

Everyone Has a Psalm

R. Edward Harlow

All material used by permission of the author, as published on
plymouthbrethren.org.

Also online at <https://plymouthbrethren.org/series/6072>

KEE Ministry Library · Faithful Men
kee-ministry-library.netlify.app

Read A Psalm Every Day

Christian Publications Registered

230 Lupien Street

Cap de la Madeleine, Quebec, Canada

In a meeting of the Church all Christians can sing God's praise, 1 Corinthians 14:26. The songs in the book of Psalms will help you every day.

This book is written in simplified English. It uses a list of 1000 words prepared by Mr. H. Dennett of England. The only other words used are common in the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Copyright © 1966 by R. E. Harlow

Read a Psalm Every Day

You can read through the whole book of Psalms in six months. Just study one psalm every day. The list on page four will help you. The longer psalms take two or three days and the longest, Psalm 119, takes eight days.

When you have read the psalm for the day, study the notes which explain it. Do not believe the notes unless they teach the same as the Bible. You should look up every verse and try to understand what it means. Most of the words in the lesson are very easy. You may have to look up the meaning of a few of them.

You should do whatever God's Word commands. Tell your friends what you have learned. This will bring a blessing to them and joy to yourself. More important still, it will bring joy to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Read a Psalm Every Day

Day | First Month | Second Month | Third Month |
 Fourth Month | Fifth Month | Sixth Month 1 | 1 | 29 | 55 |
 78:56-72 | 104:24-35 | 122 2 | 2 | 30 | 56 | 79 | 105:1-22 |
 123 3 | 3 | 31:1-18 | 57 | 80 | 105:23-45 | 124 4 | 4 |
 31:19-24 | 58 | 81 | 106:1-23 | 125 5 | 5 | 32 | 59 | 82 |
 106:24-48 | 126 6 | 6 | 33 | 60 | 83 | 107:1-22 | 127 7 | 7 |
 34 | 61 | 84 | 107:23-43 | 128 8 | 8 | 35:1-10 | 62 | 85 |
 108 | 129 9 | 9 | 35:11-28 | 63 | 86 | 109:1-20 | 130 10 |
 10 | 36 | 64 | 87 | 109:21- 31 | 131 11 | 11 | 37:1-26 | 65 |
 88 | 110 | 132 12 | 12 | 37:27-40 | 66 | 89:1-18 | 111 |
 133, 134 13 | 13 | 38 | 67 | 89:19-37 | 112 | 135 14 | 14 |
 39 | 68:1-18 | 89:38-52 | 113 | 136:1- 9 15 | 15 | 40 |
 68:19-35 | 90 | 114 | 136:10-26 16 | 16 | 41 | 69:1-21 | 91
 | 115 | 137 17 | 17 | 42 | 69:22-36 | 92 | 116 | 138 18 |
 18:1-28 | 43 | 70 | 93 | 117 | 139:1-12 19 | 18:29-50 |
 44:1-16 | 71:1-16 | 94 | 118:1-18 | 139:13-24 20 | 19 |
 44:17-26 | 71:17-24 | 95 | 118:19-29 | 140 21 | 20 | 45 |
 72 | 96 | 119:1-16 | 141 22 | 21 | 46 | 73:1-16 | 97 |
 119:17-32 | 142 23 | 22:1-21 | 47 | 73:17-28 | 98 |
 119:33-56 | 143 24 | 22:22-31 | 48 | 74 | 99 | 119:57-80 |
 144 25 | 23 | 49 | 75 | 100 | 119:81-104 | 145 26 | 24 | 50
 | 76 | 101 | 119:105-128 | 146 27 | 25 | 51 | 77 | 102:1-11
 | 119:129-152 | 147 28 | 26 | 52 | 78:1-20 | 102:12-28 |
 119:153-176 | 148 29 | 27 | 53 | 78:21-42 | 103 | 120 |
 149 30 | 28 | 54 | 78:43-55 | 104:1-23 | 121 | 150

Book 1

Psalm 1

The first verse or the first two of many psalms give in short form the message of the psalm as a whole. In the same way the first psalm is a taste of much that is found in the entire book of Psalms. Still more completely we may think of the first eight psalms as giving an example of the book as a whole. Psalms 1 and 2 teach doctrine. Psalms 3-7 are prayers and Psalm 8 is a song of praise, prayer and teaching.

The first psalm describes the righteous man and Psalm 2 the struggle between the saints and the world. Both of these ideas are important in the book of Psalms.

Moreover the perfectly righteous man in Psalm 1 is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. God's answer to the hate of the world in Psalm 2 is to set His King on the throne. Here again we see our Lord Jesus. In many psalms we see pictures of Christ and in some of them are verses which are also found in the New Testament about Christ.

We do not know who wrote the first psalm nor are any of its verses in the New Testament. Yet the truth contained in Psalm 1 is found throughout the Bible. It could be called THE TWO WAYS: The way of the righteous, vs. 1-3, and the way of the ungodly, vs. 4-6.

God's blessing is promised in verse 1 on any righteous man. The Lord Jesus pronounced nine blessings on the righteous, Matthew 5:3-11, and in the book of Revelation seven other blessings can be found. In Psalm 1:1 the blessing is for the separated man. Three words

show how a man gets closer and closer to the world: walk, stand, sit. The man who is not separated becomes ever more friendly with sinners, finally sitting in happy fellowship with those who laugh at God, 2 Peter 3:3.

Verse 1 tells us what can be seen in the life of the godly man, three things he does not practice. Verse 2 tells us of his true inner pleasures. The “law” may refer to the Scriptures and this man gets his pleasures in thinking about the Word of God at all times. He does not just obey God’s law from a sense of duty, but finds pleasure in doing so.

The Holy Spirit through the writer describes the righteous man. In Old Testament times no doubt many partly lived up to this level. The only Man who ever lived to fit this description perfectly is the Lord Jesus Christ. These verses set a high level for us to reach and a blessing is promised if we do in part reach it. They also describe the perfections of our Saviour, the only Man who completely did God’s will.

The righteous man not only has a deep inner pleasure, he is also a blessing to others, v. 3. A tree planted by a river sends its roots down deep into the ground and finds plenty of the life giving water. Its leaves give shade the year around and it bears fruit at the usual time. In the same way the believer can be a blessing to others. The nine fold fruit of the Spirit is described in Galatians 5:22, 23. Some of these, such as love, joy, peace, can be shown forth by the Spirit’s power at all times. Others, such as longsuffering are seen at times of trouble. All were seen to perfection in the spotless life of the Lord Jesus.

The man whose joy is in pleasing the Lord may take for himself the promise "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." In the Old Testament the righteous man got along well and became rich in this world. The believer today should think of this promise in a spiritual way. In the New Testament we are not promised wealth in this world, but told, if we have food and clothing, to be content, 1 Timothy 6:8.

A tree planted by rivers of waters cannot be moved. This is quite different from the waste of the grain blown away by the wind. Many seem to succeed in this world for a time, but their end is judgment. John the Baptist foretold that the waste of the wheat would be burnt, Matthew 3:12. Both wind and fire are a picture of the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:2, 3. Standing in the judgment, v. 5, means to stand accepted. All the wicked must appear before the Great White Throne to hear God's sentence of judgment, Revelation 20:12. Jehovah knows the pathway of the righteous man and keeps him safely in it, but the way of the ungodly leads to death, John 3:36.

The first psalm brings us face to face with the most important problem of life, our relation to God. In the New Testament we read that there is none righteous, no not one, and that faith is needed to please God, Romans 3:10, Hebrews 11:6. The Man who did perfectly please God laid down His life, the Just for the unjust that He might bring us to God, 1 Peter 3:18. Those of us who belong to Him should walk in separation from the world, v. 1, think with pleasure about the Word of God, v. 2, bring forth fruit for His glory, v. 3, and warn others of coming judgment, vs. 4-6.

Psalm 2

The second psalm was written by David, Acts 4:25. Like the first psalm it teaches doctrine about Christ. It may be divided into four parts of three verses each. In each part we have the voice of a different speaker.

1. THE KINGS SPEAK, vs. 1-3. David raises the question, Why do men fight against God? Their plan is at once said to be a vain thing. God has never created enough beings, even if all work together, to overthrow His throne.

People are led by their kings and rulers who set themselves against Jehovah and His Anointed. The word Christ means the Anointed One and whoever rejects Christ rejects God.

He who receives me receives Him who sent me. John 5:23; 13:20. Their plan is nothing less than to reject the authority of God, v. 3. They evidently find God a cruel master. In the beginning Satan suggested to Eve that God did not really love them, Genesis 3:5. Some servants find their masters to be cruel, Luke 19:21. Those of us who know the Lord agree that His "burden is light", Matthew 11:30.

When did or will this rejection of God take place? In Psalm 83:5 we read that the nations had joined together against God, but we do not know when this happened. The believers in Acts 4:25, 26 saw a fulfilment of this psalm in the time of Christ. Herod and Pilate, the Gentiles and the Israelites joined together against the Lord Jesus and put Him to death. In Revelation 19:19 we see the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the Lord. This takes place at the end of the Great Tribulation and the result is seen

in verses 20 and 21. At the end of 1000 years of Christ's reign Satan will be loosed and gather the nations together against God and His saints. This is the final effort of men to reject God, and again results in ruin, Revelation 20:7-9.

2. GOD SPEAKS, vs. 4-6. When the heathen and the kings of the earth join together to upset God's throne, He does not have to worry about the result. Verse 4 does not mean that God laughs at the unsaved, but at their childish plan to overthrow His throne. For example imagine a little two year old boy who is angry with his father. He runs at his father, throwing his arms around wildly, trying to get his own way. The father might lift him up in one hand and hold him over his head, kicking and crying.

God however cannot allow this rejection to go unpunished. In verse 5 He speaks in anger and states that He has set His own King on His holy hill in Zion.

It would be terrible to face the anger of God. I was once in a court where a man was brought up for not looking after his family. The judge was very angry with this man and told him he should be ashamed of himself. How much worse to stand before the throne of an angry God! No true believer will ever have to do this because the wrath of God was laid upon our Saviour.

3. THE SON SPEAKS, vs. 7-9. The words of God are very precious to the Lord Jesus and here He tells what Jehovah said to Him. While the Lord Jesus was on earth, God privately declared Him to be the Son: to John the Baptist, Matthew 3:17, John 1:32-34; to Peter, James and John, Matthew 17:5. He is declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, Romans

1:4. The very words of Psalm 2:7 are quoted of Christ in relation to His resurrection in Acts 13:33. These words teach that He is greater than angels, Hebrews 1:5, and a priest forever, Hebrews 5:5.

God commanded Christ to ask for the people of this world for Himself, v. 8. His complete victory over all His enemies is promised in verse 9.

You should think about these verses very carefully. Christ is called God's Anointed, v. 2, His King, v. 6, and His Son, v. 7. It would seem that Nathanael was thinking of Psalm 2 when he said to the Lord Jesus, "You are the Son of God, you are the king of Israel." The Lord Jesus promised to show him still more of His glory, John 1:49, 51. As you believe in your heart what God has shown you about Christ, you will be led on to see more truth, more of His glory.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS, vs. 10-12. The last three verses of this psalm are words of counsel from the Holy Spirit speaking through David. Instead of going on in their senseless hate to God, they should receive warning, v. 10, serve Jehovah with fear and joy, v. 11, and accept the love of God in Christ and trust in Him, v. 12.

In the first psalm a blessing is promised to any man who walks in the way of the Lord. In the last verse of Psalm 2 blessing is promised for ALL who put their trust in Him. There is really only One who perfectly pleased God, but those who trust in Him get great blessing, by faith, not works.

The wicked shall not go unpunished, but the righteous shall be delivered.

Psalm 3

The third psalm was written by David when he fled from Absalom, his son. This goodlooking, clever young man wanted very much to be king. He was the third son of David, 2 Samuel 3:3. The second son called Chileab or Daniel, 1 Chronicles 3:1, is never heard of and may have died at an early age. The firstborn naturally in line to be the king after David was Amnon. His sin is found in 2 Samuel 13:14, and his death at the hand of Absalom in 13:28. Thus Absalom became the oldest son in line for the throne. He could not wait for his father to die. He tried to win the hearts of the people for himself, 2 Samuel 15:6, then to take the throne of his father, 15:10. At first David fled, 15:17, but returned when Absalom had been killed. This psalm was written by David as a prayer to God for deliverance from his enemies.

These enemies are described in the first two verses. They were many and as the rebellion spread, they kept increasing. Many thought that God would not help David in this time of trouble, v. 2.

David had often experienced God's help in times past. God had promised to care for Abraham, Genesis 15:1, and David knew He would save him in this danger. He cried to the Lord and was heard out of Mount Zion where Jehovah had decided to set His King, Psalm 2:6. David prayed, received peace and was able to lie down and go to sleep.

The word Selah, vs. 2, 4, 8, is found 71 times in the book of Psalms and in no other book of the Bible except Habakkuk 3:3, 9, 13. It is thought to mean stop and

pray. To understand the deep meaning of Scripture it is necessary to pray and think about it. These things take time, but will help you to understand better the riches of God's wonderful Book.

This experience increased David's confidence for the future. He could face 10, 000 enemies without fear, v. 6. He prayed again for salvation, v. 7, but felt that with God's keeping power his enemies were already as good as dead. So the psalm ends with a note of praise to Jehovah.

Psalm 4

David wrote this psalm to the chief musician on Neginoth. The psalms were sung by the Israelites when they came to worship Jehovah. Neginoth may have been a musical instrument. Our "Chief Musician" is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ who in Psalm 22:22 is seen leading the praises of His people, Hebrews 2:12.

The psalm contains a prayer to God, v. 1, a message to men, vs. 2-5, and a statement of David's trust in Jehovah, vs. 6-8. David is still in trouble and perhaps this psalm was also written while he was running away from Absalom.

He asks the people not to turn his honour into shame nor seek vain and false words, v. 2. Jehovah had chosen David for Himself, v. 3, and the people should not act quickly, but think things through quietly, v. 4. They should put their trust in Jehovah.

That is what David was doing. Many had turned against him, 3:2, but he asked for the Lord's blessing, Numbers 6:26. David told them that his joy from the Lord was greater than the joy of the world even when they had

plenty to eat, v. 7. With this assurance David was able to lie down and sleep. He knew that God would save him from those who were trying to kill him. In every time of danger and trouble we can be sure that the God of David is able and willing to keep us in His hand.

Psalm 5

David also wrote the fifth psalm to the chief musician. Nehiloth is no doubt a musical instrument.

The psalm is a prayer addressed to Jehovah. David asks his God to hear his prayer, vs. 1, 2. He promises that in the morning he will pray again to God, v. 3. Psalm 3 may have been written in the morning, v. 5; Psalm 4 in the evening, v. 8; and Psalm 5 at night. Certainly the ear of God is open to His children at all times. As we study these old prayers together, may we learn to pray to our great Jehovah!

The Lord Jesus Christ taught us to pray in His name, John 14:14; 15:16; 16:23. In Scripture the name of Jehovah often means His character, and so David's prayer is according to God's character. His thoughts toward the wicked are declared: no pleasure, v. 4; hatred, vs. 5, 6. God's great pleasure is in His Son, Matthew 12:18. Only those who are found in Christ shall live with Him. In Scripture sinners are often called foolish, specially in the book of Proverbs. Throughout the Bible we are taught that God hates sin but loves the sinner. Disciples of the Lord Jesus should love and honour their parents, but this is so much less than their love for Christ, it is like hatred, Luke 14:26. God hates sinners, v. 5, that is, He hates their sins. He loves them enough to give His Son for them and will save them if

they trust in Him. The judgment of murderers and liars, v. 6, is taught in Revelation 21:8.

Jehovah's character is the ground of David's confidence in coming to Him. He is merciful but holy, v. 7, and David can come in confidence and in godly fear. He desires to be given righteous judgment because his enemies had falsely accused him, and wants to follow in God's pathway, v. 8.

These enemies may be the rebellious Israelites who followed Absalom, but David's description of the wicked in verse 9 is much broader and takes in the most wicked men of all ages, Romans 3:13. David prayed that they might be destroyed because their rebellion is really against Jehovah, v. 10. Christians do not pray that their enemies might be destroyed, but rather that they may be forgiven, Luke 23:34. Still it is God's will that they should be destroyed and God's will is best.

David is also praying according to God's will and asking His blessing on those who trust in Him, vs. 11, 12. The saints of God are seen rejoicing at the judgment of evil in Revelation 18:20 and 19:1, 2. God cannot bless the wicked who turn from His blessing. Those who turn from the gift of eternal life must remain without it. This is their eternal judgment. No wonder that God has commanded His saints to tell the unsaved of His love to them.

Psalm 6

This psalm was also written by David to the chief musician with certain musical instruments. In this psalm David is still being hunted by his enemies. He takes this

as chastening from the Lord. His prayer is in verses 1-7 and the assurance of God's answer in verses 8 and 9.

He asked God to remove the chastening, v. 1, because he is weak, v. 2, and filled with sorrow, v. 3. He feels he is near to death, v. 5, and that the dead cannot praise the Lord. David did not have the Christian's hope. We know that to die is to be with Christ which "is far better" than to remain in this world, Philippians 1:23. After a night of weeping and without sleep he was tired, vs. 6, 7. When he received the assurance of God's answer, vs. 8, 9, he commanded his enemies to leave him and prayed that they might be put to shame, v. 10. Unrepentant sinners will one day hear the terrible word "Depart" from One greater than David, the Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 7:23, Luke 13:27. He has asked them to come, Matthew 11:28. He stood at the door and knocked, Revelation 3:20, and they did not want to let Him in. Let us tell them once more that God is love and really wants them to be with Him for all eternity.

Psalm 7

This psalm is called a shiggaion of David. The last chapter of the book of Habakkuk is also in the form of a psalm "upon Shigionoth", Habakkuk 3:1. David sang this song "concerning Cush". This man Cush is not named in the history of David, but may be the same as Shimei, 2 Samuel 16:7.

At first David prays for deliverance, vs. 1, 2. He reminds God that he is innocent and prays that if He finds sin in him, that He will let the enemy overcome him, vs. 3-5. Far from returning evil for good, David spared Saul when he could have killed him, v. 4, 1 Samuel 24:1-12. In

this David is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, Psalm 69:4.

Then David prayed for righteous judgment, vs. 6-10, He felt that he could pray for God's judgment because God Himself had so commanded, v. 6. The result of this judgment is that the true people of God would be gathered together to Him, v. 7. He prays that the Lord would judge him and manifest his righteousness and honesty. He looks forward to the time when evil will come to an end and God will establish David and all the righteous, vs. 9, 10.

In the last part of the psalm David as teacher describes the character of God and of the evil man. God judges the righteous by showing their innocence and is angry with sinners everyday, v. 11. If they do not repent, God will prepare instruments of death, vs. 12, 13. The wicked man acts according to his sinful nature, v. 14, but his evil deeds will fall upon his own head, vs. 15, 16.

David is able to praise Jehovah, not only for delivering him from his enemies, but because His judgment is according to His righteous character.

I will sing of my Redeemer,
And His wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross He suffered,
From the curse to set me free.
—P.P. Bliss

Psalm 8

This psalm of praise was written by David for the chief musician "upon Gittith", which means the winepress. In

verse 1 he declares that Jehovah's name is great in all the earth, that His glory is above the heavens. God gets praise from babies, v. 2. The Lord Jesus Christ used this verse in Matthew 21:16: Out of the mouths of babies you have brought perfect praise. No doubt thousands of innocent children in heaven are praising God all the time. We can also think of a person who has just been born again as a "babe in Christ." Out of his joy and first love for Christ he may praise the Lord more than later on when other things come in. We should not leave our first love, Revelation 2:4, but grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 3:18.

In verses 3 and 4 David asks a question. As a youth he had many times looked after his father's sheep and kept them from their natural enemies both day and night. As he considered the sun, moon and stars in their courses he was deeply stirred as he thought about the littleness of man. David wrote again about the heavens showing forth the glory of God in Psalm 19. Also look at Job 9:4-10; 36:26-33; chs. 39-41. It is valuable for a child of God to study the world of nature which the Lord has created. However today in many schools science is taught by people who do not believe in God. The true study of creation should lead one to give glory to God and to see better the dependence of man.

David by the Holy Spirit answers his own questions in verses 5-8. These verses tell us that man has been made lower than God, in fact lower than the angels, Hebrews 2:7, but has been given his place over other creatures of God. He was put over all animals, even wild ones, v. 7, birds and fish, v. 8. Today most wild animals, birds and fish are afraid of man, but in the garden of Eden, Adam, the first man gave a name to all living

creatures, Genesis 2:19, 20. Man's control over nature was lost when he listened to the voice of a creature and disobeyed God. Even so man is greater than animals in that he has a spirit and can talk with God. It is very wrong to bow down to an animal or suppose that God should be worshipped in the form of an animal.

Even though man has failed, God has planned that the Perfect Man shall be given complete authority over all creation. Even here in this world the Lord Jesus had control over the fish of the sea, Luke 5:6, Matthew 17:27, John 21:6. When the Lord Jesus reigns in this world for 1000 years, wild animals will be controlled, Isaiah 11:6-9.

We can see in the New Testament that the promises of Psalm 8 will be fulfilled perfectly in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 2:6-8 the writer by the Holy Spirit says that when God promised ALL things will be put under His feet, nothing was left out. The word ALL means everything, but we do not see this as yet. We do see Jesus who became a man and like all men, lower than angels. The Son of God became a man with the purpose of dying for our sins. This fits in with the title of Psalm 8, "upon Gittith", because Christ went through the winepress of God's anger alone, Isaiah 63:2, 3. Now He has been crowned with glory and honour and when He comes again He will be glorified by all men.

Even when the kingdom is set up, there will be those who will turn against the rule of Christ. Still God has promised that all things shall be put under His feet, Psalm 8:6; 110:1. In 1 Corinthians 15:24-27 we see that all enemies will be put under Him, and even death itself

will be destroyed. Christ will give the kingdom to the Father and will Himself be subject throughout all ages.

It was not given to David to realize the full meaning of the words which he wrote. From the New Testament we may say that the human race has been glorified by the Son of God becoming a Man. Even so David ends his psalm with another note of praise, using the same words he started with in verse 1. Thinking of what God is and what He has done, we can also offer up the praise of our hearts to the Father and the Son.

Psalm 9

This psalm is said to be “upon Muth-labben” which means “for the death of the son.” It is closely connected with Psalm 10 which has no heading of its own. In the old Greek Bible these two psalms are put as one with 38 verses. In some of the psalms the first letter of each verse is in the order of our letters a, b, c, d, and down to x, y, z. In Psalms 9 and 10 this order is seen, but only in the first letter of each two verses: verse 1, a; verse 3, b; verse 5, c, and so on. In this way the twenty verses of Psalm 9 use the first ten Hebrew letters.

The ninth psalm is a song of praise to God. David promises to praise the Lord with his whole heart, vs. 1, 2. He looks forward to the time when his enemies will be overcome and he himself shown to all men as being righteous, vs. 3-6. Jehovah is on His throne and will judge the world in righteousness, vs. 7, 8. This means that His people will be delivered, vs. 9, 10.

David then calls upon Israel to praise Jehovah and tell of His works among other people, v. 11. The Lord will not forget the cry of the humble man, and in verses 13 and

14 we have the cry of David himself who was nearly dying.

As the governor of the world God will always punish the wicked. The very things which they make to destroy others will be used for their own judgment, vs. 15, 16. An example of this is Haman who was hung on the tree he set up for Mordecai, Esther 7:10. Satan also has had the power of death, but will himself be destroyed through the death of Another, the Lord Jesus Christ, Hebrews 2:14. Higgaion means slow music and the word Selah means to stop. The reader would do well to think of the end of evil men. The wicked and all who forget God will be turned into Sheol, the place of the dead, v. 17. Sheol or Hades will give up the dead to be judged at the Great White Throne, Revelation 20:13. This is another reason why God judges men, so others may see that they too need mercy, v. 20. We who have eternal life are responsible to give them the good news before it is too late.

Psalm 10

The psalmist continues his prayer for deliverance. In Psalm 9:9 he saw Jehovah a refuge in times of trouble, but in 10:1 Jehovah seems to have hidden Himself. Even though God is on the throne, He allows the wicked to appear victorious for a little while, v. 2.

