascribed to David. It has the feel that it was written after the Absalom Revolt and after the treason of Ahithophel.

David felt the ingratitude of his friends and suffering aggravated by their neglect and disloyalty — circumstances that pained his heart and that affected his health. See Psalm 38.

David walked with God. He loved people . . . but, people did not necessarily return the affection. One of the deep afflictions of David was that no man cared for his soul (Psalm 142:4).

All his “friends” wanted something from him. His enemies wanted to do something to him. To make matters worse, David realized that his own sin was the cause of his illness and the unrest in the nation. Thus, this psalm describes David afflictions and the need for healing in his soul.

Blessings for the Merciful

Psalm 41:1 <To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.> Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

Though a king, David did not feel like he was better than others. He needed love like all men, but received little. Coming out of this political storm a victor, David gained insight that God blesses those who take an interest in the souls of others.

“poor” refers to normal, simple, lonely, harmless people.

Thus, this is the main lesson of the psalm. Be a blessing; be a giver instead of a taker; escape the cyclone of self-interest and invest in others. Instead of talking about self and what you know, be a friend. Quiet down. Stop talking. Ask questions. Listen. Learn. Determine the best way to help.

First blessing: Men who love are rare, and the LORD promises to deliver them in the time of their trouble.

2 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.

Second blessing: preservation.

One of the blessings about being a lover of men is that God promises to provide and protect him . . . to bless him and his family . . . to deliver him from the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

Third blessing: strength in time of adversity.

The idea here is that God will enable him to endure his sickness; that he will impart power, physical and spiritual strength, when his body fails.

4 I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

Consequently, David calls on God to be merciful to him because those around him were lacking in mercy. None were concerned about his soul . . . his spiritual health . . . or what effect his trials were having upon him as an individual person. They loved his power and position, but not him.

David was sick of heart and sick in body. He realized that he was infirm because of his own sins; and, therefore, prays for forgiveness . . . for healing of his sin-battered soul.

Q: How do you know when you are healed? A: When you start giving and taking care of the needs of others . . . when you return to your duties . . . when you accept responsibility and go back to your ministry of loving others.

Betrayal by Friends and Enemies

5 Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

"speak evil" refers to muckraking, mudslinging, and defamation. David's enemies concluded that his influence in this world should come to an end; that it was time for David to die.

In a world dominated by the lust, it is not possible to do good and not have enemies that want you dead. David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul, and John were shadowed by countrymen with murder in their hearts.

6 And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.

The "he" is an enemy that came to visit David under a pretext of kindness to see for himself David's true condition.

"he speaketh vanity" suggests this false friend did not ask questions to discern the true condition of David's soul; that he just entertained frivolous chit chat; that he offered no words of encouragement nor exhibited any expressions of sincerity. Thus, the conversation was vain and superficial.

"gathered iniquity to itself" refers to the hidden purpose behind the visit which was to gather information to vilify and indict David for wrongdoing. Hiding behind the veil of kindness and

wearing a cloak of hypocrisy, this enemy searched for a basis for indicting David in order to have him removed as king.

7 All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.

“whisper” — David’s political enemies spoke to each other out of ear shot of the king in small clandestine groups, to not only conceal their treason, but to spin facts and to build their case against David. Traitors are cowards. They need the support of others to justify their insurrection. There is security in numbers. They met, not to help or to protect their pastor-king, but to pulverize his administration and to create a narrative that would make David look like evil on stilts in the eyes of the people.

Beware: Slander is the favorite weapon of dissidents. Innocent people are unable to resist or refute one-sided, scandalous reports about a pastor, employer, or figure head. God’s man must learn to deal with insurgence swiftly and decisively. Those that tolerate slander fall into the Devil’s snare.

8 An evil disease, say they, cleaved fast unto him: and now that he lite he shall rise up no more.

“An evil disease” can be translated “a thing of Belial.” That is, David’s enemies accused him of consorting with the Devil, of conspiracies, and of incompetence in order to discredit him in the eyes of the public. Coming as a group gave the rebels superficial authority to blame David of misdeeds and to create a successful coup. Even David’s melancholy and physical infirmities were used to discredit him.

9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

“Yea, mine own familiar friend” can be translated “the man of my peace” — a confidant David thought he could rely on – possibly Ahithophel.

“which did eat of my bread” refers to friends that relax and eat meals together. David had no right to expect that an enemy would not be found among his friends. Traitors lurk in every corner of power. Nevertheless, the treachery shocked David to the core.

Warning to Pastors: David had an Ahithophel; Jesus His Judas; and Caesar his Brutus. You have no right not to expect that you will not be betrayed by a deacon or staff member. It would be an error to think that church members are as pure as the driven snow; that men are free from jealousy, hate, and ambition. Be a student of human behavior. and beware of wealthy, subtle, discontented men in positions of power. One pastor said it this way, “Watch out for the man that drives you from the airport to the convention center.” Beware of duplicitous men that work for the government and hold positions in the church. They have nothing to lose in discrediting you.

Note how David did not lift up his hand against Saul when he was vulnerable in the cave of En Gedi (1 Samuel 26-27). Because David trained his men how to treat a weak leader, his soldiers

new how to protect him when he was weak and vulnerable. Consequently, David survived the military coup and the civil war instigated by Absalom.

Believing God for Mercy

10 But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

Again, we see David taking refuge in the mercy of the Lord. David was truly a victim of betrayal . . . but David was also a predator who murdered Uriah and stalked Bathsheba for an adulterous affair . . . and it was David who needed healing from sin working in his own soul . . . healing from the spirit of bitterness . . . anger . . . and the spirit of revenge.

“raise me up” – a Piel verb expressing intensity. Preserve me! Heal me! Raise me up that I may once again be Your instrument of justice . . . and mercy . . . and healing for others.

“requite them” means to give the rebels what they deserve. As the chief law enforcement officer in the nation, David had a duty to restore law and order and bring the revolutionaries to justice. The penalty for treason is death and this is what happened to Absalom and Ahithophel through the providence of God.

But, most of us are not law-enforcement officers nor has God called us take revenge on those who betray us (Romans 12:19). Most people are not “victims.” It is a grave mistake to see ourselves as “victims.” Many of us are predators who will use our pain as an excuse to hurt others. We need healing so sin does not turn us into vindictive people . . . so we can be wounded healers like our Lord Jesus Christ who was wounded for our transgressions and by whose stripes we are healed.

11 By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

As circumstances would have it, David’s army squashed the rebellion and won the civil war. And, this may be the reason for David’s confidence that God favored him. With the kingdom restored, David could rest physically and spiritually.

Sometimes we do not know if God is on our side! If this be the case, let us make sure we are on God’s side. Let us oppose fear and give ourselves to power, love, and self-control (2 Timothy 1:7).

12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.

So marvelous was David’s restoration, he beamed with confidence. Not only did God deliver him from the treachery, God restored his throne (2 Samuel 15-18). He came out of this political storm assured that God’s love and mercy would sustain him all the days of his life. Many good ministers are not this fortunate.

Blessed be the LORD

13 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

Since God was the reason for his restoration, David wished that the LORD God would be praised, honored, and adored by his people forever — from eternity to past to eternity future, may men speak well of the Lord . . . and this will happen when we are healed and give ourselves to love.

How is your soul?

Psalm 45 - The Royal Wedding Hymn

A Psalm on the Excellence of Christ



Before us is a psalmist bursting with joy over the beauty of Another, and we would do well to do the same — A royal wedding hymn that highlights the excellences of Christ.

Before us is a psalm that deserves weeks of study and a lifetime of thoughtful consideration.

A Description of the Royal Author

Psalm 45:1 For the director of music. To the tune of "Lilies." Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. A wedding song.

The tune "lilies" speaks of the purity and loveliness of this psalm. Of all the lyrics ever written by the sons of men, this hymn is a lily that stands above the orchard hills.

My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

In Psalm 45, we have a heart "stirred" by a noble theme. Hearts are often stirred by fruits connected to the Poisonous Tree, the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. But, this heart is stirred by virtue beaming from the Groom.

We ought to be careful about what we desire for we will become the sum total of all our desires—whether good or bad.

The Hebrew word "stirred" (rachash) is in the emphatic positions. It means "to bubble over" or "to keep moving." Like an artesian well, the author feels his heart is going to burst with life-giving joy.

The word "noble" is the Hebrew word tov. It means "good" or "excellent." Good things come out of a good heart. It is perplexing when good things come out of a cold heart. It is sad when bad things come out of a warm heart. But, it is wonderful and refreshing when good fruits appear on a good tree.

The occasion for this geyser of enthusiasm is a wedding between a prince, the most eligible bachelor in the land, and his beautiful, country bride. We love weddings and there is nothing that captures the interest of nation more than a royal wedding.

Who is this author whose swelling heart begs to pen the excellences of the King? The answer to this most important question is in the final verse of the psalm:

Psalm 45:17 I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever

Who is this Author? It is none other than the Holy Spirit.

Who is the Prince? The Prince is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is delighted to showcase the splendor of this majestic King. Only the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son can sustain such a promise. He works to inspire men to remember the greatness of Another.

Who is the Bride? It is His church, the redeemed, those chosen to share His reign.

Bubbling up with lovely words, the author spills over to pen this wedding hymn—and a geyser it is!

A Description of the Royal Bridegroom

Psalm 45:2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

Consider his statement, “You are fairer than the children of men.”

The Hebrew word “fairer” is the Hebrew word “yaphah” which means beautiful or handsome. The verb comes from a Piel stem which implies intensity. But, it more than this, the verb emphasizes the beauty of this king by repeating the main stem twice “yapha-pha,” and by placing the word in the emphatic position. Thus, the Spirit has a triple emphasis on the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It’s as if the King suddenly appeared before the Author. He utters a fact, a compliment, true and certain. The Spirit contrasts the beauty of this Prince with all the “sons of Adam” (ben adam). Of all the men that have been born, of all the soldiers that have adorned a sword, of all the noble poets that have ever penned a word, and all the generals that have marched to war, our Lord is infinitely greater and more virtuous than them all!

We cannot count all the virtues of the Savior, but here are a few ways the Lord Jesus Christ is superior to other religious leaders and common men:

- He is fairer than other men in His origin whose goings forth are from everlasting.
- He is fairer in conception whose mother was found with child of the Holy Ghost.
- He is fairer than other men in His nativity.
- He is fairer than other men in His nature—He is the God-man.
- He is fairer than other men in His childhood. He is the obedient, respectful son (Luke 2:52).
- He is fairer than other men in His manhood. He is the man’s man.
- He is fairer than other men in His character. He is holy and true.

- He is fairer than other men in His calling. He is called to be the Savior of the world.
- He is fairer than other men in His works—He died for the sins of men.
- He is fairer than other men in His teaching.
- He is fairer than other men in His response to evil.
- He is fairer than other men in His transfiguration.
- He is fairer than other men in His righteousness.
- He is fairer than other men in His devotion to the Father.
- He is fairer than other men in His suffering and passion.
- He is fairer than other men in His death.
- He is fairer than other men in His accomplishments.
- He is fairer than other men in His resurrection.
- He is fairer than other men in His reward and exaltation to the throne of God.
- He is fairer than other men in His reign and kingdom ministry.

Only as we focus on Christ can our hearts be filled with good things. It is too easy to focus on our problems, our faults, our sins, and our wants or the garbage pit where world leaders rule. It is too easy to focus on the problems of our spouse, or boss, or co-workers, or political leaders. Let us do what the author of Hebrews exhorted us to do and “fix our eyes upon Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith and “consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself.” Then and only then will our hearts become an artesian well of spiritual life (Philippians 4:7-8).

Grace is poured into His lips

The Spirit does not focus our attention on the “looks,” “talents,” or “wealth of the Prince, but upon his words — words that express the vigorous character of his heart. Though tough, this Prince possessed words like honey — sweet to the soul and healthy for the body (Proverbs 16:24). The Author is careful to inform us that his words are life-giving fruits in the field of Him “Who is altogether lovely” (S of S 5:16).

By words, brides are won and wars are fought. The words of men seem to have no end and they are, more often than naught, fruits of the Poisonous Tree. But, the lips of Christ are anointed with grace. One word from his lips can raise the dead. “Rise” or “Come forth” or “Neither do I condemn thee,” or “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven” are words of life.

Our Lord never cursed, never swore, and never used profanity. Only once did a curse appear on His lips, and that was a lesson for the good of his disciples (Mark 11). He cursed a fig tree because a nation rejected the prophetic Word about Him, and the disciples had to be prepared for the end of an era.

Most men have garlic on their breath, and poison under their tongue. Consider how this king's lips were anointed with grace:

- He never lied or embellished the truth.
- He never swore or used profanity.
- He never used a mince word.
- He never complained. Life's irritations never spawned angry speech, cynicism, or sarcasm.
- He never bragged or boasted; He never uttered words of self-pity.
- He never ranted or spoke in rage.
- He never berated others or exposed their hidden secrets.
- He never answered a harsh word with a threat or bitter invective.
- He never condemned a man that was just; or acquitted a man that was unjust.
- He never spoke when He should have been silent; and was never silent when He should have spoken. Before Pilate he was a sovereign in control of all things; and, before the Roman-Sanhedrin high priest he witnessed the good confession.
- He never said more than needed to be said, or less than a man needed to hear.
- His words contained no poison or venom or bitterness or bait or hooks.
- He never gave a sales speech or advertised the purchase of a commodity.
- He never rambled or continued talking after nothing else needed to be said.
- He never asked a question of which He did not know the answer.
- He never promised more than He could deliver, yet every fulfillment of a pledge was greater than His promise.
- His speech, though gracious, was never sugar-coated or sickly sweet.
- He never gave a man a tongue-lashing . . . or an insincere compliment.
- He never apologized or admitted error or a mistake or confessed a sin. In most men this would be evidence of arrogance and pride, but with Jesus it was because "He knew no sin," and "did no sin" and "had no sin."
- He knew all things but revealed the secrets of none; He knew the sins of all but slandered no man.

His praise of others was genuine and sincere; and, his condemnation of men was less than they deserved. He said of the Centurion, I have not found so great a faith in Israel," and said of the Jews, "You are of your father, the Devil."

He infused hope into the depressed; strength into the weary; health into the sick; life into the dead. He lifted Peter out of failure; Martha and Mary out of depression; Nicodemus out of self-

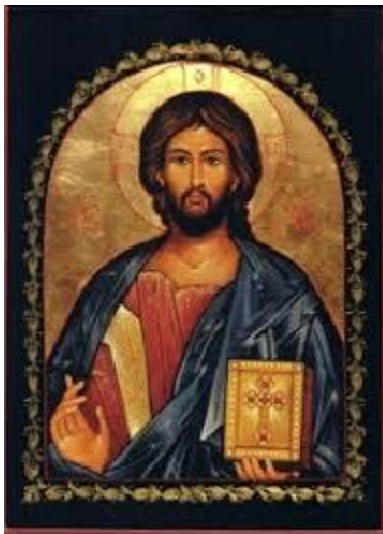
delusion; and, the thief on the cross out of despair when He said, "Today, you shall be with me in Paradise." He could cheer the hopeless and strike fear into the proud and arrogant.

The officers sent to accuse and arrest Jesus blurted out, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

His words were full of life and healing and hope and truth and grace. They were like myrrh on the lips, rain after a drought, and dew upon lilies.

A man of excellence, He is the Balm of Gilead (Jeremiah 8:22).

Therefore, God has blessed thee forever.



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

This king is not a "girly-boy" or spoiled prince sitting on a cushion of strawberries eating chocolate mousse, but a warrior-king girded with a sword willing and able to execute justice. As Commander and Chief of the nation's armed forces, He defends the life and liberty of the people. He is heroic in war as he is impressive in person.

The name "O most Mighty" (gibor) refers to manliness, strength, and military skill — Israel's "tip of the spear" special guard. In modern terms this would be equivalent to a U.S. Marine, special forces Ranger, Navy Seal, or the Green Beret.

But, this "el gibbor" is not merely a muscle-bound killing machine without restraint. The text refers generally to his glory and majesty, but not a particular attribute. Christ has no outstanding virtue, because He excels in all. The Spirit portrays him as gentle and mannerly; intelligent and charming; courageous and restrained; skilled and competent. Though He is the envy of all, He exhibits no air of superiority. This is the humble warrior-king duty-bound to enter the contest to rescue his people from the trinity of evil: Satan, sin, and death.

Spiritually speaking, the sword is the Word of God that slays men and wins hearts. It is his only weapon in the battle for world conquest — the Apostle Paul said His Word is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and is represented by the Apostle John as a sharp two-edged sword coming out of his mouth, Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 1:19.

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

The imagery here is of warrior-king riding his mount at the head of the column with his hand and sword extended toward the enemy as a signal to charge and follow him into battle. His right hand wields a sword (and a bow with arrows) which tutors rebels in lessons on submission. Some generals fight wars for glory, and others fight for power and control; but, this

king wages war for truth, self-control, and righteousness against lies, indulgence, and lawlessness.

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

The imagery of an intense battle and a charging Captain continues. Sword and arrows are icons of death and defeat. With the Spirit guiding arrows, the slaughter staggers the mind. Except, this warrior-king pierces hearts with conviction. He humbles men and enables proud rebels to confess their sins and to surrender to His law-order.

