

and the righteousness of an individual. 6) Satan tempts the righteous. 7) Some people might serve the Lord for gain. 8) The truly righteous do not serve God for gain. 9) The Lord does not permit Satan to tempt us above that which we are able (I Corinthians 10:13). 10) The power of God is greater than the power of Satan. 11) Eternal life is greater than physical life. 12) Suffering has spiritual benefits. 13) God is above man. 14) Man cannot question, nor judge God. 15) Suffering makes us question many things. 16) God is just. 17) The creation of God shows the wisdom of God. 18) People do not always have the right answer to the problems of life. 19) God always has the answer for all problems. 20) Faith in God is often rewarded by physical blessings in this life. There are numerous other benefits that we can mention, but these will suffice to give us a deeper insight into the book of Job. For further study read the handouts distributed. This material is taken from the LIVING MESSAGES OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. It was the Spiritual Sword Lectureship of 1977.

## THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The book of Psalms was written by various authors. Almost half of them were penned by David the king. Each individual psalm is a unit in itself. Very few of the psalms are written in such a way that there is a continuous flow of thought or history through more than one of them. The psalms concern themselves with various subjects. Many were used in worship to God during the Old Testament times.

### PSALM 1

This psalm simply sets forth the differences between the righteous and the unrighteous. The righteous are characterized by studying the word of God and by a fruitful tree. The unrighteous are depicted as being like the chaff which the wind drives away. They shall not stand (endure) the judgment, but shall perish.

### PSALM 2

This psalm contrasts the ways of the heathen with the ways of the Lord. The rulers of the earth set themselves against the Lord, but the Lord's will shall prevail. Note the Messianic references in vs.2 to the Lord's anointed, in vs.6 to the king of Zion, in vs.8-9 to the rod of iron, and in vs. 12 to the Son.

### PSALM 3

This psalm was written by David and may have been penned while David was fleeing from Absalom his son (cf. II Samuel 15ff). In the psalm the writer informs us that the Lord is against his enemies, but he is a shield to those who cry unto him for his aid. God is the deliverer even in the midst of thousands of enemies. Salvation belongs to the Lord and his blessing upon his people. [NOTE: The word 'selah' which appears throughout the psalms is a Hebrew term whose meaning is somewhat uncertain. It may have been used as a signal in worship for voices to be lifted up.]

### PSALM 4

This psalm exhibits trust in the Lord. He (i.e. the Lord) responds to those who are godly in his sight, to those who call upon him. Prayer is exalted in this psalm (vs.4), and so is the offering of sacrifices (vs.5). Trust is to be placed in God and not in men. Trusting in God enables the writer to lay down in peace (a common theme in the psalms).

### PSALM 5

Psalm 5 is another prayer offered to God. In the prayer the psalmist exalts prayer and exhibits a constant prayerful attitude (vs.3). God is praised as a God who hates evil and rewards righteousness. The wicked's destruction is mentioned, but those who trust in the Lord will be able to rejoice in their blessings for the Lord protects them as a shield.

### PSALM 6

This psalm is a prayer for mercy and deliverance. Note the degree to which the psalmist (David) sorrows for his sins. He is in tears, he is groaning, he is in grief, and his eyes are sore from sorrow. He seeks to be separated from workers of iniquity and he expresses confidence that the Lord heard and received his prayer.

PSALM 7

Here is another prayer for deliverance from one's enemies. Trust in God is again mentioned. Justice of God is called for. The wicked are to be judged according to their deeds, which in many cases will fall back upon them. God tries the hearts and reins (kidneys) of all people. The righteous place their defense in God and praise him according to his righteousness.

PSALM 8

This psalm is one of praise for the glory of God and the honor given to man by God. God is extolled as the great creator of the universe who is concerned with his ultimate creation on this earth, man. Man is pictured as observing the creation and giving praise and glory to God because of the wisdom exhibited therein. Man is also honored in that he is placed above the creation. Note that a portion of this psalm is quoted in Hebrews 2 and is applied unto the Christ.

PSALM 9

This is another psalm which discusses the justice of the Lord. The Lord is described as eternal and righteous in his judgments. He is a refuge to the oppressed, he remembers the cry of the humble, he aids the poor and he shows mercy unto those who seek him. The wicked are spoken of as being captured in their own traps. The writer closes by asking the Lord to put all men in fear that they may know themselves to be only as men.

PSALM 10

This is but one of the many psalms that is a prayer for the overthrow of the wicked. They are sometimes referred to as imprecatory psalms. The wicked are portrayed as the enemies of the righteous and of the Lord. Their overthrow is not sought after for personal vengeance, but for the justice of the Lord to be handed out.

PSALM 11

Trust in God is exalted in this psalm. The wicked ways of the unrighteous are again mentioned. The trials of all mankind are discussed. God is said to hate the wicked and love the righteous.