The order of letters seen in psalms 9 and 10 is broken in 10:3-11. Here the writer is describing the wicked man who is proud and who loves money, v. 3, like the Pharisees, Luke 16:14. He is so proud that he denies there is a God, v. 4. He cannot see God's righteous judgments, v. 5, and never expects to get into trouble himself, v. 6. His speech is described in verse 7, and in

verses 8 to 10 he hides himself to catch the poor like an animal. He does not expect God to remember his sins, v. 11.

No doubt these verses describe many evil men, but the time is coming, after the Church is taken home to be with the Lord, when two great persons will arise in the earth. The man of sin is described in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12. Both of them are seen in Revelation 13. These are both cast into the lake of fire, Revelation 19:20. Even today we see the idea spreading among men that there is no God, or that He has forgotten about men.

In the last part of Psalm 10 we are reminded that God will not forget the humble. Even if a wicked man admits that there is a God and that He may remember sins, he still comforts himself that God will not call him to account, v. 13. But God does see and will punish the wicked, vs. 14, 15.

So the psalm ends on a note of confidence in Jehovah. He is King. He hears the cry of the humble and will take care of them, vs. 16-18.

Psalm 11

Here David is still trusting in the Lord while being persecuted by his enemies. Someone had suggested that he should run away, v. 1. Indeed Saul tried to kill him, 1 Samuel 18:11; 19:10, and David did escape from his presence. Usually we cannot run away from our enemies, but we can look to God for help in other ways.

The nation of Israel was supposed to be a holy nation, governed by the laws of God. In the reign of Saul the very grounds of society and government were destroyed, v. 3. What could the righteous do?

The answer is very simple: trust in Jehovah, vs. 4-7. The Lord will try the righteous and keep them, vs. 5, 7, but He will judge the wicked, vs. 5, 6. The Lord did rain fire from heaven on the cities of the plain, Genesis 19:24, and in the coming time of great tribulation one man out of three will be destroyed in this way, Revelation 9:18. These verses should be a warning to those who reject God. They are also a warning to us, His children, to send out the Gospel message. In our daily lives, instead of trying to run away from problems, we should learn to trust the Lord for victory.

Psalm 12

Here is another psalm of David to the chief musician upon Sheminith, Psalm 6, 1 Chronicles 15:21. The first four verses give David's prayer; the last four Jehovah's promise.

David prays because the number of true believers was becoming smaller all the time, v. 1. On the other hand worldly people seemed to succeed. They were proud and told lies to make other people proud, vs. 2, 3. They thought they had a right to say whatever they wanted to, v. 4.

The Lord promised to deliver poor people from their enemies, v. 5. David believed this promise of God and says all the Lord's words are pure, v. 6. He was certain that the Lord would keep the saints forever, even though the wicked seemed to succeed at that time, vs. 7, 8.

In this psalm we see the difference between the words of men, vs. 2-4, and the words of Jehovah, vs. 5, 6. Men today still talk proudly, and tell lies. They even attack

the Bible itself and say it is not true. We can be sure that the words of the Lord are pure. The Bible stands firm.

Psalm 13

This little psalm gives us David's sorrow, vs. 1, 2, his supplication or prayer, vs. 3, 4, and his song, vs. 5, 6.

He thought that the Lord had forgotten him or hidden His face from him, v. 1. He received no guidance from the Lord and had to take counsel in his own soul. He received neither joy nor victory, v. 2.

In verses 3 and 4 he prays to Jehovah to hear and give light to his eyes. If not, he was afraid that he would die and that his enemies and those who troubled him would rejoice.

After praying like this, David's faith was strengthened. He trusted in the Lord's mercy and rejoiced as if his prayer was already answered. He realized all the Lord's goodness and so was able to sing a song of praise.

We can be sure that the Lord hears our prayers even in time of great trouble. If we really believed this, we could give Him thanks before we see the answer. Our prayer too would be followed by praise.

Psalm 14

In this psalm the Holy Spirit through David describes the wicked man. He says in his heart that there is no God. This results in wicked works, v. 1.

Some people today say there is no God, but the Bible calls them fools.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,"
Proverbs 9:10.

The time is coming when “the man of sin” will appear. He will set himself up as if he himself were God, as if there were no other God, 2 Thessalonians 2:4.

Jehovah looks down from heaven and finds that no one really does good, that everyone has turned aside and become unclean, vs. 2, 3. These verses are used by the apostle Paul to prove that all men need salvation, Romans 3:10-12.

Wicked men without knowledge would like to destroy God’s people and take all their money, v. 4. They should be afraid of God, but they try to make the poor saints ashamed, vs. 5, 6. So David prays for the day when the Saviour will come and bring back His people and deliver them from their trouble, like Job, Job 42:10. The people of Israel will rejoice in the day of the Lord.

What should we do when people say there is no God or the Bible is not true? We should pray for them and try to tell them about the Lord. Some day all will know that we are on God’s side.

Psalm 15

In Psalm 15 David describes the righteous man. He asks in verse 1 the question “Who shall live in the Lord’s tabernacle or His holy hill?” In the rest of the psalm we have the Spirit’s answer.

In verse 2 we see the walk, work, word and thought of the righteous man. He loves his neighbour as himself, v. 3. He does not harm his friend by word or act. He separates himself from the wicked, but honours those who fear the Lord. When he swears, he will fulfil his promise even if it is not for his own good, v. 4. He does not covet money, v. 5.

The man who does these things can abide in the tabernacle of the Lord and never be moved, v. 5. But who could do all these things perfectly?

Only one Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. While some men are more righteous than others, we have seen in Psalm 14:3 and Romans 3:12 that no man is without sin. Just as we see the coming man of sin in Psalm 14, we see the Lord Jesus Christ in Psalm 15.

His walk, works and words were perfect in the sight of God. He loved His neighbour and His enemies to the point of giving His life for men. He told the truth about the religious leaders of His day, Matthew 23, but honoured the faithful ones in Israel. When He was on trial, the high priest made Him swear if He was the Christ or not. He confessed He was, although He knew that it would result in His death, Matthew 26:63-65.

The last verse of Psalm 15 says that the perfect man will never be moved. How then do we explain that the Perfect Man was put to death? The answer is that He was without sin, but became sin for us, 2 Corinthians 5:21.

In the Old Testament we have many promises for the safety and success of the righteous man. In the New Testament we see that men killed the perfect Man, and we can expect nothing better for us, His disciples. God honoured His Son by raising Him from the dead. May we be willing to suffer with Him that we may also reign with Him.

Psalm 16

Psalm 16 is called a Miktam of David. We do not know what this word means, but Psalms 56-60 have the same

title. David is speaking of himself as a man who obeys God.

He put his trust in God, vs. 1, 2, but knew that his own goodness was not sufficient, Luke 17:10. The obedient man gets his pleasure on earth with the saints of God, v. 3. He is separate from those who worship false gods, v. 4.

He has many blessings here in this world. His joy is the Lord Himself, v. 5. Even in this world he gets pleasure, v. 6. He praises the Lord for His guidance, v. 7.

No wonder he is able to trust the Lord for the future, vs. 8-11. With the Lord at his side, he is sure he will not be moved from the pathway of blessing, v. 8, Psalm 15:5. Even death cannot take away his joy because he believes that God will not leave him in Sheol, the place of the dead, v. 10. Instead of death he will receive life in the presence of the Lord, v. 11. There he will have pleasure forever more.

These promises we can take for ourselves, but in this psalm also we have a description of the Lord Jesus Christ. While almost everything could apply to David and to the saints of all ages, the last part of verse 10 could apply only to the Lord. Both Peter and Paul in their first messages in the book of Acts used this verse. Their point is that David believed in the resurrection, but in this passage was speaking about Christ. The Jews knew that David was dead and buried and that his grave was close by, Acts 2:25-32. David could truthfully say that God would not leave his soul in Sheol, but his body did see destruction. The body of the Lord Jesus Christ in death was kept by God from spoiling, Acts 13:35-37.

Many of us who live at the end of the age may not experience death. When the Lord Jesus comes we will be caught up alive to meet the Lord in the air, 1 Thessalonians 4:17. For all believers death has lost its victory, 1 Corinthians 15:55. We know that we shall receive a new body and be happy in the Lord's presence forever more. As we think about these things, we should praise the Lord and tell others so that they too can have these blessings.

Psalm 17

The seventeenth psalm is called a prayer of David. He asks Jehovah to hear his prayer because it is true and his cause is right, vs. 1, 2. David is sure that his cause is right because Jehovah has proved him and tried him and found nothing wrong, v. 3. David had made up his mind that he would not sin with his mouth, v. 3, but also knew that it was the word of Jehovah which kept him, v. 4.

In the next part of David's prayer he asks that Jehovah would keep him in His paths and was confident that He would do so, vs. 5, 6. David then prayed for deliverance from sinners. Here he puts his trust in God who saves His people, v. 7, keeps and delivers them, vs. 8, 9. The apple of the eye is the centre of the eye.

The wicked are described as proud, v. 10. Like Eglon, king of Moab, Judges 3:17, 22, they hate the people of God, v.11. They hide like a wild animal to catch people, v. 12. David asks the Lord not to let them succeed in their desire to kill him. Even though these people seem to prosper in this world, the judgment of God will come upon them. They are interested in their families and the wealth of this world. David's desire is to see the Lord and be like Him in the NEXT world, v. 15. In the New

Testament we read of those whose god is their own body, Philippians 3:19. Those who love the Lord will see Him and be like Him, 1 John 3:2.

In these psalms David speaks of himself as a righteous man, and also of other faithful men in Israel. Today most of the Jewish people are unbelievers, but in the end time some will surely turn to the Lord, Romans 9:27.

Psalm 18

David wrote this psalm of praise when the Lord gave him victory over his enemies, 2 Samuel 7:1; 22:1. After verse 1, Psalm 18 is almost the same as 2 Samuel 22. Some verses are slightly different, for example verses 35 and 43. In the heading David is called a servant of the Lord as Moses and Joshua had been, Joshua 22:4; 24:29. Psalm 18 is the longest psalm of David and since these verses are found in two books of the Bible, we can see how important they must be.

The first three verses show us the whole psalm is a song of praise. David says he loves Jehovah, v.1, and gives eight names describing his thanks for God's deliverance. A rock is a picture of strength. A buckler or shield speaks of the Lord's power when the enemy attacks. Many animals fight against their enemies by using their horns and so the horn is a picture of its strength. A high tower is also a place of safety. Zacharias, the father of John, used these words concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, Luke 1:69.

When his enemies were all around him, David thought he was going to die. Then he called upon God who heard him in heaven, vs. 4-6. Sheol is the place of the dead.

God showed His power in nature: the earth shakes, v. 7; a mountain gives out fire, v. 8; the storm, vs. 11-13; lightning, v. 14; floods, v. 15. God used this same power to deliver David from his enemies, vs. 16-19.

David considers his reward to be the result of his righteousness, vs. 20-24. This does not mean that he thought he was sinlessly perfect. The Lord delivers His saints from the hands of the wicked because of His righteousness. He delivers us from our own sin by His grace. David is saying that he had done nothing to deserve death and certainly followed the Lord more than his wicked enemies.

God will deal with all men according to their own character, vs. 25-27. Those who show mercy shall obtain mercy, Matthew 5:17; 6:14, 15. On the other hand God will work against the crooked, v. 26, and the proud, v. 27.

As we have seen, God delivered David, v. 17. He also gave him power to do great things. By God's strength he was able to run through a large number of his enemies, to jump over a wall, to break a bow of metal, vs. 29-34. God's way is perfect, v. 30, and He made David's way perfect, v. 32. David was a man of war and had to fight like a soldier. Even so we read of God's gentleness, v. 35, which is a form of the Spirit's fruit, Galatians 5:22, 23.

The Lord gave David strength and he was able to overcome his enemies, vs. 37-42. David's life was important as the anointed king of Israel, v. 50. As a father of the Messiah David was a special object of Satan's hate. His enemies in their distress even cried to Jehovah, but not really in faith, v. 41.

When he had overcome his enemies David was able to rule over the people, vs. 43-45. Many nations bowed down to him, for example the Philistines, 2 Samuel 5; Moabites, Syrians and Edomites, 2 Samuel 8; Ammonites, 2 Samuel 12.

So the psalm ends with thanksgiving and praise to Jehovah, the living God. Because God gave him victory, David will praise His name among the nations.

Most of us today do not have to go to war, and if we do, we can hardly say that the enemies of our country are the enemies of God. In the New Testament however we do read that the Christian has enemies who can only be overcome by spiritual means, 2 Corinthians 10:4. We overcome by prayer, Ephesians 6:18, by the word of testimony, Revelation 12:11, and by the power of the Lord, John 16:33.

Psalm 19

This psalm is neither a prayer for deliverance from enemies like Psalm 17 nor a psalm of praise to God, like Psalm 18. In Psalm 19 David describes the two great revelations of God: creation and Scripture.

The first great witness to the glory of God is the starry heavens. As we noticed in Psalm 8, David must have meditated on the glory of God as he watched his father's sheep. The starry heavens glorify God. The word firmament is used for the air, Genesis 1:6-8, 20, and outer space, Genesis 1:14-17. Nature tells us much about the power and glory of God. The flow of time, day and night, have lessons for us, v. 2. David tells us here that nature has a message that can be understood by people all over the world, vs. 3, 4.

The heavens are also a dwelling place for the sun which seems to follow its pathway through the heavens day by day, vs. 4-6. Its heat is helpful to creatures all over the world.

The second part of the psalm tells us about the Word of God, vs. 7-11. Six different names of Scripture are given, each describing the Word of God in a different way. For example:

Name: | What it is: | What it does:

The law of the Lord | Perfect | restores the soul

The testimony of the Lord | Sure | makes wise the simple
The command of the Lord | Pure | gives light to the eyes
God has given us His Word for our good. When we turn to the Lord, we can have wisdom, joy and light. The words “the fear of the Lord” are another name for the Law of God, showing that we should fear Him as God and Father. The Scriptures shall endure forever and are perfectly true, v. 9. They are more valuable than gold and more desirable than the best food. They warn us about the danger of not obeying God and promise great rewards if we obey, vs. 10, 11.

The last three verses are a prayer of David. Even though he learned of the power of God from the heavens and the righteousness of God from Scripture, he still needs the Lord’s help in his daily life. None of us can really understand all his own mistakes and David asks that he might be kept from secret sins and daring sins. If sin were to rule over him, it might lead to “the great transgression” and he might turn from God for the last time. Then David prays that his words and thoughts might be acceptable to the Lord. As in Psalm 18 he calls Jehovah his strength and his Redeemer.

The first part of the psalm speaks of God's works and the second part His words. People who do not have the Word of God can know something of Him from His creation. Most of the people of the world do not follow this light, but turn away from God, Romans 1:18-28. The Word of God was given specially to Israel in the Old Testament and they too turned away, Romans 2:17-29. Both the work and words of God glorify Him. Both are a blessing to mankind, and both come to us through Christ. The world was created by God the Son, Colossians 1:16, John 1:3, and everything we know about God comes to us through Him, John 1:18.

Those of us who have the Bible should allow it to do its perfect work in our hearts, as in verses 7 to 11. In addition to reading the Scripture every day we should pray the Lord to keep us from any kind of sin. We should also pass on the good news to others. It is true that people without the Bible have the light of nature. God will hold them guilty if they do not follow that light. However He has commanded us to give them the much greater light of Scripture. If we obey Him, we will bring Him pleasure.

Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of Life;
Let me more of their beauty see,
Wonderful words of life;
Words of life and beauty,
Teach me faith and duty;
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of life. —P. P. Bliss

Psalm 20

The twentieth psalm is a prayer for David before a battle. It is the language of the people praying for their king. They ask the Lord to hear his prayer, remember his offerings and send help, vs. 1-5. They fully believe that the Lord will give the victory, v. 5.

David also shares this confidence, v. 6. Their trust is not in chariots or horses, but in the name of Jehovah, v. 7, Deuteronomy 20:1. One time the Syrians with 700 chariots came to fight against David, but he won the battle, 2 Samuel 10:18. The people believed that the Lord will answer their prayer and looked upon the enemy as already beaten, v. 8. Verse 9 may mean "So Lord save the king" or the King may be Jehovah, as in Psalm 10:16; 95:3; 98:6.

In this psalm we see worship and warfare, as in 2 Chronicles 20:22. In every struggle the saints of God need first of all to seek His presence. "The joy of the Lord is your strength," Nehemiah 8:10.

This psalm also speaks to us of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is Jehovah's Anointed, v. 6. As our Great High Priest He is praying for us. Some day He will rise from His Father's throne. He will go out to battle and His enemies shall be made a place for His feet, Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 10:13. We can be sure that He will gain the victory, but in our daily lives also we should pray for one another and put worship before warfare.

Psalm 21

Psalm 20 is a prayer before the battle and Psalm 21 is a song of praise for victory given.

First the people speak to Jehovah, vs. 1-7, and praise Him for answering the king's prayer. God gave him his heart's desire, v. 2 (20:4). God prepared many blessings for David. He established him as king, v. 3, and gave him the promise of a long life, v. 4. He gave him glory, v. 5, and joy, v. 6. All this was because David believed in Jehovah, v. 7. The Lord's promise for "length of days for ever and ever", v. 4, means David (and we) will live after death and resurrection, Psalm 16:10, 11.

Then the people speak to the king, vs. 8-12. His victory would be complete and all his enemies destroyed. When they plan evil against David, they will not succeed, vs. 11, 12. No doubt David joined with the people in praising Jehovah in verse 13. We too should be careful to give God the praise for answers to prayer and victory over our spiritual enemies.

Psalm 22

This psalm of David was to the chief musician upon "Ajeleth Shahar" or "the hind of the dawn" which may refer to some musical instrument. It was written by David at some time of great persecution and trial. In the first part of the psalm he felt he was going to die. In the last part he came to know that the Lord had heard his prayer and he praised Him for deliverance.

At first it seemed that his prayer was not answered. God had forsaken him, was far away, and did not hear his continual prayer, vs. 1, 2. David knew that God was holy and perhaps this was the reason for His silence, v. 3. Still he remembered that God had often delivered the people of Israel when they trusted in God, vs. 4, 5.

But David thought of himself as less than a man and certainly the people around him despised him completely, vs. 6-13. They laughed at him especially because he had made it known that he trusted in Jehovah, v. 8. He could not understand why God had not answered his prayer, and people laughing at him made it all the worse. Still he made up his mind to trust in Jehovah his Creator who had looked after him since the day he was born, vs. 9-11. The people seemed as cruel as wild animals, vs. 12, 13.

Beside being laughed at by his enemies, David was suffering great pain and thought he was going to die, vs. 14, 15. He was so thin he could count his bones, v. 17. The people did not care about his sickness and started to divide up his clothing which they might get if he died, v. 18.

David could only turn to the Lord, vs. 19-21. His enemies seem like cruel dogs or wild animals. As he prayed, he felt sure that the Lord had heard, v. 21.

Then he knew that he would be able to praise the Lord before all the people of Israel, v. 22. He calls upon them to glorify the Lord, v. 23. Even in the great gathering of all nations David will praise the Lord, vs. 25, 26.

All the nations will hear the name of the Lord and turn to Him. No doubt David himself witnessed to many foreign visitors who came to Jerusalem, but he is looking forward to the day when his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, will reign over the whole world.

Right from the beginning of this psalm we can see that Christ is in view. In fact some of the verses are hard to understand when we think of David alone, but much

plainer when we remember the sufferings of the Lord Jesus.

David himself went through a time of great trial. As he wrote down his own feelings, the Holy Spirit led him to say many things which tell us the feelings of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. We read in the gospels the details of Christ's death which could be seen by other men. In the psalms we see some of His thoughts when He lay down His life for us.

To kill a wicked person the custom of the Jews was to stone him to death, Deuteronomy 13:10, John 8:59. Herod cut off the head of John the Baptist, Luke 9:9. Crucifying was the practice of the Romans. If men had stoned the Lord Jesus or cut off His head, many verses in the psalms would not have been fulfilled. To be crucified meant to suffer for a long time and to listen to the mocking of the people. Hanging on the cross the Lord Jesus could indeed see His bones standing out, v. 17. He would also suffer intense thirst, v. 15.

In crucifixion the victim's hands and feet are nailed to the cross, v. 16. The Lord Jesus told His disciples after His resurrection to behold His hands and feet, Luke 24:39. He told Thomas to put his finger into the print of the nails in His hands, John 20:25, 27.

They parted my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothing, v. 18.

In the time of Christ when anyone was crucified, the soldiers according to custom divided up the clothing of the person put to death. However the main garment of the Lord Jesus was made in one piece, so instead of dividing it the soldiers cast lots to see whose it would be, Matthew 27:35.

In the four gospels we see at different times the chief priests, the rulers, the soldiers, the scribes and elders and the people that passed by, all mocking the Lord Jesus. In fact the scribes and elders used almost the same words in Matthew 27:43 as we find in Psalm 22:8.

The Lord Himself used the actual words of Psalm 22:1 in Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34. What this meant to Him we cannot fully understand. Some day we will be able to enter into His thoughts better than now.

The first part of the psalm, vs. 1-21, tells of the Lord's death, and the other part, vs. 22-31, His resurrection. In the first part He is ALONE, even forsaken by His God, in the second part He is TOGETHER with His brothers, in the congregation, v. 22, and in the great gathering of the people, v. 25, Hebrews 2:11-13.

If we have to go through a time of great trouble we may feel that God has forgotten about us. We should remember that no one will ever have to go through a trial such as the Lord Jesus Christ did. Read this psalm again carefully, thinking of the Lord Jesus and His thoughts when suffering for you. This will help you to worship and love Him more.

Psalm 23

David was a keeper of sheep for years before he went to the house of the king. Knowing the needs of the sheep he was able to write this psalm. Psalm 23 is perhaps the best known of all the psalms and every believer can use these words for himself.

Psalm 23 is sometimes called the Shepherd Psalm and the first two verses speak of the Lord's supply for His children. With Jehovah as his Shepherd, David was sure

he would have every good thing, Philippians 4:19, Ephesians 1:3. Other verses speak of God as the Shepherd of His people, Psalm 78:52; Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34:11. In John 10:11, Hebrews 13:20 and 1 Peter 5:4 the Lord Jesus is called our Shepherd. Psalm 22 makes us think of John 10, for in it we see the Good Shepherd giving His life for the sheep. Psalm 23 tells us of the Great Shepherd of the sheep who has been raised from the dead. Through Him God is working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, Hebrews 13. We shall see that Psalm 24 speaks of the coming of the Lord, the Chief Shepherd, 1 Peter 5.

We can say of the Great Shepherd He makes us to lie down in green fields with lots of food. The sheep has to rest after eating and we need to read the Bible as our daily food and then quietly think about what the Lord would say to us. The Word of God is our spiritual food. Sometimes we are not willing to spend time with the Lord. He knows we need this and perhaps will send a time of sickness so we can think about Him. When He makes us lie down, it is really in green fields for our own good. He also leads besides still waters.

In verses 3 and 4 the Lord is seen as a Guide for a traveler. We are strangers in this world and cannot know the right way without God's help. If I wander from the right way, He brings me back, Galatians 6:1. He is always leading me in the right way. This is for His name's sake or according to His character which is righteous.

The Lord Jesus Himself walked through dark valleys of sorrow and death in this world and He is able to lead us safely. In time of danger or death we do not need to fear

any evil. The Lord is with us and can keep us from every enemy. Even if we go through death, we are taken right into the presence of the Lord which is far better, Philippians 1:23. The rod is to keep off the enemy and the staff is to help the weak. Both bring comfort as we walk through the land of God's enemies on the way to God's home.

Jehovah is seen preparing a meal for His friends in verses 5 and 6. We can sit down with the Lord at His table even though there are many enemies around, Revelation 3:20, 21. Oil is a picture of the Holy Spirit whom the Lord has given to those who believe in Him. Surely our cup runs over with joy. We can look forward to the end of life knowing that God's goodness and mercy are with us. At the end of the journey we will abide in the house of the Lord forever.

There are many sheep, many travelers, many friends, but each one of us can think of the Lord Jesus as his own Shepherd and Guide. David called Jehovah "My Shepherd" and in this psalm he is not thinking of other believers, but of his own standing with the Lord. We should read the twenty third psalm the same way. The New Testament has many promises that the Lord will supply our need, guide us according to His will, bring us back if we leave the right way, comfort us in time of trouble and keep us from all evil. He gives us peace, John 16:33, joy, 16:24, and a place with Him for all eternity, 14:3.

