

Israel's Hymnal
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PSALM NINETY-TWO

[Pss 92:1] It is a good thing to give thanks unto Jehovah, And to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High;

[Pss 92:2] To show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, And thy faithfulness every night,

[Pss 92:3] With an instrument of ten strings, and with the psaltery; With a solemn sound upon the harp.

[Pss 92:4] For thou, Jehovah, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

[Pss 92:5] How great are thy works, O Jehovah! Thy thoughts are very deep.

[Pss 92:6] A brutish man knoweth not; Neither doth a fool understand this:

[Pss 92:7] When the wicked spring as the grass, And when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; It is that they shall be destroyed for ever.

[Pss 92:8] But thou, O Jehovah, art on high for evermore.

[Pss 92:9] For, lo, thine enemies, O Jehovah, For, lo, thine enemies shall perish; All the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

[Pss 92:10] But my horn hast thou exalted like (the horn of) the wild-ox: I am anointed with fresh oil.

[Pss 92:11] Mine eye also hath seen (my desire) on mine enemies, Mine ears have heard (my desire) of the evil-doers that rise up against me.

[Pss 92:12] The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

[Pss 92:13] They are planted in the house of Jehovah; They shall flourish in the courts of our God.

[Pss 92:14] They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; They shall be full of sap and green:

[Pss 92:15] To show that Jehovah is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

I. Gratitude for God's goodness (vss. 1-5)

II. The unregenerated unable to read the signs of the times (vss. 6-9)

III. The flourishing of the righteous in the Kingdom Age (vss. 10-15)

A VISION OF THE FUTURE

It is in God that we live, move, and have our continual being. Apart from Him we are nothing and can do nothing. We are utterly dependent upon Him for everything. Should He withdraw His power and blessing from us, we would pass out into eternity.

The Lord has a plan and purpose which runs through the ages. It began before the creation of the world, is unfolding through time, and will continue to enlarge and develop throughout all the ages of the ceaseless eternity before us. During time the Lord is working especially in behalf of those who yield their hearts to Him and trust Him.

The farther we advance toward the end of the age, the more wickedness and crime increase. The Scriptures do not hold out any rosy picture of a converted world prior to the coming of our Lord. The increase of wickedness throughout the world is one of the signs of the times as we all shall see later.

Out beyond the great Tribulation, as we learn from many passages of scripture, there lies the great, glorious Kingdom Age during which our Lord Jesus Christ shall sit upon the throne of David and shall reign from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. At that time joy and gladness will be in evidence on every hand.

All of these statements are expressions of great biblical truths, which are acknowledged by all who know God and the Lord Jesus Christ. These great principles find expression in our present psalm, to which we shall now turn for investigation.

I. Gratitude for God's goodness (vss. 1-5)

In the beginning of this psalm the writer states that it is a good thing to give thanks to Jehovah, to sing praises to God, to show forth His loving-kindness in the morning, and His faithfulness every night. This, according to the psalmist, should be done, "With an instrument of ten strings, and with the psaltery; With a solemn sound upon the harp."

Man's first step away from God was ingratitude. Unthankfulness is base. Distorted indeed is the mind that fails to recognize the goodness and the mercy of the Almighty. It is a good thing to return thanks, to sing God's praises and to worship Him. It is good for man. It gets him in tune with his maker so that he can approach Him in faith in the proper spirit. Let us not think that the good which is derived from such spiritual exercise is solely the reflex influence. Of course such spiritual exercise has its reaction upon the individual, but what the psalmist is talking about is one's coming in the proper attitude of heart and soul in order that he might worship God acceptably and thus receive the smile of approval of his Maker.

We should return thanks to God; we should praise Him in song; and we should show forth every morning His loving-kindness or grace and His faithfulness in the evening as we have observed it through the day. In other words, the family altar should be erected in every home and should be maintained all the time.

The psalmist believed in worshipping God upon various instruments, but he wanted those who thus approach God to worship in the proper spirit. Instrumental music in the worship of God--in the home and in the Temple service--was authorized by the Lord: "And he (Hezekiah) set the Levites in the house of Jehovah with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet; for the commandment was of Jehovah by his prophets" (II Chron. 29:25).

The Psalmist wished the people of God to praise Him because he was made glad by the activity and work of the Almighty. Hear him: "For thou, Jehovah, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of Thy hands."

David was in the habit of worshipping God early in the morning, of keeping the Lord ever before his face during his wakeful hours, of looking back over the day at eventide, and of recognizing the faithfulness of God in protecting and guiding him during the busy hours. Thus in that meditative, worshipful spirit he could see the invisible, unseen hand of God as He had worked in his behalf and in behalf of the people of God during that day. His heart was therefore glad. Moreover, he asserted that he would triumph in the

works of God's hand. He recognized that he of himself would fail. Only the providential protection, guidance, and assistance of the Almighty will make one triumph.

In verse 5 we read this statement:

"How great are thy works, O Jehovah! Thy thoughts are very deep."

In this statement the psalmist is looking at the great plan and purpose of God which is referred to by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 3:11, and which is constantly unfolding through the ages. This plan began before the foundation of the world. Throughout time it is being unfolded and will come to fruition in the Millennium.

II. The unregenerated unable to read signs of the times (vss. 6-9)

Since, in the verse just noted, the plan of God which runs through the centuries was mentioned, naturally the psalmist in the following section, verses 6-9, thinks of the end of this age and the moral and spiritual conditions which will exist then. Moreover, in prophetic vision he sees the situation of the end-time. Those who are acquainted with the prophetic word--that found in the Old Testament and also in the New--realize that wickedness will culminate in the end of this age and that evil will find its greatest expression.