PSALM 12

The Lord is sought in time of need. The lies of the children of men are denounced. The Lord is described as being willing to help the oppressed, the poor and the needy. His words are described as pure, like silver tried and purified seven times.

PSALM 13

This psalm is similar to the cry that the Christians were making in Revelation 6 as they were under the altar awaiting for the judgment upon the wicked. Man must learn to be patient with reference to these matters. God has assured us that judgment will come. We must trust in his mercy, rejoice in his salvation, and sing to the Lord for he has dealt bountifully with us.

PSALM 14

The foolishness of men is discussed in this Psalm. Some men say that there is not a God, but those men are fools. Men should seek God (Acts 17), for this is what God intended man to do upon this earth. Men carry on their lives without knowledge of God and without seeking God as their refuge. The last verse speaks of the salvation of Israel, and the salvation which was to come out of Zion.

PSALM 15

This psalm simply depicts the way of life of those righteous who are said to abide in the tabernacle of God.

PSALM 16

In this psalm David prays for preservation. Trust is placed in God by the author. Idolatry is condemned. The psalmist thanks God for his heritage, the counsel of God and the joy which God gives. Note that verse 8 and verse 10 are Messianic in nature. The latter is quoted by Peter in Acts 2 as one of the proofs of the divinity of Jesus the Christ.

PSALM 17

David prays for protection against his oppressors. He states that he is doing the will of the Lord by: purposing not to sin and keeping from the paths of the destroyer. He prays that God will be with him that he does not slip. He prays for the mercy of God. He prays that God will keep him from his enemies and that God will judge his enemies.

PSALM 18

This somewhat longer psalm is another one devoted to thanking God for deliverance given to David. God is described in many terms which depict him as the protector and deliverer (e.g. rock, strength, fortress, et al.). Further mention is made of the rewards given to the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. Throughout the psalm God is praised for his help.

PSALM 19

The psalmist declares the glory of God in this psalm in view of 1) the creation of God and 2) the word of God. The wisdom of God is again exalted. The psalmist prays that his life might be in harmony with the will of God.

PSALM 20

In this psalm we see a prayer for victory and the assurance of divine help for his people. God will hear his people in the day of trouble and will deliver them because they trust in him and not in chariots and horses.

PSALM 21

This psalm is a thanksgiving for past victories and an assurance of future victories. The psalmist thanks God for the blessings bestowed upon him in this life. Again, trust is mentioned as being placed in the Lord by the king (David).

PSALM 22

In this psalm we see the writer thinking that he is forsaken. He is scorned by men, encompassed about by wild animals. He is being tormented. He prays for deliverance and receives it, after which he praises the Lord who offers salvation to all. Note vs. 16-18 and vs. 22 which are Messianic in nature. Verse 22 is quoted in Hebrews 2:12.

PSALM 23

This is by far the most popular of the psalms. In this psalm, commonly called the shepherd's psalm, we note that the Lord is depicted as a provider (shepherd). He is not just any kind of provider, but he is a provider that sees our needs are met even in the midst of adversity. With him as our guide we lack nothing.

PSALM 24

In this psalm the Lord is described as the creator. The people who are his are of such a character that they stand in his holy place. The last part of the psalm depicts a scene in which God is portrayed as a king who enters into the gates of the city with great glory.

PSALM 25

In this psalm we see another prayer for guidance and protection. God's way is sought. God's way is made plain. A prayer is offered for deliverance. The nature of those who seek God is set forth. God's way is described as pure and upright. God will teach those who seek him of his way.

PSALM 26

David prays for divine help from the Lord. He defends himself as one who has done right in the sight of the Lord, and then makes a final request for help.

PSALM 27

In the first part of this psalm the writer expresses his confidence in the Lord. In the last part of the psalm he expresses a desire for the Lord to help him. Note the emphasis given to the author's desire to seek the way of the Lord (vs. 4) and to learn the paths of the Lord (vs. 11).

PSALM 28

David prays for help from the Lord and expresses confidence that the Lord will answer his prayer. He asks for justice upon all mankind and deliverance for those who remain righteous in God's sight.

PSALM 29

The first part of this psalm is a summons for the reader and the hearer to give glory unto the Lord. The next part of the psalm depicts the power of the word of the Lord. The psalm closes with this powerful God granting a blessing to his people in peace.

PSALM 30

This psalm is another psalm of praise for deliverance. David thanks the Lord for delivering him from his enemies. He further exhorts others to praise the Lord. Note again that the psalmist is confident that the Lord responds to his supplication. God has turned David's mourning to joy.

PSALM 31

This is another one of the many psalms which encourage trust in God and request deliverance from some difficult situation. Many of those situations are alluded to in the middle of this psalms which David was delivered out of. The last part of the psalm encourages the saints to praise the Lord for delivering them in their times of need.