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

This text is applied to the Messiah by Paul in Hebrews 1:8. The use of the title “O God” informs us this is a Messianic psalm presenting to us the sovereignty of the God-man. The Captain-prince is none other than our sovereign Lord Jesus Christ Whom the Father granted “authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him” (John 17:2).

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

The “oil of gladness” is a metaphor for joy. Oriental weddings involved perfumes, ritual oil baths, and burning of incense. The Spirit desires the reader to perceive the joy of the Bridegroom which is powerful and pleasant — the royal fragrance derived not from external oils but from the character of the Groom.

“Fellows” refers to the attendants of the wedding party whose sanguinity inspires the guests to celebrate the joy of occasion.

The reason for all this enthusiasm is the aromatic character of the bridegroom who loves righteousness and hates wickedness; Who loves order and despises lawlessness; Who loves



good and hates evil; Who loves truth, and hates lies; and, Who loves life and hates death.

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

“All thy garments smell of myrrh . . .” speak of the pure, unblemished character of the Groom. The aromas are a metaphor for the virtues of Christ germane to the man.

Consider that many couples spend lots of money on weddings to enhance the joy of the occasion. But, it isn’t long into the marriage that every couple begins to sniff malodorous character flaws resembling decaying compost. But, not so with this Bridegroom! There is “no fly in the ointment” (or sin) that can pollute the sweet scents emanating from the Prince that vitalizes

the wedding party.

The spices mentioned formed the delightful blend of flora in the “oil of gladness” — the same blended herbs in the special anointing oil of the High Priest in Exodus 30:23-24. No music is mentioned. Only the royal fragrances flowing out of open doors of the ivory palace so the celebrants could participate in the sweet, sensual delights streaming through the air.

A Description of the Bride

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

The focus in this wedding song switches from the glories of the Groom to the beauty of the bride. She is the lovely “queen” adorned in the gold of Ophir (1 Kings 9:28).

Figuratively speaking, the bride represents the church of our Lord Jesus Christ Who “loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25-27)

The stunning bride became a queen by the will and grace of the King. Her silk-satin, silhouette wedding dress, royal jewels, and golden necklace are gifts from the Groom.

As all do at weddings, the court Seer shines the spotlight on the bridesmaids. They were not toothless, country bumpkins dressed in hand-me-down, tattered-cotton dresses surviving on welfare, but stately ladies of the court. The author calls them “honorable” (yaqar) which means rare, precious, splendid, or weighty (1 Samuel 13:1).

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

The Spirit has some royal advice for the new queen. All brides need guidance on how to be a good wife, and this bride also needs counsel. The Seer gives her the wisdom of the ages — advice, if followed will make her the queen of queens to the King of kings.

First, is for the bride to “shut” her mouth and “put her ears on.” The Advisor exhorts her to restrain her tongue and to “hearken,” “consider,” and “incline thine ear” so she can conform to the noble standards of godly women and courtly manners of the palace; and, so she can learn to respect and to please her new husband. She must remember that while she is a queen, she is still His royal subject. As his subject, she must learn to restrain her personal and emotional powers. Many a mouthy woman has aroused the anger of her husband and shattered her marriage because of her inability to control her tongue and to show respect to her husband-king (James 3:1ff; Ephesians 5:24ff).

Second, is for the bride to leave her parents and to cleave to her new husband; that is, to leave, cleave, and weave — to leave her parents mentally, emotionally, and physically; and, to cleave to her husband-king. Furthermore, she learns “to submit” to her husband and weave faith,

hope, and love into her marriage by arranging herself under his authority. This is the Spirit's way of telling Christians to forget their ways in Adam and to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

The exhortation in verse ten is for the purpose of enhancing the dazzling beauty of the bride. The charm of a Queen is not in her clothing, but in her noble, self-restrained character; and, studied devotion to her husband.

All brides would do well in aspiring to be a daughter of Sarah remembering her husband "is thy Lord." For the Scriptures says, "the head of the woman is the man;" and, "the wife must respect her husband" (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:33; 1 Peter 3:1-6).

Likewise, the beauty of the church is her devotion and submission to Christ.

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

The Seer offers this promise. The nobility of the bride and her devotion to the Groom invites the attention of the nations who will come with gifts in their hand and hopes in their heart.

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

"The king's daughter is an affectionate metonym for the bride who herself is the daughter of royalty. Her golden jewelry is only surpassed by her golden devotion to the King. Beautiful within and without, the Spirit praises her.

Likewise, the church of Christ is all glorious within — born of the Spirit and endowed with spiritual graces, she is the hope of men. Her silk-satin dresses highlighted by gold and her internal perfections are gifts of grace weaved by the Spirit as the bride beholds the beauty of the Savior-King (2 Corinthians 3:18). Perfect in standing, the true church practices what is pleasing to the Lord.

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

As with all weddings, the guests anticipate the presentation of the bride to the groom. She is a virgin unspoiled by lusty admirers. Her virtuous purity, the intricate silk-satin embroidery detail of her gown, and the glorious beauty of bridesmaids stuns the audience.

Likewise, the church waits the day when she shall be presented to her Heavenly Groom arrayed in the golden accomplishments of His salvation.

This is an ideal picture of the church — something every Christian congregation aspires to be.

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

Entering the kingdom of God is compared to a glorious royal wedding, and the presentation of the bride is compared to entering a king's palace filled with articles of gold and earthly comforts.

Oh, how the church eagerly waits for the final day when she shall be adorned with the glories of redemption and be presented to her beautiful Savior.

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

Here we see the bride's growth in maturity where she stops thinking like a child of her father and transitions to think like the woman-bride of the king and a mother to princes.

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

This royal wedding hymn begins with an artesian well of praises to the Crown Prince, but the wedding song ends with a promise the wedding feast not be forgotten, and that the glorious union of the Groom and Bride will be remembered forever.

Who is this author? Only the Holy Spirit has the power to make His name and His accomplishments in the church known to all generations.

Thus, we reflect on the fact the church is the hope of blessing to the world and the source of everlasting happiness to the men. Selah!

Barnes notes this psalm has been on the lips of millions, and it will be on the lips of millions more in future times as an expression of the majesty and tender love of the Redeemer.

Psalm 68 - Rejoicing in the Ascension of Christ

“Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.”



The ascension of Christ into heaven marks the grand consummation of His ministry on earth and the beginning of His session on His heavenly throne.

The early church saw the ascension of Christ as so important they included it in the Apostles' Creed, which affirms that Jesus "is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead."

The ascension brought our Lord much joy, and this psalm sheds light on why we should rejoice in our Lord's glorification and session at the right hand of God (session: from Latin "session" meaning "act of sitting" at the table in order to do business."

Consider the greatness of David – a king with a vision to center the nation around the worship of Yah and not the workings of politics – a king with a vision to build the house of God and not the military.

Psalm 24, Psalm 68, and Psalm 132 are dedicated to the glories of the ark coming to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6).

1 (To the chief Musician, A Psalm or Song of David.)

There is no good reason to doubt this psalm was written by David and sent to the Chief Musician in the Levitical Choir, a title given to 53 psalms.

The ascription "Chief Musician, is derived from (nâtsach), which means "to shine," but the ascription is not used in the Hebrew Qal verb form. In the Piel form, the title is intensified to mean "conspicuous; to be over anything; to be chief; to be superintendent" 2 Chronicles 2:2, 2 Chronicles 2:18; 2 Chronicles 34:12, and then it means to lead in music (Barnes, Psalm 4).



The first phrase in the psalm, "Let God arise . . ." directs us to consider the glorious procession of the Ark of the Covenant from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem (Zion) in 2 Samuel 6.

The first administrative act of King David concerned the ordering of Israel's golden treasure, the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the Throne of God, to be

transported to the nation's capital.

What a scene! Levites carrying the golden ark with its iconic cherubim, golden mercy seat, the tablets of law inside, while covered in badger skins. The military procession created the largest celebration in David's generation. Can you see in your mind's eye soldiers marching with lifted spears, swords clanging, trumpets blasting, crowds cheering, people dancing, women trilling, tambourines jingling, Levitical choirs singing as the winding cavalcade marched proudly into the City of David? What a parade!

To enhance the joy of this occasion, David penned Psalm 68 to provide convincing reasons why the people should celebrate this transfer of power from the hills of Kirjath-jearim to Mt. Zion.

Moreover, the value of this psalm is that it provides arguments justifying a Christ-centered family, church, and nation as opposed to a man-centered government.

A Prayer for God to Arise



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

The phrase "Let God arise" is derived from the masculine, military prayer of Moses in Numbers 10:35 where He called upon God as the nation's Commander and Protector to scatter, crush, and subdue His enemies.

Moses understood what few high-ranking officers seem to grasp: that only the power of God can overcome man's enemies; that only the greatness of Christ can unite a nation and keep them from splintering into various factions.

"Rise up" is human language designed to awaken the reader to how terrifying God's regiment of justice must be towards His adversaries (Hebrews 2:3).

His enemies are designated as those that "hate Him." Hate is a catch-all term for disinterest, neglect, lawlessness, idolatry, and contempt for the LORD's authority and His law-order.

The character of His enemies are listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 as the unrighteous: fornicators, Idolaters, adulterers, effeminate boys (transvestites), homosexuals (male and female), thieves, defrauders (coveters), drunkards (drug users), slanderers (fake news, injurious reports), and extortions (robbers, swindlers). And, His enemies are my enemies, and my enemies are His enemies.

The wish for God to rise up announces **Code Red** for rebels. Wake up eyes wide! Stand trembling! Breath deep! Feed your fears! Gird on your sword! Shake like Jell-O! Sweat blood! Hear the drum roll in a death march that announces pending doom! Prepare to die!

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

The prayer continues. As easily as the evening breeze pushes campfire smoke into the sky and fire melts wax, blot out the blasphemers quickly and completely.

The Call for the Righteous to Rejoice

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

The occasion for gladness was the festival surrounding the cavalcade escorting the ark to Jerusalem.

To intensify and prolong the joy of the redeemed, David mentions “rejoice” twice to amplify the appropriate response for the occasion. Rivers of joy flow out of a heart that delights in God’s presence and power. Subjects of His sovereignty should robe themselves in garments of gladness . . . with *ululation, increpuere, magna arte clara* . . . Latin for howling, rattle, huge, bright and shining.

The Apostle Paul understood the human condition and exhorted the Philippians with double commands: “to rejoice, and again I say rejoice!” (Philippians 1:18, 4:4). Because breaking free of the ice pack of God’s frozen chosen serves the honor of God, the apostle references rejoicing eleven times in his epistle to the Macedonians.

But, the enemies of God should shake like condemned prisoners facing a death panel; and, during all this doom and gloom on the wicked; the righteous should beam like sunflowers in August.

4 Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

To assist his people to celebrate the entrance of the King to Jerusalem and to enter into the grandeur of the moment, David commands his people “to sing.” He issues the imperative twice (sheru = sing; zamar = sing praise) in order to jar the heart lose from chilly dispassion so the redeemed could embrace the joy of the celebration *acer* (energetically), *vehemins* (vigorously).

The word “praise” (zamar) means to “pluck the strings” or “to make music on the harp.” A Piel imperative, it adds intensity to the order, “Strike up the band;” March *fortiter* (manly); Sing with *crescendo*¹ and *fortissimo*² and not for *calando*³

¹ Crescendo: increasing loudness.

² Fortissimo: very loudly

³ Colando: gradually increasing tempo

Negative commands require emotional restraint. Positive commands require chilly hearts to light a fire in their furnace. Since the psalmist issues positive commands, singing and praise knows no bounds.

The word “extol” (calal) is **not** another command to praise God. Rather, it means “to lift up,” or in this context to repair your highway so the Lord of Hosts can come to you. Like inhabitants of a city would go out to their road, clear the rocks, and fill the potholes before the Emperor would ride on his golden chariot leading his entourage through the city gates, believers are to prepare the way for God to work in their lives by removing all obstacles that hinder His holy work (See Isaiah 40:3).

Practically, the command “extol” means to clean up your act; to forsake your sins and to start practicing righteousness; that is, to prepare your heart to receive the King by faith, praise, confession, and obedience (See Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20).

Praise unfolds the reason for our existence. And, since the Lord dwells between “the praises of Israel” (above the ark), we should approach Him humbly and thankfully if we want God to dwell happily with us (Psalm 22:3).

Praise is a requisite that releases the power of God on behalf of His people. God loves it; the Devil hates it. Praise attracts the Lord, and complaining attracts the Devil. (See Jehoshaphat 2 Chronicles 20; Psalm 50:23; Jonah 2:9).

“rideth upon the heavens” crashes head on with the rules of translation. The word “rideth” should be translated “marcheth” as a military column. The idea is not so much of riding as it is leading or marching at the head of the column. The Commander and Chief leads the charge as Jesus rides a white horse conquering souls by gospel proclamation (Revelation 19).

The word *araba* is translated “heaven” but it refers to a “desert” and never to “clouds” or “heavens.” The metaphor reflects on the LORD leading Israel from Mt. Sinai through the desert in the days of Moses, to the Lord as the Commander of Israel riding from the south towards His northern enemies in the character of His name “YHWH.”

“by his name YAH” – God (Elohim), the Creator of Heaven and Earth, has a name. In this text, His name is “Yah,” short for “YHWH,” used in later psalms to delicately and beautifully facilitate the pronunciation of Hebrew syllables in a cadence that creates a high water mark for the mood and theme of the text – in this case to “rejoice” (exult) before His face as David did when he laid aside his royal robe and danced before the ark. The first use of “JAH” is found in Exodus 15:2.

“It is found in combination, or in certain formulas - as in the phrase Hallelujah, Psalm 104:35; Psalm 105:45; Psalm 106:1. The meaning here is, that God went thus before His people in the character of the true God, or as Yahweh” (Barnes).

All this rejoicing before “YAH” calls for positive energy.

The full name of “YHWH” is not in the original text. But, the context calls us to identify His sacred name (the Tetragrammaton” or “LORD” in English) revealed to Moses in Exodus 6:3.

Reasons to Rejoice in the Lord

5 A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. 6 God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land. 7 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

What a stunning statement! It seems out of place. In the midst of this military motif with war whoops of slaughter and carnage, military field drums, soldiers marching step in step swords clanging at 120 steps per minute, the Spirit announces that this uncompromising, bone crushing Commander has a gentler side who men love and fear. He is the lion-lamb, tough and tender, leather and silk, steel and velvet.

Though He is majestic in His power and rides the tempest of the storm, His soldiers love Him because of His tender mercies toward them. Not only does the name YHWH strike fear into the hearts of His enemies, it conveys grace and kindness to His friends. He not only scatters His foes, He releases prisoners. He not only quails adversaries, He gathers sinners and debtors together to save and bless them with eternal riches.

This “God of War” bombarded Egypt with air strikes from heaven to devastate the Egyptian economy, and then tenderly led His people to the Promise Land.

During the Civil War General Robert E. Lee ordered his barefoot troops to flee the approaching blue coats near St. Petersburg, they scurried out of there as fast as their feet could hit dirt . . . but the general wasn’t with them. Dismounting his horse, General Lee picked up a little bird that had fallen out of its nest. Placing it back in its home, the good General immediately remounted his steed dodging bullets to rejoin his troops.

8 The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel. 9 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

While in the wilderness, heaven rained manna and quail for the children of Israel. To illustrate the LORD’s tender care of the nation the psalmist compares these provisions to black thunderclouds dumping buckets of rain from the convulsing heavens, and to a rigorous, rocking, rumbling earthquake ripping up tectonic plates.

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

The scene shifts from wilderness wandering to God providing a homestead for Israel in Canaan. The word “congregation” (chayah) refers to a flock, herd, or troops. As a shepherd cares for his flocks, God cares for the weak. He provides for those that have no resources of their own.

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

The themes in this psalm emanate from the ark and its glorious history. The provisions and victories of the people are credited to the command of God.

“great was the company” (feminine) should be translated “the women publishing it were a great host” with *ululation*.

12 Kings of armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

The psalm begins with the command for the Lord to rise up and scatter His enemies. Now the psalmist reflects on the historical record when Israel’s enemies did in fact flee before the armies of Israel and afterward the women joyfully divided the spoils of war.

13 Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. 14 When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon. 15 The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; an high hill as the hill of Bashan.

Before us are images of victory and glory.

A difficult phrase to interpret, “Lien among the pots” could refer to Israel’s neglect of the ark, or it could be translated “when you lie down between the borders” highlighting the privilege of occupying the land God gave them.

The Spirit compares Israel’s redemption from Egypt and occupation of the Promised Land to the beauty of a dove in flight where its wings glitter like silver and gold when touched by the rays of the sun.

DeWitte renders it, “When ye rest between the cattle-stalls” which expresses the same idea of quiet repose as among the herds of cattle lying calmly down to rest (Barnes).

“Scattered kings” reflects images of triumph in battle. When God commands victory, enemies scatter. Afterward God’s people enjoy the benefits of victory and peace.

“White as the snow of Salmon” could refer to pure cleansing power of the snow or to dry, bleached, white bones of fallen soldiers on the battlefield.