Psalm 24

This psalm may have been written by David at the time the ark of Jehovah was brought up to Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 6:12-17. The ark made the people think of the

presence of Jehovah and of His holiness. The Holy Spirit would have us think of our Lord Jesus Christ in these verses.

This psalm, like Psalm 23, has three parts. In the first the writer speaks of Jehovah as the One who owns the earth, everything in it and all people, v. 1. This is because He is Creator, v. 2. In Genesis 1 we see that after God created the earth, the waters of the seas covered the whole world. God commanded the waters to be gathered together so that the dry land would appear, Genesis 1:9. This was by the word of God, 2 Peter 3:5.

In the next part of the psalm, vs. 3-6, the question is asked, Who shall ascend into heaven? In the last part, vs. 7-10, the command is heard to open the gates of Jerusalem and the king of glory shall come in. Now the question is, Who is this king of glory, vs. 8, 10? The answer is Jehovah.

The questions asked in verse 3 are about the hill of Jehovah and His holy place. The hill is where the king will reign, Psalm 2:6, and only the priest can enter the Holy Place. While there were many kings and many priests in Israel, only our Lord Jesus Christ is really both King and Priest.

The answer to these questions is found in verses 4 and 5. The kings and priests in Israel should have been holy men, but only the Lord Jesus Christ is perfect. As we saw in Psalm 15 there is only one truly righteous Man. Christ is the One to whom was given the right to be a blessing to mankind, v. 5. The Lord Jesus was falsely accused and God has shown that He was righteous. This will be made plain to all men when the Lord comes back

again as King of Israel. Then the nations of the world will ask for the favor of Israel, called Jacob in verse 6.

The Lord Jesus Christ was rejected by Israel when He came the first time. When He comes the second time He will be welcomed. The gates of Jerusalem will be opened for Him. The keepers of the gates will know that He is the Lord God, vs. 7-10. The command to open the gates is given in verses 7 and 9 and the question of the gatekeepers is asked again. The answer in verse 8 is that the King of glory is Jehovah, victorious, Colossians 2:15. In verse 10 He is the Lord of angels and the King of glory.

This psalm speaking of the coming of the Lord makes us think of the Chief Shepherd in 1 Peter 5:4. The first two verses glorify Jehovah the Creator and in the New Testament we learn that all things were made by the Son of God. The next part of the psalm tells us that only the Perfect Man could stand before Jehovah as King and Priest. This is the Christ who became a blessing to many. In the third part the King of glory is seen as Jehovah Himself. So in this psalm we see Christ the Son of God overall, vs. 1, 2; Jesus the Son of Man, perfect, vs. 3-6; and Christ victorious as God Himself, vs. 7-10.

It is good for us to be on God's side. We could not stand in His presence until cleansed by the blood of Christ. Although men turn from Him now, we will reign with Him when He comes again. If we are ashamed of Him now, 2 Timothy 1:8, He will be ashamed of us when He comes, Mark 8:38.

Psalm 25

There are twenty two letters in the Hebrew language and the twenty fifth psalm is written so that almost each verse begins with a different letter. Psalms 9 and 10 are partly in the order of Hebrew letters and here in Psalm 25 also it is not perfect. This does not mean that we cannot understand the psalm or that it is not part of God's inspired Word.

Psalm 25 is a prayer of David, vs. 1-3. He prays that he might not be ashamed before his enemies. In verses 4 and 5 he asks the Lord to lead him in the right way. He prays the Lord to remember His mercy of old times, but not David's sins, vs. 6, 7.

David then writes down many of God's wonderful promises concerning His guidance, vs. 8-10. More promises for the blessing of those who fear the Lord are found in verses 12-15. In verse 11 David prays again for pardon and continues his prayer in verses 16 to 22. He asks the Lord to have mercy on him and to deliver him from his cruel enemies. In the last verse he prays that God would deliver Israel out of all his troubles.

This psalm could have been written by David when he fled from Jerusalem and crossed the river Jordan, 2 Samuel 17:22. David accepted this time of trouble as punishment for his own sins and in Psalm 25 he prays for forgiveness, vs. 11, 18. However he had not wronged those who were persecuting him and in verses 2 and 19 he prays that he might be delivered from his enemies. This should be our thought as well. We do not say we are sinlessly perfect before God, but we try to live in this world before men without harming them or grieving the

Lord. In this way we can speak to people about Christ when we have an opening.

Psalm 26

In this psalm David is praying, not for deliverance from his enemies, but for a closer walk with God. He asks the Lord to judge him righteously and remember his faithfulness. He is confident that the Lord will find his heart to be pure, vs. 1, 2. David was faithful to God, v. 3, and did not go along with sinners, vs. vs:4, 5. With clean hands he can worship at the altar of Jehovah, v. 6, and tell others of the Lord's goodness, v. 7.

David loved the house of Jehovah, v. 8, and prayed that the Lord would not take him away with sinful men, vs. 9, 10. He will continue to walk in the right path, but knows that he needs God's help, v. 11. With this help he will stand and praise the Lord, v. 12.

Today we long to be with the Lord's people and the church is called the temple of God, Ephesians 2:20, 21. We love to be with the Lord who walks with those who obey Him. Some day we will be in His presence, 2 Corinthians 5:8.

Psalm 27

In this psalm David starts with praise and confidence before he makes his prayer to the Lord. This confidence is built on the character of Jehovah. Jehovah is David's light, salvation and strength. Why should he be afraid of anyone? This is the only place where David called Jehovah his light, but see Isaiah 60:20, Micah 7:8, 1 John 1:5.

David's confidence is strong because of the Lord's actions in the past in delivering him from his enemies, v. 2. Goliath said he would feed the birds with David's flesh, but instead of that he was the one that fell to the earth, 1 Samuel 17:44, 49. We may also think of the men who came to take the Lord Jesus Christ in Gethsemane, John 18:6.

As he thought of these things, David had peace for the future, vs. 3-6. His desire was to dwell in the house of the Lord, Psalm 15:1; 23:6. This would result in safety in time of trouble, v. 5, and victory over his enemies. Then David would sing praise to the Lord, v. 6.

David was sure that the Lord would look after him, yet he felt he should make his prayer to God. He asked the Lord to hear, v. 7, to hide not His face, to forsake him not, v. 9, to teach him in the way, v. 11, and to deliver him from his enemies, v. 12. He sought the Lord, v. 8, was confident that Jehovah would take care of him, v. 10, and believed that he would not die at that time, v. 13. The Lord Jesus Christ in the garden of Gethsemane prayed to His Father and had peace in His soul as David did in verses 1 to 6. Then the Lord was arrested and went back to Jerusalem to face His enemies, John 18:1-12, like David, vs. 11, 12.

After these experiences David is well able to instruct others, v. 14. Taught by the Holy Spirit he promises that the Lord will strengthen those who wait on Him. It is the same with us. It is possible to know a great deal about the Bible, and still not be of much help to others. A man who has learned by experience in the presence of God is the one who can show others the right way.

Psalm 28

In this psalm David first makes his prayer to the Lord, vs. 1-5, then praises Him, vs. 6-9.

Jehovah is his only help. If He does not answer David's prayer, he will be like the dead. Therefore David cries to the Lord in the Most Holy Place of the temple, v. 2. He prays that he may not be judged like sinners who deceive their neighbors, v. 3. He knows that it is God's will to punish the wicked, vs. 4, 5. As Christians we should pray for the salvation of men, even those who persecute us, Matthew 5:44. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself did this, Luke 23:34, but like David in this verse He had to prophecy judgment on those who refused the truth, Matthew 11:20-24. When David felt that his prayer was answered he praised the Lord, vs. 6, 7.

David wanted to be separated from the wicked, v. 3, and joined with the people of God, vs. 8, 9. The Lord is the strength of His people and of His anointed one. David himself had been anointed with oil, 1 Samuel 16:13, but here also looks forward to Christ, God's Anointed One. So he asks Jehovah to care for His people as a shepherd looks after his sheep, v. 9. David knew the Lord as his own Shepherd, Psalm 23, and wants His blessing for all the saints. David praying for the people of Israel reminds us of God's Anointed One, the Lord Jesus Christ, praying for us. He IS our Shepherd.

Psalm 29

This psalm of David is a song of praise to God, the Creator. David calls on the mighty angels or kings to give glory to Jehovah. They should declare His glory and strength and worship Him with holiness. People who do

not know God do not want holiness, but to those of us who love God it is beautiful. God as Creator controls the storms. The noise of a storm may be called the voice of Jehovah, vs. 3, 4. During a storm trees are broken down, flashes of light are seen, and sometimes the earth and the mountains shake, vs. 5-7. Lebanon and Sirion (or Hermon) are mountains in the north of Israel and the wilderness of Kadesh, v. 8, is in the south. The storm has an effect on all nature, v. 9.

When God shows His power in the storm, men should consider that He is God and fear His name. In the temple everyone speaks of His glory, v. 9. The greatest storm ever seen by men was the flood in the days of Noah. Even then the Lord was in control and He will be King forever, v. 10. Here and now He will give strength and peace to His people.

In this world the children of God have many trials and problems. God lets these come or even plans them so we can learn patience and faith. We need the Lord's help in time of trial and in time of peace. His help is always near to those who trust in Him.

Psalm 30

Psalm 30 is a psalm of David praising Jehovah as His Saviour. The Lord gave him victory over his enemies, v. 1, healed him when he was wick, v. 2, although he thought he was going to die, v. 3.

David calls upon the saints of the Lord to praise Him whenever they remember His holiness. God may be angry with His people, but only for a short time, vs. 4, 5. The Father will chasten His children when they do not

obey Him, but even this is a mark of His love. For all who love God the best is yet to come.

When things went well with David, he became proud and said to himself that he would never be moved, v. 6.

Really it was the Lord who had made him strong and when Jehovah stopped helping David, he was troubled, v. 7. Then he cried to the Lord, v. 8, and asked if his death would really profit God, v. 9. If he went into the dust of death, he would not be able to praise the Lord nor declare the truth of God.

Then God answered David's prayer. David had been afraid he would die and put on rough cloth as a sign of his repentance. When his prayer was answered, he was so happy he was ready to dance. God did not save him just to make him happy, but that he should sing praises to the Lord and tell others about Him. We should not be silent either. God has saved us to praise Him. His purpose is that we should also tell others about His love.

Psalm 31

This is another prayer of David in which his trust in the Lord is very plain. We should always pray in faith, James 1:6, Mark 11:24.

Four times in the first eighteen verses we see David's trust in Jehovah and his prayer. In verses 1 and 2 he starts by telling Jehovah he is trusting in Him, then he prays for deliverance.

In verses 3 and 4 God is his strength. He asks for guidance and deliverance from the snare of his enemies. He commits his spirit to the Lord, v. 5.

In verses 6 to 13 David trusts in the Lord, v. 6, and is happy in His mercy, v. 7. Because of these past mercies

he prays again for help. Within himself he has trouble and sorrow and feels that he is at the end of his life, vs. 9, 10. Outside his enemies speak against him and even his own friends and neighbors, vs. 11-13.

Again in verse 14 David declares his trust in Jehovah. His life, his times, are in the Lord's hand, v. 15. So he prays that the Lord would deliver him from his enemies and put them to shame, vs. 16-18, specially those who tell lies and speak proudly.

Then David speaks as if his prayer was already answered, vs. 19-22. He praises Jehovah for His great goodness toward those who trust in Him, v. 19. David himself had been trusting in the Lord, vs. 6, 14. The Lord hides righteous men in the secret of His presence, v. 20. He delivers them from their enemies. David praises the Lord for His wonderful kindness in delivering him, v. 21, as he had been praying in the first part of the psalm. Even when David's faith was weak, the Lord heard him, vs. 22, 9, 10.

In this psalm we see prayer, trust and thanksgiving. If God answers our prayers, we should be careful to thank Him for it. We should also praise the Lord by telling others about His goodness. This David did in verses 23 and 24. He calls upon the saints to love the Lord and to be of good courage. In these two verses we have three things that abide, faith, hope and love, 1 Corinthians 13:13. It is possible that Jeremiah the prophet got a blessing from this psalm of David. When Jeremiah was attacked by his enemies, he trusted in the Lord. In verse 12 David said he was like a broken vessel. Jeremiah used these words in 18:4; 19:10, 11; 22:28. In verse 13 David

spoke about fear on every side. Jeremiah uses these words also in 6:25; 20:3, 10; 46:5; 49:29.

Both Jeremiah and David went through great trials for the sake of their God, but the Lord Jesus Christ suffered much more than any man. Just as David committed himself to the Lord, vs. 17, 18, so Christ committed Himself to Him who judges righteously, 1 Peter 2:23. The Lord Jesus actually used the words of verse 5 in speaking to His Father just before He died on the cross, Luke 23:46.

Psalm 32

This is the first psalm which is called Maskil, which means instruction or teaching. David is not praying for deliverance nor praising the Lord for answered prayer, but giving instruction on the joy of forgiveness.

The man whose sin is forgiven by the Lord is a happy man. There are three words for sin in verses 1 and 2, transgression, sin and iniquity. Sin is a crime against Jehovah. All men are sinners and all can be forgiven. It is said of the Lord Jesus that no guile or deceit was found in His mouth, Isaiah 53:9; 1 Peter 2:22. He who knows all hearts found no deceit in Nathanael, John 1:47. Paul taught that God counts a man righteous not because he has done many good works, but because he has trusted in Christ, Romans 4:4-8.

David himself knew the joy of sins forgiven. When he fell into sin, he at first did not confess it to the Lord, but something inside told him he should repent. The Lord was speaking to him and he became sick. When Jehovah's hand was heavy upon him, his bones felt old, v. 3, and his body dried up, v. 4. Finally he was willing to

confess and in verse 5 there are three words: acknowledge, hide not, and confess. Then he speaks to the Lord, vs. 6, 7, and the Lord speaks to him, v. 8. The godly man prays to Jehovah before it is too late. We read of the foolish young women who came to the Lord too late, Matthew 25:11, 12. Those who come in time will not be sent away by the floods of God's judgment. Like David they will find Jehovah to be a hiding place, v. 7. They will also sing His praises.

Not only will the Lord forgive and keep us from trouble, He will also guide us in the right way, v. 8. The whole Word of God gives us help in doing those things that please the Lord. We should keep looking to Him and we will know what is the right thing to do.

Then there is a warning for the people not to stand still like the ass, or be in a hurry like the horse. These animals must be controlled by putting a piece of metal in their mouths. The Lord sometimes has to allow us pain and suffering before we will do His will. Even then the child of God knows the Lord's mercy. We should be glad in the Lord and tell others about the joy we have received in Christ, v. 11.

Psalm 33

In the thirty second psalm we have read of the joy of the man whose sins are forgiven. The last verse calls on righteous men to rejoice in the Lord. Psalm 33 does the same.

In the first part, vs. 1-7, the Holy Spirit calls on the righteous to praise the Lord. This is good and fitting for all who have been made righteous in Christ. When the people of Israel worshipped the Lord in the temple,

some could play music on harps and other instruments, v. 2. All could sing a new song when they knew the joy of sins forgiven, Psalm 32:11, Revelation 5:9.

The righteous are called upon to praise the Lord because of what He is and what He has done: His Word and His work, v. 4; His righteousness and love, v. 5. Then we are told of God's power, vs. 6, 7. He created the heavens and controls the sea.

God was not only interested in the people of Israel, but in the whole world. This is certainly true today because God has commanded us to preach the Gospel to every creature. In Psalm 33, verses 8-19 give the call to all men to fear the Lord. There are four reasons for this call. All people of the world should know God's POWER in creating the world, v. 9, Romans 1:19, 20.

God's power is great enough so that He can carry out His PURPOSES. Man's plans will come to nothing, v. 10, but the counsel of Jehovah will remain forever. His great purpose is to bless any nation which will believe in the Lord and trust Him, v. 12. Israel was specially chosen for this purpose, but God's blessing today is for all people, Ephesians 2:11-13.

Another reason why people should fear God is because He KNOWS all things, vs. 13-15. This means that we cannot hide anything from the Lord, even our own thoughts.

The fourth reason to fear the Lord is because He alone can save. In time of danger people of the world think that a great army can save them. In old times in a war men on horses were able to fight better than those without horses. We should not trust in man or our own

strength. The Lord is looking after His own to save them in time of danger or great hunger, vs. 18, 19.

The people of Israel knew the Lord and trusted in Him. They found He was a help and shield, v. 20. They could rejoice because they had trusted in the Lord's Name, v. 21. So they asked the Lord for mercy, v. 22.

We as Christians should rejoice in the Lord always. When we pray about everything we will know God's peace in our hearts, Philippians 4:4, 6, 7. Others will see this joy and hear our songs of praise and will want to know our Saviour too. God's will is that all men should fear Him and love Him.

"Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil," Proverbs 3:7.

Psalms 34

Nine of the psalms are written so that each verse begins with a different letter. We have already studied psalms 9, 10, and 25. The others are psalms 34, 37, 111, 112, 119 and 145.

Psalms 34 was written by David after the Lord delivered him from Abimelech or Achish, the king of Gath, 1 Samuel 21:10-15. David ran away from Saul, but in his fear he did not trust Jehovah. Among the Philistines he was also afraid and acted as if he had lost his sense. When he escaped from the Philistines, he went to Adullam, 1 Samuel 22:1.

The first part of this psalm, vs. 1-10, is a call to the saints of God to praise, trust and fear Him. David himself promises to praise the Lord, vs. 1, 2, and calls upon others to do the same, v. 3. As Christians we

should each one praise the Lord when alone and also when we come together as a church.

Then David tells how the Lord answered his prayer and delivered him, vs. 4-6. The angel of the Lord will deliver all who fear Jehovah. David just asks the people to taste and see that the Lord is good, v. 8. He also calls upon the people to fear Jehovah and gives them the promise that the Lord will fulfil all their needs, vs. 9, 10.

Then David speaks specially to children, vs. 11-22. God wants His people to teach their children the truth, Exodus 12:26, Deuteronomy 4:10, Ephesians 6:4. If anyone wants a long happy life, he must say and do what is right, vs. 12-14. The Lord will help the righteous in doing these things, v. 15. On the other hand He will punish those who do evil, v. 16. This is not to say that the righteous will never have any trouble, but their Lord promises to deliver them, vs. 17-20. The difference between wicked men and the servants of the Lord is seen again in verses 21 and 22.

The apostle Peter loved this psalm. When he wrote the first epistle of Peter, he used verse 8 in chapter 2, verse 3, and verses 12 to 15 in chapter 3, verses 10 to 12. God does not promise that we will never have any trouble in this world, but does promise His presence all the way.

This psalm also makes us think of the Lord Jesus Christ. In verse 6 David calls himself a poor man and the Lord, though rich became poor for our sakes, 2 Corinthians 8:9. The promise in verse 20 that no bones will be broken was true of the Lord Jesus, John 19:31-36. Just as David teaches the saints and the children, so the Lord Jesus told His disciples to learn of Him, Matthew 11:29. As we become more like Christ, we will bring more

pleasure to the Father. God loves His Son and wants us to become more like Him.

Psalm 35

In Psalm 35 David prays that God will return evil on those who have done evil to His people. Other psalms with this kind of prayer are 52, 58, 59, 69, 109, 137. Here David prays for vengeance on his enemies because of God's promises, vs. 1-10, because of God's righteousness, vs. 11-18, and because of God's people, vs. 19-28.

1. God had promised Abraham that He would curse anyone who cursed him, Genesis 12:3. He promised to keep Abraham from danger, Genesis 15:1, and to fight for Israel, Deuteronomy 20:4. David may have had these verses in mind in praying as in verses 1 to 3. He may have been thinking of Exodus 23:23 when he asked that the angel of the Lord would drive his enemies away, vs. 5, 6.

It was right for David to pray this way because he had done no wrong to his enemies, vs. 7, 8. His soul and his whole being would praise the Lord if God delivered him, vs. 9, 10.

2. God is the righteous Judge of all the earth, Genesis 18:25, and it would be only fair for Him to judge those who told lies about David, v. 11. David had been kind to his enemies and prayed for them when they were sick, vs. 13, 14. Instead of returning kindness to him, they gathered together to mock him, vs. 15, 16. Biting their teeth, v. 16, shows hate as in Acts 7:54. Then David asks how long it will be before the Lord will rescue him. He

then promises to praise God before all the people, vs. 17, 18.

3. David is not praying for himself alone. His enemies are planning to do wrong to the people who live quietly in the land. His enemies thought that they had gained a victory over him, v. 21, but David still cries to Jehovah to rise up and save him. Notice he is praying now because of Jehovah's righteousness, v. 24, and not because of his own, as in verses 7 and 8. David belonged to the Lord and so men hated him, John 15:18. Therefore he asks God to deliver him for His own sake. David calls upon his friends to praise the Lord and promises that he will speak of God's righteousness all the daylong, vs. 27, 28. When God answers our prayer, we should be careful to praise Him in our hearts and before others as well.

The Lord Jesus Christ, David's Son, was more righteous than David. He too was persecuted by His enemies. The Lord Jesus did not pray that His enemies would be judged, but rather forgiven, Luke 23:34. He did commit Himself to Him that judges righteously, 1 Peter 2:23, Luke 23:46. We as Christians should pray for those who treat us wrongly, Matthew 5:44. Stephen did this, Acts 7:60, and the Holy Spirit has commanded us to bless them which persecute us; not to return evil for evil nor to seek vengeance, but to be kind to our enemies, Romans 12:14, 17, 19, 20. Let us pray that God would make us more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 36

Psalm 36 was written by David who is called a servant of Jehovah as in the heading of Psalm 18. Here the contrast is between wicked men, vs. 1-4, and the good Lord, vs. 5-9.

David understood from the way men act that they do not fear God. If they did, they would obey His commands, v. 1. Part of this verse is quoted in Romans 3:18 where Paul proved that all men are sinners and some are very wicked indeed.

The wicked man is very proud until his sin is known, v. 2. His WORDS are false and his WORKS are not good, v. 3. His plans and thoughts are evil, v. 4.

Then David gives praise to the good Lord. His mercy and faithfulness are great, v. 5. God is faithful with His children. He always keeps His word and so we can put our faith in Him. God is righteous and must judge sin, v. 6. This also means that He will judge wicked men who attack His people. As God He is able to keep both men and animals. Because of His love men can trust Him, v. 7, Psalm 91:4. He supplies their needs, v. 8, and gives them life and light, v. 9. Sinners walk in darkness and are dead in their sins. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Light of the world and came to give life to all, John 1:9; 8:12; 10:10; 11:25.

What will the good Lord do to men? David prays that God would keep on giving His love and righteousness to the saints, v. 10, and keep him from proud and wicked men, v. 11. These wicked people will be cast down and will not be able to rise up again, v. 12. We should give them the Gospel so that they can be saved.

Psalm 37

Like Psalm 34 this psalm has a different letter for each two verses. This is as if verse 1 began with the letter A, verse 3 with B, verse 5 with C, and so on. There are 22 letters in Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament.

The first two verses tell us what the psalm is about. We should not worry about evil doers nor feel badly when they seem to succeed. After a short life God will judge them.

Then David by the Spirit of God tells us to do seven things. Along with these commands are many wonderful promises.

1. Trust in the Lord, v. 3. | God will keep safely.
2. Do good, v. 3.
3. Get all your pleasure in the Lord, v. 4. | He will answer your prayers.
4. Commit your way to the Lord, v. 5. | He will act for you and show others that you are righteous.
5. Rest in Jehovah, v. 7. | God's promises are found in the next part of the psalm.
6. Do not worry, v. 7.
7. Do not be angry, v. 8.

Next we see the difference between the righteous and the wicked. The wicked will be cut off from the earth, but the righteous will live, vs. 9-11. These wicked men hate the righteous and plan to do wrong to them, v. 12. Verse 13 does not mean that God is happy about the judgment of sinners, Psalm 2:4, but of course He is not afraid of their plans. The wicked will be killed with their own sword like Goliath, 1 Samuel 17:51. A poor righteous man is better than a rich wicked man, v. 16. Then again David tells us the end of life for wicked men, vs. 17, 20, and of the upright, vs. 18, 19.