PSALM 32

This psalm speaks about forgiveness. The blessedness of those who are forgiven is mentioned in the opening part of the chapter. Then the confession of sin and forgiveness is portrayed. Last, the writer encourages all to repent and confess their sins in order to obtain forgiveness from the Lord. When this is done all are able to truly rejoice.

PSALM 33

In this psalm the writer gives exhortation to praise God. He gives reasons for praising God: 1) God is the creator of heaven and earth, 2) he is a God who provides for his own, and 3) he is the deliverer of his people. Note the power of the word of God in vs.6ff.

PSALM 34

This psalm is a psalm of praise and trust. We note that the psalmist gives praise for the goodness of God. We note that he exhorts the reader and the hearer to trust and seek the Lord. The psalmist gives a warning against sin. The writer depicts the deliverance of the righteous and the condemnation of the wicked. Note that vs. 20 is quoted in John 19:36 as a prophetic utterance that deals with the Christ.

PSALM 35

This psalm is another prayer for help. The psalmist (David) prays for help in the midst of persecution. He prays for help from slanderers and he prays for help from those who hate him.

PSALM 36

In this psalm the psalmist speaks about the steadfast love of God. Though man is sinful and sin is abomination in the sight of the Lord, God is still able to be good and gracious unto those who seek him.

PSALM 37

In this psalm David exhibits wisdom with regard to the wicked and the righteous and their separate rewards. The righteous will prosper, but the wicked will be cut off. A comparison is then made between the lives of the righteous and the lives of the wicked. Finally, we note that the deliverance and the security of the righteous is sure.

PSALM 38

This psalm is the prayer of a penitent heart. In this plea for mercy we note that the condition of sin is extremely separated from the will of God. We note that the penitent exhibits a desire for deliverance, and then we note the confidence that is placed in God.

PSALM 39

This psalm is a prayer for self-understanding. The writer expresses his weaknesses and then seeks the Lord to forgive him of his sins.

PSALM 40

This psalm is another psalm of praise. The psalmist praises God for answering prayer. He acknowledges that God delivers him out of trouble and that God is good. He speaks of his grateful obedience. He offers a prayer for mercy and grace.

PSALM 41

This psalm deals with compassion. God is praised for his compassion upon the poor. The psalmist talks about the malice of those who call themselves friends. He speaks about the vindication of his integrity and praises God the eternal of Israel.

PSALM 42

This psalm speaks about the sorrow and the consolation of the godly. First, sorrow of separation is discussed. Then the consolation and the hope of the godly is portrayed as being in God.

PSALM 43

This short psalm is a prayer for deliverance from the ungodly.

PSALM 44

This is another psalm that deals with deliverance. The psalmist acknowledges deliverance in times past due to the mercy of God. He states the need for such mercy in the present situation, and then he prays for God to deliver him.

PSALM 45

This psalm deals with the marriage of a king. The first part of the psalm speaks of the rule of the king and his majesty. The later part of the psalm speaks about the wedding celebration. Note that in vs. 6, 7, and 17 Messianic references are made. Christ was to be the King of Kings (Is.53) that reigned forever.

PSALM 46

In this psalm God is exalted as the refuge of the righteous, the strength of the righteous, and the victory of the righteous. All nations are encouraged to "Be still and know that I am God."

PSALM 47

In this psalm God is depicted as the king of all the earth. All nations are subdued by the power of God and he reigns over all of the earth. As a result God is to be praised by all peoples.

PSALM 48

This psalm is a psalm of Zion (Jerusalem). Zion is depicted as a city of God. The establishment of Zion is mentioned. Zion is described as praising God. Jerusalem occupied a place of great importance in the Bible. It was the center of religious worship in the Old Testament, and the origin of the church in the New Testament.

PSALM 49

This psalm is a short sermon on the foolishness of trusting in riches. First, the people are summoned to pay attention. Second, the limitations of wealth are mentioned. Third, the end of those who trust in wealth is portrayed. Last, a final exhortation is given for the people to be obedient to God.

PSALM 50

This psalm discusses true and false religion. God is seen to be the judge between the two. God is seen to judge the intent and not just the outward form. Hypocrisy is rebuked. The conclusion is that all should remember and glorify God.

PSALM 51

This is another psalm in which David expresses a penitent attitude. This psalm is considered to have been written to deal specifically with the sin committed with Bath-Sheba. Note David's strong desire to be forgiven. Note that he realizes that sin is first and foremost against God. He confesses his sin and seeks to create within him a new heart. At the end of the psalm he praises God.

PSALM 52

This psalm contains a word of caution to the pride of the wicked. A description of those who are misusers of the tongue and those who trust in riches is given. Ultimate trust is to be placed in God. The saints of God are likened unto a tree which is nourished by God.

PSALM 53

This psalm is almost the same as psalm 14. The foolishness of men is depicted in both of these psalms. God is depicted as being the salvation of Israel.