The “hill of God” refers to Zion where David placed the ark. Consequently, the presence of the ark in Jerusalem made Mt. Zion more glorious than the lush forests of Bashan, the northern mountain region of Israel stretching to Mt. Hermon — Mt. Hermon being to Israel what the Rockies are to America.

16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.

The mountain being a metaphor for pagan nations, leaping high hills identifies the pride, jealousy, and contempt other mountains had for Mount Zion when Israel brought the ark to Jerusalem. In their insolence, surrounding nations spoke disparaging about Mount Zion as if the presence of the ark in Israel's capital was of no great importance.

George Beverly Shay use to sing, "I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold . . ." While Jesus means everything to the believer, the pagan press treats Christ snobbishly.

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

While the nations looked at Mount Zion mockingly and wished for its ruin, David reminds the nation that the chariots of God with angelic charioteers are quite capable of defending Zion against infidels. As Israel was undisturbed in Mt. Sinai, David anticipated that Israel would be protected by God's presence on Mt. Zion; that is, with God on the throne overseeing the care of His people, His flock would be safe and secure.



18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them. 19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.

Now we come to one of the key thoughts in the psalm. The musical term "Selah" has come to mean "to stop and think about this."

The idea here is that God not only scattered His enemies, but He took captives, not to impoverish them, but to enrich them; not to shame them, but to bless them with safety and prosperity.

The term "benefits" is not in the original. The term "loadeth" should be translated "lift up" as to lift up a stone (Zechariah 12:3) which conveys the kindness of a Champion assisting a defeated, wounded foe.

What kind of King is this that captures the poor, lifts them out of spiritual poverty, and adorns them with golden charms (Ephesians 4:7-12)?

As the ark journeyed from Kiryat Ye'arim to Zion, so has Christ ascended into glory. He is the true Ark of the Covenant with the law in His heart, and the true Mercy Seat sprinkled with His own blood. Therefore, we rejoice in our Lord's finished work at Calvary and His ascension to the throne at the right hand of God. Unlike pagan kings that stripped their captives naked, and paraded them through arches of triumph to be sold in the slave market, our LORD captured sinners, clothed them in royal robes of righteousness, and gifted them with jewels and pearls from His treasury in heaven.

Moreover, we rejoice that His work is finished and that His shame and humiliation have ended; that He has ascended into heaven; that He is with the Father robed in kingly apparel enjoying the presence of holy hosts. Whatever makes Him glad, makes us glad.

What does Christ's ascension and session at the right hand of God mean for us? Quite simply, it means everything! While we Americans gloat about living in a socialistic democracy, Christians live in a kingdom that is actively ruled by the King of kings and Lord of lords. His kingdom is not future, but now! Because He reigns yesterday, today, and forever we can pray, "Lord, rise up, scatter your enemies!"

There is one huge lesson here for us. While all Christians wish to see Jesus face-to-face, it is better for us that He is not here. Jesus said it was expedient (necessary) that He go away to take His place on the throne at the right hand of God so the Comforter would come to perform His comforting work in us and among us. Today, every Christian has the Holy Spirit and is being enriched by His ministry (John 16:7).

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

David begins his psalm with a cry for God to scatter His enemies, but now he inform his people that their God is a God of salvation, deliverance, emancipation, redemption, pardon, and restoration.

The word "issues" should be translated "escapes" from death; that is, not only does He save His people from physical death from invading armies as in the day of Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 18), He has provided eternal salvation and a door of escape from the grave by virtue of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Savior.

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

While David informs his people that the LORD is the God of salvation for all who trust Him (28:20), He passes sentences on lawbreakers. The metaphor of "wound the head" and "hairy scalp" informs the reader that God is a terrifying, bone-crushing, skull-cracking Adversary to rebels; that this all knowing, all powerful just Judge knows the secrets of all men and will hold them accountable for their trespasses against His law.

22 The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea: 23 That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

There is an allusion here to the victory achieved over Og, king of Bashan, in the time of Moses, Numbers 21:33-35. As God delivered His people at the Red Sea from the chariots of Pharaoh and their conflicts in the desert, Israel's Commander is ready to deliver His people from future foes and dangers.

God's will includes crushing rebels under His feet; that His people stain their sandals in the blood of their enemies; and that stray dogs lick up the blood of Israel's adversaries on the killing fields.

24 They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary. 25 The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels plying with timbrels. 26 Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel.

"Seeing Thy goings" points to the pomp and circumstance which acclaimed the victories achieved by God as the Ark was paraded into Jerusalem.

David appears to grow in understanding that this victorious God was "his" God and "his" King. Historically, David was so impressed with the glorious triumphal entry, he took off his royal robes and danced with the singers, musicians, and women banging on their tambourines.

So glorious is the God of Israel that the psalmist calls upon his people to "Bless God;" not to enrich Him, but to awaken to their new found wealth in Christ Who is the Fountain of all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3).

27 There is little Benjamin with their ruler (ruling them), the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.

As David gazed with pride and joy at the procession, he noticed that Benjamin, the smallest tribe, led the parade of singers and dancers as its grand master. Representatives from larger tribes like Judah, Zebulun, and Naphtali followed in the cavalcade.

28 Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

The entrance of the ark into Jerusalem sounded a high note in the nation's history. Such a glorious occasion called for "thy strength;" that is, "full participation" and a total "turn out" of every man, woman, and child to rejoice in the military parade.

While the coronation ceremony was well attended. David wished for overflowing joy. David prays that the joy of the occasion might be celebrate by more and more with intense enthusiasm. Religion is either a dull habit or an acute fever. David prays the whole nation might hum with gladness that the LORD God made Jerusalem His residence.

29 Because of thy temple (palace) at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee. 30 Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people that delight in war. 31 Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

Not only does David call all the people to celebrate "God with us," he anticipated that kings and dignitaries from every nation would make a pilgrimage to Mount Zion to be instructed by

Israel's King and to learn His law. Princes from Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sheba were sure to make the long expensive journey to bow their knee to the King of kings.

“the company of spearmen” -- The meaning of the whole verse, though surrounded by difficulty in interpreting the particular expressions, is, that the most formidable enemies of the people of God, represented here by wild beasts, would be subdued, and would be made to show their submission by bringing presents – by “pieces of silver,” or, with tribute.

32 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:

The Spirit issues an imperative to the Kings (kingdoms) of the earth to arrange their administrations under the authority of the LORD God and to gladly sing His praises; that is, David invites the nations to harmonize their will with God's will.

33 To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice. 34 Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds.

The word “rideth” paints a picture of the LORD mounting His war horse with glory and majesty as He saves and wages war throughout the whole earth (Psalm 18:10). “Send out His voice” is a reference to thunder designed to increase man's awareness of his majesty and power. As men stand at attention during piercing thunderclaps and spears of lightening thrusts towards earth in stove-black thunder storms, men are to proclaim the glory to God – the duty of Spirit-filled men.

“Ascribe” or “give” is an imperative ordering God-seekers to acknowledge His authority, majesty, and power; that the God of Israel dwells on Mt. Zion (heavenly Jerusalem) and nor on Mt. Ulura in Australia, nor Mt. Kailash in Tibet, nor Mt. Ahkka in Sweden, nor Mt. Olympus in Greece. Nor is the King of kings in carnal Jerusalem in the modern “other” Israel.

But, by His Spirit He dwells in the temple of His church.

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

David addresses his God. Thou art “terrible” should be translated “feared.” Because of God's thundering power and bone crushing conquests, men should fear and tremble before Him. But, He is more than a skull cracking gladiator, He is a tender Shepherd, a Father of the fatherless, that gives strength and power to His people. Here stands Israel's holy Champion engaged in His people's struggles are absent from any accusation that He is weak and feeble; casual and aloof; distant and uncaring. A glorious King on a throne, He has authority to richly bless His people; a tender Shepherd, He acts graciously toward the weak. This is David's way of telling us that the God of Israel saves and rescues those who trust Him.

David's first administrative act after he was anointed king over the entire nation was to transfer the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem so that the nation's hope would not be in its civil

government and weak kings, but in the presence and power of God as symbolized by the ark and its tabernacle services. What a concept — God as the center of the nation's affection — the Levitical ministry of reconciliation as the focus of the people's attention . . . and not the civil government! Oh, that more administrations would consider the wisdom of King David!

Diversity is not strength; it is a weakness to overcome. With all the conflicts that divide a nation, no civil administration is capable of uniting people of different races and political ambitions without the use of force. Only the attributes of the Living God are strong enough to link a diverse people and cause them to rest in peace. Let us, therefore, rejoice in the ascended Christ. Again, I say, rejoice!

Psalm 69 - In Deep Waters



Psalm 69 is an imprecatory prayer and a Messianic Psalm.

An imprecatory prayer is one that calls upon Heaven to judge the enemies of righteousness.

Enemies is plural, not singular. The wicked are gang creatures that hunt in packs.

“O God, break the teeth in their mouths (plural); tear out the fangs (plural) of the young lions (plural), O LORD!” (Psalm 58:6).

We shouldn't discount this psalm and say it has no application for Christians today. This psalm is quoted in the New Testament by Christ (John 15:25), Peter (Acts 1:20), and Paul (Romans 11:9).

Yes, our Lord taught us to forgive our enemies, but he also taught us to resist the Devil's agents that devour the innocent.

By virtue of God's law order, all good men are members of the *posse comitatus* with a duty to expose criminals and bring them to justice (James 4:1-17; 1 Peter 5:7).

When man's institutions fail to purge evil from society, imprecatory prayer becomes duty!

While we are called to forgive our personal enemies when they seek our forgiveness, there is a place for petitions to the Supreme Judge to abate the evil schemes designed by the wicked. The forces that threaten the health of society must be stopped. The church militant should be able to conduct its mission without being shackled by meddling power-hungry authorities.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 – “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”

We don't pray that God would “bless” our leaders. We pray that God would restrain their evil plans and frustrate their power-grabbing schemes so the church can be left alone to serve the gospel ministry.

Imprecatory prayers are not invocations calling down curses on irritating neighbors, but prayers against movements that are anti-Christ, antinomian, and anti-humanity (Luke 17:1-7; Thessalonians 2:15).

When corruption infiltrates human institutions backed by corrupt judges, psychopathic legislators, and tyrannical officials, holy men have authority to petition the Supreme Court of Heaven to crush the plans of the wicked.

A Plea for Abatement

James 5:4 “Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.”

If you are burdened by Godless movements that have metastasized to governmental powers, Psalm 69 is a prayer for you. Moreover, this prayer sheds light on the Son Who “endured such opposition from sinners” (Hebrews 12:2-3).

A Plea from a Man Suffering from the Wrongdoing of Others

If you ache over the sins of the age, it is because you are righteous. When holy men grieve, prayer is conceived. Pain, therefore, is the path toward prayer and the prevention of perversion. The acorn must crack in order for the mighty oak to sprout.

1 (To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, A Psalm of David.)

This prayer has the scent of David all over it. Though we don't know on what specific occasion David prayed this prayer, the grime of the Absalom revolt and the betrayal of Ahithophel shadow this psalm.

Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul.

The word “waters” is a metaphor for a torrent of troubles and heavy storm clouds raining on David's career. Finding it impossible to hold on to the keel, David fell overboard engulfed in a sea of strife. Facing floods without and torrents within chilled him to the bone. Modern man would say, “I'm up to my neck in problems.”

David shares his anguish so we might understand the holy cause of his imprecatory prayer. In law, a Plaintiff must be able to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. Injured by the slander of his enemies in a coups d'état, David presents his plea.

Save: We not only need to be saved from our own sins, but the sins of others who war against the kingdom of God and our peace in His pasture.

2 I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

David describes his soul as being in the mire, a pit, and a sea of trouble — as one tossed overboard in the stormy currents of an ocean swell— as wreckage floating ashore.

3 I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

The metaphor changes from the surf and foam of the sea to the anguish of bone-dry thirst under the desert sun. The red trials blistered his soul. His enemies are bigger than he is. He is tired of being tired. Weary of being weary! Sick of being sick!

Use of the descriptive “dried throat” references David’s dehydration and the cracking, choking feeling of total exhaustion that chilled his will to live.

He compares his pain to eyes blistered by overexposure to UV rays from the burning Sun.

Synonyms for “Mine eyes fail” are indistinct, blurry, fuzzy, hazy, misty, foggy, shadowy, smoky, faint, unclear, vague, indefinite, unfocused, obscure, lacking definition, ill-defined, and nebulous – a reference to David’s confusion and depletion of faith and hope.

4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

Christ quoted this verse (John 15:25).

“They” is a reference to Absalom’s followers – the fickle masses governed by quixotic expectations, cry-baby temper tantrums, and razor-sharp rantings against his administration.

“without cause” means they prosecuted him in the court of public opinion without probable cause; i.e. David had injured none of the Plaintiffs.

David’s enemies are not named. This isn’t personal. A military coup sought to remove him from office by every means possible. The phrase “more than the hairs of mine head” refers to a well-organized movement opposed to God’s law-order.

5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.

David is not so foolish as to think that he is as innocent as a lamb and everyone else is a raving wolf. He does not play the victim while performing as a predator. Absent in this man is a “holier than thou” attitude: “my sins are not hidden from You.”

While he understands that he is a sinner, he also knows that he has clean hands — that he has injured no man. Unlike the opposition, David renounced the way of transgressors and walked on the path of righteousness. This horde of rebels invaded the dominions of Christ to disturb His peace. The coup d’état had to be stopped.

Clean hands is a legal doctrine — an equitable defense in which the innocent defendant argues that the plaintiff has no claim upon which relief can be granted because the plaintiff acted unethically and in bad faith. David knows he is not perfect, but he also knows his adversaries acted recklessly with malice aforethought.

6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

Knowing that he was a weak, flawed man . . . and God's anointed, David prays that his frightened supporters might not grow weary because of the strength of the opposition. Behind this good faith petition are fears that his failures might impair the perspective of the righteous. Aware of his own depravity, he prays the pious might not lose faith because of political reversals. Oh, that all of us were so careful.

A Plea that His Just Cause Might Prevail

7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

David's enemies are God's enemies. Because he was a friend of God, he felt the full fury of those that hate the Lord –the "reproach" of the rebels. The venom on the tongues of his foes poisoned the joy of his service to God. Under a cloud of accusations, the darkness blocked sunshine from reaching his ministry. The doom and gloom of his enemies cast a deep shadow over his own soul so that "shame" covered his usual cheery countenance.

8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

The terms "stranger" and "alien" describe David's isolation. He was the sheep among goats; the innocent among prisoners. Like a Jew in a mosque, he felt out of place.

One of the difficulties of being a Christian is that feeling of being alone and misunderstood. God's people are wonderful, but most can't understand the loneliness that frequents the soul of a dutiful, pious Christian. When ease and prosperity are high values in the minds of Christians, you cannot expect them **not** to reject true disciples of Christ.

Those who expect others to understand their sorrow are setting themselves up for disappointment. There is something about people that shy away from emotional pain. Men are into "positive" energy. Many are all mouth and no ears. Few have the capacity to comfort an aching heart. Some are "miserable comforters" that cannibalize the weak and shoot the wounded.

Protect yourself. Lower your expectations. Keep your grief to yourself, and don't expect more of people than they are capable of giving. Grow in grace. Be ready to hear the heartache of a hurting soul. Be all ears and less mouth. It is not what you say that relieves stress, but the fact that you listen and care.

9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

Zeal is a praiseworthy devotion to preserve something precious.

Because of his faith in God, David has foes. He is a candle consumed by its own flame; the soldier standing alone against an advancing army; the wounded warrior bleeding for his Captain; the hungry man so busy with his work he forgets to eat; the long tail cat in a room full of rocking chairs. You get the point.

The Spirit quotes this text in reference to Jesus in John 2:17

10 When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

The psalmist is a man washed out to sea by his own tears. The literal translation would be, “And I wept (away) my soul with fasting;” that is, I gave myself so much to fasting accompanied with weeping, that my strength was exhausted (Barnes).

11 I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them. 12 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.

In Eastern custom, mourners clothed themselves in sackcloth. The metaphor enhances the sorrow and loneliness he feels.

Like the militant media mock their political opponents, the psalmist was the theme of late night comedians — of the bar dribble of drunkards — the butt of the jokes — the twisted topic of the spinsters — a true victim of village gossip.

13 But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

How should a person respond to the crushing waves of criticism crashing on his shore? David provides the answer, “As for me,” I pray to the LORD.

God’s man did not swear nor complain. He prayed. He kept up his religious disciplines: self-control, Bible reading, devotions, confessions, and prayer. He did not give into fear, anger, and depression. When his rivals mocked him, he prayed. Normally, a good man will defend himself against careless remarks, but this will not work against a well-organized insurrection.

The acceptable time to pray is when we are in trouble; when savage wolves pack together to devour God’s sheep — when carnal churchmen call for your resignation -- when politicians advance evil by statute (Psalm 94:20).

A Plea for Personal Deliverance

David submits his complaint to Heaven’s Supreme Court. God saves many people from painful problems, but this psalmist prays, “Deliver me!” These jussive verbs behave as motions to the Court to quash his enemies and to grant relief where relief can be granted.