The wicked gets rich by not paying his debts, but the righteous man gives away money to help the poor, v. 21.

God will take care of the righteous, v. 22. He will guide him in the right way. The righteous man takes pleasure in following God's way, v. 23. This does not mean he will never fall into sin, but the Lord holds him up, v. 24. If any man sin, we have a Comforter with the Father, 1 John 2:1. David knew that the Lord will supply the need of the righteous man and his children. For this reason the righteous man is able to help others, vs. 25, 26. The Lord Jesus promised us that God would supply all we need, Matthew 6:25-33.

In the last part of the psalm, vs. 27-40, there are more commands. We should stop doing what is wrong and do only what is good, v. 27. Again we see that the righteous will be kept in the land. They speak wisely, v. 30, and think about the law of God, v. 31. When the wicked tries to kill the righteous man, the Lord will take care of him, vs. 32, 33.

The next command is to wait on the Lord, v. 34. David in his long life had seen the Lord looking after the righteous, v. 25. He had also seen wicked men who seemed to succeed, v. 35, but they soon pass away, v. 36. The end of the upright and the end of the wicked are different, vs. 37, 38. Then finally we have another promise that the Lord will look after His own because they trust in Him, vs. 39, 40.

In this psalm the Holy Spirit tells us to trust in the Lord and not to worry about the wicked, because in the end the wicked will be punished, but the Lord will look after His own people. These truths are so important that the Spirit says them over and over again. We need to learn these lessons and day by day trust the Lord more and more. If our only pleasure is in the Lord, He will give us

what we desire. He will give us more of Himself and we will enjoy Him more than ever.

Psalm 38

Psalm 38 was written by David as a prayer that the Lord would remember him in his trouble. It has the same heading as Psalm 70. We have seen in many psalms that David prayed to God to deliver him from his enemies. Here in Psalm 38 David sees himself as the sinner and accepts his trouble as from the Lord. There are seven psalms which are called “penitential psalms” because the writer is really sorry for his sins and repents before God. These seven penitential psalms are 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143. Five were written by David and we do not know who wrote the other two.

Four times in Psalm 38 David prays to Jehovah, vs. 1, 15, 21, or to Adonai, which means Lord or Master, v. 9. The word LORD with big letters is Jehovah; Lord with small letters is Adonai. David asks the Lord not to be angry with him and says that God’s punishment is like sharp sticks in him, vs. 1, 2. God does not let His children go on in sin, but will chasten them as His children. David was sick and took this as from the Lord, vs. 3-8. He confessed his sins to God, vs. 3, 4.

He took this whole problem to the Lord, v. 9. He knew that he had no strength left in himself, v. 10. His friends had left him, v. 11, but his enemies spoke against him, v. 12. David did not try to answer these wicked men. He just kept quiet like the Lord Jesus Himself, Isaiah 53:7, Matthew 26:63, 1 Peter 2:23.

His hope was only in the Lord, v. 15. If the Lord would not help him, his enemies would certainly rejoice, v. 16.

David was sorry for his sins, vs. 17, 18, but felt that his enemies were treating him wrongfully because he followed the Lord, vs. 19, 20.

At the last David just prays to the Lord to help him quickly. As Christians, if we get sick, we should ask ourselves, "Is the Lord chastening me for some sin in my life?" If the Lord shows us some sin, we should confess it and stop it. If men hate us because we belong to God, we should pray for them. All these things will make us more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 39

This psalm was written by David for Jeduthun, one of the leaders of the temple music, 1 Chronicles 16:41; 25:1. Psalms 62 and 77 are also addressed to Jeduthun.

In Psalm 38:13, 14 David said he was like a man who cannot hear or speak. In Psalm 39 he tells of his purpose not to sin with his tongue, vs. 1, 2. It is indeed a good thing to control the tongue, Matthew 12:36, James 3:2, 3. At last his heart burned and he spoke out in prayer to God, v. 3.

His prayer was that he might know his own weakness, v. 4. The Lord showed him that his days at best were very short, v. 5. This is true of all men, 1 Peter 1:24. Many people seem to act as if they would live forever. They spend their time getting rich, but when they die, someone else will get their money, v. 6.

David's hope is only in Jehovah. He prays that God will save him from his sins, but knew that his trouble came from the Lord, vs. 9-11. Sometimes the Lord, to make us more patient or longsuffering, allows trouble or tribulation to come in our lives. In Romans 5:3 we read

that suffering makes us more patient. In his prayer David reminds God that he is in this world for only a little while and asks for strength, vs. 12, 13.

David's son, king Solomon, may have been thinking of this psalm when he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes. Psalm 39:5, 6, 11 sound a lot like the book of Ecclesiastes. Solomon speaks of the folly of a man seeking riches when he does not know whether his son will be wise or foolish, Ecclesiastes 2:18, 19. David did not know what he would find after death, v. 13. Solomon says a man on this point is no better than an animal, Ecclesiastes 3:19-21. In the New Testament we get more light about what we shall find after death. Paul said to be with Christ is far better, Philippians 1:23. The Old Testament gives us part of the truth of God and the New Testament still more. When we get to heaven, we will know fully. Down here we should learn all we can about God and His truth as found in the Bible. We will then come to know that life indeed is short and we should use our days, not for sin or self, but for God's glory.

Psalm 40

In the first part of Psalm 40 David tells what God has done for him, vs. 1-4. Then he tells what God has shown to him, vs. 5-10. The last part of the psalm gives us his prayer to God.

God had answered David's prayer. God did not answer the prayer as soon as it was made, and David had to wait patiently, v. 1. He knew that God would answer his prayer and he had peace in his heart. David had been in trouble which he says was like a deep hole, like Joseph, Genesis 37:24, and Jeremiah, Jeremiah 38:6. The Lord brought David out of his trouble and set his feet upon a

rock. This rock speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God on Whom the Church is built, 1 Corinthians 3:11.

Someone asked a Christian why he thought the Lord Jesus Christ was better than Buddha or Confucius, two great leaders of older times. The Christian said, "A man fell into a deep hole and could not get out. Buddha came along and told him if he had followed the right pathway he would not have fallen into the hole. Confucius came along and told him if he got out of the hole, he should live a better life. But the Lord Jesus Christ came, went right down into the hole and carried the man out. Then He gave him power to walk according to God's will in this world."

God not only put David's feet upon a rock, but He showed him the right way and gave him power to walk in it. More than that, He gave him a new song to sing. Other people saw what God had done to David and the joy which he had and they wanted to trust the Lord also, v. 3. Everyone who trusts the Lord will be blessed, v. 4.

When David thinks of God's wonderful works and thoughts, he sees they are more than he could count. One of God's wonderful works is creating or making this world, Psalm 8:3 and 19:1. More wonderful still is God's work in saving man from his sin. He sent His own Son into this world to die for all men. He forgives our sins and then gives us power to live for Him. When we get to heaven, we will talk together about God's wonderful works and His thoughts of love toward us.

Then David, by the Holy Spirit, gives us a wonderful example of God's love. In verses 6 to 8 we hear the voice of the Lord Jesus, Hebrews 10:5-9. It is true that God commanded Moses and the people to bring sacrifices

and offerings for sin, Exodus 12:3-8; Leviticus 16 and 23. But the blood of animals could not take away sin, Hebrews 10:4. Besides that, some of the people of Israel thought that they could sin and just bring a sacrifice and God would have to forgive them.

When David himself fell into sin, he knew that God wanted real sorrow in his heart more than a burnt sacrifice, Psalm 51:16, 17.

The Son of God knew that all the sacrifices of Israel pointed forward to His own sacrifice on the cross, so He said, "Lo, I come," v. 7. This book is the book of God's purposes and the Son of God had joy in doing His will.

Some people refuse to do God's will and others do it because they feel they have to. The Lord Jesus loved His Father and was happy in His will. This pleased the Father, Matthew 3:17; 17:5. If we love God we will have no greater joy than to do His will. This also will please the Father because it makes Him think of His beloved Son.

The words in verses 6 to 8 were true of David in his desire to please God. He went on to say that he told the good news before all the people of Israel, v. 9. He told them of God's salvation, love and truth, v. 10. The Lord Jesus also came into the world to teach men the truth of God. We who know God's salvation should always be ready to tell others, one by one, in small groups or large groups, about our wonderful Saviour.

The rest of the psalm is David's prayer in which he asks the Lord to keep him, v. 11, to deliver him from sin, vs. 12, 13, to punish his enemies, vs. 14, 15, to give joy to the saints, v. 16, and be a help to David, v. 17. In the first verse he tells us that after waiting patiently the Lord

heard his prayer. When he got in trouble again he knew the Lord would help him and asks Him not to wait too long. If God answers our prayer we should remember to thank Him, then ask again according to our needs, Philippians 4:6. He loves to hear our prayer and thanksgiving and will do anything that will help us to become more like the Lord Jesus.

Psalm 41

This psalm starts off with a promise from God, vs. 1-3. The blessing is for the man who thinks about the poor and helps him. The Lord will deliver or save this man when he is in trouble. He will deliver him from his enemies and bring him back to health when he gets sick.

David knew the promise of God and his prayer is found in verses 4 to 10. He confessed his sin and asked for healing, v. 4. David felt very badly because his enemies were speaking evil of him, v. 5. If anyone came to see him, it was not out of love. He would just go out and tell others about it, v. 6. They were all planning to hurt David and said he would no doubt die soon, v. 8. In fact his own friend had become his enemy, v. 9. This may have been Ahithophel who was David's friend and counsellor, who helped him think through the many problems of the country. When David's son Absalom tried to become king, Ahithophel left David to help Absalom, 2 Samuel 15:12, 31; 16:23. David was a man who loved his friends. It hurt him very much to think that Ahithophel had left him.

David knew that God had heard his prayer because his enemy did not gain the victory over him, vs. 11, 12.

The last verse of this psalm is David's praise for answered prayer. For every believer, when the struggle of life is over, there will be the endless years of eternity to praise the Lord for ever and ever.

The book of Psalms is divided into five books and this is the last verse of the first book. "Amen" means "May it be so." The people of Israel in saying "Amen" agreed that God should be blessed forever. So do we.

Book 2

Psalm 42

Psalms 42-49 were written for or by the sons of Korah. Psalm 43 has no heading but really goes with Psalm 42. In the third book also there are four psalms for the sons of Korah, 84, 85, 87, and 88.

Who were the sons of Korah? Korah belonged to the tribe of Levi and was a relation of Aaron and Moses. God had made Moses and Aaron leaders of the people, but Korah did not want to obey them. He gathered a number of unhappy Israelites and they rebelled against Moses and Aaron. God punished them by opening a great pit or hole in the earth into which they all fell and died, Numbers 16:1-35. Some of Korah's children died also, but not all of them, 1 Chronicles 6:22. This shows us both the righteousness and the mercy of God: righteousness because He judged Korah for the sin of rebellion; and mercy because his children's children, or great-grandchildren had a place of service in the temple worship. For us too God is a God of righteousness and mercy. He must judge our sins, but if we confess them, He will give us a place to serve Him.

Psalm 42 is also called Maskil. We have seen in Psalm 32 that this word means instruction or teaching.

In the first part of the psalm, vs. 1-5, the writer tells of his need for God. As a thirsty animal wants to find water to drink, so the writer's soul desires God, v. 1. He especially wants to stand before God in the temple, v. 2.

His friends were saying, "Where is thy God?" Why does He not help you? These people had gone with the writer

to the temple, v. 4, but now they do not help him or show love to him. So the writer calls upon his own soul to hope in God. He is sure that he will soon praise God for His help, v. 5.

The second part of the psalm also gives the writer's need for God. His soul is still sorrowful, but he will remember God no matter where he is, even when near death. He felt God's judgment going over him like the waves of the sea, v. 7. He was sure that God would deliver him, v. 8, but at that time it seemed that God had forgotten him. His enemies were still laughing at him and asking, "Where is thy God?", vs. 9, 10. So he again called upon his soul to hope in God, v. 11.

When Jonah was inside the big fish, he also felt that God's judgments were like the waves of the sea, Psalm 42:7, Jonah 2:3. Jonah is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 12:40. In this psalm we can hear the heart cry of the Lord Jesus when He was made sin for us, 2 Corinthians 5:21. Even on the cross God did not forget Christ, but He did cry, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" No matter what trouble we have to go through, we should remember that the Lord Himself suffered far more for us.

Psalm 43

Psalm 43 is the only psalm in the second book which does not have a title. Verse 5 is the same as 42:5, 11. These two psalms go together.

In Psalm 43:1, 2 we see the writer's need of God. He asks God to make the whole nation know that he is right. He wanted deliverance specially from one man. He prays that God would send out His light and truth to

lead him to God's temple. He would be very happy to go to the altar, the place in the temple where animals were killed for a sacrifice. Again in verse 5 he calls upon himself to hope in God.

After the Church is taken home to heaven, a great man will rise up in this world, called the man of sin, 2 Thessalonians 2:3. He will hate the Jewish people and persecute them more than they have ever been persecuted in the past, Matthew 24:15-21. At first many of the Jews will go along with this man. Those who remain faithful to God will no doubt use the words of verse 1 and other parts of the psalms in praying to God.

Our special prayer is in verse 3, as we ask the Lord to send out the Gospel to all mankind.

Psalm 44

Here we have another Maskil for or by the sons of Koran. Sometimes the writer speaks for himself, sometimes for the nation of Israel. He remembers God's deliverances in the past and sees their present trouble as coming from the Lord.

Their fathers had told them how God had given to them the land of Canaan. This was not by their own power, but by God's right hand, vs. 1-3. Before Israel entered the land, Moses told the people again and again in the book of Deuteronomy that they would obtain the land only with God's power, Deuteronomy 7:1; 8:18. After they had entered the land Joshua reminded them that it was God's power, Joshua 24:12. Our salvation also is the work of the Lord, Titus 3:5.

The writer of this psalm was sure that God as King would deliver Israel. He would not trust in his own

instruments of war, only in God, vs. 4-6. God had saved them and they were praising His name, vs. 7, 8.

However God had left them and put them to shame. Their enemies gained the victory, vs. 9, 10. God scattered them among the nations and sold them for nothing, vs. 11, 12. Their enemies laughed at them, vs. 13, 14. The writer himself could not understand this. He was mixed up and full of shame, vs. 15, 16.

The writer knew that God allowed this trouble, yet Israel had kept God's law and had not departed from their agreement, vs. 17-19. Even if they had forgotten God, He would know the secrets of the heart, vs. 20, 21. They were in great danger because they belonged to God, v. 22. The apostle Paul used this verse in Romans 8:36 to show that God will look after His children in time of danger. It is possible for us to suffer for the Lord's sake, or for our own mistakes. We should be glad if we have to suffer because we belong to Christ, but not if it is for our own mistakes, 1 Peter 4:12-16.

In the last part of the psalm the writer asks God to awake and help His people in time of great trouble. He prays in this way, not because of their righteousness, but because of God's mercy, v. 26. This is the right way to pray: not because of what we are, but because of what God is. He saves us and helps us, not for our goodness, but for His own.

Psalm 45

In the heading of this beautiful psalm the word meaning "lilies" may refer to a musical instrument. See also Psalm 69 and Psalm 80. Psalm 45 is also called a Maskil

and a song of loves. The writer is praising the king, vs. 1-9, and his new wife, vs. 10-17.

In the first verse the writer tells us of his joy in writing this psalm for the king. His beauty is greater than other men's and his words are more gracious. God's blessing is on him, v. 2. Before we learned to love the Lord Jesus, He did not seem beautiful to us, but rather like "a root out of dry ground", Isaiah 53:2. Now that we know Him as Saviour, He has become altogether lovely, Song of Solomon 5:16. When we hear Him speak, we wonder at His gracious words, Luke 4:22, John 7:46.

Then the writer speaks of the king's power. When he goes out to war, he will be victorious, vs. 3-5. This is because he is on the side of truth and right. Satan, the father of lies and all who help him will be overcome when the Lord Jesus Christ goes out to war, Revelation 19:11-21.

In verse 6 we see that God's throne is forever and ever. The Holy Spirit tells us that this verse and the next are about the Lord Jesus Christ, Hebrews 1:8, 9. God has already set Christ on His throne, Psalm 110:1. When He comes back to earth, He will sit on His own throne, Matthew 19:28.

We read of the king's joy in verses 7-9. Because he loved righteousness, God poured the oil of gladness on him. His clothing and his home (called ivory palaces) have made him glad, v. 8, but most of all his queen, v. 9.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and He is called God in Hebrews 1:8. He is also the Son of man and in verse 7 God anoints Him with oil. The word Christ or Messiah means the one who is anointed. This oil speaks of the Holy Spirit who came on Christ at His baptism,

Matthew 3:16. When the Lord Jesus had died, Nicodemus took His body and put medicines with it, John 19:39, 40. So Psalm 45:8 makes us think of the death of the Lord Jesus.

The writer then calls on the king's wife to forget her father's house and worship her lord, vs. 10, 11. Other people will come with gifts for her, v. 12. In beautiful clothing she and her friends will be brought to the king, vs. 13-15. Her children will rule in the earth like the king's sons. She will be remembered and praised with the king forever, vs. 16, 17.

We know from the New Testament that Christ loves the Church as a man loves his wife, Ephesians 5:25-27. He is preparing to bring us to Himself in perfection. We will be dressed in the fine clothing of righteousness, Revelation 19:8. As we bring men to Christ they will be born again. We can call them our spiritual children as Paul did, Galatians 4:19, 1 Timothy 1:2. This will bring still great pleasure to our King, the Lord Jesus.

Psalm 46

This is called a song upon Alamoth. It tells us of God's help in time of trouble.

When in trouble we can always turn to God, v. 1. Our trouble may seem great, like a storm or when the very earth shakes. If we trust in God, we will not be afraid, vs. 2, 3.

When there is no rain, the people of a city may suffer because they do not have enough water. Jerusalem is called the city of God and God supplied a river of water. More than that, He Himself was with the people in the city, vs. 4, 5. For this reason Jerusalem is a picture of

heaven where God dwells. We read about the new heaven and the holy city, new Jerusalem, in Revelation 21 and a river of the water of life, Revelation 22:1. Only those who believe the Gospel will be there and only those who hear the Gospel can believe it. When the enemy is angry, it is a great help to know God is near, vs. 6, 7. When the Lord speaks, the earth melts. This means that the enemy cannot stand against God's people.

The enemy will not give up until God greatly punishes them, v. 8. The time will come when there will be no more war in the world, Isaiah 2:4. So even now in time of trouble we should learn to be quiet and trust in God, v. 10. In this verse God speaks and promises that He will get glory in the whole earth. When the Lord Jesus comes back in power, all living people will have to obey Him. Even now as we tell people about the Lord, some will believe and this will bring glory to God.

Verse 11 is the same as verse 7. In each of the three parts of the psalm God is called our refuge or place of safety, vs. 1, 7, 11. We should learn to turn to Him in our little troubles every day as well as in the great problems of life.

Psalm 47

This psalm also tells us of God's victory over evil in the whole world. All peoples are called upon to strike their hands together for joy, vs. 1, 2. Israel will have the highest place in God's kingdom. He has chosen the place where He wants Israel to live, vs. 3, 4.

When God goes up on high, the people should sing praise to Him, vs. 5, 6. They should also sing His praise because He is the King of all the earth, v. 7. When He

sits on His holy throne, He rules over all people, v. 8. The princes of the world come to Israel in peace. They can no longer make war against Israel because God is her God.

“God has gone up with a shout,” v. 5. This psalm may have been used when the ark of God went up to Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 6:12. We read of the time when the Son of God rose from the dead and went upon high, Ephesians 4:8. He sits upon the throne of God and will reign over the nations, Psalm 47:8. Today the nations are not our enemies. We should love them and tell them about Christ. If they bend the knee to Him now they will get a blessing. The time will come when every knee must bend, Romans 14:11, Philippians 2:10.

Psalm 48

This song is also by or for the sons of Korah. It tells of God’s presence in His temple on Mount Zion. Zion was the city of David, 1 Kings 8:1; it was called God’s holy hill, Psalm 2:6.

In Psalm 48 because God was in Zion it is holy, beautiful, and a place of safety, vs. 1-3. Kings came together, perhaps to see if they could take the city, but they soon turned back in fear, vs. 4-6. Some of them may have come all the way from Tarshish in ships. The people of Israel had often heard of God’s power in delivering His people from danger. Now they have seen it for themselves, v. 8.

As they thought of these things in the temple, v. 9, they felt that God’s praise should go out to the ends of the earth, v. 10. Especially the people who live in Jerusalem should be glad, v. 11. They could see how strongly the

city was built, v. 12, and should tell this to young people, v. 13. They were sure that God would guide them safely to the end of life, v. 14.

God chose Jerusalem to put His name there, 1 Kings 11:36. Today God does not choose any city or country above another. The Lord Jesus Christ loves His Church which is also called His Bride. In Revelation 21:9, 10 we see that the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is the new Jerusalem where God will dwell forever. This psalm teaches that God will save His people when their enemies come against them. At the same time He desires that we should witness to all.

Psalm 49

Psalm 49 is the seventh and last in this group written by or for the sons of Korah. Four more are found in the third book: psalms 84, 85, 87 and 88. The subject here is that some day all must die.

The call goes forth to all the people of the world, both rich and poor, vs. 1, 2. The psalmist says he will give them a message of wisdom. This message is in the form of a psalm and so he plays on his musical instrument, vs. 3, 4.

Rich people had persecuted the writer, but he was not afraid, vs. 5, 6. Money cannot redeem anyone. It is not possible to pay God to save my brother or myself, vs. 7-9, 1 Peter 1:18. These people must know that all men die, both wise and foolish, v. 10, and someone else will get their money. Yet they seem to think that their lands will be their own forever, v. 11. Yet in the day of his death the rich man is little different from an animal, v. 12.

The end of life is the grave for men without faith, vs. 13, 14, but the writer of this psalm is confident that God will redeem him, v. 15. So his counsel to the reader is not to be afraid when rich people get along well in this world, v. 16. He can take none of his money with him to the next world, v. 17. In this life he considers himself very fortunate and men agree with him. In the next world he will be forever far from God, v. 19. In the world today there are many rich people who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. God does not promise that all who believe in Christ will get along well in this world. Teaching for believers who would like to get rich is found in 1 Timothy 6. 6-10. Teaching for those who are rich is found in the same chapter, vs. 17-19.

The New Testament also teaches that people have to die once and after that comes judgment, Hebrews 9:27. It also teaches that for those who are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation, Romans 8:1. You may be rich or poor in this world, but in Christ you can be very rich, 2 Corinthians 8:9.

Psalm 50

We now come to the first psalm of Asaph. There are twelve altogether: this one and psalms 73-83.

In the first book of Psalms, Psalms 1-41, the common name for God is Jehovah or LORD. In the second book and most of the third book the name God is used more often than LORD. In this psalm of Asaph the word God is found eight times and LORD only once, v. 1. In the twelve psalms of Asaph two words for God are found 67 times and LORD only twelve times. The name Jehovah or LORD is the name used in the Bible for God when He makes or remembers His covenant or agreement with

His people. In this psalm the mighty God, the LORD reveals Himself, vs. 1-6, rebukes His people, vs. 7-15, and rejects the wicked, vs. 16-23.

The Lord God has authority over the earth, v. 1. In grace He gives light from Zion to men, v. 2. His judgments also tell us His character, vs. 3-6. He calls to the angels of heaven to listen while He judges His people. He calls His people His saints. They have made a covenant with Him, v. 5, but there is something lacking.

The trouble was, they brought sacrifices, but not with a true heart. God does not rebuke them for not bringing sacrifices, vs. 8, 9. All the animals of the world belong to Him, vs. 10-13. What does God really want? He wants thanksgiving from the heart, v. 14, and glory from those who have been saved, v. 15.

Throughout their history the people of Israel brought animals to God as sacrifices according to the law of Moses. This was good, but some thought they could go on in sin and then quickly get forgiveness from God just by bringing a sacrifice. The prophets from Isaiah to Malachi warned Israel against this idea and here Asaph is doing the same thing.

Some in Israel acted as though they were believers, but in truth they were not. Even though they talk about God's law and covenant, God calls them wicked, v. 16. They refused the word of God, v. 17, were friends with sinners, v. 18, spoke evil words, v. 19, even against their own brothers, v. 20.