PSALM 54

Psalm 54 is another prayer for divine protection. Note that the psalmist depends upon God for strength. He will be judged according to God's strength and not his own. God is identified as his (the psalmist's) helper who delivers him out of ALL trouble.

PSALM 55

David, in this psalm, prays for deliverance from deceitful friends. Note that these friends were close to David (vs.13), but that their outward actions did not truly represent their inward motives (vs.21ff). God is shown to be the ultimate judge of all men, and David faithfully places his trust in him (i.e. God)

PSALM 56

Again we notice another prayer for help. Note the picture given of those enemies of the writer; they would swallow him up. In the midst of this trouble, the psalmist places his trust in God. God knows of his troubles, his tears and his thoughts. God will deliver him out persecution. As a result, the psalmist continues to praise the word of God, place his trust in God, and have no fear of his enemies.

PSALM 57

This psalm constitutes another prayer for deliverance. David was troubled several times during his life. Initially, he became king over part of the promised land and then over all of the land. In the meantime there were men who did not readily recognize him as king. Prior to becoming king he was persecuted by Saul. After becoming king he was troubled by his own son. In the midst of just such persecutions, David wrote many of these psalms. This one again teaches us of the trust that David placed in God. Note that in vs.7 David's heart was "fixed" (i.e. determined, set) to serve God and to give him praise and glory.

PSALM 58

This psalm is a denunciation of those who are wicked. Remember that God hates every evil way. Those who are faithful to God should hate every evil way as well. This does not, of course, indicate that we hate the perpetrators of such evil. We are to love all men enough to be willing to teach them of the saving truth of God's word. This psalm, like many others, simply calls out for the divine judgment against the wicked.

PSALMS 59

This psalm is another prayer for deliverance and request for judgment upon the wicked. Note that David said that these things would cause people to know that God ruleth in Jacob (vs.13). Oftentimes the wrath of God is spoken of as being that which causes men and women to change their lives. It is in this sense that David speaks of God and his wrath in vs.13. Notice again the trust which David places in God.

PSALM 60

This psalm is a prayer for help against the foes of the writer. Notice that the beginning of the psalm informs us that God had previously been against them, but that the writer realized that continued and renewed faithfulness in the ways of the Lord would once again bring the help of the Lord against their enemies.

PSALM 61

This psalm is a psalm of praise. Note the confidence expressed with regard to the answering of prayer by God. God is depicted as a rock of safety, a shelter, a strong tower, and a protective bird. God responds to the prayers of the faithful. The faithful are to sing praise unto the Lord.

PSALM 62

God is again portrayed as the strength and refuge of the faithful. It is through God that salvation comes. He is our defense; in him we should be steadfast. We should always place our trust upon God and pour our hearts before him (cf. Proverbs 3; I Peter 5). We are to be righteous people, not of low or high degree. God will judge every man according to his work (cf. II Cor.5:10).

PSALM 63

Matthew 5:6 tells us that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled. Here we note that David thirsts after God. Note also that Job 2:4 tells us that Satan said that a man will give anything in exchange for his life. Here (vs.3) we see that David says (by inspiration) that the loving-kindness of God is better than life. Satan's statement in Job was wrong. Notice also the attention given to prayer in this psalm. In the first verse David says he seeks God early, in verse 6 he says that he will remember God upon his bed and in the night watches. We are to keep God in our thoughts at all times (cf. Deut.6:4-9; 11:18-21).

PSALM 64

In this psalm we see the ways of the evil described in detail. The wicked: 1) engage in secret counsel against the righteous, 2) whet their tongues like swords, 3) have bitter words like arrows, 4) encourage themselves in evil matters, 5) commune of laying snares privately thinking no one will see them, 6) scheme to do evil, and 7) have their own words fall back upon themselves. The righteous are to trust in and be glad in the Lord.

PSALM 65

This entire psalm is a praise of God. God's power is exalted in his creation. In this psalm we note that God 1) hears prayer, 2) provides salvation, 3) is girded with power, 4) stills the seas, 5) provides for the earth, 6) gives water, 7), provides for prosperity, 8) prepares corn, and 9) God is seen in his creation.

PSALM 66

This psalm is similar to the previous one. God is praised because of the magnificence of his works in creation, and because of his works in behalf of the children of the children of Israel. Note that the writer indicates that God tried them as silver is tried, but that he also brought them through their trials into a wealthy place. As a result of God's blessings, the psalmist is devoted to worshiping the Lord.

PSALM 67

This brief psalm is one devoted to encouraging praise for God. Note again the emphasis on God and his way being made known upon the earth to all nations. Verses 4ff teach the same principle that is found in Proverbs 14:34.