Moreover, we hear the heavy breathing of the Son as he faced the opposition of sinners to His Messianic mission (Isaiah 53:1-6).

14 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. 15 Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. 16 Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. 17

And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. 18 Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies.

The Reasons God should Grant his Plea

19 Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee.

Reason one: God knows the damage these devils did to his reputation. Their slander and lies pierced his heart like poison darts. As a result of the rumors and lies circulating about him, friends were lost and trust vanished. Society broke down and every man did what was right in his own eyes.

Imprecatory prayer is **not** telling God what He does not know. This is a plea for God to make him whole and to repair the wreckage in his administration. It is a plea for the Court to adjudicate the case and to pronounce the Defendants “guilty as charged” — a plea to grant him relief because he provided the Court with sufficient evidence of the plaintiff’s wrongdoing and bad faith.

20 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

Reason two: Because all human efforts failed to stop the rebellion, David begged for Divine intervention. Because David exhausted his administrative remedies, it was time for the Court to act.

Aspersions, calumnies, and slander were the weapons of choice by David’s cowardly enemies. Slander is a subset of prohibitions under the command, “Thou shall not kill;” that is, the hearts of David’s enemies were filled with spite and malice. Turning their tongues into sharp swords, they sliced up his reputation like Italian pepperoni.

21 They gave me also gall (hemlock) for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Reason three: Because the crimes of his adversaries were wanton, malicious, and inexcusable conduct, the Court is obligated to grant his motion for relief. Great societies are built on the rule of law, and not the rule of men. Righteous men believe that justice will prevail; that good will triumph over evil; that wickedness must be crushed and that Christ will reign for ever and ever.

“hemlock for meat” implies His enemies intentionally, willfully, maliciously, and inexcusably attempted to incapacitate him -- a serious violation of the principle, “do you neighbor no harm.”

Good men give food to the hungry, water to the thirsty, and care to the sick; but, David’s enemies gave him cyanide to eat, hemlock to drink, and then deserted him.

It is the duty of all citizens to support the Lord's anointed especially when they are weak (1 Samuel 24). But, these rebels took advantage of that weakness and drove a wedge between the King and his subjects.

A Plea that God would Destroy His Enemies

Imprecatory prayers are not about personal revenge, but stopping evil!

22 Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.

"Their" refers to his enemies who sought his ruin.

The word "table" refers to the supply of food, clothing, and shelter. Here it refers to the supply lines that supported the rebel movement and fires of contention that fueled distrust and division among the people. Because they tried to destroy David's career with treachery and deceit, he asks God to confuse their plans and to disrupt their supply of wealth; that in their pursuit of wealth and prosperity, they would be ensnared like vermin in a mousetrap.

23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

"Eyes" speak of the wit and skill of rebels which enabled them to succeed in their war against David. He prays the Lord will blind enemy troops, damage their optics, scramble their communications, and shake their confidence. Blind soldiers are useless on a battlefield. Prayer releases God's psyop weapons against the enemy.

24 Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

This is a plea that God would step in to this fight, administer justice, and batter his adversaries.

"Wrathful anger" refers to God's burning wrath. This is David's way of asking God to abate the threat and to immediately dispense vigorous justice to quash the lawless rebellion.

25 Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents.

The words "habitation" and "tent" refer to the dwellings where his adversaries work and rest. Because they sought to displace David from his palace, he prays that God will render equal justice and dispossess them of their houses and lands.

26 For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.

While under the chastisement of God for his own sins, his enemies added to his anguish by withholding comfort and assistance from him in his God-given calling. In addition to their treason was their failure to stop and render aide to the injured.

27 Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness.

This is a difficult text to interpret correctly.

The Lord is not only a great Redeemer, He is a great Restrainer.

“Add iniquity to iniquity” is David’s way of asking the Restrainer to remove His mantle of protection from his adversaries, and to let their sins mature so God’s plenary justice will be swift and severe.

28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

Because his enemies sought to kill him, he petitions God to crush his adversaries and to take their life. This is David’s way of asking God to kill them and to send them to hell.

Confidence the Lord Will Save the Righteous who Love Zion

Imprecatory Prayers are about the honor of God’s name and prosperity of His people.

29 But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high. 30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. 31 This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs. 32 The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God. 33 For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.

What marvelous, practical faith! Modern man appears to have very little faith in the Lord. When push comes to shove, people tend to follow their emotions instead of their convictions; their feelings instead of their faith. But, not this agonizing saint. He marched forward with praise in his heart, promises on his tongue, and the prospect of victory on his mind.

“We must cease striving and trust God to provide what He thinks is best and in whatever time He chooses to make it available. But this kind of trusting doesn’t come naturally. It’s a spiritual crisis of the will in which we must choose to exercise faith.” Chuck Swindoll

A Plea for the Praise of God and the Prosperity of the People

34 Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein.

Praise is the goal of the universe.

The verb “praise” is a Piel verb, jussive in meaning; that is, the Psalmist urges the church militant to join the heavenly choir at *fortissimo* in praise. In using the terms “heaven and seas” the psalmist calls upon all things, animate and inanimate, to focus on the virtues of the Creator. However, it is much easier for heaven and earth to look to God than it is for self-centered man to escape the vortex of his own existence in order to focus on the glories of God. The Piel jussive implores men to exert themselves.

Praise is to God what complaining is to the Devil. Satan is no match for a singing saint. (2 Chronicles 20).

When Christians whine, fear triumphs over faith, but when Christians worship, truth triumphs over troubles.

35 For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. 36 The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

David begins his prayer journey with a soul weighed down by the power of his enemies. He ends his prayer with a light heart and weighty confidence in the power of God. Instead of being a bitter man, he became a better man.

Having prayed shakily that God would save him, he closes the psalm with certainty that God will save Zion. His immediate concern was that he might not be dispossessed of his inheritance, but his ultimate concern shifts to the assurance that the people of God will possess their inheritance.

Psalm 72 - David's Final Prayer

Thy Kingdom Come

The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.



We have the final prayer by David for his son Solomon centered around the North-Star glories of the coming King.

The psalm concludes with the phrase, "The prayers of David are ended."

This fact causes us to conclude this prayer involved a vision of David's greater son, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. The psalm beams with Messianic overtones. Here David gained a glimpse of the kingdom of God on earth and the blessings to follow.

The prayers of all men end, sort of speak, when they see the climax of history and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth in and through the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The arrival of kingdom of God in its first fruits form in Christ is the major message of the New Testament (Matthew 4:17). That God reigns is the gospel of the Old Testament (Psalm 97:1).

Enough of statist flim flam with their misleading rhetoric, name-calling, tacit assumptions, and mud-slinging that do nothing to make this this world safer or freer or more just. Governments' wrongdoings, lies, power grabs, brutality, meanness, inhumanity, immorality, greed, corruption, debauchery and tyranny have exhausted the patience of the righteous.

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. Amen!"

A Prayer for Solomon

Psalm 72:1 <A Psalm for Solomon.> Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

The "king's son" refers directly to Solomon and indirectly to the Messiah.

"judgments" refers to making executive decisions in government that promote righteousness, responsibility, and freedom for the people — something modern democratic despots in the graveyard of corruption seem unable to do.

"righteousness" is a big word that includes goodness, conformity to law, truthfulness, and faithfulness to duty.

"God" (Elohim) is the first word in the Hebrew stanza. "Give" is an imperative — the language of prayer.

The name "God" (Elohim) occurs three times in this psalm. The Tetragrammaton is used only once (72:18).

To rule over a people having whirlwinds flowing through the mind for their good and to make decisions that sweeten the daily life of the people is a gift of God. Most overlords make decisions that cheer their handlers, increase their own profits, and provide \$\$ privileges to their supporters.

A Prophecy About the Blessing of Messiah

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

Contrast this hope with our times where we endure self-seeking politicians lying about legislation, starting wars, and introducing sophisticated, immoral aberrations into society that bamboozle the common man.

The king-son judges the people according to fixed standards of righteousness instead of willy-nilly impulses sprouting like thorns from the Poisonous Tree of utopian ideals.

Use of "the poor" implies the king is consistent; that is, He applies the same standards to the poor as he does the rich.

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

In using the term "mountains" and "hills," David may have in mind bandits that hide in the terrain to attack and plunder vulnerable travelers. Under the policies of the New King hills hum with peace with blossoming flowers begging for attention.

"peace to the people" refers to judgments that make victims of crime whole again.

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

A good administrator saves the poor by purging evil men from society through a consistent application of law. Righteous kings scatter the proud like casting dice on the table in order to relieve stress in the middle class. Correct applications of law heal victims of oppression as well as crush the oppressors. Righteous judgment makes men whole, not the government rich.

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

The key to this king's success is the fear of the Lord . . . a consistent, abiding discretion that shrinks from that which offends His holiness.

David employs the metaphor "as long as the sun and moon endure" to emphasize the enduring blessings of the Messiah's administration. The windfalls from godly kings are short lived, but the salvation-bounties of the Messiah-King endure forever.

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

David compares the reign of the Messiah to an abundance of gentle rain that refreshes cut grass. How much more will quality of life revive when the Messiah reigns upon the earth as the King of kings?

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

The reign of this king (the Messiah) shall scatter the wicked like feathers in the wind and cause the righteous to flourish like cedars bathed with continual kisses of rain.

International Blessings of the Messianic Reign

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

The word “dominion” (radah) could be translated “may he tread down” rebellious nations from sea to sea. This hyperbolic wish for Solomon became a reality in the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to the throne of Almighty God.

“from sea to sea” stretched the faith of Hebrews to believe ancient Israel could have sovereignty from the Red Sea in the south to Mediterranean Sea in the north . . . even to the Euphrates River. Ultimately, however, this vision extends to the reign of the Messiah from sea to sea, from shore to shore, from the North Pole to the South Pole; and, from heaven to earth.

Zechariah 9:10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

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

The term “wilderness” (tsiy’iy) is better understood as “wild beasts.” They that “dwell” (pa’nah) can be translated, “They that face wild beasts” – a reference to nomadic tribes that live in the desert – rugged, barbaric, traditional enemies of the nation.

David employs the metaphor “lick the dust” to express the death of the wicked.

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

“kings of Tarshish” refer to nations (isles) east of Israel as far away as Mediterranean Spain. “kings of Sheba” appear to represent southern Arabian nations; and “kings” of “Seba” (Saba) represent African countries south of Egypt.

But, this was as far as the Hebrew mind could stretch. The text obviously refers to the global rule of Messiah Whose authority extends to the four corners of the earth.

“bring presents” refers to worship – to the esteem and appreciation nations will have for Israel’s Messiah-King.

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

In case the reader is in doubt about this extravagant promise that reaches for the stars, David repeats it a second time for assurance.

Solomon, a type of the Messiah-King, saw kings from the east and west acknowledge His talent and authority. The Queen of Sheba marveled at his wisdom. However, this is a prophesy regarding David's greater son and the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Even the Jewish expositors understood it of the kingdom of the Messiah" (Matthew Henry)

Even now there are men in every nation on earth who raise their hands to Christ as the Most High. In every nation, to the end of time, men will swear by His name and open their lips to praise Him.

Judicial Blessings of Messiah

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

Contrast the following hope with the corruption of our age: preferential treatment for the rich, oppression of the poor by the police state, taxation into poverty, cruelty with prison terms, State robbery, ruthless feminist leaders, propaganda, lies by government officials, censorship, bribes, secret spy agencies, and promotion of depravity.

In our time we have seen Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, Mussolini's Italy, Mao's revolution in China, and Obama's "Yes, we can." The rise of strongmen and demagogues, the ascendancy of profit-driven politics over deep-seated principles, the warring of race-baiting politics that divide and conquer infuriate us. Our time is one of callous disregard for basic human rights with politicians claiming war is the means to peace.

The "needy" and "the poor" refer to vulnerable youth and to feeble senior citizens. The fame of His merciful government shall spread like happy smiles causing many to bow to His rule and to model his mercy and justice.

The imperfect verb "deliver" means "to rescue, to snatch, or to free" from oppression. The Messiah sees the injustice and shall deliver those that cannot help themselves.

The cross that saves the poor is the opening pledge of his glorious redemption by blood.

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

Unlike modern elected leaders to whom money is everything, this highly exalted Messiah-King is not out of touch with the struggle and stresses of the poor. His mercy extends to the dirty slums and cement ghettos of this world. He not only saves the souls of those who know they need Him, He protects and provides for them.

This conquest of the poor is not by armies having steel tanks with scorpion stings in their tails, but with an abundance of tender-humane principles smothered with fragrances of mercy and grace picked from the Tree of Life.

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

The psalmist identifies the problem with this world and the reason for the affliction of the poor – fraud and violence from brain-boiled trolls in government — fraud in taxation, fraud in banking, fraud in commerce, fraud in medicine, fraud in advertising, fraud in the courts, fraud in history and the sciences; and, violence by officers in the executive branch of the State apparatus.

The term “deceit” refers to commercial scams and oppression. “violence” refers to the cruelty and tyranny of psychopathic leaders.

“and precious shall their blood be in his sight” alludes to the Messiah’s protection for those who trust Him. “- He will rescue their lives from the hands of tyrants who practice deceit and oppression. The death of the saints is precious to God . . . and precious to us (Psalm 116:15-19).

Men are lied to about history, science, religion, and commerce. The reign of the Lord Christ will be one of truth with utter intolerance of “black hat” schemes to deceive, brainwash, trap, and plunder the poor.

The Blessings Showered Upon Messiah

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

What does a perfect society look like?

There was a time in England when curtains in every home were closed because fathers read Scripture and had devotions with their families before they headed to work. There is coming a day when men will be eager to find new ways to express their thankfulness to the LORD.

The Scripture informs us that those who are benefactors of His protection and provision will love the Messiah so much they will bring thank offerings out of their golden treasure chests to present to Him.

True prayers shall ascend into heaven with frankincense, “the sweets of the gods,” to the delight of the Lord. No longer will men rise and rush off to work to earn a shekel. Rather, men will rise early and live to praise Him, thank him, and to adore Him.

Let the redeemed say so . . . and start now!

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

“handful” (piccah) = “abundance.” The idea here is that even nature will respond with energetic thanksgiving to the Messiah by yielding bumper crops of corn on the earth. During our day the earth grieves and grudgingly yields its fruits. But, there is a day coming when crops will beam like sunflowers with smiles of gratitude for grace given to man by the King.

Even the mountains and valleys will shout for joy and supply golden cereals for men to enjoy.

The problem today is not global warming or a shortage of fertilizers but a paucity of praise and thankfulness in the hearts of men.

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

Oh, the blessedness of His name. Jesus is the “sweetest name I know.” Just the mention of His name causes men to sprout seeds of honesty, integrity, and generosity. In Him is life, and His life is the light of men (John 1:4).

Because He lives, we will live; Because He is the Source of all things sweet, men are recipients of the honey-coated gifts of nature. To the end of time, redeemed men shall hum praises to His name. Happiness will sit down at every meal with those blessed by the Christ of God.

Blessings on the LORD God of Israel

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

“wondrous” (pala) refers to something extra ordinary, something that surpasses human possibilities – of butterfly strength to lift buckets of silver.

The noun “only” (bad) is a term expressing separation, uniqueness, and something set apart from man’s abilities – like immortality, or advanced intelligence, or the mysterious blessing of His omnipresence.

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for showering his struggling people with the golden blessings of His presence. The redeemed shout, “Blessed are you Lord, our God, King of the Universe who brings forth bread from the earth.”

How much more shall the new Israel of God in Christ bless the Heavenly Father for giving them the riches of kingdom of God with all “spiritual blessings” in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3). Solomon was a type of Messiah, but Christ turned shadows into realities. Blessed be His name. For all that He has done for men at Calvary, the church ought to inspire hearts to praise and to bless our Eternal Redeemer.

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

“blessed be . . .” could be translated, “Let your glorious name be blessed forever.” “Amen” is used twice for certainty and emphasis.

The adjective “glorious” describes Hashem which fuels our imagination to consider His platinum attributes, His rose petal excellence, the aroma of the healing powers of His name that wages war on man’s moral enfeeblement.

“And let the whole earth be filled with his glory” — As the kings of Tarshish and Sheba brought gifts to Solomon, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords. Let the redeemed honor him with their words, works, and wealth. Let every heart be filled with the praises of God. Amen! Amen!

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

The Pual verb “ended” is the first word in the Hebrew stanza — an intense passive of the Piel stem in the emphatic position: “Ended! are the prayers of David, the son of Jesse.

After he saw with eyes of faith the Christ of God and His kingdom established on earth, the prayers of David ended . . . not literally of course, but spiritually. With his coffers full, David rested.

Rest, Soul, rest!

Psalm 89 - Merry Christmas to the Exiles in Babylon

"My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him."



This psalm is entitled "Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite."

Strong's says the word "maschil" refers to a poem of contemplation or instruction.

"Ethan" is proclaimed the author of this psalm. He was from the family of Ezrahites — grandsons of Judah: Ethan, Heman, Zimri, Calcol, and Dara mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2:6 — Judah-Tamar, Perez, Hezron and Hamul. The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all."