God had not judged them at once, so they thought that everything was alright, v. 21. God warns them of terrible judgment, v. 22. Those who offer praise and at the same time walk according to God's order bring glory to Him

and will see His salvation, v. 23 This psalm teaches us today that it is possible to behave like a Christian without really belonging to God. True Christians will be chastened by the Father. He wants us to worship in spirit and in truth, John 4. 24. He wants us to pray to Him and when He answers, to praise Him, v. 15. We can know that He who owns the cattle on a thousand hills will take care of His children, Matthew 6:33. Notice in Psalm 19:1 the heavens declare the glory of God, and in Psalm 50:6 they declare His righteousness. But the church reveals the grace and wisdom of God, Ephesians 2:7; 3:10.

Psalm 51

Most of the psalms, 51-72, to the end of the second book are by David. Many of them were written after certain events in David's life. For example in the heading of Psalm 51 we read "When Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone in to Bathsheba." Before you study these psalms it would be well to read the story of David's life in 1 Samuel 16 to 1 Kings 2:11.

David was looking after his father's sheep when Samuel anointed him to be king of Israel later on. After he killed Goliath, his name was well known and king Saul became very jealous of him. David had to flee, but the Lord saved his life. After Saul was killed in the war David became king. He fell into sin and the Lord had to punish him. David's son Absalom rose up to kill his own father. Absalom died and David kept on reigning as king until the day of his death.

The story of David's sin is found in 2 Samuel 11. For about a year God spoke to him, but he would not repent. Finally the Lord sent Nathan the prophet who told David

what God thought about his sin, 2 Samuel 12:1-14. David repented and did not have to die, but God's punishment of David was terrible just the same. Psalm 51 tells us David's thoughts before he was sure that Jehovah had forgiven him.

At first David confesses his own sin and his need of God's mercy. He speaks of his sin in three different words, as in Psalm 32. 5. In the law of Moses the sinner was both guilty and unclean. David prays here that God would wash him and make him clean, v. 2.

He confessed his evil and saw that his sin was against the Lord only. It is true that he had done great wrong to Bathsheba and her husband, but his sin was really against God. God had judged David to be guilty of sin. By confessing the sin he shows that God is just, v. 4.

This one sin was very great in David's eyes, but in verse 5 he confessed his sinful nature. Adam, the first man committed sin and passed on his sinful nature to all his children. David is not saying this to make his sin seem less important. When you confess a sin, do not try to make it look less by saying, "It's my nature" or "Everybody does the same thing" or "I could not help it." The way to get forgiveness is to call it SIN. God desires truth in the inner parts, v. 6. No one can deceive Him and He does not like us to try, Psalm 32:2.

Then David prayed for seven things from God.

1. He wanted to be washed pure white, v. 7. Hyssop is a common plant found in Bible lands. It was used to cleanse the leper, Leviticus 14:6.

2. Before he confessed his sin, he was very unhappy and had pain in his body, Psalm 32:3, 4. Here he asks that

God would give him back his joy and make him feel better, v. 8.

3. He asked the Lord not to look at his sins, but to take them away, v. 9.

4. He prayed for a clean heart and a new spirit, v. 10. God promised Israel a new heart and a new spirit, Ezekiel 36:26. When we are born again, all things become new, John 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

5. David prayed that God would not put him away or take away the Holy Spirit, v. 11. We know from the New Testament that the Holy Spirit will not leave a true child of God, but when we fall into sin, we certainly lose the joy of the Lord.

6. So David asked again for the joy of salvation, v. 12.

7. Then he prayed that God will hold him up by the Spirit, v. 12.

When Christ was glorified He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts. Before that, men were moved at certain times by the Holy Spirit, Judges 13:25. The Lord Jesus said to His disciples about the Holy Spirit, "He dwells with you and will be in you", John 14:17. As believers we do not need to pray that God will give us the Holy Spirit nor fear that He will take Him away.

When you are forgiven, you can serve the Lord. David promised that he would teach sinners, v. 13, and praise the Lord, vs. 14, 15. He understood that just giving an animal as a sacrifice on an altar would not please God, v. 16. This is the teaching of Asaph in Psalm 50. 7-15. What God really wants is true sorrow in the heart, v. 17. Beside teaching sinners and praising the Lord David prayed for the people of Jerusalem, v. 18. He shows his

true sorrow by these things. After that it was right to bring sacrifices to God, v. 19. Let no one suppose that God will forgive his sins because of any amount of money he may give. If we truly confess our sins, then our gifts will be accepted by the Lord.

Psalm 52

This psalm or instruction of David was written before he became king. Saul was very jealous of David's mighty acts. David had to flee and first he went to Ahimelech the priest, 1 Samuel 21:1. Doeg, a man from the land of Edom saw him and told Saul. Saul could not catch David, but he killed 85 priests. When David heard about this he was very sorry, 1 Samuel 22:9, 18, 22.

The men of Edom were the children of Esau, the brother of Jacob, Genesis 36:1. The name Edom is almost the same as Adam and speaks of the natural man without God. Esau himself is a picture of the man who lives for the things of this world, Genesis 25:29-34.

In this psalm the evil of the natural man is seen in his tongue. The natural man likes to say big things about himself, v. 1, also evil and deceitful things, v. 2. He loves these things because his heart is evil, vs. 3, 4, Matthew 12:34.

The righteous man will see God's judgment on the wicked who trusted in his riches, vs. 5-7. This does not mean that either the righteous man or the Lord would be happy when the sinner is judged, Isaiah 28:21. The righteous man sees himself like a green tree in the house of God. He will trust and praise the Lord with his tongue forever, vs. 8, 9.

The tongue is very important in the sight of God. In Psalm 51 we have the sinful man David confessing his sin to the Lord. In Psalm 52 we see a wicked man saying great things about himself and false things about others. James, the brother of the Lord, tells us to be careful with our tongues, James 3:1-12.

The believer is like a branch brought into a tree and receiving blessing, Romans 11:17. We are also like branches of the vine, John 15:1-5. The Lord Jesus Christ always said the right words at the right time. As we abide in Him and His power goes through us, we can use our tongues to praise the Lord and to tell others about Him.

Psalm 53

In Psalm 52 we had the natural man, but in Psalm 53 the wicked man who says there is no God. He is careful enough to say this only in his own heart. Today a few people get up and try to tell everybody that there is no God. They also attack the people of God like the wicked man in Psalm 53.

This psalm is also a Maskil, a psalm for instruction, as psalms 52, 54 and 55. The word Mahalath is used only in this psalm, and may refer to a musical instrument.

Psalm 53 is almost the same as Psalm 14 except verse 5 and the name used for God. In Psalm 14 the name Jehovah is found four times, God three times. In Psalm 53 God is named seven times. Psalm 14:5, 6 are a little different from Psalm 53:5.

A few people deny that there is a God. The Holy Spirit calls them corrupt or spoiled, v. 1, but God looks down on all men and finds that there is none that does good,

vs. 2, 3. They seem to have no knowledge and try to eat up God's people like bread, v. 4. God will surely judge them and make His people rejoice, vs. 5, 6.

If a person says there is no God, there is little value in trying to prove to him that there is. The best thing to do is to tell him what the Bible says and trust that the Holy Spirit will show him the truth.

Psalm 54

Psalm 54 is also on Neginoth (stringed instruments) as psalms 4, 6, 54, 55, 67 and 76. Musical instruments are given in the heading of a number of psalms, mostly in the first two books. We know very little about these musical instruments, but Neginoth were used more often than any other.

Psalm 54 was also written at the time when Saul was persecuting David. David and his men hid themselves in the woods and the Ziphites came and told Saul. Saul was thankful for their help and sent a large army to take David, 1 Samuel 23:19-25.

In our psalm David prays that God would save, judge, and hear him, vs. 1, 2, because strangers had risen up against him, v. 3. David knew God's plan to make him king and so knew that his enemies did not want the will of God, v. 3.

As soon as he prayed he was assured that God was with him and would reward evil to his enemies, vs. 4, 5. He promised to bring sacrifices and to praise the Lord, v. 6. He was so sure that the Lord would help him that he could already see his victory over his enemies, v. 7.

God saved David by sending Saul's enemies, the Philistines, against him. So Saul had to give up hunting David for a little while, 1 Samuel 23:27, 28.

Later on the Ziphites again went to Saul and told him that David was hiding in their country. This time David and two of his men went to the camp of Saul while his army was sleeping. David could have killed his enemy, but he would not do so. When Saul found out that David had spared his life, he confessed that he had done wrong. He let David go at that time, but David was still afraid of him, 1 Samuel 26:1, 8, 9, 21; 27:1.

God does not always deliver His people and many have had the honour of dying for Christ, Hebrews 11:35, Revelation 2:10. We should live for Christ as already dead with Him, Galatians 2:20. In all the problems of life we know He will hear and answer our prayers.

Psalm 55

In Psalm 55 we have David's prayer for help, vs. 1-8, his prayer against his enemy, vs. 9-15, and his trust in God, vs. 16-23.

His enemies were so strong that David was filled with fear, vs. 4, 5. He wished that he had wings like a bird so that he could fly away to the wild country, vs. 6-8. In time of trouble we often wish we could escape, but it might be God's will for us to stay and pray and see His hand working for us. Wild country may be a place where Satan can tempt us too, Mark 1:12, 13.

Instead of running away, David prayed that the Lord would destroy his enemies in the city. He asked God to mix up their tongues so that their plans would fail, vs.

9-11. God had mixed up the language of the people who built the tower of Babel, Genesis 11:7.

What hurt David most of all was a friend who turned false, vs. 12-14. If it were an enemy, he would be brave, but to think that his own friend would betray him! Was David thinking of Ahithophel? Ahithophel was David's counselor whose counsel was considered very highly by David. When Absalom, David's son tried to make himself king, Ahithophel left David and followed Absalom. David prayed that God would turn Ahithophel's counsel to foolishness. When Ahithophel's counsel was not followed, he went out and killed himself, 2 Samuel 15:12, 31; 16:23; 17:23. In Psalm 55 David speaks about his equal and his friend. David went to the house of God with him, vs. 13, 14. Have you ever trusted in a friend who later turned against you? The Lord Jesus Christ chose Judas as one of His disciples, but Judas turned against Him and betrayed Him, Psalm 41:9, John 13:18. In this psalm again David's experience makes us think of the Lord Jesus. When David prayed that God would judge his enemies as in verse 15 he is not like the Lord Jesus who prayed that His enemies might be forgiven, Luke 23:34. We know that God will judge the wicked, but our prayer as Christians should be for their salvation.

David promised to pray to God three times a day, vs. 16, 17. He was sure God would deliver him, v. 18. As for the wicked, they would not change their ways nor fear God, v. 19. The one who betrayed him broke his promise. His words were very nice, but there was war in his heart, v. 21. Both David and Peter tell us to put our care on the Lord, v. 22, 1 Peter 5:7. The wicked would soon be judged, but David would trust in God, v. 23. This gave

him more peace than the thought of flying away, v. 6, or praying for God's judgment on his enemies, v. 15. So it is with us, John 14:27, Romans 5:1.

Psalm 56

When David left home for fear of Saul, after a long time he lost hope and went to Achish, a king of the Philistines, the enemies of Israel. The servants of Achish knew him and told the king that he had killed many of their people. David was very much afraid and began to act as if he had lost his mind. Achish thought he was mad and David was able to escape to Adullam, 1 Samuel 21:10-15. David did not honour the Lord by putting his trust in the enemies of God. The world will laugh at us when we ask it for help. Still the Lord looks after His own and will hear our cry. David wrote Psalm 56 at this time and when he escaped he wrote Psalm 34.

In this psalm he prays to God and says that men are fighting against him every day, vs. 1, 2. But David puts his trust in God and so his fear is taken away, vs. 3, 4.

In the second part of the psalm David tells God how his enemies are planning to kill him, vs. 5, 6. He prays that God will throw them down, v. 7, and knows that God remembers all his troubles, v. 8. He knows that God is for him, v. 9, and so is not afraid of what man can do. Verses 10 and 11 are about the same as verse 4.

Now David praises God and says he will do what he promised, v. 12. Since God has saved him from death, he is sure that He will keep him from falling and help him to walk in the light of life, v. 13. We can say the same thing. God has saved us from our sins and will keep us from falling, Jude 24. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Light

of the world and if we follow Him, we will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life, v. 13, John 8:12.

Psalm 57

When David escaped from the Philistines, he went to live at Adullam, 1 Samuel 22:1. His enemies were still trying to destroy him and he wrote Psalm 57, another psalm of prayer and praise.

He calls to God for mercy. As a little bird keeps under the wings of its mother, so David wanted to stay close to God until his troubles passed over, v. 1. He knew that God was faithful and would send help from heaven, vs. 2, 3. Still David was in a place of danger. His enemies were like wild animals whose teeth were like instruments of war. God would get glory by saving His servant, vs. 4, 5.

They tried to catch David in a snare like an animal. They made a hole for him to fall in, but they fell into it themselves, v. 6. David praises the Lord in his heart, v. 7, and with musical instruments, v. 8. He got up early in the morning to praise the Lord and promises to praise Him among all peoples, vs. 9, 10.

Verse 11 is the same as verse 5. A verse in a psalm or song which is the same as another verse is called a refrain. This is very common in modern songs. In Psalm 56 the refrain is seen in verse 4 and verses 10 and 11.

David wants God to be glorified above the heavens and above the earth. The Lord Jesus Christ when He rose from the dead passed through the heavens, Hebrews 4:14, and God has given Him a place above every other being, Ephesians 1:20, 21. We too have been delivered

from sin and like David should try to spread God's glory through all the earth by telling men about His Son.

Psalm 58

Psalms 57, 58, 59 and 75 are all marked Al-taschith, meaning, "do not destroy." In this psalm David speaks to the judges of Israel. God has told men to govern themselves, Genesis 9:6, and the judges of this world should do right. Specially in Israel God expected righteous judgment because He had given His laws to that nation. Here David describes their words, v. 1, their hearts and hands, v. 2, all evil. They were born with an evil nature. They are like serpents that no one can control, vs. 4, 5.

The end of these evil judges is described, vs. 6-9. Though they are like wild animals, David calls upon God to break their teeth. He prays that they may quickly pass away, v. 7. The snail, v. 8, is a very small animal which moves so slowly that anyone can step on it and kill it. David wants God to take these evil judges away quickly like a baby that is born too soon and dies. Thorns, v. 9, are short, sharp little branches which burn very quickly. All these things are pictures of God's quick judgment.

When God takes these evil judges out of the land, the righteous will be glad. Putting one's feet in the blood of an enemy is a picture of victory. When God is the Judge in the earth, there will surely be a reward for the righteous, vs. 10, 11.

As Christians we are told to obey the government. There may be evil judges in the land, but it is not part of our work to make this world any better. We should give people the gospel and if they believe they will be saved

forever. God is a righteous Judge and some day everything will be made right.

Psalm 59

When David killed Goliath, Saul as a reward gave him his daughter Michael for his wife. When the people began to praise David for winning greater victories than Saul, Saul became unhappy and jealous. He tried to kill David, but David slipped away to his own house. Saul sent men to wait at David's house and kill him in the morning. David's wife Michael helped him to escape through a window and she put an image in David's bed and when the men came to kill him, said David is sick. Saul was angry with Michael, but he could not harm her because she was his daughter. David escaped, but he knew he was still in great danger. This story is found in 1 Samuel 19:11-17 and David's feelings at this time are explained in Psalm 59.

In verses land 2 he prays four times for deliverance. In verses 3 and 4 he does not say he is perfect, but certainly has not done anything which would give his enemies just cause for trying to kill him. He calls upon the Lord to judge the Gentiles and all wicked men, v. 5. We know that Saul had close to him at least one Gentile who was willing to kill righteous Israelites. Doeg was an Edomite, Psalm 52, and there may have been more.

David says these wicked men are like wild dogs, running around the city, looking for food. They think God will not hear them, vs. 6, 7. The Lord laughs at the nations who think they can overthrow His strength. David is sure that God will give him victory over his enemies, vs. 8-10, Psalm 2:4.

He prays that God would punish them and not kill them. This is so that the people of Israel would not quickly forget and also so that men would learn the lesson and perhaps repent. However they continue to curse and lie and God will have to judge them, vs. 12, 13.

Like dogs they come back in the evening and grumble if they do not get enough, vs. 14, 15. David's enemies would not be satisfied until they killed him, but David will sing of God's power and love, vs. 16, 17. God's power means that He is able to deliver us in any time of trouble. His love means that He is willing to act for us. These dogs seem to come in the evening, vs. 6, 14, but David is sure the Lord will deliver him and that he will sing praise in the morning, v. 16. Sorrow may last all night, but joy comes in the morning for the believer, Psalm 30:5.

In many of these psalms we have David praying for judgment on his enemies and in some of them God laughing at sinners. You should remember that God's righteousness demands that He should judge sinners, but He will do it with sorrow. Judgment is His strange work, Isaiah 28:21, Lamentations 3:33, but He delights in love, Micah 7:18.

Psalm 60

In the heading of Psalm 60 Shushan Eduth may be a musical instrument. This song is a "Miktam." So are psalms 16 and 56-59. The meaning of this word is not certain, but these five psalms, 56-60, are all prayers of David in time of trouble. We do not know just when this psalm was written. After David became king, he fought many wars against the enemies of Israel. See 2 Samuel

8:3-6. The last part of this psalm, vs. 6-12, is almost the same as Psalm 108:7-13.

In the war the enemy at first seemed to be too strong for Israel. David explained this as a sign of God's anger. He punished His people by showing them hard things, vs. 1-3. Then He raised a banner or flag for those who feared Him. So David was sure that He would defend His loved ones, vs. 4, 5.

Then God speaks in holiness, joy and power. He is in complete control of all Israel, vs. 6, 7, as well as the nations around it, v. 8. We can be sure that "God is still on the throne, and He will take care of His own."

When David remembers God's power, he knows that God will lead him into the strong city and give victory over the Edomites. Israel will trust in God and not in man, vs. 9-12. This is a lesson which we too must always be learning. We are likely at all times to trust in our own strength or to look to others for help. God wants our love and trust for Himself alone.

Psalm 61

This psalm of David's was to the chief musician on a stringed instrument like Psalm 54. It is another prayer of David when he was king of Israel.

He cried to God in time of great trouble as if he were very far away at the end of the earth. He prays that God would lead him to the Rock. This Rock is the Lord Himself, Psalm 18:31; 28:1; 94:22. For us that Rock is Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:4. In the past God had been David's refuge, and for the future he wanted to remain in God's tent and rest under His wings, Psalm 57:1.

God had heard David's promises and given him an inheritance, v-5. He believed that God would give him long life, v. 6, and that he would be before God forever, v. 7, Psalm 23:6. With these wonderful things in mind no wonder David looked forward to singing God's praise forever, v. 8.

These words were true of David and of us and of all God's saints. They are specially true of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's chosen King who will reign forever.

Psalm 62

This psalm of David is addressed to Jeduthun as psalms 39 and 77. Psalms 61, 62 and 63 were written by David when he was king. Even on the throne David had a great deal of trouble. The first word of verses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9 in the Hebrew language is only or alone. David's trust is only in God and wicked men seem to be interested only in evil.

David tells of his own experience, vs. 1-4. He found that God gives salvation, v. 1, and He is salvation, v. 2. His enemies are planning evil against him, but they will be like a poorly built wall which is about to fall down, v. 3. David is on the Rock, vs. 2, 6, 7. His enemies were planning nothing less than to get him off the throne, v. 4. They acted as if they were David's friends, but he knew their hearts.

David was always ready to tell people about God's goodness to him, vs. 5-8. Verses 5 and 6 are almost the same as verses 1 and 2. David knew the salvation of God and so could tell the people to trust in Him and pray to Him, v. 8.

In the last part of the psalm David teaches his people not to trust in man, nor riches, vs. 9, 10, but only in God, vs. 11, 12. Balances, v. 9, are used to weigh things and the picture here is of the wicked, whether great or small, who are weighed in God's balance and found wanting, like king Belshazzar, Daniel 5:27. Even if a person gets rich honestly, he should not put his trust in riches, but in the living God, 1 Timothy 6:17. We all should trust in the God of power, v. 11, and love, v. 12, because He will reward every man according to his work. Sinners will be punished for their sins and believers will be given a crown for faithful service when the Lord comes, 2 Timothy 4:8.

Psalms 63

When David's son Absalom tried to become king, David quickly fled from Jerusalem to the wild country of Judah, 2 Samuel 15:14, 28. A little later he crossed the river Jordan to the east side, 2 Samuel 17:16, 22. Psalms 3 and 7 come from this same time. Here the king, though rejected by his people, still trusts in God.

In the wild country of Judah the land is very dry, but David was longing for God, v. 1. He wanted to get back to the tent of God in Jerusalem and see His power and glory again, v. 2. Still he would praise God for His love which he felt was better than life itself, vs. 3, 4. In the wild country David did not have the food he was used to nor a comfortable bed. Still he could praise God, vs. 5, 6. He had been safe under the wings of God who had helped him so often before and would no doubt deliver him again this time, vs. 7, 8.

He was sure that his enemies would be killed in the war, eaten by wild animals, and go down to the place of the

dead, vs. 9, 10. David the king would rejoice in God and all those who follow God as well, v. 11.

When we cannot get the usual comforts of home, we should rejoice in the Lord, Philippians 4:4, Psalm 37:4. When we cannot sleep at night, we can pray. When our enemies try to harm us, we can trust in the Lord. These are the lessons of Psalm 63.

Psalm 64

We are not told when this psalm was written, but David is still being attacked by his enemies. He asks God to hide him from their secret counsel, vs. 1, 2. The Lord Jesus knew what His enemies were going to do, but put His trust in God, 1 Peter 2:23.

David's enemies were ready to shoot at him with their words, vs. 3, 4. People may accuse you falsely or say things to do you harm. Like David God will take care of you. These men made their plans carefully, vs. 5, 6. Remember that the Pharisees made a plan to catch the Lord Jesus in His words, Matthew 22:15.

David knew that God would shoot at his enemies. One word from God will do more than all the words of evil men, v. 7. God's enemies in the last days will be put to death by the sharp sword of the Son of God, His Word, Revelation 19:13, 15, 21.

In our psalm when God brings evil men to justice, it will be a lesson to others and the righteous will be glad, vs. 8-10. We must remember that God is still in control and will surely care for His people.

Psalm 65

This is the first of four psalms which are also called songs, like psalms 30 and 48. Psalms 65 and 68 were written by David.

Psalm 65 is a song of praise to the great God who is overall. In the future all men will come to God to praise Him because He answers prayer, vs. 1, 2. If His people sin, God will forgive them, v. 3. This could be true of anybody in the world, but there is a special blessing for those who are chosen to live near the temple of God which David planned to build. God is the only ground of hope for all men. He will show the nations that Israel is the people of God, vs. 4, 5.

God's greatness is seen in the present time by His power in the natural world, vs. 6-13. He has established the mountains, v. 6, can control the waves of the sea, v. 7. People all over the world can understand God's power in nature every day, v. 8. We saw in Psalm 19:4 that this message goes out through all the world. God sends rain and food to all men, vs. 9, 10. When they gather their food at the end of the year, everybody should be happy and praise God. Paul tried to give this message to the men of Lystra in Acts 14:17. One of the sins of the Gentiles is that they are not thankful to God for all His blessings, Romans 1:21.

This psalm teaches us that we should give thanks to God for food and every blessing. It also tells us of the time when people everywhere will bow down to Jehovah, the only true God. People who die today, if they die in their sins, will not come into this future blessing. For this reason God has commanded us to tell them about His

love as seen in Christ. If we obey this command, we can know now the joy of being near Him.

Psalm 66

We do not know who wrote this psalm or when it was written. God had delivered the nation of Israel from some terrible trial and the writer of the psalm calls on all nations to praise God.

First he calls on all the earth to sing God's praise, vs. 1, 2. Because of God's great power all His enemies will be overcome and everyone should worship Him, vs. 3, 4.

He asks the people to consider God's power as seen in the history of Israel, vs. 5-7. He turned the Red Sea into dry land, Exodus 14:21. When they crossed the river Jordan the Lord held back the waters, Joshua 3:14-16. These things were long ago, but God was still ruling by His power over all the nations, v. 7. God has warned these nations not to rebel, but His warning will not be received, Psalm 2:2.