PSALM 68

In this psalm God is praised, his past deliverances provided for Israel are enumerated, and the work which he presently does in behalf of Israel is depicted. God is shown to be a God that always goes before his people. Like the cloud and fire that lead Israel through the wilderness, God guides the nation of Israel and provides for them. As a result, the nation that was in bondage to Egypt grew to become a nation that was exalted in the eyes of other nations. All nations witnessed the glory of God as he dealt with them through the agency of the Jewish nation. [Note vs.19. Compare it to Matthew 6:11.]

PSALM 69

The writer depicts himself in the midst of distress. He is sinking in mire. The floods are overflowing upon him. He is tired of crying. His throat is dry, and he seems to be losing hope. Even in the midst of such distress the psalmist turns to the Lord. He can deliver him about of the mire. He can keep him from sinking in sin and shame. He can keep the floods of sin away from him. Not only does he do that, but he also provides for the things that we need. He removes us from where we ought not to be and he places us where we ought to be. The psalmist recognizes this and praises God for his deliverance.

PSALM 70

In this short psalm we see another prayer for deliverance. The psalmist requests deliverance, speaks about the sins of the wicked, and encourages the faithful to seek God and to be glad in him (i.e. God). God is his help and his deliverer.

PSALM 71

This psalm is one that seems to have been written in old age (vs.18). The writer asks that the Lord might continue to watch over him in his last days just as he did so in the days of his youth. The psalmist is full of praise for the Lord and active in speaking that praise to others (vs.6, 8, 14, 15, 17, 23, 24).

PSALM 72

This psalm is a prayer by David for his son Solomon. Though many of these verses apply expressly to Solomon, many of them apply to the coming Christ as well. Note that the psalmist says that 1) he shall judge the poor, 2) he shall have dominion, 3) all nations shall serve him, 4) he shall deliver the needy, 5) men shall be blessed in him, etc. These passages refer not only to Solomon, but also to the Christ.

PSALM 73

The subject of the prosperity of the wicked is discussed in this psalm. The writer was at one point envious of the foolish when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. Then he saw that they (the prosperous wicked) were 1) covered with a chain of pride; 2) covered with a garment of violence, 3) corrupt, 4) lofty speakers, 5) set against the earth, 6) in slippery places. When they awaken out of their dreams, they will have to face reality. Though the writer was plagued and chastened frequently, it was good for him to trust in God and to draw nigh to him. He trusted in God and therefore was able to declare his works (God's works).

PSALM 74

This psalm is very similar to some of the ones that we have previously discussed. The writer is concerned about the oppression of the righteous and he is wondering how long this oppression is going to continue. In this sense the psalm is comparable to Revelation 6. In the psalm the writer provides us with accounts of the wickedness that were being committed by the heathen. In the midst of the enemy the writer seeks deliverance from God. Note that in closing the psalmist asked God to "plead thine own cause". He did not ask for God to plead his (i.e. the writer's) cause. This evidences that fact that the writer sought for God's will to be done and not his own. Hopefully, his will would be in harmony with God's.

PSALM 75

This psalm is a warning to the wicked. They are admonished not to exalt themselves, but rather to realize that God is the judge. They will not ultimately prosper unless they are right in God's sight. The writer closes by giving praise to God.

PSALM 76

In this psalm God is presented as being truly praiseworthy. Many Bible passages tell us that we ought to praise God because praise is due God. This psalm speaks of God's glory which encourages man to praise God. That glory is seen in God's creation and in the events which God involved himself in for the benefit of Israel. The psalmist closes by saying that God "ought to be feared". There should be not excuse for anyone not to fear the Lord.

PSALM 77

This psalm also continues to praise God. The writer recalls the works of the Lord in the past; he remembers how God delivered Israel. He concludes that there is no God as the God.

PSALM 78

This psalm provides us with a brief history of Israel. The first section of the chapter is a reminder of God's goodness to Israel. All of his laws which were made known were done so in order that those laws might be taught to the people and to their future generations. When God delivered them out of the land of bondage, Israel, rather than



remaining faithful to God, fell away and forgot God. When Israel did this, they were punished by God. When he slew them, then they remembered...but only for a little while, for they soon forgot again. They tempted God and provoked him. As a result, Israel was punished. Throughout all of this, the righteous who always sought to serve the Lord were spared.

### PSALM 79

This psalm is another prayer for deliverance in the midst of persecution. Israel had become a reproach to their neighbors; they had lost all of their respect. The writer asks that the Lord might not hold their iniquities against them, but to forgive them according to his tender mercies. He asks that the heathen might receive their due reward. He closes with words of praise.

### PSALM 80

In this psalm the writer pens a prayer for the restoration of Israel. Note the illustration given in verses 8ff about the vine which was brought out of Egypt. God prepared that vine; he prepared the land for it, he caused it to take deep root and allowed it to fill the land. Now that the vine (Israel) sinned, God pruned it...and, the writer requests that Israel might once again be restored in the face of God. "Turn us again, O God, and cause they face to shine; and we shall be saved."