If these were the persons referred to, then the period of the composition of these psalms was early in the history of Israel — before David. But, this doesn't seem plausible. Most likely it was written by a grandson with the same name who composed this psalm sometime around the exile. Compare with 1 Chronicles 2:6-12.

David was a precious, powerful king and the Hope that the Messiah, David's Greater Son, was the Expectation of Israel — a hope choked in the dust of the Babylonian Exile.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was the darkest period in the history of the nation. The deportation to Babylon threatened the precious promises made to David. His "crown" had been "profaned" and "cast to the ground" (89:38-44). Though this promise appeared to be completely abrogated, Ethan underscores the Davidic Promise as still in effect!! Ethan, a descendent of Judah, rises in faith to instruct the defeated Jews that God will, in some miraculous way, fulfill the Davidic Covenant.

In one sense, this is Ethan's "Christmas Message" to the captives during their long winter in Babylon. It shows the miracle of Christmas, the anticipation of the Messianic Promises given to David. Ethan romances the diamond of the Messianic Promise against the black velvet of the Babylonian captivity.

To appreciate this psalm one must perceive the wonder of the Messianic Promise given to David (2 Samuel 7:1-17) and the thundering threat the Babylonian Exile had on this precious Pledge. Dark, thick, clouds with thunder and lightning rolled in like a hurricane during the captivity forecasting death and doom over the Messianic Hope.

Luke 1:28-32 And the angel came . . . and said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and

bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

Matthew 1:6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias . . .

Matthew 1:17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Acts 15:16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

Ethan's Christmas Message to the Exiles in Babylon

The Diamond Promise Made to David Regarding the Messianic Hope (1-37)

Psalm 89:1 <Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.> I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

The mercies of the Lord encompass the coming of Christ and the "sure mercies of David" (2 Chronicles 6:42, Isaiah 55:3-9, Psalm 132:1, Acts 13:34).

Yes, the exile dumped cold water on the fire of the Messianic Hope, but it did not nullify God's faithfulness, mercy, or ability to fulfill His promise to David!

"sing of the mercies of the LORD" is Ethan's way of instructing the defeated Israelites to walk by faith (in the Promise and Power of God) and not by sight (in the chains of captivity).

2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

Ethan assures the people that the Davidic Promise is written in Heaven . . . that it is as unshaken and unvacillating as the sun, moon, and stars.

3 I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,

“covenant” and “sworn” refer to God’s oath to raise up the Messiah through David. David was the “chosen” one; that is, the promise is inextricably, indivisibly, and intrinsically bound to the eternal, indestructible, unchanging character of the LORD.

4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

Terms like “establish for ever” and “build up” and “to all generations” confirm the immutability of the Promise. Ethan pounds his finger on 2 Samuel 7 saying, “God said it. It must be true. It will be done! He is under an oath to fulfill this promise.”

5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

Yes, the captivity cast shadows of doubt over the Messianic Promise, but this Promise is proclaimed by the invariable heavens testifying to the unchanging nature and eternal faithfulness of the LORD.

6 For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

Ethan appears to apologize for comparing the faithfulness of God to faithfulness of the heavens, but it was the best he could do. In reality nothing can be compared to the fixed, invariable, permanent, eternal, enduring, uniform, persistent, unwavering, lasting, and undeviating character of God. Israel’s circumstances had changed for the worse, but God does not change for better or worse. Therefore, His promise to David was still in effect!

7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

Ethan instructs his brethren that they are not to fear there is a breach in the promise because of their bitter circumstances, but to fear God and to rely on His faithfulness.

8 O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

Because He is the “LORD God of hosts,” the God of Heaven’s and earth’s armies, His power will resurrect the buried Promises and fulfill them; that is, all His power is still available to fulfill the Messianic Hope.

9 Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

If God can still the waves of the raging sea, He can calm the political storm that walloped Israel where the tsunami of judgment swept them away to Babylon; that is, He can bring Israel back to the land. And, He did!

10 Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.

“Rahab” refers to a storm or a mythical sea monster — a metonym for Egypt or Pharaoh.

He broke Rahab and led Israel out of Egypt to the Holy Land; and, He can do it again from Babylon!

11 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

If God can dispose of the heavens and the earth as He wills, He can intervene in the muddled world of politics to fulfill His covenant with David.

12 The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

Because He created the north and south and everything in between, He controls all that is going on in Babylon. In the end, Mount` Tabor and Mount Hermon will rejoice in the coming Messiah. And, they did in our Lord’s visitation to earth in His day.

Mt. Tabor in the west and Mt. Hermon in the east, both objects of majesty and grandeur, were created by God. Since He controls what he creates, He controls not only Israel, but Babylon. As the mountains honor His majesty and power, so the exile in Babylon will end up glorifying the LORD.

13 Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.

Utilizing anthropomorphism as a literary device, Ethan assures His defeated people that they are still in the palm of His hand; still under His power; that His hand is still in control of international affairs.

14 Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

Since justice, mercy, and truth are the foundation of His throne, God will use His position and power to fulfill the Messianic Promise.

15 Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.

Those among His people who hear the joyful sounds of His justice, mercy, and truth will smile in the face of death and walk in the light of His powers . . . and, not live in despair because their circumstances changed with the exile.

16 In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

Their joy was not in their circumstances in Babylon, but in the Name of the LORD God . . . in His character . . . in His righteousness and faithfulness.

17 For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

“glory” = ornament; and “horn” speaks of the power of a king.

This is Ethan’s way of instructing his brethren to rejoice in the strength of the Lord and not worry about their weakness in figuring out how to return to the Holy Land. Eventually, in God’s timing, He will exalt our cause. The Messiah will appear and deliver the people.

18 For the LORD is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.

Ethan informs his people that the LORD is their defense; that the Holy One of Israel is their king . . . not Nebuchadnezzar . . . that the King of Israel is in control of world affairs and not the governments of this world.

19 Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

Ellicott and Benson agree that the “holy one” refers to Nathan, the Prophet, who delivered the Messianic Promise to David.

Ethan reminds his people that God gave the Messianic Promise to David through Nathan the Prophet and other prophets by means of dreams and visions.

20 I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

Saul was chosen by the people. David was chosen by God.

It was God who found David among the sheepfolds, taught him, and anointed him to be king of Israel. David did not obtain power by political prowess or the lawless methods of assassination, but by the election of God — an inference that the Lord would usher in His Messiah in the land of Israel in His time; that is, the Jews will return to Palestine and rebuild the nation.

21 With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.

Since God chose David, and appointed him to be king over the nation, it was God who strengthened him, protected him, and provided for him. Therefore, God will do what is necessary to fulfill His Promise to David. And, He did on that first “Christmas” morning (Luke 1:28-32).

David was a type of Christ. What He did for him, He will do for His Greater Son, the Messiah.

22 The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

“exact” (nasha) is a commercial term relating to usury or the exaction of a debt.

Babylon will not profit or exact a profit by its extortion of Israel. Though treated as slaves in Babylon, God would not allow the Babylonians to treat them as debtors or act as debt collectors trying to extract a debt one cannot pay.

God's purposes are not weakened, threatened, hindered, or frustrated by the belching and boasting of government officials or the ups and downs on the sea of politics. Nebuchadnezzar's deportation of Jews to Babylon did **not** disrupt the LORD's Messianic Agenda. "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20).

23 And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. 24 But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

Beating "down his foes" is a reference to destroying David's enemies.

Ethan reminds the people that God made a promise to David to defend him and protect him, and that He will defend and protect the promises made to David even though he is now dead. The protection he provided for David, He would provide for the Jews in Babylon. Since Babylon is an enemy, the remnant could expect to see God's plague upon this Euphrates nation sometime in the future.

25 I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

Ethan uses a commercial metaphor of exacting payment of debt like a creditor pushing a debtor into "the sea" or "to the rivers" to demonstrate that no matter how ruthless Israel's creditors become "exacting debt to the last inch" of a man's capacities, God will protect, preserve, and provide for His people . . . even in usury- driven Babylon.

"rivers" = the Mediterranean Sea, Euphrates and Tigris Rivers.

26 He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. 27 Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

David was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ Who is called God's Firstborn (Colossians 1:15-18).

"firstborn" – a reference to David being the first and foremost of Israel's faithful kings . . . of the earth's great kings . . . a man beloved in the eyes of the Lord . . . a man favored above all the earth's kings.

David accomplished a touching conquest over all these territories because He looked to God as His Father . . . a foundation upon which Christ expanded His theology of God, our Father Who art in Heaven.

28 My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

A reference to the "sure mercies of David" – the grounds of confidence and unshaken assurance that God will do what He promised to David. And, He did in the birth of the Savior in Luke 2.

29 His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

“His seed” refers to the Lord Jesus Christ and to His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father — a fulfillment of God’s Promise to Eve, Abraham, Jacob, Judah, David, and Mary.

First, God gave the Promise to the whole world through Eve (Genesis 3)

Second, God narrowed the Promise to a nation through Abraham (Genesis 12).

Third, God identified the Promise coming through a tribe — the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49).

Fourth, God narrowed the Promise to come through a family — the family of David (2 Samuel 7).

Fifth, the Messiah was born to a virgin, a daughter of Nathan, the son of David (Luke 3) and inherited His right to be king from His stepfather, Joseph the son of David and Solomon (Matthew 1).

30 If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; 31 If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; 32 Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. 33 Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

A reference that God would be faithful to David and His promises regardless of the failure of his sons to keep God’s law; that is, the sins and failures of the latter kings before the exile did not and could not prevent God’s intent to bless the line of David till the Messiah arrived in history.

Luke 9:35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips 35 Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.

Ethan reminds the people that God is not a covenant breaker; that in this case, the covenant to David came wrapped up in the red ribbons of unconditional promises . . . and dressed up in swaddling clothes.

When God takes an oath, it cannot be broken; that is, He puts ALL His integrity, truth, and power behind all His promises . . . especially the “sure mercies of David.”

Matthew 1:22-23 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

36 His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. 37 It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

His seed refers to the Abrahamic seed — a reference to the world being blessed by the Messiah, the Son of David, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Who could have foreseen the coming of Christ, His birth through Mary, His death at the hands of Pilate, His resurrection from the dead, and His glorious ascension as a Faithful Witness to execute judgment on His enemies from the right hand of the Father? That the throne in Jerusalem would be transferred to heaven; that David's greater son was the eternal Son of God, Savior, and Judge of all mankind; that is, the fulfillment was greater than the promises.

Ethan romances the diamond against the black velvet of the Babylonian captivity.

Velvet = the dark cloud of the exile that hid the hope of the Davidic Promise

In the first part of this psalm Ethan revisits the bright Promises given to David. In this section, he contrasts these sunbeam Promises with the doom and darkness of the destruction of Jerusalem, the exile, and the Babylonian captivity — a perspective from the bewildered, confused, doubting eyes of the captives in exile — midnight darkness indeed.

But, Ethan was not disconnected from reality. He wasn't plukin' harps on Fantasy Island singing, "All You Need is Love." He too was trying to shake off the dust of defeat, of being homeless, faithless, and hopeless in a foreign land, under a foreign king, under foreign law. Reality smacked him in the face every day and his brethren were quick to remind Him that their circumstances in Babylon provided all the evidence they needed to conclude that God had forsaken them. Only by reading and re-reading the inspired Scriptures could Ethan conclude the Messianic Promises were true and that their material circumstances were a lie.

Oh, the cold darkness that preceded the birth of Christ: The curse on Adam, Noah's flood, the confusing birth of Ishmael, the mistreatment of Jacob, the incest of Judah and Tamar, Israel's enslavement in Egypt, wars against the nation, Athaliah's infanticide of the royal nursery, the Jeconiah curse, the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 586 B.C., the 70 year exile in Babylon, the difficulty of the return and rebuilding of the temple, the rage of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Hellenization of Israel, the madness of Herod the Great and His slaughter of infants in Bethlehem. How Jesus the Messiah was born in history at the right time, in right place, and to the right family with His genealogy intact and free of Adam's curse is a miracle of history. Merry Christmas, indeed!

38 But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.

Ethan now speaks for the captives. In their minds God had forsaken them . . . in anger. Anger, yes; but, forsaken, no.

39 Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.

In the mind of the survivors, God nullified, broke, and abrogated His Promise to David . . . to the prophets . . . to the nation.

40 Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.

In the minds of the captives, God removed His protection from the nation and the land . . . even destroying its defenses.

41 All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.

Consider the destruction of Jerusalem and its archaeological ruins.

In the eyes of the captives, they lost everything of value — their personal assets, houses and possessions; their capital city, temple, religion, and nation. In their minds, they were plundered by every pickpocket, petty thief, porch climber, prowler, and pillager on earth.

42 Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

Oh, the shame of sitting in despair, despondency, depression, and dejection watching your enemies rejoice, party, sing, boast, swagger, dance, skip, and frolic over their victory.

43 Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.

From the eyes of the captives, God abandoned their soldiers to join the forces of the enemy. Their swords missed their mark; their arrows hit the dirt instead of the enemy . . . a work of God against the people.

44 Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground. 45 The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

The glory, reputation, and fame of the nation were smothered in Babylon's siege of Jerusalem. Israel was truly decimated, defanged, depleted, and defeated.

The Intense Plea for God to Restore the Messianic Hope

Though Israel's defeat was real and substantial, Ethan leads the nation to rely upon the God who struck them.

46 How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?

The question is not "if" they will recover, but "how long" till they recover. God's wrath burned for 70 years against the nation, and then the ambers of wrath died out in 536-519 B.C.

Remember, Israel's 70 years of servitude to Babylon (606-605 B.C. to 539-536 B.C.) -Jeremiah 25:11; 29:10; and the 70 years of desolation — a forced sabbatical rest (589-586 B.C. to 519-516 B.C.) – 2 Chronicles 36:19-21.

47 Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? 48 What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

The meaning is clear. My time on earth is short. Soon, I must die. If I am to see your promises fulfilled, it must happen soon.

All men are mortal. All die. There comes a time when the promises of God to men die with the man. Act now . . . in my time so I may rejoice in Your Hope. This is my time, my day, my short life. Show yourself true to Your promises in my hour of need.

49 Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?

A question on every Jewish exile's mind was where is the kindness, mercy, and love you promised to David . . . to us. . . to the sheep of your pasture? Darkness abounds; show me the light. It's cold; where is the warmth of your love?

50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people; 51 Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.

The reason for the above question (49) rested in their painful circumstances. Instead of honor, they felt disgrace; instead of respect, they felt shame; instead of comfort, they felt pain; instead of light, they were surrounded by darkness; instead of joy and freedom, they felt the cold rattling chains of slavery. Therefore, the psalmist prays that God might remember their affliction and restore them to a place of favor . . . of honor . . . and of peace.

"footsteps" – Where ever I go, what every I do, I hear the mocking and taunting of my oppressors . . . I feel the heavy breathing of my enemies down my neck . . . sneering at my faith . . . and criticizing my God.

"They have reproached my footsteps"; that is, they have followed me with reproaches – treading and marching along behind me insulting my religion. What advantage is it to be a God-fearing man?

52 Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Out of darkness and doom, out of defeat and discouragement comes a feeble rebuke of unbelief: "Blessed be the LORD for evermore."

Out of the Euphrates Valley come the faint sounds of the remnant, Amen, and Amen! The Psalmist is not alone! There are many others that believe God is true and that the blessed Promises Regarding the Messiah will be fulfilled; . . . and, they were on Christmas Day circa December 25, 2 B.C.

"Out of the darkness, white lilies grow."

Merry Christmas — our Lord is the Miracle of History.

Psalm 102 - A Prayer for the Destitute

A Psalm for Troubled Saints



This is a psalm written by a distressed saint who draws a lesson from one of the great acts of God in history—the return of the Jews from Babylon (536 BC).

The occasion is due to the unexpected command of Cyrus for the exiles to return to Canaan and to rebuild their temple. Afflicted and alone in his personal trial, he submits his petition to the unchanging God of history. See Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah.

Psalm 102:1 <A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.> Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

Satan would have us believe that there is no God, no hearing, and no answering.

If such be the case, it would be more desirable for the atheist to execute our death warrant than for us to ramble on about the case for the existence of God. To the soldiering saint, it would be better to die than to be denied access to His Mercy Seat.

The Hebrew word for “hear” is *shema*. It is a command, and it is the same word used in the “Shema” of Deuteronomy 6:4. I know you hear prayers, but hear my plea. My prayer is flawed and I am broken, but hear my cry!

The prayer of the psalmist is so flawed; it is more of a “cry” than a prayer. The first use of the term “cry” is when Israel cried over the bitterness of their bondage in Egypt. When sorrow fills the heart and words fail, the urgency of our conditions begs that our groans reach the ears of Him who has the power and grace to arrest our conflict.

If our cries do not enter the veil of Him who rules over true Israel, we are the most miserable of all men.

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

The psalmist deals with a truth: that God is . . . but that God also conceals Himself. Where is God when I need Him? Why does He seem so near in His temple, but so far away in trouble? Why does God feel so close in times of prosperity, but so distant in times of adversity?

The secretive ways of God tests all men, and the psalmist fears His evasiveness Who at times is more difficult to find than Big Foot: “Hide not . . .” Do not ignore me. Do not pretend You do not know me. Do not be truant when I am in trouble. At least raise your eyebrow and

acknowledge my presence. If my sins have so offended You, deal with them latter when I can better bear it. But, now, in my distress, overlook the weakness of my faith and the weaknesses of my prayer.