The writer again told the people to bless God, v. 8, because He has delivered Israel, v. 9. True, He put His people to the test, vs. 10, 11. At first their enemies gained a victory and they went through a time of trial like fire and water, but God brought them through it all, v. 12.

During this trial the writer promised to bring offerings to God if He delivered them. He may have been a king of Israel and if so could act for the nation. He is now ready to bring these sacrifices, vs. 13-15.

Then he asks all who fear God to listen while he tells what God has done for him, v. 16. He simply prayed to God and gave praise to Him, v. 17. He knew that if there

was sin in his heart, God would not hear, v. 18. But he can praise God for answering prayer and delivering his people, vs. 19, 20.

Most of the psalms are about David, the saints, or the people of Israel. In Psalms 66 and 67 we see God's interest in all the nations of the world. In this psalm the nations are called upon to praise God because of His great power. God showed His power to Israel, not for their benefit only, but so that all people might learn to fear Him. We too have been saved for this purpose, that we might tell others about the power and love of our God.

Psalm 67

We do not know who wrote Psalm 67. In it the Holy Spirit calls on the people of the world to praise God.

First Israel asks for God's blessing in the same way that the high priest prayed for them, Numbers 6:24, 25.

However they asked for this blessing so that God's way and God's salvation might be known among all nations, v. 2. Their desire is that others might praise God also, v. 3.

God as a Shepherd will guide and govern all nations as He did Israel. This will give the people great joy and they should praise God, vs. 4, 5.

The time is coming when God will set His King on His holy hill in Zion, Psalm 2:6. Then all the nations of the earth will be governed righteously and well. They will rejoice in the blessing of God. The earth will bring forth plenty of food, v. 6, Isaiah 35:1. God will bless Israel and even people far off at the ends of the earth will know and fear Israel's God, v. 7.

Even in Old Testament days it was God's will that the peoples of the world should hear of His power and goodness. Israel failed to spread that message. Today we have far greater knowledge of the love of God and our command is to preach the Gospel to every creature. We should be doing this until the Lord comes back again.

Psalm 68

This psalm was written by David, but we are not told when. However it would seem to be a song sung by the Levites as they brought the ark of God to Jerusalem. King Saul years before had departed from God. The ark was a wooden box with gold on the outside, a picture of the presence of God. Saul supposed that by taking the ark into the battle God would surely give them victory. But Saul had not judged his own sins and God would not answer his prayer. The Philistines gained the victory and went off with the ark of God. Then God judged the Philistines and they sent it back to Israel. When David became king, he wanted to bring the ark of God to its rightful place, 1 Chronicles 15. Some of the Levites carried the ark and others sang hymns. David himself was clothed with a long robe. After taking six steps everybody stopped while a sacrifice was made, 1 Chronicles 15:25-28; 2 Samuel 6:13.

David wrote Psalm 68 for the Levites to sing as they brought the ark of God up to Jerusalem. He used words and verses from early parts of the Bible so that the people would remember God's blessing to Israel in years past. He used seven different names of God in this psalm:

· God, v. 1

- Jah, the Lord, v. 4.
- The Almighty, v. 14.
- Jehovah, the LORD, v. 16.
- The Lord God, v. 18.
- The Lord, v. 19.
- Jehovah or GOD, the Lord, v. 20.

When the ark was first made, the people of Israel were in the wilderness. When the Levites picked up the ark to move forward, Moses asked the Lord to rise up and scatter His enemies, Numbers 10:35. David starts off with this same prayer in verse 1. The effect of God's presence is to drive away the wicked and give joy to the righteous, vs. 2, 3.

As the people start marching to Jerusalem, the Levites start to sing in praise of Jah, who is Jehovah, v. 4. The presence of God is a blessing to the poor, v. 5, to those who are alone or in prison, v. 6. The people of Israel had been slaves in Egypt, but God brought them forth into the wilderness. At Mount Sinai when the Law was given, the earth itself shook, vs. 7, 8, Exodus 19:18. He brought them into the land of Canaan and gave them plenty of rain for their crops, vs. 9, 10, Deuteronomy 11:11, 12.

As the Levites and the people continue on their journey to Jerusalem, David in this psalm reminded them of victory which God had given to the nation when they first entered the land of Canaan. There were seven kings in Canaan, Deuteronomy 7:1. The Lord scattered them and gave victory to His people, vs. 11-14. Even the women had part in this, vs. 12, 13. For example Rahab, Joshua 2, and Deborah, Judges 4:4. In the spiritual

struggle today with Satan and his armies Christian women have a most important part in the victory, by prayer. They will surely receive a great reward.

Jerusalem is on a hill or small mountain and at last the people as they march can see the hill of God not far away, vs. 15, 16. There are many hills in the land of Israel much higher than Mount Zion. Verse 16 suggests that maybe they would be jealous because God had chosen this mountain for His temple, for the ark of God.

Then David brings to mind the story of Deborah and Barak, vs. 17, 18. Sisera, the captain of the Canaanite army had 900 chariots of iron, Judges 4:3. Deborah was a woman, but when there was no man to teach the people the Law of God, she did it. She called on Barak to lead Israel to victory and the Lord was with him. When the Canaanites were beaten, Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise, Judges 5. Barak by God's strength had delivered the Israelites who were captives of Canaan and made the Canaanites captives instead, Judges 5:12. Here in Psalm 68 David shows that God's power was greater than the power of the enemy, v. 17. Barak led away the captives and also got many useful things as gifts for the people, v. 18.

At last the ark arrives and the Levites set it down in the right place. The Lord had given them strength, v. 19, and they know that He will save them from death, v. 20. He will give victory to His people and bring them back to their own land, vs. 21-23.

When the ark is finally at rest in the sanctuary, v. 24, the Levites sing and play on their instruments, v. 25. The tribes take their place round about, v. 27. They look forward to the time when kings will bring gifts to the

temple at Jerusalem, v. 29. If any refuse, or still want war they will be overcome, vs. 30, 31. Indeed the kingdoms of the earth will please God, vs. 32-35, and the great final cry will be "Blessed be God." In these last verses David and the singers are looking forward to the time when Christ will reign in this world. All men will serve God at that time.

So we see that this psalm was written for the day when they brought the ark up to Jerusalem. David by the Spirit of God looked back into the history of Israel. He also looked forward to the glorious future of Israel.

The Holy Spirit also took verse 18 as referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, Ephesians 4:8. The Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead and ascended on high. He had overcome Satan and all his armies. He gave gifts to the church, apostles, teachers, preachers. We who are now members of His body were rebel sinners before we were saved. Now the Lord God dwells within us. These gifts are so that the body of Christ might be built up, so that each one may become a man of God, not carried away by new teaching but becoming more and more like Christ, Ephesians 4:12-16. Israel in the future will be blessed when the Lord Jesus Christ rules as their King. We will be blessed as His bride at His right hand.

Psalm 69

This psalm, like Psalm 45, was upon the lilies. This is the name of a common flower, but here it may mean a musical instrument. Psalm 45 speaks of the glory of Christ and the bride of Christ. Psalm 69 speaks of His sufferings. David as he wrote this psalm, prayed to God to deliver him from the hands of his enemies. He wrote by the Spirit of God and was led to speak of the

sufferings of Christ. Many of the verses in this psalm make us think of the feelings and thoughts of our Lord Jesus Christ as He suffered at the hands of men. In Psalm 22 we see something of how Christ suffered in His body, Psalm 22:14-17. In this psalm it is the shame which men heaped upon Him, vs. 6, 7, 9, 10, 19, 20.

First we have David's trouble, vs. 1-5. He calls upon God to save him because he feels like a man standing in deep water. The water is getting deeper and he is not able to get out, vs. 1, 2. He is tired of crying and weeping, v. 3. He has many strong enemies, but he has not done anything to make them hate him. He is even willing to pay back what he did not take, v. 4. Still he does not say that he has no sin before God, v. 5.

The Lord Jesus Christ prayed to God His Father in the garden of Gethsemane, Matthew 26:39, 42, 44, Hebrews 5:7. He certainly had done nothing to make His enemies hate Him. He was willing to pay the debt of sins He had never committed. He died for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, 1 Peter 3:18. He had no sin to confess as David did, v. 5, but was willing to take on ours, 2 Corinthians 5:21. What a wonderful Saviour!

David was put to shame, but prayed that his friends would not be humbled on his account, v. 6. He was put to shame because he trusted in God, v. 7. His own family rejected him, v. 8. He had a strong desire to be in God's house, but those who would not honour God put David to shame as well, v. 9. David showed his sorrow by weeping and going without food and wearing rough clothing. This just made them laugh at him all the more, specially people who had drunk too much wine, v. 12. When the Lord Jesus Christ was on the cross, people laughed at

Him because He said He was the Son of God, Matthew 27:43. His disciples were put to shame and ran away from Him, Matthew 26:56.

Although men put David to all this shame, he continued to pray to God, vs. 13-15. His troubles still seem like deep waters as in verses 1 and 2. He felt as if he were in a great hole in the earth which might close in on top of him and he would be buried alive like Korah, Numbers 16:33. He asks Jehovah because of His mercy to deliver him quickly, vs. 16, 17. He was really in trouble.

The Lord Jesus Christ prayed if it was possible that the cup might pass from Him, Matthew 26:39. God heard Him and saved Him by bringing Him out of death on the third day. This was the greatest possible victory over His enemies.

The lowest point in David's experience at the time of his greatest trouble is described in verses 19-21. God knew all about his shame and his enemies, v. 19. Their reproach broke his heart. He looked for someone to have pity on him, but there were none, v. 20. They gave him poison and something bitter to drink.

When the Lord Jesus Christ was about to be crucified, they offered Him bitter wine, but He would not drink it, Matthew 27:34. Even when He was hanging on the cross, His desire was that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. All His life this was His purpose, Matthew 5. 17. On the cross when everything else was finished, to fulfil the Scripture in Psalm 69:21 He said, "I thirst." The people gave Him the bitter vinegar to drink, John 19:28, 29.

On the cross we see the Lord Jesus Christ put to shame by man and suffering for our sins at the hand of God.

The Lord's desire was to glorify God, fulfil the Scriptures and save His people from their sins. How wonderful to see the words of the psalms fulfilled by our Lord!

But what about the last part of the psalm? Here David prays for vengeance on his enemies, vs. 22-28. He prays that God would judge them because they persecuted him. He prays that they might be put to death, v. 28.

All this is quite different from the way the Lord Jesus Christ prayed on the cross. He prayed that the Father would forgive them because they did not know what they were doing, Luke 23:34. It is true that God will judge those who reject His Son, even the people of Israel. The apostle Paul uses verses 22 and 23 when speaking about God's judgment on Israel in Romans 11:9, 10. Peter used verse 25 when speaking about Judas in Acts 1:20. But even those who have rejected Christ for a long time, if they are still alive, they can come to God for forgiveness. If they die in their sins, they cannot come, John 8:21, 24.

In the rest of the psalm David first praises God for delivering him, vs. 29-31. God hears the prayers of His people, vs. 32, 33. Some day everything will praise the Lord, v. 34. Israel will be rebuilt and those who love God's name will dwell there, vs. 35, 36.

The Lord Jesus Christ will lead His people in praising God, Psalm 22:22, Hebrews 2:12. This psalm shows man's terrible mistake in rejecting God's chosen One. It also shows God's righteousness in judging those who will not repent, and His grace toward men who accept Christ as Saviour. We who believe in Christ love the Bible. We can see in this psalm many verses which

explain the thoughts and feelings of the Lord when He suffered for our sake.

More about Jesus would I know,
More of His grace to others show;
More of His saving fullness see,
More of His love who died for me.

—E. E. Hewitt

Psalm 70

Israel had five different offerings to bring to Jehovah: the burnt offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the sin offering and the trespass offering, Leviticus 1-5. In all these offerings we see pictures of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the burnt offering the whole animal was burnt on the altar as a sacrifice to Jehovah. In Psalm 40:7, 8 we hear the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ who gave Himself up wholly to the will of God. In the trespass offering the offerer had to give more than what he had failed to give the first time, Leviticus 5:16. Our Lord Jesus Christ paid the debt for us, not for anything wrong which He had done. He paid back what He had not taken, Psalm 69:4. For this reason Psalm 69 suggests the death of Christ as the trespass offering.

Psalm 70 may have been used with one of the offerings, Leviticus 2:2. It has almost the same heading as Psalm 38. All these psalms are prayers of David for deliverance from his enemies.

Psalm 70 is almost the same as the last five verses of Psalm 40, except that the name God is used instead of LORD. It is also something the same as parts of Psalm 69.

David prays for help quickly, Psalm 70:1, 5; 69:17. He prays that his enemies would be judged, Psalm 70:2, 3; 69:25, 26. He prays for his friends, Psalm 70:4; 69:6.

God will save us from our enemies in answer to prayer, but all these blessings come through the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross.

Psalm 71

Psalm 71 like psalms 1, 10, 33, 43 and many others in the fourth and fifth book of the Psalms has no heading. Even if we do not know the writer, we can be sure it came from the Holy Spirit. It is a prayer for a believer who has grown old.

First he prays for deliverance from Jehovah in righteousness, vs. 1, 2. He wants God's salvation from the hand of the wicked man, vs. 3, 4.

The writer has trusted in Jehovah since his youth. God has looked after him ever since he was born, vs. 5, 6. Some were surprised that he had lived so long, but he says this is in the strength of the Lord, v. 7, and he wants to praise Him all day long. So he asks God not to leave him now that he is old, v. 9. His enemies think that God has left him and so they can take him, vs. 10, 11. But he prays again that his enemies might be overcome, vs. 12, 13. The writer knows that God will answer his prayer and he will praise Him more and more all the day, vs. 14, 15. He would go on in the strength of the Lord and give Him all the glory, v. 16.

He has learned the way of God from early years and has often told others about God's wonderful works, v. 17. Now that he is old he asks God's help in telling young people about His power and righteousness, vs. 18, 19.

He believes that God will bring him up again from death, v. 20. He will praise God with musical instruments, v. 22, with his lips, his soul, and his tongue, vs. 23, 24.

We do not know the name of this old believer, but we can all count on God's blessing until the end of life. When life is over we will be able to praise Him better than ever in heaven. This psalm also speaks of the nation of Israel. The Lord richly blessed that nation when it was young. The Bible tells us that Israel still has a great future when the Lord comes back again.

Psalm 72

Psalm 72 is a psalm of or for Solomon. The last verse suggests that it was a prayer of David. The psalm certainly looks forward to Christ, the coming King.

The first four verses could be a prayer for Solomon: that he might judge the people in righteousness; that there might be peace and plenty in his day, v. 3, and that he would deliver poor people from their enemies, v. 4.

Jerusalem was very rich in the time of Solomon, 1 Kings 10:27, but still there were poor people who needed help, vs. 2, 4.

The complete fulfilment of the rest of the psalm will be seen only when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to reign as King. His reign shall last as long as the sun and moon, vs. 5, 7, 17. Solomon reigned for 40 years, 1 Kings 11:42. Christ will reign in perfect righteousness and perfect peace, v. 7. Solomon himself fell into great sin, 1 Kings 11:1, 6-8. As a result he had strife in his kingdom and not perfect peace, 1 Kings 11:11, 14, 23, 26.

Christ's kingdom will be over the whole world, vs. 8-11. Solomon reigned over many kingdoms, 1 Kings 4:21, but

really only over a small part of the world. When the Lord Jesus comes to reign, there will be plenty of food for everyone, v. 16. God has given the Lord Jesus a name which is above every name, Philippians 2:9. It will continue forever, v. 17. Truly in Christ we have One greater than Solomon, Matthew 12:42.

No wonder David could call on men to bless the Lord God, vs. 18, 19! David knew from God's promise that the kingdom of his Son would last forever, 2 Samuel 7:16. He could pray for nothing more than the coming of the Lord and blessing for Israel and the whole world. So this psalm is the END of his prayers, v. 20. We can look forward to God's new creation after this world has been destroyed. Other psalms and prayers of David are found in the other books of the Psalms. Verses 19 and 20 also mark the end of Book 2 and Psalm 73 begins the third book of the Psalms.

Book 3

Psalm 73

There are seventeen psalms in the third book. Eleven of these are by Asaph, one each by Heman, Ethan, and David. Four are for the sons of Korah including one (88) written by Heman. Who was Asaph? He was the son of Berachiah, a Levite, one of those set over the service of song by David, 1 Chronicles 6:31, 39. With Heman and Ethan, Asaph was appointed by the Levites to play the musical instruments, 1 Chronicles 15:16, 17. Of these Asaph became the chief, 16:4-7. His sons also shared in this service, 25:1. Asaph was one of those who sang and played a musical instrument at the time that Solomon opened the temple of Jehovah, 2 Chronicles 5:12.

We have already studied one psalm of Asaph, 50. Herein Psalm 73 Asaph faces a problem: Why do wicked men seem to succeed in this world? He knew that God was good to the pure in heart and punished the wicked. When he saw wicked men getting rich, he was filled with envy and wondered if God had changed, vs. 1-3. These men seemed to have no trouble, vs. 4, 5. They became proud and fat, vs. 6, 7. They even talked against God, vs. 8, 9.

The common people see these wicked men getting rich and they begin to wonder too, vs. 10, 11. Even Asaph thought that perhaps he had been keeping himself clean from sin without any benefit to himself, vs. 13, 14.

He knew he should not say this to others, v. 15, but could not understand it at all, v. 16. Then he went into the presence of God. There he learned again that the

judgment of the wicked is still in the future, vs. 17, 18. When the time comes, they will be destroyed very suddenly, vs. 19, 20.

Then Asaph realized how foolish he had been, like an animal, vs. 21, 22. His hope in God was now strong again. He was sure that God would guide him and take him home to glory, vs. 23, 24. He might not have much in this world, but he had God in heaven, vs. 25, 26. In the last two verses he says again that those who are far from God shall be judged, but he wants to stay close at God's side, vs. 27, 28.

There is no promise in the New Testament that Christians will be rich in this world. Some Christians have a problem because they take for themselves God's promises given to Israel in the Old Testament. We should not be surprised when the wicked become rich in this world. By serving the Lord we can have great riches in the next world. Anyway all our problems should be brought to God. When we remember that He is on the throne, we will know that everything will finally turn out right.

Psalm 74

This is a Maskil or "instruction" like psalms 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 78, 88, 89, 142. In the heading of the psalms the word "of" Asaph could mean "for" Asaph. We do not know who wrote some of the psalms, but we can be sure that they are all inspired by God.

In many of the psalms we have seen wicked enemies attacking God's people from outside. In Psalm 74 the enemy is inside. The word sanctuary, verses 3 and 7,

means the temple, 1 Chronicles 22:19. The enemy came in to destroy and burn.

Asaph himself saw David gather materials and he saw Solomon build the temple of Jehovah in all its beauty. Why then did he write this psalm about men destroying it?

The first two verses give us Asaph's prayer that God would remember His people. The nation was going through some time of great trouble and it seemed that God had cast them off every day. The words "forever", vs. 1, 10, and "perpetual", v. 3, mean day by day.

As Asaph thought about these terrible things, the Spirit of God gave him a vision of what would happen to this same beautiful temple later on. Asaph was called a seer or prophet, 2 Chronicles 29:30. Perhaps the people were trying to comfort themselves in the thought that they had God's temple and so He would not punish them. In the days of the Lord Jesus Christ the disciples showed Him their temple, but the Lord told them that it would be completely destroyed, Matthew 24:1, 2.

The temple of Solomon was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings 25:8, 9, Psalm 74:3-8. God's enemies roared in the place which should have been for quiet worship. They set up their own signs, v. 4. They cut down the beautiful wood, vs. 5, 6, 1 Kings 6:29. They burned the temple in Jerusalem and all the buildings in the land where the people gathered together to worship God.

Asaph could not believe that the enemy would triumph forever, but there was no prophet of God to tell him how long it would be, vs. 9-11. He got comfort in remembering God's power in old times, vs. 12-14. God

saved the people of Israel by dividing the sea, Exodus 14:16. At the same time God destroyed the Egyptians, Exodus 14:27. Leviathan or the crocodile was a picture of Egypt. Eating it means complete victory as in Numbers 14:9. Asaph also thought of God's power in controlling day and night, v. 16, and summer and winter, v. 17.

So he asks God again to remember His people, vs. 18, 2, and not to leave them to their enemies like a bird attacked by wild animals, v. 19. It is GOD'S name which wicked men were laughing at. Asaph rightly expected God to defend His own name and His own people.

So we see in this psalm a time of great trouble. The psalmist asks God to remember His covenant and deliver His own. He was carried by the Holy Spirit beyond the problem of that day to the much greater difficulty when the temple would be destroyed. If God could give His people comfort and deliverance at such a time, He can surely help us in our trials day by day.

Psalm 75

The heading of this psalm is partly like the heading of psalms 57-59. This is also called a song of Asaph. Here the singers give thanks to God because of His great works, v. 1. God answers by promising to judge righteously, v. 2. Even when everything seems to be going wrong God is in control, v. 3. He tells the proud to keep humble, vs. 4, 5.

The writer explains further that God alone can raise a man up to a higher position, vs. 6, 7. It is also the Lord who will pour out judgment like wine on the wicked, v. 8. After the terrible times which Asaph had seen in Psalm

74, it is good to hear him rejoicing in the Lord, v. 9. In Psalm 73 he thought that the wicked would succeed in this world, but in Psalm 75:10 he sees the wicked cut off and the righteous exalted. We must keep our eyes on the Lord and remember that in the end everything will be right.

Psalm 76

In Psalm 76 we see that God is still in control. The city of Jerusalem on Mount Zion was in the hands of the enemy in Psalm 74 and God seemed far away. In Psalm 75:1 we see that His Name is near. In Psalm 76:1 His Name is great. God is again dwelling in Mount Zion, v. 2, having broken the enemies' instruments of war, v. 3.

Mount Zion is more glorious because of the presence of Jehovah, v. 4. God had overcome the bravest enemies and put them to sleep, vs. 5, 6. Asaph may be looking back to the day when God destroyed the armies of Egypt, Exodus 15:1, 21. Later on the Assyrian army came to Jerusalem to destroy it. King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah prayed to God and the Assyrian army was destroyed, 2 Kings 19:34, 35, Isaiah 37:35, 36. No doubt the psalm also looks forward to the great battle of the last days, Revelation 20:9.

We can always say men should fear God. When He becomes angry, no one can stand before Him, v. 7, Psalm 2:5. God's judgment is to save those who have been persecuted by the wicked, vs. 8, 9.

In verse 10 we see that even the wrath of man will turn out to the glory of God. For example, Pharaoh refused to obey God and persecuted His people. God remained in complete control, Exodus 9:14, 16, 29. The king of

Assyria came up against Jerusalem and raised himself up against Jehovah. God was in complete control, Isaiah 37:23, 29. Perhaps this psalm was a help to Hezekiah and Isaiah when they were in great danger. We can remember in times of trouble that God is on the throne and in complete control of the whole world. The day of judgment may be nearer than we think.

Asaph tells believers to bring their gifts to God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, vs. 11, 12. This is a message for us too.

And I have brought to thee, down from My home above,
Salvation full and free, My pardon and My love;
I bring, I bring rich gifts to thee,
What hast thou brought to Me?

—Frances R. Havergal

Psalm 77

This is the last of the three psalms to the chief musician, to Jeduthun. The others are psalms 39 and 62, both written by David. Jeduthun is named with Heman and Asaph, 2 Chronicles 5:12. This psalm is a prayer of Asaph in time of trouble. Day and night he cried to God, but received no comfort, vs. 1, 2. He thought about God, but was so troubled he could not sleep or speak, vs. 3, 4.

When he remembered how God helped him in early years, it was all the worse, vs. 5, 6. He asked himself six questions wondering if God would ever show him mercy, vs. 7-9. If God really changed, v. 10, it would be a great sorrow for all men. But He does not change, Malachi 3:6. The Lord Jesus Christ is always the same, Hebrews 13:8.

When Asaph considers God's works of old, he gets comfort. God's ways are holy and we can understand His greatness in the sanctuary, v. 13. Asaph had learned before that this is the place to find the answers to the problems of life, Psalm 73:17. Now he learns that God is a God of wonders, v. 14. He had redeemed Israel, v. 15. God is the God of nature: the waters, v. 16, the skies, v. 17, the earth, v. 18, the sea, v. 19. Best of all in the wilderness He led His people like sheep, v. 20.