### PSALM 81

This psalm provides us with a contrast of God's goodness to Israel's unfaithfulness. God provided for Israel. He delivered them from Egypt and told them not to have any other gods, but Israel did not hearken unto the words of the Lord. Therefore, the Lord gave them up. Had they continued to be obedient the Lord would have continued to be with them against their enemies and they would have continued to prosper.

### PSALM 82

This short psalm is a prayer for righteous judgment. God is depicted as being first among all things. It is he that judgeth all the strong ones. It is he that will defend the poor and fatherless and deliver the poor and needy. Note that man is referred to as gods and children of the Most High. Compare this with John 10:34. God is to inherit all nations.

### PSALM 83

This is another prayer for the destruction of the enemies of Israel. The enemies of Israel are depicted as plotting the ultimate demise of God's chosen people. Therefore, the writer asks that God might judge them for these evil plans and he has judged those who sought to fight Israel in the past. Notice again that the psalmist includes that this might cause them to seek thy name (vs.16) and that they may know that Jehovah is the Most High over all the earth (vs.18).

### PSALM 84

This psalm exalts the privilege of worship to God. Note that the psalmist states that 1) he longs and faints for the courts of the Lord, 2) those who dwell in the house of the Lord are blessed, 3) a day in the house of the Lord is better than a thousand days out of his house, and 4) it would be better to be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Surely we as Christians should desire to worship God as much as and even more than this writer desired to do so. God is our sun and shield. He lights and protects the way for us. He provides us with grace and glory and withholds no good thing from them that walk uprightly. The man that trusts in him is blessed indeed.

### PSALM 85

This psalm informs us of the previous mercies of the Lord in that he forgave Israel for their past sins. The writer acknowledges that fact and then requests that the Lord will once again forgive their sins so that they might be restored in his sight.

### PSALM 86

This prayer unto God shows us the abundant blessings which are available to the righteous.

God can 1) cause the souls of his servants to rejoice, 2) forgive us of our sins, 3) hear our prayers, 4) answer our prayers, 5) deliver us from our problems, 6) be long-suffering toward us, 7) be gracious toward us, 8) be plenteous in mercy and truth toward us, 9) give us strength, and 10) teach us of his ways. Man has the responsibility to avail himself of these great blessings.

### PSALM 87

This brief psalm exalts the glory of the city of Zion (Jerusalem).

### PSALM 88

This psalm is a cry for deliverance from death. The writer is in a despairing situation and he pleads that the Lord might relieve him of it. Verses 10ff are rhetorical questions; the writer does not intend to promote that the Lord will show wonders unto the dead in their graves.

### PSALM 89

This entire psalm concerns itself with the promises of God as made to David concerning the covenant of the everlasting kingdom. The writer praises God for his strength and the glory of his creation. He speaks about the choosing of David and his establishment and his reign as king over the nation of Israel. He explains the covenant which was made, but then he questions when the covenant will be restored. God promised to provide an everlasting crown, but at this time there was not any king. The psalmist asks how long this state will continue before the Lord will restore the covenant. [NOTE: The Lord did not break his covenant when the nations of Israel (Israel and Judah) went into captivity. The covenant did not require a continuing line of physical kings upon a physical throne. The covenant's ultimate fulfillment came in the Christ who was to sit upon the spiritual throne of the kingdom. Prior to his time there was no physical king/kingdom of Israel.]

### PSALM 90

This psalm contrasts the eternality of God to the temporal nature of man. God is from everlasting to everlasting. Man's years and days are numbered. The psalmist requests that he (and all men) be taught to number (use) the days of his life so that he might apply his heart unto wisdom. Our lives are the purchase price that we give for our eternal destiny. If we use our lives in such a way as to merit eternal reward; that is what we will receive. If, on the other hand, we use our lives in such a way as to merit eternal condemnation, then that is what we will receive. It is up to us to use our days to the best possible advantage for our future destiny.

### PSALM 91

This psalm depicts the help of God for mankind. He is our Most High, our refuge, our fortress, the wing under which he hide and in which we trust, our shield, and our buckler. Because of the aid which God has given unto us we ought not to be afraid of the terrors that may come upon us. Note that vs.11ff are quoted by Satan in his temptation of Christ in Matthew 4.

### PSALM 92

This psalm is another psalm of praise. This one specifically praises God for his goodness. In addition to that the psalmist also speaks of the end (i.e. the ultimate end) of the wicked and the faithfulness of the righteous. Note that the righteous are again likened unto a tree, a symbol of steadfastness.

### PSALM 93

This entire psalm depicts the majesty of God. He is seen as clothed in strength and splendor. Because of his holiness, great praises are ascribed to him.

### PSALM 94

This psalm is similar to many of the previous psalms. In this psalm we note that an appeal is made to God for him to avenge the sins of the wicked. A cry for vengeance on the wicked is made. The rest of the psalm teaches that the Lord will not forsake his people. The psalmist closes the psalm by advocating all to seek the Lord as he sought the Lord.