All the great thinkers of our day recognize the fact that evil, wickedness, and sin are stalking forth in the broad open daylight everywhere. They recognize that there has been a collapse of the spiritual and moral forces of our civilization. Many of them have become alarmed over the situation and can see only disaster ahead. The psalmist informs us that "A brutish man knoweth not; Neither doth a fool understand this: When the wicked spring as the grass, And when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; It is that they shall be destroyed for ever" (vss. 6,7).

Who is the "brutish man" mentioned in this passage? The answer is that he is the one who is living on the level of the brute creation. Spoken of in terms of New Testament teaching, he is the unregenerate, unsaved man. He is guided by his instincts, his fleshly nature, and depraved desires. Such people, declared the psalmist, cannot and do not recognize the imminent danger that threatens the world when wickedness springs forth on every hand. This is in perfect accord with God's dealings with men who refuse to do His will. For instance, God would not allow the children of Israel to take possession of the Holy Land until the native Canaanites had filled up the cup of their iniquity to overflowing. (See Genesis 15:12-21.) Again we see the same principle operative in the case of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, to whom the Lord addressed these words: "When thou hast made an end of dealing treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee" (Isa. 33:1).

According to the prophetic word God will allow wickedness to come to its highest expression. He will permit men to continue their own chosen, self-willed ways until they go beyond the hope of redemption. Then He will send His judgments upon them and purge the world of such sinners. This He will do in preparing for the period of righteousness which will follow.

According to verse 9 these hardened sinners will be inveterate enemies of the Lord:

"For, lo, thine enemies, O Jehovah, For, lo, thine enemies shall perish;
All the workers of iniquity shall be scattered."

These men will not only be sinners, but they will also be confirmed enemies of God, of the Messiah, and of all that is right, good, and holy. When this condition exists all over the world, the time will have arrived for God to blot such men from the face of the globe. On this point the writer in Psalm 119:126 said,

"It is time for Jehovah to work; *For* they have made void thy law."

The heathen have rejected or refused to accept the revelation of God. In the ranks of Christendom there has arisen a mighty force of men and women who have accepted wholeheartedly the destructive criticism of the Bible and have made null the Word of God. When this attitude becomes the prevailing one, according to this verse, it is "time for Jehovah to work"--to purge the world of all the wicked.

III. The flourishing of the righteous in the Kingdom Age (vss. 10-15)

Following the purging judgments of the Tribulation will come the great Kingdom Era when the curse will be lifted and the glory of God will encircle the earth as the waters cover the sea. In verse 10 we find the psalmist looking forward to that glorious time when he will live with all the redeemed of the past ages. He therefore declared:

"But my horn hast thou exalted like *the horn* of the wild-ox: I am anointed with fresh oil."

What does the writer mean by the word "horn"? Sometimes it is used symbolically as in Daniel, chapter 7, to indicate a king, a ruler. At other times it simply means strength or power as in Psalm 75:10. In this verse the horns, or the powers, of the wicked are cut off, whereas the horns, the power and strength, of the righteous are lifted up. It seems quite evident that Psalm 92:10 uses the word "horn" in the latter sense, since the statement in which it appears is parallel to the clause, "I am anointed with fresh oil." The psalmist therefore looked beyond this life to the time of the resurrection when he will have his resurrection body with all its power. Moreover, he will be anointed afresh, with the Spirit of God; and thus be strengthened in his soul. At the present time we have our weaknesses in our bodies and spirits, which are now subject to the conditions prevailing while the curse is resting upon all mankind and upon the world. Then, however, in our resurrection bodies our redeemed spirits will enjoy strength, power, and vitality far beyond our fondest expectations. Such seems to be the interpretation demanded by the facts of this context studied in the light of related passages.

The psalmist declared that he will look back, at that future time, upon the time when God's vengeance has been executed against his enemies. He will not delight simply in the fact that the vengeance of God has been wrought upon them but because of the fact that righteousness and holiness will have at that time been vindicated by the strokes of judgment of the Almighty's hand.

Our writer, in verse 12, thinks of the righteous, who will still be in their mortal bodies, in the great Millennium Age as palm trees which flourish and the cedars of Lebanon which thrive. I have seen the stately palms in Egypt and the mighty cedars in Lebanon. To the psalmist's readers these two trees were emblems of strength, power, opportunity and blessing.

Then, according to verse 13, these righteous ones who are thus symbolized by the palm tree and the cedar are planted in the house of Jehovah and "flourishing in the courts of our God." The redeemed, with their resurrection bodies will be indeed like plants in the most favorable situation, which flourish and bear fruit. The environment in which the redeemed will live will be that of the place and atmosphere of the worship

of Almighty God. The Temple which will exist in the city of Jerusalem during the Millennium will be a house of prayer for all the nations.

Those who will be living during the Millennial Age here in the flesh will bring forth fruit in old age. Those who will be admitted, at the judgment of the nations (Matt. 25:31-46), into the kingdom will live throughout the thousand years' reign of our Lord. But like trees in full vigor and strength they will bear fruit in old age--as long as they still remain in the flesh. God will thus give them life, strength, and power to bear fruit in old age in order to show that Jehovah is upright and that He loves His people.

"They still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be full of sap and green:

To show that Jehovah is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him."

(vss. 14,15).

He is our Rock and there is no unrighteousness in Him. He is absolutely holy, righteous, and just. Throughout the world His marvelous character will be shown to all who live at that time. For the first time in the annals of history then it will be *fully* recognized that God is a righteous and holy Being.