We can learn a lesson from each part of this psalm. Even in time of great trouble when God does not seem to hear our prayers, we can be sure that He will never forget or change. When we look back to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, we can never doubt God's love to us. He will surely lead us all the way.

Psalm 78

In this Maskil Asaph gives instruction to all who will hear. He goes back into the history of Israel to show that when the people followed God, they were blessed.

In the first eleven verses he gives his reason for writing this psalm. He calls on the people to listen, v. 1, while he teaches them by parable, vs. 2, 3. This means that he will explain what the people perhaps did not understand. We have seen this before in Psalm 49:4. The Lord Jesus also taught in parables, Matthew 13:35. These lessons should be passed on to the children, v. 4, Deuteronomy 4:9. The Holy Spirit speaking through Asaph did not want the children to forget the works of God, vs. 5-7, nor rebel against God as their fathers had done, v. 8. An example of this was the men of Ephraim, the leading tribe of the northern part of the kingdom. They were

ready for battle but departed from God, vs. 9-11. The tribe of Judah was chosen instead, vs. 67, 68.

In the next part of the psalm, verses 12-42, Asaph tells again how God supplied Israel's need and how the people provoked Him to anger. He led them out of Egypt, guided them and gave them water to drink, vs. 12-16. They sinned and spoke against God, vs. 17-20. They put God to the test by asking for meat to eat. This made God angry, vs. 21, 22, but still He provided the food, vs. 23-29. He gave them manna which was like a sweet seed, Exodus 16:31, and wild birds like chickens for meat. They did not pray in faith. God answered their prayer, but was angry because they did not trust Him, vs. 30, 31. They sinned still more, v. 32, but when many died then they turned back to God, v. 34. Even then their hearts were not true, vs. 36, 37. God showed mercy because He knew that men have only a short time to live, vs. 38, 39. Still they kept on putting Him to the test, vs. 40-43.

In the third part of the psalm, vs. 44-66, Asaph again goes over the story of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. In the book of Exodus we read that God struck ten blows against Egypt called the ten plagues, Exodus 9:14. Seven of the ten plagues are given in verses 44 to 51.

He killed the oldest child in every home in Egypt, v. 51, but led His own people like sheep through the wilderness, v. 52. He brought them into the land of promise, vs. 54, 55. Although God had blessed them so much, still the people turned back to worship idols, vs. 56-58. God had to punish them for this, vs. 59-61. The ark of God which spoke of His presence was at first kept in Shiloh, Joshua 18:1, 1 Samuel 1:3. Because of the sin

of Israel the Philistines gained the victory and took the ark of Jehovah, 1 Samuel 4:10, 11. This brought great shame on Israel, and the name of the Lord. Many people were killed, vs. 62-64. Then the Lord delivered His people again, vs. 65, 66.

In the last part of the psalm we see that Ephraim was not chosen by the Lord as the chief tribe. Jacob had given a great blessing to Joseph and Ephraim, Genesis 49:22-26; 48:15-20. Even so Jacob was led by the Holy Spirit to give still greater blessing to Judah by saying that the King would come from his tribe, Genesis 49:8-10. In our psalm Asaph said that Jehovah chose Judah and Jerusalem, vs. 68, 69. He chose David of the tribe of Judah to feed and lead God's children, vs. 70-72.

Many years later the Lord Jesus Christ was born in the tribe of Judah. God has chosen Him to be the King of kings and Lord of lords. In Christ we have great blessings. We have seen God's power delivering us from sin. He has supplied every need for this world and the world to come. Let us never ask anything from God without faith. Let us never put God to the test nor turn from Him in unbelief. Why should we bring sorrow to the heart of God who has done so much to make us happy?

Psalm 79

This psalm, like Psalm 74, speaks about the defilement of the temple of Jerusalem. Asaph was troubled because unbelievers had come into God's holy temple, v. 1. Many of God's people had been killed, vs. 2, 3. Perhaps Asaph was speaking of some experience which is not written in the Bible, or he may have been speaking of some future time as Micah did, Micah3:12, Jeremiah 26:18.

The rest of the psalm could have been written at different times. The neighbours of Israel often laughed at them, v. 4. Asaph prayed like David, that the Lord would not be angry with His people, v. 5, but with the nations that did not know Him, vs. 6, 7. He asks that the Lord would not remember the sins that happened before, but rather that He would forgive them, vs. 8, 9. This was so that the nations round about would know there was a God in Israel, v. 10. Some of the people were prisoners, v. 11, and the nations were mocking Jehovah, v. 12. Asaph promised that God's sheep would praise Him and tell young people about His glory, v. 13.

No doubt believing Jews in the future will be able to use the words of this psalm when their holy city is attacked. As Christians we do not pray that God would judge unbelievers, but we can think of ourselves as His people and His sheep, v. 13. We can also pray that God will deliver those who are bound in the prison of sin, v. 11. If delivered, they too will have great reason to praise the Lord. We can also pray that those who laugh at us may be put to shame, v. 12, but still more that they might be saved.

Psalms 80

In Psalm 80 Asaph prays to God because the people of Israel have departed from the Lord. Three times he asks God to turn them again and to give them light, vs. 3, 7, 19. In verse 3 Asaph calls Him God; in verses 7 and 14 the God of hosts, or angels, and in verses 4 and 19 the Lord God of angels.

In the first part of the psalm Asaph calls upon God as the Shepherd of Israel. He had been thinking of the people as God's sheep, 79:13. In 80:1 he refers to the

ark as standing for the presence of God, Exodus 25:21, 22.

Jacob had four wives and twelve sons. Joseph and Benjamin were the sons of Rachel and Ephraim and Manasseh were Joseph's sons. Soon after Asaph's time the kingdom of Israel was divided into two. The northern kingdom was called Israel and the southern kingdom Judah. The leading tribe in the northern kingdom was Ephraim, but there were ten tribes in all including Manasseh. In the south the only tribe with Judah was Benjamin.

In the second part of the psalm, vs. 4-7, Asaph asks God how long will He be angry with His people, v. 4. He gave them nothing but sorrow, v. 5, and strife, v. 6. Asaph knew that Israel was wrong and so he asked God to turn them back to Himself, v. 7.

In the last part of the psalm Asaph speaks of Israel as a vine. Isaiah used this picture of Israel in chapter 5, and so did Ezekiel, in chapter 15. Much work is needed to plant a vine. You should put a hedge or a wall around it so that animals or men cannot come in and take the fruit. Here Asaph says that God planted this vine and it grew very well, vs. 8-11. When God looked after Israel, the nation grew large. Now the walls have been broken down and anyone could come in and spoil it. So Asaph asked God to look down from heaven and save Israel again, vs. 14-16. He prayed that God would help the king, v. 17, and promised that the people would not turn away from God again, v. 18.

This psalm makes us think of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, John 10:11. He is also the true Vine, John 15:1. Israel did not bear good fruit for God, Isaiah

5:4. The Lord Jesus Christ as a Man bore much fruit and brought glory to His Father. If we abide in Him, we will do the same, John 15:7, 8.

Benjamin is also a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. His name means “the son of my right hand”, v. 17. The Lord Jesus, the Son of Man, was strong for God and is now sitting at His right hand, Psalm 110:1. When Christ comes back again, then God will really shine upon His people, Malachi 4:2; Revelation 21:23. Even before that God will give the light of truth to those who ask Him.

Psalm 81

This psalm, like psalms 8 and 84, is to the chief musician upon Gittith, a musical instrument. In Psalm 80 Asaph prayed that Israel might be turned back to God. In Psalm 81 we see that this prayer was answered.

In the first part, vs. 1-5, the Holy Spirit calls on Israel to sing with joy to God, v. 1, with musical instruments, v. 2. This was to be done specially at the time of the new moon, Numbers 10:10, or when the moon was full in the middle of a month. The feasts of Jehovah are described in Leviticus 23. One of these was at the beginning of the month, Leviticus 23:24. Others were in the middle of the month, vs. 5, 34. This command was from the Lord, Psalm 81:4, and the keeping of the Passover was commanded as a testimony to the people of Egypt, v. 5, Exodus 12:14.

In the next part of the psalm Jehovah speaks, vs. 6-12. He wants Israel to remember that He delivered them from the bondage of Egypt, v. 6, and took care of them in the wilderness, v. 7. His purpose was that the people of Israel would love Him. God cannot let His people

serve any other god, v. 9. This is still true today. Anything that keeps us from loving God is really an idol, 1 John 5:21, Colossians 3:5. Jehovah had brought Israel out of Egypt and He would still supply all their needs, v. 10.

Instead of that Israel rejected God, v. 11, and for this reason God rejected them, v. 12. It is a terrible thing when God gives anyone up, Romans 1:24, 26, 28. As His children He will never cast us off, but He may leave us alone for a while.

In this psalm the Lord wished that His people had been willing to obey, v. 13. This was always true, Deuteronomy 5:29, Isaiah 48:18. If Israel had obeyed God, He would have given them the victory, vs. 14, 15. He also would have given them the best of food to eat, v. 16. God has promised to give us enough to eat, Matthew 6:26. He has also given us His Word which is food for our souls, Psalm 19:10. True joy can only come to those who obey God.

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
When we do His good will, He abides with us still
And with all who will trust and obey.

—J. H. Sammis

Psalm 82

This little psalm of Asaph is addressed to the judges. We have seen God sitting in heaven on His throne, Psalm 2:4; 9:4; 29:10; 47:8. The word god means one with power. In verse 1 God takes His place to judge the

judges. The great men of this world should remember that God will one day judge them also.

These judges of earth have not been fair and righteous. They show favor to the wicked, v. 2. God tells them to give justice to the weak and the poor, vs. 3, 4. This command is still necessary because most of the judges of the earth do not walk in the light of God's Word. Righteousness is the ground of good government and without it nothing is right, v. 5.

These gods or judges have been given their authority by God, Romans 13:1. They are great in this world, but still only creatures and of course some day will have to die and stand before God, vs. 6, 7. These words are also addressed to the judges of Israel because the Word of God was given to that nation. The Lord Jesus Christ used these words in speaking to the Jews, John 10:34, 35. Even in Israel the judges who did have the law of God were not judging righteously. No wonder Asaph calls upon God Himself to arise and judge the nations, v. 8.

There will never be true righteousness in this world until the Lord Jesus Christ comes to rule as King of kings. We have not been commanded to try and make things better in this world, but to preach the Gospel to every creature. Those who are children of God should in their own lives and their own work do what is right.

Psalm 83

This is the twelfth and last psalm of Asaph. Here he sees the enemies of Israel joining together and asks God to destroy them as He has done in the past.

He asks God not to remain quiet, v. 1, because the enemies are making a great noise, v. 2. Asaph

understands that by planning to destroy God's people, vs. 3, 4, they are showing their hate against God, vs. 2, 5.

Ten nations or cities joined together against Israel, vs. 6-8. They came from every side: Gebal, Tyre and Assyria were in the north. Ammon and Moab lived east of Israel, Amalek and Edom to the south, and the Philistines to the west. It is sad to note that six of these enemies were related to Israel in old times. Hagar was the servant of Abraham and Ishmael was his son, Genesis 16:15. Ammon and Moab were the sons of Lot, Genesis 19:37, 38. Edom was a son of Isaac and Amalek a son of Edom, Genesis 36:1, 12. The people of Assyria and the Philistines belonged to a different family, the family of Ham, Genesis 10:11, 14. Tyre and Gebal were cities and are mentioned in Ezekiel 27:8, 9.

No wonder Asaph was worried. It is bad enough to face one great enemy at a time. When they all join together against us, it is plain that we cannot stand in our own strength. God allows these things to happen so that we will put our trust fully in Him.

Asaph prayed that God would deal with them as He had dealt with the Midianites and the Canaanites in the past, vs. 9-12. Jabin was the king of the Canaanites and Sisera the head of his army. Israel was far from God and when there was no man to lead them in the right way, God raised up a woman, Deborah. When the people got right with God, He raised up Barak to overcome the Canaanites. This victory was at the river Kison. Sisera ran away, but was put to death by another woman, Jael, Judges 4:4, 6, 13, 18-21.

After a while the people of Israel fell into sin again. This time the Lord raised up Gideon to deliver them. After teaching him many lessons God gave him the victory over Oreb and Zeeb, two princes of the Midianites, Judges 6:1, 12; 7:25.

Asaph prayed that his enemies might be made like the waste of the wheat, v. 13, and burnt with fire, v. 14. He wants them to be filled with fear, v. 15, and shame, v. 16. His purpose is that they might seek the Lord, v. 16, and if not, they will be punished forever, v. 17. This should have the effect of making men know that Jehovah is the Most High, v. 18.

Here we see God's reason for punishing men. As long as a man is still alive, he can repent and turn to the Lord. Others should learn the lesson when they see God judging wicked men.

Psalm 84

This is the first of four more psalms of, or for, the sons of Korah. Seven of these psalms are found in the second book, Psalms 42-49. This one is about the house of God. There are three parts, the first two ending in the word Selah, vs. 4, 8.

First we have the blessings of the Lord's house. The writer with all his heart desires to be with the living God, vs. 1, 2. It was so peaceful in the temple that birds could make their nests there, v. 3. The word altar does not mean where the fire was burning, but the whole temple. The sons of Korah were doorkeepers of the temple, 1 Chronicles 26:1. They also served in time of war, 1 Chronicles 12:6. In Psalm 84:4 they thought it was a great blessing to dwell in the house of God. Later

on they were called on to praise God with their voices, 2 Chronicles 20:19.

There is also a blessing for those who have a desire to go to the temple in Mount Zion, vs. 5-8. They get strength for the journey. They may have to go through valleys of sorrow. The word Baca means weeping and the valley may speak of sorrow, Psalm 23:4. Those who trust in the Lord get more strength from these difficult experiences, v. 7.

Then they asked God to look on His anointed one. Aaron was anointed as high priest, Exodus 28:41. David was anointed as king, 2 Samuel 5:3, and Elisha as prophet, 1 Kings 19:16. We have seen that the word anointed is the same as Christ, Psalm 2:2, and so this verse makes us think of Him.

One day in the temple of the Lord is better than a thousand any other place. To be a doorkeeper there is better than living at home with wicked people, v. 10. The Lord saves His own, gives them honour and every good thing, v. 11. There are many blessings for the man who trusts in Him, v. 12. Verses 4 and 5 also give us other blessings in this psalm. The Lord will give us everything that is good and will take us home to glory, v. 11, Romans 8:28, 30. Here on earth we should learn the joy and blessing of waiting in the Lord's presence in prayer and worship. From Him we will get strength for the journey even if it means going through the valley of sorrow. We can be sure that soon we will be in glory.

Psalm 85

Psalm 85 gives us a lot of truth about God. In the first three verses the writer praises God because He has

been good to the people of Israel, v. 1. He has forgiven their sins, v. 2, and turned from His anger, v. 3. These verses show the mercy and love of Jehovah.

In the next part of the psalm, vs. 4-7, we have a prayer that God would turn Israel back to Himself and not be angry with them, v. 4. Three questions are asked, vs. 5, 6, and another prayer is found inverse 7. From these seven verses we learn that God is ready to forgive, but the people need to be turned back to Him. God has always loved man, but is righteously angry with our sins. If man is separated from God, it is because he is not willing to receive God's forgiveness.

For himself the writer is ready to listen to God's words, v. 8. These are words of peace to those who turn to God with their heart. God is ready to save and when man believes, it brings glory to Him, v. 9.

In God's character we see His love which would bring a man to Himself. However the truth is that man has sinned. To remain faithful God in righteousness must judge all sin. How then can there be peace between God and man? Verse 10 says that these two meet together. In the New Testament we learn that God's love and righteousness meet in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ, —John 1:17.

God can remain righteous, yet show His love to man by forgiving his sins, Romans 3:26. The work is finished and God is ready to forgive. There remains only that man should hear the message of God's love, believe that message and turn to Him. In the future the people of Israel will indeed turn to God. Then there will be blessing in the land and in the whole earth, vs. 11-13.

We look forward with joy to the blessings of the future, but right now we are commanded to tell all men the wonderful news of God's love and forgiveness. We can rejoice even now in the wonderful wisdom of God who has given us this salvation.

Psalm 86

This is the only psalm of David in the third book of psalms. It is another prayer of David, much like many of the psalms in books 1 and 2. In this psalm he gives reasons for his prayers.

In the first part, vs. 1-5, he asks God to hear because he is poor, v. 1. He asks for salvation because he is godly, v. 2; for mercy because he cries to God all day long, v. 3; for joy because he is praying to the Lord, v. 4. David expects God to answer his prayer because of His great love, v. 5.

In the next prayer, vs. 6-10, David also asks God to hear. He knows He will answer, vs. 6, 7. He describes the Lord as One completely different from the gods of men, v. 8. All nations must bow before Him because He alone is the true God, vs. 9, 10. We have seen in Psalm 85:10 God's wonderful plan of salvation. No religion in the world has a message like this. No god is like our God, Micah 7:18, 19.

David knew something of this truth, but prayed that God would teach him His way so that he might walk in God's truth with an undivided heart, v. 11. He praises the Lord for His love in saving him from death, vs. 12, 13.

David's enemies had risen against him, but David knew that the Lord had both love and truth, v. 15, Psalm 85:10. So he prays that God's strength would be his

strength, v. 16. He asks for a sign, not to help him believe but so that his enemies would know that the Lord was with David, v. 17.

God allowed David to see a great deal of trouble in his life. These experiences made him turn to God in faith. We can be glad that it happened this way because David learned more about God in time of trouble. He wrote these things down in psalms and the Holy Spirit can teach us the truth about God as it was given to David. To know the true God and Jesus Christ is eternal life, John 17:3. There is no greater joy in the world than this.

Psalm 87

This is the shortest psalm in the third book. It is a song for the sons of Korah in praise of Jerusalem. We have seen that God chose Zion in Psalm 78:68, Here in the first three verses the city is praised because God Himself founded it, v. 1, and the Lord loves it, v. 2. It is called the city of God, v. 3.

Special honour was given to those who were born in Jerusalem. The writer might refer to Rahab (another name for Egypt) and other countries or cities, v. 4. Jehovah Himself notes with favor those who were born in Jerusalem, vs. 5, 6. Those who served in the temple had special joy, v. 7.

This psalm looks forward to the time when Christ will be King in Jerusalem. Even in the time of Hezekiah people brought gifts to Jerusalem, 2 Chronicles 32:23. This will take place again in a much greater way when the Lord Jesus comes, Psalm 86:9, Isaiah 2:2, Zechariah 2:11.

As Christians we have no city here on earth, but the church itself is called the city of God, Revelation 21:2, 9,

10. The important thing is not where you were born in the world, but have you been born again.

Psalm 88

Psalm 88 is a song or psalm of instruction (Maskil) of Heman the Ezrahite. Psalm 89 is another Maskil by an Ezrahite whose name was Ethan. These two men were considered to be very wise, 1 Kings 4:31. Heman was a son of Joel the son of Samuel, 1 Samuel 8:2, 1 Chronicles 15:17. He had fourteen sons and three daughters and was called the king's seer, 1 Chronicles 25:5. His psalm is really a prayer to God in time of deep trouble.

In the first part, vs. 1-8, he is praying day and night, vs. 1, 2. He feels that he is at the point of death, vs. 3, 4, forsaken by God, vs. 5-7. His friends have left him, v. 8.

Again he calls to the Lord every day, v. 9. He asks six questions to show that the dead cannot praise the Lord, vs. 10-12.

The third prayer is much the same. He cries to the Lord in the morning, v. 13. From the time of his youth he has been in danger of death, vs. 14, 15. God's anger is like a flood of water, vs. 16, 17. God has taken away all his friends, v. 18.

What are the lessons of this psalm? One is that all men are near death because we never know what will happen next. It is a good thing to be ready to meet God, Amos 4:12. The psalmist does not show any hope that God would deliver him from death. Only in the New Testament do we clearly learn that God will raise us from the dead. Even before we are raised, to die and be with Christ is far better, Philippians 1:23.

This psalm also makes us think of the Lord Jesus Christ in His sorrow. He was taken as a prisoner, v. 8, Matthew 26: 56, 57. All His life He looked forward to His death, v. 15. He was forsaken by His friends, vs. 8, 18. But through all His troubles the Lord Jesus Christ had hope and perfect trust in God, 1 Peter 2:23. Even if we have to die for Christ, this would bring us into great joy, Revelation 2:10.

Psalm 89

Ethan was an Ezrahite like Heman. He was also a wise man. His long psalm of instruction is about the covenant which God promised to David.

Ethan's purpose as seen in the first two verses is to sing of God's love for ever. God's purpose was to establish David and his sons on the throne of Israel forever, vs. 3, 4.

The next part of the psalm declares the greatness of Jehovah: in heaven there is none like Jehovah who should be greatly feared, vs. 5-7. God's greatness in the world is explained in verses 8 to 13. He can control the sea, v. 9; His enemies like Egypt or Rahab, v. 10; the heavens and the earth, vs. 11-13. Notice God's faithfulness in verses 1, 2, 5, 8, also in verses 24 and 33. In verses 6 and 8 Jehovah alone is God as we saw in Psalm 86:8.

God's greatness is seen again in His dealings with Israel, vs. 14-18. They have righteousness, v. 14, light, v. 15, joy, v. 16, glory, v. 17, and strength, v. 18. God's love and truthfulness are found in verse 14, as in 85:10 and 86:15.

The next part of the psalm, verses 19-37, tells of what Jehovah had done for David. He chose him, vs. 19, 20, strengthened him, vs. 21-23, glorified him, vs. 24-27, and established his seed, that is his son and son's son, vs. 28-37.

The coming King is the Son of David, Matthew 1:1. God has chosen Him, Matthew 12:18, and anointed Him as Christ. How wonderful that a Man, the Man Christ Jesus, sits at God's right hand on the throne of heaven and will some day rule in this world as King of kings! David was strong, v. 19, and made stronger with God's arm, v. 21. The coming King has all power, Matthew 28:18. What a wonderful time is coming!

God's promise that David's line would be established for ever will be fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. As for Solomon and his sons, God warns them that they will be punished if they break His commands, vs. 30-32. This is what really happened, but God's promises about Christ cannot be changed, vs. 33-37.

The last part of the psalm is a prayer of Ethan when he saw God chastening Solomon. Instead of glorifying him like David, vs. 19, 20, He cast him off, vs. 38, 39. Solomon could have had victory like David, vs. 21, 23. Instead his enemies are made strong, vs. 40-43. Instead of receiving honour, vs. 24-27, he is humbled, v. 44. Instead of establishing him forever; v. 29, God has shortened his youth, v. 45.

No wonder Ethan asks the Lord to remember him because life is short, vs. 46-48. He asks Him to remember His promise to David and to turn back the enemies, vs. 49-51. In the last verse he blesses Jehovah for ever. This verse is also the last of the third book.

We see that part of this psalm refers to David and his line, part of it to the Lord Jesus Christ, and part to both. Neither David nor any of his sons lived for ever. In 1 and 2 Kings we read of the life and death of each one. These words “for ever” can only refer to the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand when it speaks of the sin of David’s sons, these words could not apply to the Lord. We too have been promised great blessings from God, but these come only when we obey Him. If we disobey, our joy will be gone and nothing will be right until we get back to the Lord.

Book 4

Psalm 90

Moses lived long before David and as far as we know, this psalm is the oldest in the book of Psalms. In Deuteronomy 32 we have a song of Moses and in Deuteronomy 33 we have his blessing which is also in the form of a psalm. Psalm 90:1 makes us think of Deuteronomy 33:27.

In the first part of the psalm, vs. 1-4, he speaks about God's greatness. His people have always dwelt with Him, but Jehovah was God before anything was created, v. 2. Eternity is like the years of time, but without beginning and without end. God always was and always will be. God is greater than man, v. 3. We think a thousand years is a long time, but in the sight of God it is like a single day, v. 4. Peter added that in God's sight one day is like a thousand years, 2 Peter 3:8.

Moses led Israel out of Egypt and they were guided by the Lord to Kadesh. This was on the edge of the land of Canaan and the nation could have entered at that time. However they were afraid, did not believe God's promise and would not obey His command. God turned them back to wander in the wilderness for 38 years until all the men of war had died, Deuteronomy 2:14. Nearly 100 people died every day. Moses, Joshua and Caleb were the only ones left.