PSALM 95

This psalm is a call to praise the Lord. The praises are to be sung and worship is to be given unto God. The psalm concludes with a warning to those who do not hearken to the commands of the psalm.

PSALM 96

This psalm contains the same basic thought as the previous psalm. A call is given to worship the Lord by singing praises unto him. All the earth is to praise the Lord, for he is the righteous judge.

PSALM 97

This psalm teaches of the power and the dominion of the Lord. His reign is spoken of as being over all of the earth. Therefore all the earth is to join in giving praises of exaltation to the Lord. The psalm concludes by stating that the Lord delivers the righteous from the hands of the wicked.

PSALM 98

This psalm is another call to praise the righteous Lord. The first part of the psalm contains a song of salvation. The next part contains a summons for men to praise God, and the last section contains a summons for the praise of nature for God.

PSALM 99

This is yet another psalm which speaks about giving praise to a holy God. The initial section contains the summons to praise God, and the latter section presents us with the reasons for such praise.

PSALM 100

This short psalm succinctly teaches that all men are to praise God. It is a psalm of exhortation.

PSALM 101

This psalm is a profession of integrity and honesty. David speaks about his desire for personal integrity and his desire for the integrity and honesty of others. All men are to be committed to holy living.

PSALM 102

This psalm is an appeal for mercy for the psalmist and for Zion (Jerusalem). The writer speaks of his own sufferings in the first portion of the psalm. He then praises God as the eternal God and the refuge for Zion and the faithful. He concludes by addressing God confident that deliverance will be given.

PSALM 103

This psalm is an exhortation to bless the Lord. The writer initially discusses the exhortation as it relates to himself. He states that the mercies of God are reason enough to bless him, and that God's love is an everlasting love. He concludes by uttering a universal call for all men to bless the name of Jehovah.

PSALM 104

This psalm gives praise to God for his creation and for his provisions for that creation. The psalm speaks about the beginning of creation, the foundations of the earth, the springs in the valleys, the fruitfulness of the earth, the moon and the sun, the creatures of the sea, God as the sustainer of life, and it concludes by giving praise to God as a mighty God.

PSALM 105

This psalm encourages men to give praise to God because he is a covenant-keeping God. The psalm speaks about the covenant made with Abraham, the story of Joseph, the account of Israel in Egypt, Moses and the ten plagues, the exodus from Egypt and the subsequent wanderings, and finally the settlement of Canaan by the children of Israel. Throughout all of these events God continued to be faithful to his promises.

PSALM 106

This psalm is a praise to God for the mercies that he has shown unto the sinful nation of

Israel. The psalm opens with a prayer for mercy. It then continues and presents a discussion of Israel's sin at the Red Sea, Israel's sins in the wilderness, the sin of Dathan and Abiram, the incident of the golden calf at Mt. Sinai, the refusal on the part of the nation of Israel to enter Canaan, their attachment of the false god Baal, the sin of Israel at Meribah, their idolatry in Canaan, and the punishments which Israel received as a result of their sinfulness. As the psalm closes, the mercy of God is mentioned and an appeal is made for the Lord to save Israel from among the nations.

#### PSALM 107

This psalm continues along the same lines of thoughts as the previous psalm. The psalm gives thanksgiving unto God because he is a delivering God. The psalm opens with a call to praise God. The psalm then mentions the deliverance which God provided from the wilderness of the desert, the deliverance from their troubles, the deliverance of the sick, the deliverance from the sea. God is pictured as being the Lord who blesses the earth. The psalm concludes by discussing the steadfast love of the Lord.

#### PSALM 108

This psalm is a psalm of confidence in God. The psalmist expresses thanksgiving to the Lord. The writer then pleads that God might keep his word. As the psalmist cries for help, he also exhibits the confidence that God will provide the requested help.

#### PSALM 109

This psalm is a psalm of cursing. The opening and closing sections of the psalm depict a cry for help, but in between the two lies the request that God might curse the wicked.

#### PSALM 110

This psalm is Messianic in nature. The Messiah is shown to be a king, a priest, and a judge. Several of these verses from this psalm are quoted in the New Testament. (cf. Mt. 22:44; Mk. 12:36; Acts 2:34; et al.)

#### PSALM 111

This psalm is another one which praises the Lord. The psalm opens with a call to praise. It then presents reasons for praising God, and then it concludes expressing the proper attitude toward praising God.

#### PSALM 112

This entire psalm provides us with another contrast of the lives of the wicked and the lives of the righteous. The righteous are those who will receive the reward which God has promised.

#### PSALM 113

This psalm is another psalm of praise to God. God's mercies are described as being numerous; no one else is like the Lord God. Because of these abundant mercies, all men are to praise God.