Troubles are difficult enough, but a silent God in the midst of trials is a double tragedy. It is a great blessing for God to send a gift, but for the gift to arrive in time to avert disaster is a double benefit that bolsters confidence in God.

Answers that come on the heels of prayer are the medallions of the saints. But, who can boast about a silent God in the midst of screaming problems? What faith can endure the bombardment of doubts due to God's abandonment of the man in the midst of his field of battle? The psalmist employs a set of effective metaphors to describe his condition.

A Description of His Suffering

Consumed

3 For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as a hearth.

The metaphor is well chosen. Smoke is illusory, intangible, and immaterial. Fire is a fearsome destroyer. Smoke disappears into the midnight sky never to be seen again. It cannot be retrieved. It cannot be harnessed. It cannot be saved for usefulness at a later time.

Not only were the psalmist's days disappearing like smoke, his bones burned like coals in a hearth. Likewise, his feeble faith and piety passed before him like vapors amidst the charred ashes of his precious all. His righteousness that stood like a proud cedar in the forest was stripped of its bark and all that remained was black charcoal of a once noble tree.

What a plight -- a child of God with an empty bank account; his energy spent; his youth past; his dreams a flame in pillars of smoke! But, this is the state of many a dear child of God.

God's Withering Flower

4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. 5 By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.

The term "smitten" refers to an aggressive blow with the intent to slaughter. It is translated "kill" in Genesis 4:15. It refers to God's act of flooding the earth to destroy humanity in Genesis 8:21. It is the term used to describe Moses killing an Egyptian in Exodus 2:11.

The psalmist sees himself as a tender plant that wants to live but is smitten by the intense heat under the desert Sun. He struggles to survive but his beauty and freshness is spent. Burnt, dehydrated, and under intense heat, the psalmist exposes himself as God's withering flower. God's blossom is so distressed he can't even eat. Sorrow stole his appetite. Regret ruined his routines. Weakened by the spiritual drought, God's faded flower shrinks into despair, dismay, and depression.

Gaunt and thin, he looks more like an Eisenhower German POW death camp survivor than one of God's well fed sheep. Pale and gray, he resembles a living, emaciated corpse. Where is God?

His Comparison to Three Birds Blown off Course

6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

The pronouns "I" and "my" may be a literary device where the psalmist speaks for the exiles.

The psalmist likens himself to three miserable birds. What is a water fowl doing inhabiting the parched, blazing wastelands staring at cactus and sand dunes?

What is an owl doing moping alone in a desert clinging to solitude? Stunned and disorientated, all hope is abandoned. Isolated and depressed, he lies face down in the sand. Fluttering for breath, he awaits his final fate.

I stare at the sand

Where is His hand?

My prayer not heard,

Alone like a bird.

Having once flown high,

Is it time to die?

7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.

The psalmist sees himself as a tiny sparrow perched on a housetop as a sentinel keeping watch over a city he cannot defend, he cannot protect, and that will not heed his chirping. He is the lone patriot watching the nation. Where is the flock? Where are the soldiers?

Maybe this little bird has lost its mate or its little chicks. Maybe the other members of his clan are safely roosting in their nests.

This is not a cheerful sparrow, but a bird chirping in a minor key warning his nation of impending doom. He is only one bird. No other guards are seen on the rooftop. Where are the kindred spirits? What can a single, weak, depressed, exhausted sparrow do to save his sleeping city? He looks; he sees; he chirps out his warning, but no one hears; no one cares; no one wakes. The church slumbers on.

8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.

God's little bird watching his city was surrounded by predatory hawks, coyotes, and snakes. Clever politicians and government bureaucrats plotted his downfall.

The psalmist found himself confronted by canons of criticism and the sword of slander “all the day.” Whereas leaders should have sworn an oath to uphold God’s law, these rulers were under oath to crush God’s sparrow. In the hunt, the demagogues acted with insane intensity to trap God’s little bird and to break its wings.

A Description of His Personal Distress

A Diet of Ashes and Tears

9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping,

Ashes were the mourner’s cosmetic choice in times of great grief. Lying in ashes symbolized humility and havoc. When people in the East wanted to express bereavement, they adorned themselves in sackcloth and wept face down in a pit of ashes.

God turned his wine into water. Drinking only water, he could taste the salty tears in his cup.

Indignation and Wrath

10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

The nation was under judgment. Loyalties were divided.

In the cloud of confusion, opportunists rose to power. Madmen ruled the nation.

The rabble used that power to oppress this servant of God. His enemies had provoked the Lord and were cause of the distress. When men idolize political power, Christians cannot be trusted not to betray one another. The sharp effects of justice now touched this patriot and he felt its bitter impact personally. The wrath of God poured out upon the nation splashed upon God’s little bird. The grief and suffering of God’s people pierced his own soul. Though he had done all within his power to avert the calamity that reached the nation, he found himself on his face mourning in ashes.

Possibly, his own political or financial distress was the judgment of God against the psalmist for his own personal sin. With his welfare deteriorating, he saw God as the Source of his calamity. It was God that lifted him up, and it was God that cast him down. God promotes; and, God demotes. He is the cause of the rise and fall of men. The psalmist agonizes because he is among the fallen.

A Disappearing Shadow and Withered Grass

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

Grabbing two more metaphors, the psalmist compares his life to a shadow that appears in the morning and disappears in the evening under the cover of darkness.

Like a tender, green blade of grass that appears in the spring, his vitality faded to dry, pale yellow under the summer heat. Scourged by the blazing Sun, the positive passion of youth shriveled into depression.

The psalmist is made to feel the brevity and temporariness of life. He wants to live. He wants a full life. But, poverty and death was at work robbing him of joy and happiness.

His Description of the God He Serves

Eternal

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

Turning from his personal affliction, the author reflects on the true source of consolation. God's name is YHWH or "I am". I will perish, but You remain. I fade and change, but You are permanent. My life is a variable, but You are Constant. My nation crumbles, but You are imperishable. My generation will disappear, but you are indestructible. Because You reign as the eternal King, all is well (Exodus 3:12; Psalm 30:4).

Men will forget me, but there will be new generations who will remember You. Evidence of thy presence will cause future generations to seek your face. All things are vanishing, but you remain forever. You are the Creator and Your creatures will always remember You.

Merciful

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

For the Hebrews to return and build Zion – What faith!

What is our view of God? What kind of God is He? Is He a scrooge grasping tightly to his pennies or is He a benevolent Father eager to give? Do we see Him as a warden holding us in prison, or as a Governor that can grant us clemency and freedom? Do we see Him as some kind of unfaithful beau that abandons His sweetheart to lustily pursue another, or do we see Him as a devoted Lover that will "never, never, never, no never forsake us"? Our sticky trials often taint the truth of His character.

Surely, there must be a key that unlocks the steel vault that hides the presence of God from us.

He does not know when, but the psalmist expresses confidence that God will act soon to comfort His people.

He believes the silent, inactive God will come out of His hideout, speak, and revive His work in the psalmist's day; that the sunshine of His presence would cause the shadows of judgment to retreat and the flowers to bloom.

The disasters of yesterday are past. Today offers new hope. He may hide Himself for a while, but He cannot restrain His desire to bless for long. The dark gray storm clouds and thunder claps must surely contain rain. He may withdraw His affections so His people will repent of their transgression, but he cannot restrain His love forever.

The time has come, yes, the time has come! After a dark night, there is the light of sunrise; after the cold winter, there is the warmth of spring time; and, after bitter discouragement, there is sweet encouragement. The God of love must love; the God of wealth must give; the God of grace must show mercy. And, He did in 539-516 B.C.

The jailed must go free; the rejected must be accepted; and life must prevail over death. God is never continually at war with His people. Peace must be declared. Surely His frowns are temporary. Fasting must end and feasting must begin: For the time to favor her is come; yes, it is come!

Precious

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

Zion refers to Jerusalem and its Solomon temple. Zion was not only the religious center of the nation but the hub of civil authority. Zion was Gods throne as well as God's altar. Every devout heart yearned to be near the temple . . . even in the dust. The cold hard stones delighted the servants of God. So great is Zion even the dust had value to His people. Every aspect of God's work is precious . . . and every task in service to Him a privilege!

Likewise, the servants of God take great delight in the church, the true temple of God. The youngest child in the smallest church has great importance to deacons in the family of God. Everything is significant, from preaching of the Word to the moping of floors. Nothing is without significance and no task below our dignity.

Feared

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

When God has mercy on his church, even the heathen take notice. When sincere hearts gather to light a candle to honor Christ, even the pagans come to see the light and enjoy the warmth.

When Zion rejoices in the accomplishments of Christ, heathen are converted. Even kings are attracted to simple, happy faith of genuine believers. The restoration of Jerusalem following the captivity was a marvel to all the surrounding nations. Likewise, a revived church cannot escape the notice of civil rulers. There is nothing more riveting to pagans than to see humble Christians delighting in Christ and joyfully serving their Master's interest.

A prayer: O, God, revive me and start a fire in my own heart that sheds light on the glories of Christ. May others see it and rejoice.

Glorious

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

Young's translation has the tenses correct: "For Jehovah hath builder Zion, He hath been seen in His honor." A post-captivity psalm, God's house was rebuilt and His presence manifested among the people.

Kings take great pride in their palaces and public projects. Likewise, when God revives his work and rebuilds His church, He is honored among men. When pagans are converted and trained to serve Him, the Lord is glorified.

A united church growing in holiness and love is like a setting of silver at a king's banquet. Who can resist genuine Christians bound together to honor Christ and to serve the gospel in the energy supplied by the Holy Spirit?

When Christians surrender themselves to the cross, little candles create a bonfire for all to enjoy.

Building up Zion is God's work and must be energized by His Spirit. While man can participate in it, and appreciate it, men can add nothing to it. Likewise, building the kingdom of God is God's work. It can only expand by a supernatural supply of power. Man can preach the kingdom (sow the seed), but only God can cause the seed to grow (Mark 4:26). Both seed time and harvest are supernatural works of God.

The Great Lesson in the Psalm

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

Again, Young's translation has the tenses correct (Qal perfect): "He turned unto the prayer of the destitute, and He hath not despised their prayer."

Historically, the poor were those left in the land to forage for food and those among the captives of Babylon that returned to rebuild the House of God. The pioneer exiles came back to a wasteland in order to rebuild the infrastructure of the nation.

What an encouragement that God hears the prayer of the destitute! The term "destitute" (Heb: ar-ar) refers to a small bush in the desert with tiny leaves—a condition brought about by a combination of acidic soil and drought conditions.

In Jeremiah 17:6, the term "ar-ar" is translated "heath" which refers to a dwarf-shrub—a low growing woody plant in arid regions of the earth. Jeremiah specifically mentions salty, parched lands. Perhaps, the psalmist is referring to vegetation near the Dead Sea. The principle the psalmist seeks to convey is that God hears the prayers of his dwarfed afflicted people.

What an encouragement! God answers prayer! Thousands of saints will testify to it! Israel's King does not hear men because of their wealth or their status in society. God is not moved by riches or reputations. He is moved by faith. God is love and He loves because of Who He is and

not because of who we are or what we have accomplished. Great kings are surrounded by powerful and wealthy men. The common man has no access to a prince.

Unlike arrogant judges who cite petitioners with contempt for violating some esoteric rule, there is a King that is ready to bend his ear to those stripped of wealth and health. He hears beggars! As a King he has the wealth to pass out more than crumbs; as a gracious Being He can overlook the great faults of the petitioners. He will not despise the weakness of the prayers or the prayers of the weak.

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

Having experienced such direct and intense answer to prayer, the psalmist shares his intent: Let this be written for future generations. Take a lesson from history. The rebuilding of the Second Temple was an act of God in answer to prayer. Take note, for there shall be future generations who will be poor and destitute. Let them be hopeful! There is a God in heaven who hears the prayers of the poor.

19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth; 20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death (YLT: "sons of death"); 21 To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

The lesson from history continues: the destitute in Babylon are called "sons of death" because it appeared they would die bondmen in a foreign land forever. Exiled and without a temple, they poured out their hearts to the Lord. The God of Heaven heard their cries for spiritual and political freedom (prisoners of Babylon). When Cyrus came to power, God stirred the heart of this Persian messiah to grant freedom for political prisoners. He gave the order for volunteers among the exiles to return to Israel to rebuild God's temple.

To the captives, the order seemed like a dream. Political prisoners in Babylon, Cyrus ended their bondage. Such political reversals are rare in history. Jolted, the nation came to life. In the graveyard where nations are buried, God pried open Israel's casket. Like Lazarus, a nation in grave clothes hobbled out of their tomb.

The psalmist teaches a profound truth: When forsaken by men, there is a God in Heaven Who hears the cries and groans of those in shackles and chains.

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

How great were the sudden political reversal and the return of the captives from Babylon to rebuild the temple? The psalmist answers. When the final act of history closes, and saints are gathered around the eternal campfire telling stories, the return of the Jews to the land of Israel from the refugee camps in the State of Babylon will not be eclipsed. As a miracle of history, it parallels Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

His Personal Prayer

Weakened and Shortened

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

Having secured the grand fate of the temple and announced the miracle of the release of the Jews from Babylon, the psalmist now returns to his personal stress.

The verb “weakened” is a Piel perfect indicating intense affliction that caused him to hobble as a lame man toward the finish line. He was so afflicted; the stress drained him—even shortening his expected life span.

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

The psalmist did not fear death, but he loved life. With a Chaldian elephant on his chest and struggling to find strength to breathe, he begged the Almighty for a full life. Because God lives, he wanted to live.

Knowing Who God is, the poet wants to personally experience all of Jehovah’s mercies and graces.

Because God answered the prayers of the destitute under Babylonian oppression and because he feels like a desert plant stripped of its leaves, he begs God to be to him what He was to the exiles—a God of resurrection.

25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

It is reasonable to expect God to answer his prayers because God has not changed. God is unchanging in His eternal being. There has never been a time when God was not. There will never be a time when He will cease to exist. He is the Great I Am. What he was to destitute Israel in Egypt and in Babylon, He can be to the destitute psalmist and his people now!

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

The psalmist seemed confident that godly seed will continue in future generations, not because of virtue in them, but because there is an unchanging God who creates and sustains them by His mercy in every age.

What encouragement! We can expect the truth and mercy of God to prevail in all seasons of history. While it seems things are always getting worse and worse, there is this promise to claim: “the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.”

Psalm 109 - An Imprecatory Plea for Justice

“For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.”



This psalm is credited to David. A righteous man with many enemies, there is no reason to doubt his authorship.

Furthermore, this psalm is quoted in the NT in regards to Judas (Acts 1:20). Like Jesus, David had enemies willing and ready to betray him to the highest bidder.

There are two ways to improve society; (1) the salvation of souls, and (2) justice applied toward the wicked. Both the saving of life and the taking of life are duties of men. This psalm prays that God would rain down justice on those who verbally assaulted him.

Psalm 109: A Prayer lying the Grounds of His Claim

1 <To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.> Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;

“hold not thy peace” is an expression used by David appealing to God to intervene in his defense. The Hebrew word literally means “don’t stop ploughing.”

“O God of my praise” -- David grounds his prayer on the character of God, particularly His justice, to intervene that he might have more reasons to praise Him. Spiritually speaking, David claims the best thing about himself is God; that He is his treasure.

Slander

2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

The wrong done to David is described as slander – the weapon of choice of political opponents – a violation of the Sixth Commandment, “Thou shall not kill”; that is, defamation and libel are auxiliary violations of the law against murder.

Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Verbal Assault

3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

“They compassed me” implies the vilifiers came at him from every direction attacking his character and assaulting him to any who would listen.

“without cause” implies David had not injured any of his accusers; that he violated no law; that all their accusations were malicious and wrongfully inspired. David is not saying he is not a sinner. Rather, He claims innocence in relation to the verbal charges laid against him.

Malicious Mud Racking

4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.

“For my love” -- David had shown love to his accusers and they repaid him with libel, slur, and insults.

When David did good, they reimbursed him with evil; that is, they repaid his kindness with backstabbing unfaithfulness.

Instead returning evil for evil, David prayed *for them*.

Personal Wrongdoing

5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

David did good toward His enemies and did not retaliate in like kind. Rather, they returned hate for love, bitterness for goodness.

“David's enemies laughed at him for his devotion, but they could not laugh him out of it.” (Matthew Henry)

A Prayer for Retribution upon the Wrongdoer

6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

Since these malicious accusers could not be corrected by David's love or prayer for them, he prays for strict justice – that God would place a wicked taskmaster over them that would treat them like they had treated him.

“let Satan stand at his right hand” - at the side of the taskmaster's counselor and adviser. Since Satan is the master of accusation, David prays his enemies might be made to feel the pain and terror of slander against them.

When a man criticizes a pastor or elder, he gives permission for others to belittle him.

7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Unlike David who had not violated the law and who was falsely accused, he prays that his accusers might be held accountable for their actual violations of law; that is, for the very thing

they were doing, David appeals to strict justice. Lord, when they are judged for their sins of slander, let them be condemned.