In the next section of our psalm, vs. 5-10, Moses spoke of the shortness of man's life. He said it is like a dream or like grass, vs. 5, 6. God is angry because of our sins, vs. 7, 8. Even today men usually live to be no more than

70 years old, but sometimes as much as 80, v. 10. While this seems like a long time to young people, it really passes away very quickly. Therefore we should be careful not to make God angry, v. 11. We should consider that we only have a few days at the most and ask God for wisdom, v. 12.

Moses asked God to teach them, v. 12, forgive them, v. 13, satisfy them, v. 14, make them glad, v. 15, show them His glory, v. 16, and establish them, v. 17.

Moses had prayed for himself that Jehovah would show him His glory. It was not possible for a man to see the face of God, but God showed him His goodness, His grace and His mercy, Exodus 33:18-20. We too see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:6. As we think about the shortness of life we should use our days and hours for the glory of the Lord. Remember too that men around us will not live forever. After death comes judgment, Hebrews 9:27.

Psalm 91

Many people think that this psalm was written by Moses, but the old Greek Bible said it was written by David. We can be sure that someone who really knew the Lord was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write it.

A general promise is found in verses 1 and 2. It is possible for the one who believes in Christ to dwell or abide in the presence of the Lord. Most High is a name of God which shows His greatness over all creation. Almighty means that He has the power and the love to take care of His own. The man who walks with God day by day will be able to trust in Him at all times.

One of the most wonderful truths of the New Testament is that we can dwell in Christ and Christ in us. In fact the Holy Spirit and the Father and Son dwell with or in the believer, John 14:17, 23; 15:5.

In the next part of the psalm, vs. 3-11, the Holy Spirit promises that God will take care of His child.

1. He will deliver you from danger like a bird that someone is trying to catch. He will also keep you from deadly illness, v. 3.
2. Sometimes an animal will try to attack a young bird, but the mother will cover it with its wings. In verse 4 you see that God will keep you safely under the shield of His faithfulness, His truth.
3. You need not be afraid at any time, day or night, or at noon, vs. 5, 6.
4. Even though others fall around you, it will not come near you. You will see how God punishes the wicked. You will not fall because the Lord Jesus has taken your punishment, vs. 7, 8.
5. If you dwell with the Lord, no evil will come near, vs. 9, 10.
6. Even if you kick your foot against a stone you will not fall because God's angels will look after you, vs. 11, 12. In the New Testament we see that angels do take care of those who belong to the Lord, Hebrews 1:14. God promises specially that we do not have to fall into sin, Romans 14:4.
7. The lion, the greatest of wild animals, and the adder or serpent are both pictures of Satan, 1 Peter 5:8, Revelation 12:9. In our psalm verse 13 gives a promise of complete victory over Satan.

In the last part of the psalm, vs. 14-16, God promises to deliver the one who loves Him, to answer his prayer, to give him a long life and satisfaction.

The only One who has always dwelt with the Father is the Son, John 1:18. As we have seen in psalms 1 and 15 the righteous Man is really the Lord Jesus Himself. These promises are for us and for the child of God in Old Testament days. Finally and completely they are true only of the Lord Jesus.

When Satan tried to tempt the Lord, he used verses 11 and 12. He tried to get the Lord to jump off the top of the temple to prove to all the people that He was the Christ. The Lord Jesus said that we should not put God to the test. God has promised to look after us, but we should not plan to get into danger just to see if God will keep His promise, Matthew 4. 5-7. It is terrible to think that Satan would stand before his Creator the Son of God and suggest that He should sin. The Lord answered Satan and used another verse from the Old Testament, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test", Deuteronomy 6:16. He answered as a Man, but still He must have thought of Satan the creature trying to put His God to the test. The Lord would also remember the next verse after the one which Satan used, v. 13. This promise to the Lord Jesus that He would get the victory over Satan must have brought Him comfort at that time. This is not to say that the Lord Jesus could have sinned or might have sinned. It is impossible for God or the Son of God to sin, but Satan did everything he could. As Christians we can be tempted to sin and sometimes fall into sin. God has prepared a way for us to get the victory every time. This is one of the blessings which we have in

our Lord Jesus Christ. He has never failed and never will.

Psalm 92

This is a song for the sabbath day. In the Old Testament God's people were commanded to rest on the seventh day. In the New Testament Christians remember the Lord and take up an offering on the first day of the week, Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2. Psalm 92 is a song of praise for the work of God. We know much more about the work of Christ on the cross and have much more for which we should praise God.

In this psalm the writer says it is good to give thanks to the Lord with the voice, v. 1, and with musical instruments, v. 3. The Lord's loving kindness should be declared, not only on the sabbath day, but everyday, morning and night, v. 2. This psalm is a song of praise to Jehovah whose name is found seven times. Can you find these seven verses? In the first verse He is seen as God Most High. The writer's reason for praising God for His work is the joy he himself has received, v. 4. Not only God's works, but His thoughts are wonderful, v. 5.

The next section is a warning to the wicked. A dull or stupid person does not seem to understand that the wicked may APPEAR to succeed, but they will soon come under the judgment of God, vs. 6, 7. Jehovah is on high and His enemies shall perish, vs. 8, 9. The writer also expected to be exalted when his enemies had been put down, vs. 10, 11.

This should be a comfort to all the righteous, vs. 12-15. They are planted like strong trees in the house of the

Lord, vs. 12, 13, Psalm 1:3; 52:8. Even in old age they can show that the Lord is righteous, vs. 14, 15.

We can see that the author of this psalm like David knew the Lord as his Saviour. God's enemies will be destroyed like grass, vs. 7, 9, while the righteous will continue like a tree, v. 12.

"Praise the Saviour, you who know Him."

Psalm 93

The writer of this little psalm was sure of Jehovah's power. As King He is clothed with glory and strength. The world cannot be moved, much less the throne of the everlasting God, vs. 1, 2.

God's enemies may rise up like a great flood of waters, but the Lord is over them all, vs. 3, 4, Psalm 65:7. The writer is certain that victory belongs to Jehovah. He is also sure about God's Word. Everything in His house is holy forever.

This little psalm should be a comfort to us. When we see the enemies of the truth making trouble God's power is the same as ever. He will soon be seen working for His people.

Psalm 94

The writer of this psalm prays to God for vengeance or punishment on evil doers and specially on wicked judges, vs. 16, 20. He cries to the Lord God, the Judge of the earth, to punish these people, vs. 1-3. He prays in this way because of their proud speaking, v. 4. They try to destroy God's people, v. 5, and specially the helpless, v. 6. They think that God will not know, v. 7.

Before God pours out His vengeance, the Holy Spirit gives some instruction to these people, vs. 8-11. How foolish to think that the One who created the ear and the eye would not Himself know everything! He punishes the nations and He will punish the wicked judges of Israel, v. 10. God knows everything including the thoughts of men, v. 11.

At first God punishes men a little so that they will learn their lessons. This chastening can be a real blessing, v. 12, specially for the people of God, v. 13. The wicked will go down into the pit, but the Lord will not leave His own people, vs. 14, 15. This truth is found in Proverbs 3:11, 12 and Hebrews 12: 5-11. The Father will not put His children out of His family for sin, but He will surely chasten them. God also speaks to the unsaved and gives them a little trouble to warn them to turn to Him, Job 33:14-30.

In the last part of the psalm we have the writer's confidence that the Lord would save him. If the Lord had not helped him, these wicked men would have put him to death, vs. 16-18. He remembered these things and got comfort in his heart, v. 19. These wicked rulers cannot join with God. Those who are on God's side should be separate from evil men. This is clearly seen in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. These wicked judges did not act with God, v. 20, nor judge righteously, v. 21. The Lord would surely protect His servant and judge the wicked judges, vs. 22, 23.

We have seen in Psalm 82 Asaph warning the wicked judges. We are told to pray for those who are in authority over us, 1 Timothy 2:2. We also look forward to

the time when the Lord Jesus Christ will reign righteously in this world.

Psalm 95

There are seven psalms in this part of the fourth book which tell us that the Lord rules: 93:1; 95:3; 96:10; 97:1; 98:6, 9; 99:1. Some call upon us to sing His praise: 95:1; 96:1; 98:1; 100:1.

In the New Testament we learn that David wrote this psalm, Hebrews 4:7. In the first part he calls upon the people to rejoice and worship the Lord. In the second part the Lord warns them not to turn away from Him.

David exhorts the people to come and sing thanksgiving to Jehovah, vs. 1, 2. They should do this because Jehovah was the great God and King, v. 3. The world is His, v. 4, because He made it, v. 5. Then the call is to worship the Lord our Maker, v. 6, and Shepherd, v. 7.

God loves to have the praise and worship of His people, John 4:23, and the first part of this psalm as all Scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit. But God knew that the heart of man is very changeable and so brings in a warning not to turn from Him. He asks them to listen to His voice and not to harden their hearts. The people of Israel did not believe that God would look after them. When they had no water, they complained and put God to the test at Massah and Meribah, Exodus 17:1-7. Many times they showed that they did not really believe in God. When they came near the land of promise, they did not believe that God would give it to them and turned back. God made them wander in the wilderness for 40 years until all the grown up men had died, Numbers 14:20-23.

This is also a very strong warning to us as Christians. We can be joyful, we can worship the Lord as our Creator and Shepherd. Some have done these things and then turned away to sin again, Hebrews 3. 7-4:7. God is still grieved when people do not believe in Him.

Psalm 96

In 1 Chronicles 16, verses 7 and 23 to 33 we see that David knew Psalm 96. In it the writer calls upon the nations to praise the Lord.

In the first part, verses 1-6, he tells them to sing anew song to Jehovah, v. 1, Isaiah 42:10, and to show His salvation to others, vs. 2, 3. They should do this because Jehovah is greater than any god, v. 4, Psalm 95. 3. These gods are only idols, but the Lord is the Creator, v. 5. All glory is His, v. 6.

In the second part of the psalm the writer calls on the peoples of the world to give glory to Jehovah. They should bring an offering to the temple and worship the Lord, vs. 7-9. They should also tell other people around them that Jehovah reigns and will judge righteously, v. 10. More, He is coming to this world, vs. 11-13. All nature will rejoice and the Lord will judge the world in truth. Only those who do not want the truth will be sorry when He comes. This is another reason why we should tell men the truth about God. If they know the truth and believe in the Lord they will be glad to hear about His coming again.

Psalm 97

In this psalm also we see Jehovah reigning and the nations called to rejoice in Him, v. 1. He rules in

righteousness, v. 2, and all His power is seen in nature, vs. 3-5.

The heavens declare His righteousness, v. 6 (and His glory in 19:1). In Psalm 96. 5 we see that the gods of the nations are idols. In 97:7 those who worship these idols are put to shame. In fact all these gods must bow down before the Lord. The last part of verse 7 is used by the Holy Spirit to show that Christ is the Son of God and greater than any creature worshipped by man, Hebrews 1:6. Angels are spirits. Those spirits who do not obey are called demons and these are the gods of the nations, 1 Corinthians 10:20. All angels, spirits, demons and all creatures will bow before the Lord Jesus Christ, Philippians 2:10, 11. Our Saviour is none other than God Himself, Titus 1:3, 4.

The people of God are glad because Jehovah is above all others, vs. 8, 9. The Lord loves and cares for His own. He gives life and light and joy to them, vs. 10-12.

This psalm looks forward to the time when the Lord Jesus Christ will reign in this world, and all nations will be blessed in Him. How much more we who know Him now as our Saviour!

Psalm 98

In this psalm Israel is again called on to sing a new song to Jehovah. They should do this because He has gained the victory, v. 1, and made known His salvation, v. 2, and remembered His love, v. 3. This is specially for Israel, but the nations have seen it, even those who live far away at the ends of the earth.

The whole earth should make a joyful noise to Jehovah, with the voice, v. 4, and with musical instruments, vs. 5, 6.

Even nature will be glad: the sea, the world, the hills, when the Lord comes to rule and judge, vs. 7-9. The Lord should be praised because of His victory, v. 2, because He is King, v. 6, and Judge, v. 9. When the Lord comes, all nature will be blessed, but only man has a spirit and can really praise God. As Christians we know the grace of God more than Israel in the past or in the future. We should count our many blessings and praise Him for what He is and for what He has done.

Psalm 99

This psalm is another call to praise because the Lord reigns. The ark of Jehovah was a box made of wood and metal. On top of it was the form of two angels called cherubim. The ark is a picture of the throne of God, v. 1, Psalm 80:1. Jehovah is great, holy and righteous, vs. 2-4. All the people of the world should worship before Him, v. 5.

In the past He answered the prayers of Moses, Aaron and Samuel, v. 6. He revealed His will to His people, v. 7. He forgave their sin, v. 8, but punished them if they did wrong. Verse 9 is a refrain, much the same as verse 5. Today we often sing a refrain after each verse of a song. We should praise the Lord for His goodness, but also remember His holiness. We should love Him and fear Him.

Psalm 100

This little psalm also tells us to praise the Lord. In verse 1 the writer calls upon the people of all lands. It is God's

will that all peoples should know Him and praise Him, Psalm 96:7; 97:1; 98:4. They can serve Him and come near Him, v. 2. They should know that Jehovah is God their Creator, but He only calls true believers His people and His sheep, v. 3. Only Israel could enter into the courts of the temple, v. 4. Yet the way was open for any believer to join the people of Israel. The temple was to be a house of prayer for all nations, Isaiah 56:6, 7.

God does not ask us to worship Him without good reason and the last verse of the psalm tells us of His goodness, love and faithfulness or truth. We have seen reasons for praising God in Psalm 95:3, 7; 96:4, 13; 98:1, 9; 99:9. Also read Revelation 4:11; 5:9, 10; 19:1-6. Our worship to God should be according to knowledge. We should always offer up a sacrifice of praise to God with our lips, Hebrews 13:15.

Psalm 101

It seems that David wrote this psalm when he first became king of Israel. He states the rules which as king he wants to follow. The first thing is to praise Jehovah, v. 1. The second is to walk in the right way and for this he needs the help of the Lord, v. 2. In his own life he will be very careful and he will not allow wicked men to be near him, vs. 3-5. He will help those who are faithful and only such will work for him, v. 6. He does not want in his house people who tell lies, v. 7. As king he will take away all wicked men from the land of Israel and from the city of Jerusalem, v. 8.

These are good rules for a king, but David failed to carry them out. He fell into sin himself and did not righteously judge his own sons Amnon and Absalom, nor the head of his army Joab. The first and only completely righteous

King of this world will be the Lord Jesus Christ and we look forward to His kingdom. Most of us are not kings, but we all give an example to people who live with us and near us. Let us be sure that we give them a good example.

Psalm 102

This is another prayer of a man in trouble who turned to the Lord for comfort. His prayer is addressed to Jehovah in the day of trouble, vs. 1, 2. He is sick and feels that he does not have long to live, vs. 3, 11. He does not eat his food and his body is thin, vs. 4, 5. He cannot sleep and feels very much alone like a bird in the wilderness, vs. 6, 7. His enemies laugh at him, but he takes his trouble as from God, vs. 8-10.

As he thinks about the Lord he takes comfort. His own life may be very short, but Jehovah will continue forever, v. 12. More still, the Lord will rise up when the time comes and have pity on Jerusalem, a city which His servants love, vs. 13, 14. When He comes, the nations will fear, vs. 15, 16; and God will remember the poor, v. 17. When the Lord looks down from heaven to deliver His people, it should be written in a book so that men in the future will praise the Lord, vs. 18-22.

In the last part of the psalm the writer speaks of his own short life, vs. 23, 24. Even the heavens and the earth will pass away. Jehovah made them and when their work is finished, He will change them, vs. 25, 26, 2 Peter 3:10-13. Jehovah is always the same, v. 27. Before He created the world and after it is passed away, He can say "I AM". With this comfort His people can dwell in safety, v. 28.

The Holy Spirit used verses 25-27 to prove that Christ is the eternal Son of God, Hebrews 1:10-12. We should never let any man try to teach us that Christ is only a Man or that He was created by God. Our Saviour is God Himself. This is our comfort when we are sick or when our enemies laugh at us. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever," Hebrews 13:8.

Psalm 103

This psalm of David has no prayer but is wholly a psalm of praise to Jehovah. The first two verses give us the key which will open the door so we can understand this psalm. David calls on his own soul to bless the Lord and not to forget all His benefits. Some of these benefits are given in verses 3 to 5. God forgave his sins and healed him when he was sick, v. 3. He saved his life and satisfied him with good things, vs. 4, 5.

In the next part of the psalm, vs. 6-18, David describes the character of Jehovah. He is righteous, v. 6. He reveals Himself, specially to Israel, v. 7. The Lord reveals Himself as a God of mercy, v. 8, as He had done to Moses, Exodus 34:6, 7. He does not quickly become angry with His people. When He does, He will not remain angry forever, vs. 8, 9. Even when they sin, He is still a God of love, vs. 10, 11, Psalm 57:10. He removes the sin of His people far from them, v. 12. He remembers our weakness, vs. 13, 14. He knows that our time on earth is short, vs. 15, 16. His love for those who fear Him and obey Him will never come to an end, vs. 17, 18.

So the Lord shows great mercy to men. He also has great power and rules over all, v. 19. No wonder David called on angels to praise Jehovah, vs. 20, 21. All His

works will praise Him and David wants to do the same, v. 22.

As you read this psalm again, notice in verse 3 God forgives his sins before healing his sickness. Sometimes God speaks to men through sickness, Job 33:19-30. If we confess our sins He will first forgive us, then perhaps heal our bodies. This is what the Lord Jesus did in Matthew 9:2, 6. Also read James 5:15, 16.

This psalm tells us that the Lord in His mercy will remove our sins as far as the east is from the west, v. 12. No one can measure how far that is. In Micah 7:19 we read that God will cast our sins into the deep sea. In the new covenant the Lord will not remember sin any more, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:10-12. In the New Testament we see very clearly that God can forgive sin only because Christ paid the price. We ought to praise the Lord more than David could.

Psalm 104

In Psalm 103 we are called upon to praise God our Redeemer. In Psalm 104 He is seen as Creator. The great Lord is clothed with honour, v. 1, and light, v. 2. He created heaven to live in and angels to serve Him, vs. 3, 4, Hebrews 1:7.

God's power was seen in creating the world, v. 5. At first it seems that the earth was covered all over with the waters of the sea, v. 6. God raised the mountains and gathered the water together, Genesis 1:9. After the flood He promised that the waters of the sea would never again cover the whole earth, Genesis 9:11, Psalm 104. 5-9.

God also controls nature so that His creatures can live in this world, vs. 10-18. He commanded the earth to bring forth plants and fruit trees, Genesis 1:11, 12. These were for food for birds, animals and man, Genesis 1:20-27. In this psalm He gives water for birds and animals, vs. 10-13. He thinks of food for man and animals, vs. 14, 15, and a home for birds and animals, vs. 16-18. God also controls the sun and moon, vs. 19-23, for the benefit of man and animals.

God's wisdom is also seen in nature. Both earth and sea are full of creatures small and large created by the Lord, vs. 24-26. The great God supplies food for all His creatures, vs. 27, 28. Life and death are in His hand, vs. 29, 30.

The last part of the psalm tells of the glory of the Lord which will last forever. The Lord is pleased with His work, v. 31, Genesis 1:31. The Creator is still in control, v. 32. The psalmist promises to praise God as long as he lives, vs. 33, 34. He looks forward to the time when there will be no more sin in the earth, v. 35.

The study of nature should lead the believer to give glory to the Creator. All men should be thankful to God for supplying their daily food. Like the psalmist we should call upon all that is within us to praise the Lord. The last words in verse 35 are found many times in the book of Psalms, especially the last part of the book.

Psalm 105

Here the Holy Spirit calls on the people to give thanks to Jehovah because of all that He has done for Israel. The first part, verses 1-4, is a call to praise: to sing God's

praise and tell others about Him, vs. 1, 2; to rejoice and seek the Lord, vs. 3, 4.

Most of the psalm is a call to remember what the Lord has done. God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that He would give their children the land of Canaan, vs. 5-11. As a family they were only few in number and strangers in the land, yet God looked after them, vs. 12-15. When the time came, He kept back the rain so that there was great hunger in the land of Canaan and the land of Egypt. Joseph was a servant and a prisoner, vs. 18, 19, but God made him the ruler of the people, vs. 20-22.

His father Israel came to Egypt and the family grew larger, vs. 23, 24. When the Egyptians hated God's people, He sent Moses and Aaron to deliver them, vs. 25-27. In Exodus 7-12 we read of ten plagues or blows which the Lord sent on Egypt before they were willing to let His people go. Some of these are given in Psalm 78:43-51. Here eight of the ten are referred to, but in a different order. The ninth plague, darkness, is here given first, and the fifth and the sixth plague are not found in this psalm. Finally the Lord destroyed the oldest son in every home, v. 36. The Egyptians were glad to see Israel go and gave them money for all the work they had done for many years without pay. In the wilderness God gave the people a cloud of fire to keep and guide them. He also gave them food and water, vs. 39-41.

Why did God do all this for Israel? The purpose is found in the last part of the psalm, vs. 43-45. He gave them the land of Canaan so that they would keep His laws and praise the Lord. This is for us also. The grace of God has appeared to save us and to teach us to live godly lives in

this world and to wait for the appearing of Christ, Titus 2:11-14. He gave Himself to save us from sin so that we would be pure, a people who bring Him pleasure and do good to others.

Psalm 106

This psalm tells again the history of Israel, but brings in the nation's sins. The first part is a call to the people to praise Jehovah, vs. 1, 2. No one could tell out all of the Lord's praise, but there is a blessing for those who practice righteousness, v. 3. The writer prays for the Lord's favour, vs. 4, 5.

The main part of the psalm, vs. 6-46, tells of some of God's dealings with His people when they fell into sin. The writer does not say that he and the people with him are any better than their fathers of old, v. 6. Though the fathers had seen God's great miracles in Egypt, they soon rebelled at the Red Sea. Still God saved them for His own sake. He led them through on dry land and destroyed the Egyptians, vs. 7-11, Exodus 14. Then they sang a song of praise, v. 12, Exodus 15.

They soon forgot this. They put God to the test by demanding meat to eat. God gave them wild birds to eat, but punished them for their sin, vs. 13-15, Exodus 16, Numbers 11.

Then some of them became jealous of Moses and Aaron. Dathan and Abiram fell into the earth and 250 men who followed them were destroyed with fire, Numbers 16. God gave the Law to Moses and the people promised to obey. Just a few days later they broke the first and second commands by worshipping an image, Exodus 24:3; 32:8. This sin is described in our psalm, vs. 19-22,

and their punishment in verse 23. Moses prayed that God would not destroy them, Exodus 32:9-14. When they reached the edge of the promised land, they refused to enter. God said they would all fall in the wilderness and their children would live in strange lands, vs. 24-27, Numbers 13, 14.

Even then they did not learn the lesson. They joined with the people of Moab, they committed sins and they worshipped the god Baal. A terrible disease broke out. Many people died. Phinehas, the son of the priest, boldly took a stand for the right and God's anger was turned aside, vs. 28-31, Numbers 25.

Another time they made God angry at Meribah. Even Moses said what was wrong, vs. 32, 33, Numbers 20.

When they did get into the land, they mixed with the people of the land. They served idols and put their own children to death, vs. 34-39. The people of the land were very wicked and God had commanded Israel to destroy them. Instead of that Israel followed the evil practices of the nations. God had to punish Israel, vs. 40-43. In the book of Judges we read seven times that they cried to God in their trouble. Each time the Lord raised up a saviour and gave them the victory. Soon they fell into sin and had to be punished again.

The last two verses of the psalm, like the first part, give us prayer, v. 47, and praise, v. 48. The last verse of the psalm marks the end of the fourth book.

What a sad history of Israel! Again and again the Lord delivered them, but they never seemed to learn the lesson. Are we any better? We have the whole Bible and all the lessons in it. Yet we forget many times the law of the Lord and fail to obey Him. Through the whole Bible

we learn of man's failure without Christ. The Lord taught us that apart from Him we can do nothing, John 15:5. Like Paul we can do all things in the strength of the Lord, Philippians 4:13.