“let his prayer become sin” in court; that is, may the judge reject the maligner’s plea for mercy. This text informs us that David’s accusers were religious men claiming a holy status before the Lord – a presumption that was proved false by their duplicity.

“When men reject the salvation of Christ, even their prayers are numbered among their sins” (Matthew Henry).

This imprecatory prayer was David’s hope and a supposition, and not an immediate actuality.

8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

This petition is consistent with Psalm 37 that God would cut off the wicked. No good man would pray that God would forgive the unrepentant or that they might live a long, prosperous life. He wants these wicked governors removed from office.

9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

Again, this imprecatory prayer is consistent with God’s promises in Psalm 37. Crimes deserve punishment and David pleads with God to punish these criminals and to prevent them from multiplying quibblers like themselves.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

David does not want to see evil men with children who will do the same things as their fathers. He prays that the seed of the blasphemers would be cut off so they could not multiply more minions. The early death of the offspring of the wicked is a one way to improve society.

“desolate places” = barren lands, deserts, and the wilderness where men have to work day and night for one meal.

“Let his family share the punishment, his children be as wandering beggars to prowl in their desolate homes, a greedy and relentless creditor grasp his substance, his labor, or the fruit of it, enure to strangers and not his heirs, and his unprotected, fatherless children fall in want, so that his posterity shall utterly fail” (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary).

11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

“Let the extortioner” or debt collector harass, hound, and pester him.

“let the strangers spoil his labour”; i. e. let foreigners seize and possess what he has earned.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

The sense behind this petition-curse is that the slanderer and his family might never experience comfort, compassion, or pity from anyone.

“See what hurries some to shameful deaths, and brings the families and estates of others to ruin; makes them and theirs despicable and hateful, and brings poverty, shame, and misery upon their posterity: it is sin, that mischievous, destructive thing” (Matthew Henry).

13 Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

This prayer is consistent with Psalm 37:28 – “but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.” It is a blessing to the world when liars, slanderers, murderers, fornicators, lesbians, and Sodomites do not have children or that their children are killed. Thus, this is a prayer for pure justice.

14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

“Be remembered with the Lord” is a Biblical doctrine that God “visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate” him (Exodus 20:5). It is an inescapable fact that children and children's children regularly suffer from the errors, crimes, and sins of their parents.

“The sweet of vengeance lies in its completeness. The curse must strike backwards as well as forwards, and the root as well as the branch be destroyed” (Ellicott).

In his prayer, David seeks to purge society of evil men and their reprobate children – a noble, beneficial, profitable strategy. We don't need more liars and fornicators on earth. Plants that produce bad fruit must be plucked up.

15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

“Let them be before the Lord continually”; that is, may God never forget their sins and may He work to cause others to forget them. Thus, this is a prayer for pure justice.

“Let their sins never pass from the mind of God. Let him never so forget them as not to inflict punishment for them (Barnes).

16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

David's imprecatory prayer is not extreme or unjust. It is fair and proper. Because they did not show mercy to the poor and needy, David petitions the Lord to withdraw His mercy from them even if they have a broken heart during prosecution. Isn't this what the Day of Judgment is all about?

17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

In regard to these slanderers, David prays that they would be cursed because they loved cursing him; that because they despised mercy and compassion, God would not show mercy and compassion to them; because they took pleasure in vilifying others, that God would treat them as villains; because they took pleasure in smearing others, they might be smeared; and, because they showed no compassion to their victims, that God might not show them any compassion -- a prayer for pure justice.

18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

“clothed himself with cursing” is a metaphor meaning these miscreants clothed, dressed, and robed themselves with blasphemy.

Like “water” and “oil” are necessities of life; the psalmist wants their whole being drenched with damnation as easily as water and oil can be splashed on a body.

19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

Like a leper clothed with rags, David wishes these reprobates to be eternally clothed with curses, condemnation, and hopelessness.

20 Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

“reward” – Let them receive the curses I have prayed because they deserve them.

Because they tried to ruin me with their lies and slander, let them be ruined forever.

A Prayer for Personal Deliverance and Protection

21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.

Unlike his accusers who broke the 6th and 9th Commandments, David prays for mercy . . . not because he was a flawless man, but (1) because he did not injure those that sought his ruin, and (2) because it is God's nature to be merciful.

22 For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

Though a king, David saw himself as an ordinary, poor, and needy man . . . but, more than this – a true victim of defamation. David was not plying the victim; he was truly an injured party of intentional, premeditated, undeserved murder.

“Whoever files, attempts to file, or conspires to file, in any public record or in any private record which is generally available to the public, any false lien or encumbrance against the real or personal property of an individual described in section 1114, on account of the performance of official duties by that individual, knowing or having reason to know that such lien or encumbrance is false or contains any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for not more than 10 years, or both” (18 U.S.C. § 1521).

23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

David uses the metaphor of a shadow and a locust in the wind to describe the wobbly, precarious position his accusers put him in when they sought to destroy him through slander . . . that is, the slander worked to destabilize him.

24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

So effective was the malicious slander, it caused David to take leave of his kingly responsibilities, to pray and to fast over this plot to ruin him as king. The more he prayed the weaker he became.

25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

Perhaps, the most devastating result of this defamation campaign to demolish his reputation was that others believed the mudslingers. When the victims of defamation looked upon David, they shook their heads in contempt; that is, they believed the carpers even though they had no evidence against David.

26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

Trapped between backstabbers and those who believed them, David felt alone.

Christians can be fair weather friends, and when the black storms of slander hit the sails, they jump ship. When government is god in the minds of Christians, you cannot expect them not to betray you when you are accused of wrongdoing.

27 That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it.

David looked to God to save him from traducement and to do it in such a way that the whole community would know that God stood with him and saved him.

28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice. 29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

David could survive the slander, but he could not live without God’s blessing. Let them continue their gossip, but God please don’t discontinue your blessing. Work on my behalf. Let

them be ashamed and let me rejoice in You! Let their shame be so complete that it would cover them like a garment.

A Prayer Expressing Clean Hands

30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

Having prayed this imprecatory prayer, David bursts into praise knowing that the God of justice heard his prayer and that the matter was in His hands.

31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

David finds rest for his soul without finding a clear remedy for the slander. Knowing that God was with him sustained him during this assault on his character and status as king.

To save him from those that condemn his soul - - Margin, "from the judges of his soul." The Hebrew is, "from those that judge his soul" (Barnes).

The LORD is the poor man's advocate just as Satan is the poor man's accuser (Ellicott).

"Jesus, unjustly put to death, and now risen again, is an Advocate and Intercessor for his people, ever ready to appear on their behalf against a corrupt world, and the great accuser (Matthew Henry).

Let us all find rest for our souls knowing that matters of concern are in His hands.

Psalm 110 - The Coronation of God's King-Priest

Behold the Beautiful Christ

Before us is a royal hymn.

The most quoted psalm in the New Testament, its importance is staggering (Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42; Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:13; 7:11, 15, 17; 8:1).

It has been said the first duty of man is not to submit to authority, but to question authority.

The writ that challenges authority is called a *quo warranto* requiring an individual claiming authority to produce in writing his writ of authority to exercise certain powers.

This is Jesus' response to man's *quo warranto*. It is proof of claim that He was called to be the Ruler of all matters pertaining to God.

Before us is the glorious coronation of Messiah to the office of king and priest. A contract with offer and acceptance is announced. The acceptance of the appointment to office contains rights and privileges, and imposes duties and responsibilities on the Messiah.

Here the powers of government and the obligations of King-Priest are conferred upon this human agent, the Messiah. The Psalm serves as constructive notice of His appointment a thousand years before He walked the earth.

Messianic Appointment as King

Psalm 110:1-2 A Psalm of David. The LORD (YHWH) said unto my Lord (Adonai), Sit (yashab) thou at my right hand, until I make (shiyth) thine enemies thy footstool (hadom). The LORD shall send the rod (matteh) of thy strength out of Zion: rule (radah) thou in the midst of thine enemies (oyeb).

Five persons are introduced in the first three verses: David, LORD, Lord, the enemy, and thy people.

When the Pharisees quibbled with Christ and tried to trap him in a contradiction, He queried them about the identity of the "Lord" David mentioned in this psalm, "If David then called him 'Lord,' how is he his son?" (Matthew 22:41-46).

David

When David wrote this psalm He was God's duly anointed king.

The word "anointed" is the Hebrew word for "messiah."

A messiah is someone with olive oil poured over them during an inauguration ceremony. In Israel, kings and priests were anointed with oil as a symbol of their divine appointment to public office. David was God's de jure messiah king.

But, in this psalm the anointed One is not David, but "the Lord." The only reference to David is in the inscription and the word "my" when he referred to "my Lord."

In the New Testament, the Greek word *christos* means "anointed." Consequently, our Lord Jesus was called "the Christ" or the "Anointed One." This psalm, therefore, is not about David, but about the coronation of the Lord Jesus Christ and His commission as king and priest.

LORD / Lord

The name "LORD" (YHWH) is the Tetragrammaton meaning "I Am" — a being verb expressing "the existent One." This is God's official name and the covenant name whereby God made His contract with Israel. Jesus taught us to address the LORD as "our father."

The title "Lord" (Adonai)[1] in lower case letters means "master" or "owner." The word *adon* comes from a Ugaritic word meaning "lord" or "father." The plural form, *Adonai*, is like the plural form *Elohim* which is regularly used with singular verbs and modifiers. It is proper to construe the Name as an "emphatic plural" or "plural of majesty." The plural form occurs over 300 times in the Old Testament, and it always refers to God. Adonai is our Lord Jesus Christ.

That the LORD is the supreme authority over all creation was unquestioned in Israel by virtue of the fact the LORD is the Creator (Genesis 2:4), and that He is the Redeemer of the nation (Exodus 20:1; Isaiah 41:14; 43:14).

Because He is sovereign, He rules! Because He loves His people, He redeems! He rules His people with their needs on his heart; that is, Israel's God is an all-powerful, all-holy, all-benevolent Sovereign.

"Sit" is an imperative. It is YHWH that summons Adonai and bestows on Him the duties and privileges of the Messianic office at His right hand. He was commissioned because of His virtue and His competence.

"Right hand" is a Middle Eastern symbol of authority and power. It is a position or throne whereby Messiah exercises jurisdiction over His domain.

"Footstool" or "under feet" is an idiom for conquest over enemies.

"Rod" or "staff" is a scepter, a symbol of authority. Today we use stamps and embossers and seals to declare the authority of a written instrument. In Biblical times, a king's staff represented His authority.

"Zion" is Jerusalem, the residence of King David, and where God ruled over the nation from the tabernacle / temple. But, this coronation does not occur in carnal Jerusalem, but in the presence

of Almighty God in Heavenly Jerusalem, the place of God's eternal rule before Christ came to this earth (Psalm 87).

Rule: The term "rule" (radah) is an imperative; i.e. we have here a grant of authority to execute the duties of the Messianic office. This answers the quo warranto question, "by what authority does Christ make claims on men?" The duties of Messiah include at least two obligations: (1) to save His people from their enemies and (2) to crush the enemies of God, His law, and His authority.

Enemies: The term "enemies" means that not everyone accepts this king or His grant of authority. Many rebel against God's law-order and resist His reign.

God's enemies (oyeb) are proud and foolish men who reject His rule over them. Anyone who refuses to surrender to this King . . . is an enemy! Terms like "wicked," "unbeliever," and "anti-Christ" come to mind.

Luke 19:27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Destroying God's enemies means salvation for God's people; that is, the defeat of enemies means victory, safety, and prosperity for Zion. No force or political movement on earth can defeat the will of Heaven. The true church is invincible.

Messiah's Appointment and the Consent of the People

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

In this verse we have a lovely description of the King's people using rich and refreshing metaphors of morning dew and sparkling in the sunshine of the unveiled Christ.

"Here there is the additional idea of brightness—the array of young warriors, in their bright attire, recalling the multitudinous glancing of the ground on a dewy morning: thy young warriors come to thee thick and bright as the morning dew" (Thompson).

"Thy people" refers to God's covenant people; those who confess Him as their King, Lord, and Master; those who surrender to His law-order and live out a life of love. We call them "converts," "the elect," "believers," or "Christians." Jesus called them "friends" (John 15:13-14; Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 11:28-29; Luke 18:7).

"Thy people" are not Jews, as there was no such thing as a "Jew" in David's day. Moreover, Jesus was from the Tribe of Judah, but He was not a "Jew" in the religious sense of the term. The Jews of Jesus's day murdered Him. They were His enemies. Those Hebrews who believed in Him were called Christians, God's chosen ones, believers, and God's people. Today's "Jews" who belong to the "other" Israel are not Hebrews but Khazarians from the Ukraine . . . and, they too are anti-Christians and enemies of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

Modern so called "Jews" have no Hebrew blood them . . . and, even if they did, race / genetics does not commend one to God nor make them "God's chosen people" (Matthew 3:1-10; John 1:10-13).

"Willing" (nedabah) refers to consent. It is a word connected with free-will offerings, something voluntary and not mandatory. In order to experience the benefits of the contract (salvation), one must consent to be ruled by the Lord-King. Everyone in God's kingdom is there because they want to be there. These are people with "no king," but King Jesus (Acts 17:6-7).

"Day of power" is a reference to the day the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ will be unveiled to mankind. It is the day of the Lord and the day of resurrection. The New Testament calls it the "apocalypse" (2 Thessalonians 1:7; Revelation 1:1).

"in the beauties of holiness:" God's people are seen dressed in holy garments. Justified and sanctified in Christ, the saints shine "in the beauties of holiness." In contrast to His enemies lurking in the darkness, the church sparkles with devotion to their King.

The "womb of the morning" is a glorious reference to the arrival of the Eschaton in its fullness and universal power. The long night of distress, disease, and death is over.

The "dew of thy youth" is a lovely description of the bodily resurrection of the holy dead. These holy ones are described as the morning dew that refreshes the meadow after a long summer drought.

This is an ideal picture of God's people robed in the holy garments of kings and priests. Raised from the dead (spiritually and bodily), they sparkle and shine like fresh crystals of dew on a mantis-green meadow.

Messiah's Appointment as Priest

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

We have a second pronouncement — The public declaration that God has made His selection for the office of priest, and installed Adonai to be not only a king, but a priest! A priest is one who not only mediates God's interests to men, but mediates man's concerns to God. This messiah priest not only has access to God's throne room, He intercedes to God on man's behalf.

This royal coronation is a grant of power and authority by our Father-God to Messiah to enter heaven's sanctuary in order to mediate the needs of mankind to our Father-God.

An oath binds a man to the duties of his office. An oath is made in exchange for public trust.

The oath verifies the acceptance of Christ as man's representative in Divine affairs. He is not only God's Representative to man, but man's Representative to God. What an advantage to have one man Who loves us and Who represents our concerns before the throne of Almighty God.

Glory! Hallelujah! We have a wise, virtuous, competent, duty-bound King-Priest that rules, and represents us before the Father (cf. 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 5)!

Sworn: No man has a duty to perform public service unless he is commissioned to do so and voluntarily accepts the appointment. Consequently, assignments to office require a public oath.(
Note: In America when a man is appointed or elected to public office, “We the People” require the officer-elect to take an oath and post bond in exchange for public trust before he begins to exercise the duties of office (Article VI of the U.S. Constitution).

This was true in David’s time, and it is true in our time. Public officers are required to take the prescribed oaths and to post bond . . . OR, they are imposters acting under color of office, color of authority, and color of duty.

The wording in Hale v. Henkel declares a political truth: the citizen “has no duty to the state or his neighbors to divulge his business . . . his rights are such as existed by the law of the land long antecedent to the organization of the State . . .”

Because a man has no duty to the State, upon acceptance of a commission to serve the public, the man must take an oath to faithfully perform the duties of public office. Likewise, every contract requires an oath or promise to faithfully perform the duties of a contract. In most states, the duly sworn officer must also post a bond they will faithfully perform their duties according to the contract (the constitution).

Thus, we have in this verse the LORD’s oath and appointment of Messiah to the office of the Melchizedek priesthood. A mysterious figure, Melchizedek was the greatest man in the Old Testament — greater than Abraham — greater than Levi and Aaron. With no record of his birth or death, he is a type of the Son of God. Unlike the Aaronic priests, he did not inherit the priesthood from his parents, but was appointed such by God. Unlike Levitical priests whose ministry was interrupted by death, Jesus serves by the power of an endless life. Because He lives, believers live (Hebrews 7:7, 16).

Will not repent: This appointment of Messiah as King-Priest is irrevocable, unalterable, and unalienable — not capable of being taken away or denied for all eternity.

“Thou art a priest” means that He is not a priest stemming from His own ambitions, but by the appointment of the Father; that the Messiah is not only a king that kings, but a priest that priests. Before us is an ideal king—a King that mediates the affairs of God to man; and, a Priest that mediates the concerns of man to God. He is God’s representative to men as King; and man’s representative to God as Priest. He serves God and dispenses justice as a king, but he serves mankind and shows mercy as a priest.

We have here for the first time in history a King that not only serves the law of God, but also a King-Priest that serves the needs of the people. What a concept – a King committed to God’s law-order — a benevolent King – a King-Priest that cares – a King that executes justice toward the wicked, but a King-Priest that exercises mercy towards kingdom citizens!

As King He purges society of evil men; and, as Priest He saves sinners to the uttermost! Hallelujah!

“Melchizedec:” The title “Melchizedec” means “king of Salem” (King of peace or at peace). He is the King of Shalom and without him there is no peace.

One of the unique features of Melchizedek is that He appears suddenly in the Genesis record. His origin is shrouded with mystery as the Spirit reveals nothing about his human ancestry. The writer of Hebrews used this strange feature to signify the eternal nature of the Melchizedek priesthood with which our Lord is identified. He was the first king-priest mentioned in the Bible and was either a Theophany of Christ or an ideal king-priest to the people living near Jerusalem at the time of Abraham.

Melchizedec refreshed Abraham after Abraham’s return from pursuing the five plunder-kings that captured Lot by supplying him with bread and wine. Rejecting a contract with the King of Sodom, Abraham accepted a contract with the King of Jerusalem. So great was Melchizedek, that Abraham tithed a tenth of his equity to this king-priest. Melchizedek was not a Jewish priest ministering in the carnal temple with sacrifices that can never take away sins. Rather, He was a true catholic king-priest that used his resources to meet the needs his people, and specifically, Abraham.

Our Lord’s kingly priesthood is the archetype of the competent, charitable, cosmopolitan Melchizedek priesthood.

He is the King of Peace, and there is no peace without Christ as King.

Messiah’s Conquest, Triumph, and Rest

5-6 The Lord (Adonai) at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

O, how the kings, princes, rulers, presidents, legislators, judges, and parliamentarians anger us! But, oh how they must fear the mere mention of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Psalm 21:8 Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. 9 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

Adonai, when His glory is revealed, shall judge among the heathen; He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; and, he shall wound the heads (rulers) over many countries.

The Lord at thy right hand: Before us is an apocalyptic pronouncement of the bone-crushing victory by Adonai, God’s appointed King-Priest, over stubborn and rebellious kings that have resisted God’s rule and His law-order. This is not “sweet Jesus” caressing lambs in his arms, but the Lord Christ, the righteous-conservative, “tough on crime” Judge who will “drain the swamp” and deny relief for corrupt government officials.

Strike (machats): The word “strike” means “to smite, shatter, or wound severely.” Here it represents the Messiah faithfully executing the duties of His office to punish evil doers and to purge society of evil men . . . and those self-promoting, greedy, hedonistic politicians.

This is the “day of the Lord” that unbelievers and politicians fear!

Kings: The “kings” refer to proud and defiant rulers on earth that shake their fists at God to maliciously and recklessly violate the rights of man.

These are rulers who defy the law of the LORD God and rule arbitrarily as tyrant-taker-taxers over men. All presidents, sultans, prime ministers, Caesars, queens, emperors, dukes, generals, governors, and government officials are included in this word “kings.”

Wrath: The word “wrath” (aph) means “nostril” in Hebrew. An angry man has his nostrils flared and is an appropriate expression for wrath.

This is “eternal wrath,” the wrath of the Eschaton, the wrath associated with the Last Judgment. It also includes the wrath leaking from heaven now against evildoers now (Romans 1:17ff). This is “sinners in the hands of an angry God.” This is the irresistible, dynamic, cataclysmic, universal “day of vengeance” and the “baptism of fire” mentioned by Malachi and John the Baptist (Malachi 4:1-2 Matthew 3:1-12).

Jeremiah described a limited, local day of wrath on rebel Jews prior to 586 BC. Jesus describe the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD as the sign of His wrath on the Jewish Nation and proof He reigns in the clouds of heaven in Matthew 24. Furthermore, one day this judgment will break forth into a final, ultimate display of wrath for which there is no escape.

Jeremiah 46:10 For that day belongs to the Lord God of hosts, A day of vengeance, so as to avenge Himself on His foes; And the sword will devour and be satiated And drink its fill of their blood; For there will be a slaughter for the Lord God of hosts, In the land of the north by the river Euphrates.

Dead bodies and wounded heads: Before us is imagery of the Bonecrusher splintering the enemies of God littering an ancient battlefield with bleeding, broken bodies. The psalmist assures us that the enemies of God will suffer ultimate, irreversible, eternal defeat.

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

On this canvas of Holy Writ, the Holy Spirit sketches a scene of the Champion King-Priest returning home as a Victor from a fierce battle.

With blood on his garments and sweat on His brow, He stops by a stream to refresh himself with a drink of water and to reflect on the marvels of this victory. With His enemies crushed, and His people safe, He holds His head high with dignity, honor, and joy.

The battlefield was Calvary wherein our Lord faced the trinity of evil: Satan, sin, and death. Having given His all to save His people, He returns to the Father as Heaven's Champion — a reference to His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:32-37).

This is the King-Priest of the psalm; the Lion-Lamb of Revelation chapter five; the One with a "sword in His mouth:

"He that treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God;" the "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS;" and, He that orders the fowls of the air to "eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great" (Revelation 19:15ff).

The Lord Jesus Christ has been crowned, and he is sitting at the right hand of God in authority over heaven and earth.

Does this King-Priest know you as one of His own? Your eternal destiny will be determined by your relationship to this King. Acknowledge Him now, bow the knee now, own Him as your Lord and Master in this life, and He will be your Savior on the day you are called to cross Jordan's River into the presence of Almighty God (Romans 10:9, 10).

[1] "The plural form Adonai, like the plural form Elohim, is regularly used with singular verbs and modifiers, so it is best to construe the Name as an "emphatic plural" or "plural of majesty." When the plural is formed using a singular possessive ending ("my Lords"), it always refers to God, and occurs over 300 times in the Tanakh in this form"

(Source: http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Names_of_G-d/Adonai/adonai.html).

Psalm 118 - Open the Gates of Righteousness

The Call to a Litany of Thanksgiving



Before us is a call to worship based on the victories of God's people. It is a Messianic psalm liturgized for the Feast of Tabernacles. The Victory began when the Levites demanded the porters to Open the Gates of the Righteous so the prayers of God's people could ascend to the throne.

If you are distressed because of political enemies, this psalm is for you.

Victory's Call to Thanksgiving

Psalm 118:1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. 2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. 3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. 4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

The psalm begins and ends with "O give thanks unto the Lord." This is the conclusion of a matter, not the beginning. The Hebrew word for "give thanks" (to'dah) means "to throw up the hands" in worship to express gratefulness, yieldedness, and devotedness. It is an imperative – the reasonable response of those devoted to the LORD.

The reason for this encumbrances is "his mercy endureth for ever" which is liturgically repeated four times for emphasis in verses 1-4, and again in verse 29, making a total of five times in this psalm. The term "mercy" implies the restraint of perfect justice combined with a spirit of kindness for the benefit of the impaired.

So noble is this grand theme of thanksgiving, the psalmist invites Israel, the house of Aaron (the priests), and all who fear the LORD to join him in proclaiming the mercy of the Lord. No doubt each group felt broken and in need of restoration and encouragement.

The Reason for Thanksgiving: Victory

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

The "I" could be an individual in the nation, Israel, or in the ultimate sense the Messiah.

The reason for this five-fold vigorous litany is the psalmist's deliverance from his difficult troubles by the LORD; and, or, the nation's deliverance from international perplexities.

The word "distress" (met'sar) refers "to the straits" or to a "narrow place" crowded by adversities with no means of escape. The phrase "set me in a large place" (bi'mer'hab yah)

literally means “set in a large place by Yah” or “answered me with the freedom of Yah” (Ellicott); that is, the LORD gave him “elbow room” (King John).

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

The greatest state in life is the assurance “the LORD is on my side” — something not all men are able to say or feel.

The result of the psalmist’s rescue was not only a deliverance from pressing troubles, but freedom from fear devouring his happiness. If we are on the Lord’s side, He will be on our side.

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

The psalmist had true friends that stood with him during his trials. The Lord used them to help him. He relied on God and the LORD employed his associates to provide comfort and to relieve his stress. Our Master does not draw upon organizations or corporations, he uses people to console and support those suffering under adversity. Consequently, with the eye of faith the writer of this hymn was able to see the downfall and defeat of his enemies — “princes” (v. 8), “man” (v.8), surrounding “nations” and governments (v.10).

The Lesson of Victory

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

9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

This is the middle verse in the middle of the Bible!

The word “better” (tov) refers to two options. The psalmist had a choice between creating a treaty (alliance) with surrounding nations or going deeper into reliance upon the LORD. He chose a course of trusting Yah.

The word “trust” (la’ha’sot) refers to fidelity to the covenant (Ellicott). Armies, ambassadors, and government representatives always disappoint and seldom provide the relief that men wish for. “That the military is the only way” reeks with false hopes and treachery.

The lesson is clear: stop trusting your government to do something good for you. See Psalm 145 & 146.

The Confidence of Victory

10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them. 11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. 12 They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

The psalmist now describes his “distress” in verse five. The pronouns “me” and “I” appear to be literary devices performing the function of a personified-allusion humanizing the nation of Israel.

We do not know the circumstances surrounding the composition of this psalm, but we sense the hymn writer is a King or Levitical leader who hears the sounds of armies on the march at the borders of his nation. “they compassed me about” is repeated four times for emphasis.

The image of being surrounded like “bees” around a honeycomb provides an impressive snapshot of this stress — an image used in Deuteronomy 1:44 describing the pursuit of Amorites against Israel like a swarm of bees.

Considering his political distress, his confidence that he will destroy these armies is astounding. The word “destroy” (muwl) is used twice for emphasis. The Hebrew word “muwl” (destroy) is the term for “circumcision.”

The agricultural imagery of being burned “as the fire of thorns” not only describes the character of his enemies, but carbonizes the ruination of these armies in our minds.

His confidence is stunning: “in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.”

“in the name of the LORD” announces his authority.

He uses the phrase “I will destroy them” three times to emphasize the defeat of his adversaries. His desired outcome was not “conversion” but “demolition.” Our God is not only a Savior that improves society by converting men to the gospel, but a God of War (Exodus 15:3) who improves the commonwealth by destroying armies and purging society of evil men.

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

The “thou” is a direct address to his enemies as if they were in front of him with eyes to see and ears to hear.

Unless we are prone to degrade this peril, the psalmist reminds the reader of the force and aggression of Israel’s adversaries; they “thrust sore at me that I might fall.” The word “thrust” (dachah) means “to push violently.”

These enemies were massive and terrifying. But, the LORD was more terrifying.

The Theology of Victory

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

Facing overwhelming odds, the psalmist did not rely on his own might and muscle. Rather, He focused on the muscle and sinew of Another.

15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

The word “tabernacles” (‘ohel) could literally be referring to the number of tents erected around Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles — like a huge Bible camp movement.

The “voice of rejoicing” could be the happy sounds of families laughing and singing about the Lord as the people gathered around evening campfires during the festival sharing their perspectives on the “right hand of God” working for them following this national crisis.

Luther renders this beautifully; “They sing with joy for victory in the houses of the righteous” (Barnes).

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

The imagery here is of a mighty warrior with his hand lifted up ready to strike (Ellicott). Since the power of God is superior to all others, his enemies have no chance of victory. Their armies will be crushed and broken.

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

The composer is confident that he will live and that Israel’s enemies will die. In one sense the pronoun “I” refers to Israel or the “new Israel,” the church; that is, the church will never be defeated.

Numbers 14:21 But *as truly as I live*, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.

Let us remember, the purpose of deliverances is for the glory of the Lord . . . to give us reasons to boast in Him.

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

The Lord is not only against sin in the camp of Israel’s enemies, the Lord is against sin in the lives of His people. The psalmist reminds us that “judgment must begin at the house of God” and that the LORD had tempered the righteous in the furnace of affliction. This man knew his sins deserved punishment and that it was only because of the LORD’s mercies he was not shattered to the bone.

The Faith of Victory

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:

The “gates of righteousness” is better translated “the gates of the righteous” which refers to the doors of the temple which only Israel was allowed to enter.

“O ye porters, appointed by God for this work, open the gates of the Lord’s tabernacle, where the rule of righteousness is kept and taught, and the sacrifices of righteousness are offered:” (Benson)

“Open” is a command. Maybe some of the porters seemed dubious and dilatory. More likely, “open the gates” is used in a metaphorical, spiritual sense. David and others demanded entrance into the courts of the LORD so they could be near God, adore Him, and learn His ways. Likewise, the “kingdom of God comes violently, and the violent take hold of it;” that is, kingdom-seekers pound on heaven’s gates until they open for them to enter. They knock and knock until their prayers are answered. Likewise, Christians demand to be in a church with God’s people to worship and enjoy the Lord.

20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

All who are truly righteous and wish to be holy have a right to enter the house of God and to join the devotions of his people.

God’s people prefer the company of sheep rather than goats; of saints than sinners; of a house of worship than a palace of pleasure.

21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

I will praise You because You have allowed me access to your courts and received my petitions. Now it is time to throw up my hands in thanksgiving because your “mercy endures forever” — even unto me. You and You alone are the reason for my prosperity.

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

“The stone” should be translated “a stone.” The “stone” is Israel — a small nation rejected by others in the Levant as an insignificant force in the Middle East and a nation of no political value.

Prophetically, what is true of Israel is also true of Christ. He is the ultimate Stone which the builders rejected (Matthew 21:42-44; Acts 4:11; 1Peter 2:7; Ephesians 2:20).

The theory behind this perspective is that when Solomon built the temple, the stone carriers arrived at the temple site with a “weird” shaped stone. Not knowing what to with it, the builders simply pushed it down the hill only to realize later that the rejected stone was actually the corner stone of the foundation on which the temple had to be constructed.

That Jesus is the Cornerstone and that the Jews rejected Him is a fact of history. Now, He is the foundation stone of the church, the new Israel of God.

23 This is the LORD’S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

In a primary sense, this change of destiny for Israel which made her of strategic political importance in the Middle East is to be ascribed to none but Yah Himself.

Since this nation gave birth to the Messiah, the Savior of the World, this ancient nation is the bridgehead of salvation for all men. Who could conceive in the first century that the crucified Christ would become the cornerstone of Western Civilization?

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

The day of victory for ancient Israel is from God. The Lord made it; Israel rejoiced in it.

Prophetically, “the day which the LORD hath made” is Calvary; and, we rejoice in our Lord’s accomplishments at the cross and His subsequent triumph over death. Our ultimate enemy is death, and the Savior defeated this opponent in and through his resurrection. Therefore, we will rejoice and be glad for the cross as this is the day of salvation!

Cruci Dum Spiro Fido.

The Benediction of the Victorious

25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

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

“now” is not in the text. It is not an adverb of time (Ellicott): “Save, we pray (anna).”

The Hebrew imperative “save” (yasha) is translated “Hosanna” in the New Testament (Matthew 21:9). The crowds employed this word as our Lord went to the cross.

The word “prosperity” (tsalack) means “rush” your blessings to us; that is, you have saved us. Now continue to pour out your goodness to us.

The “we” are the priests in the House of the Lord. “The one coming in the name of the LORD” appears to be worshippers presenting offerings to the priests;” that is, the priests blessed the worshippers.

Those coming in the name of the Lord were not always welcome in Israel, but here we see receptive hearts eager to receive the Word of God. Ultimately, “he who comes in the name of the LORD” is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Historically, this psalm was sung on the last day of the Feast of Sukkot (tabernacles). “Hoshana Rabba” (a request for great salvation) is on the seventh-eighth day, the last of the seven days of Sukkot. At this time the Jews performed the sacred water drawing ceremony by going in parade like fashion to the Pool of Siloam to fetch a golden pitcher of water and then returning to the temple. This was called the “Simchat Beit Hashoavah.” Another group led by priests went to collect palm branches. At this time the people entered the “water gate” and heard the blast of the shofar. The priest would pour water and wine upon the altar as a symbol of thanksgiving to God for sending rain for the harvest, and as a prayer that the LORD would send the early and latter rains for next season.

At the same time, the people would wave palm branches and chant, “O LORD, save us now.”

Remarkably, the people in Jesus’s day did not know that their Savior-LORD-Messiah was in their midst in the person and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 7:37 In the last day (the day of the water festival), that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

27 God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.

If this song was created for the Feast of the Tabernacles, the “light” could refer to literal light of the pillar of cloud and fire present during Israel’s pilgrimage in the wilderness. On the other hand, it could be figurative referring to “light” as a the revelation of God at Sinai. Ultimately, Jesus is “the light of the world” (John 8:12).

*28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.
29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Apparently, the psalmist called worshippers to join his declaration and to confess as a nation, “Thou are my God . . . ” Thus, the psalm ends as it began – thanksgiving to the Aleph and Tav, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End of all our blessings – for His mercy endures for ever.

“the LORD is good” during good times and bad times. He is always good. He injures no man. He is good in sending rain for crops; and, He is good for sending us the Savior Who is the Water of Life and the Light of the World.

Note: See the historical traditions and the use of the psalm during the Feast of Tabernacles as explained by Israel My Glory – “priests holding willow branches marched once around the Great Altar, reciting for all to hear, “Save now (hoshanah), I beseech thee, O LORD! O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity!” (Psalm 118:25).

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