#### PSALM 114

This psalm commemorates the deliverance which God provided for Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt. This event, the deliverance of Israel from the "iron furnace" of Egypt is perhaps the greatest feat which God worked in behalf of the children of Israel.

#### PSALM 115

This psalm encourages the reader to give glory unto God. True glory belongs only to God. To worship idols is evil, Israel is therefore enjoined to trust in the Lord. As a result of Israel placing their trust in the Lord, they would be blessed.

#### PSALM 116

This psalm is another psalm giving thanksgiving unto the Lord for his acts of delivering Israel and the writer. An acknowledgment of God's deliverance is made in the opening section of the psalm. The writer then makes a resolution to pay his vows to the Lord.

#### PSALM 117

This brief psalm praises God for his steadfast love toward Israel.

PSALM 118

This psalm is another psalm of thanksgiving to the Lord. The love of the Lord is exalted in the opening section of this psalm. The following section depicts God's answering of prayer and his deliverance from persecution. The strength of the Lord is exalted, as well as his wisdom. The psalm closes with the writer saying that he will give thanks unto the Lord and extol him.

PSALM 119

This psalm is the longest of the psalms. It is divided into 22 separate sections of eight verses each. The letters which are presented preceding each of the sections correspond to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. It is as if the writer of the psalm was praising God from A-Z. In the 176 verses of this psalm constant reference is made to the law of the Lord. It is identified in numerous ways such as: the law, the word, commands, commandments, precepts, statutes, et al. In every verse, with the exception of one or two, reference is made to the laws of God. In discussing the law of God the psalmist teaches 1) the blessedness of those who keep the law, 2) the holiness which comes from keeping the law, 3) the necessity to keep one's eyes on the law, 4) the necessity of prayer to understand God's law, 5) the confidence and perseverance which comes from keeping God's commands, 6) the salvation which comes from the law of the Lord, 7) the source of hope and comfort which the law provides, 8) the fact that the law teaches that God is our helper, 9) how the law of God is learned through suffering, 10) fellowship based upon the commands of God, 11) the peace which results from keeping the laws of God, 12) the unchangingness of the law of God, 13) the love of God's laws, 14) the direction supplied by the precepts of God, 15) the refuge provided by the commands of God, 16) keeping the laws of the Lord, 17) the necessity of the grace of God in keeping the statutes of God, 18) the righteousness of the Lord and his laws, 19) the salvation within the laws, 20) the necessity of keeping the law of the Lord at all times, 21) prayer for deliverance from persecution, and 22) a prayer to continue to always keep the commandments of God. This psalm will provide the sincere Bible student with an abundance of material with reference to the blessings and attitudes that come from a proper respect of and appreciation for the laws of God.

PSALM 120

This brief psalm is a prayer for deliverance from those who lie and from those who hate peace.

PSALM 121

This psalm gives praise unto God for being the keeper of the writer. God keeps us from evil. He keeps our life. He keeps us always.

PSALM 122

This psalm is a prayer for the peace of the city of Jerusalem. Note the attitude of the writer when he speaks of the place of worship. He was glad to have the opportunity to be in the temple. The psalm concludes with a prayer for peace and prosperity in the city of Jerusalem.

PSALM 123

This brief psalm is another one which expresses confidence in God. The psalmist is shown to be always looking to God (cf. Col.3:1). The psalm concludes with a brief prayer for the continued mercy of God.

PSALM 124

This psalm is another psalm which gives thanksgiving to God for the miraculous deliverance which he has so frequently provided for Israel. It is God alone who delivered Israel from such difficulties as the bondage in Egypt and others. Praise is given to God because of his provision for Israel.

PSALM 125

This psalm presents God as the protector of his people. Just as the mountains are around the city of Jerusalem, so is God around his people. God will protect them from the wicked.

PSALM 126

This is yet another psalm thanking God for his deliverance. Israel was in captivity, but now they are returned to their land. Now they are laughing and singing, but before they were filled with sorrow and tears. That which was sown in tears now brings forth joy.

PSALM 127

This psalm sets forth the truth that all men need to rely upon God. Without God in a person's life, all of his (i.e. that person's) work is vanity. The last few verses of the psalm speak of the privilege of having children in this life. "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them:..."

PSALM 128

The fruits of faithfulness are depicted in this psalm. Those who fear the Lord are blessed. The individual who fears God is blessed, his home his blessed, and ultimately if all are like this, then the nation is blessed as well.

PSALM 129

This psalm expresses the thankfulness for the deliverance which the Lord has provided for the children of Israel. It also is a prayer in that it requests that the enemies of Israel might receive their reward.

PSALM 130

This psalm depicts the soul which waits upon the Lord. The request for help is made. Then the patient waiting takes place. During the period of waiting there is hope, and finally the fulfillment comes. Note vs. 3. Compare to Romans 3:23.

PSALM 131

This psalm teaches the necessity of humility in the lives of those who fear God. Our hearts are never to be lifted up, but rather we are to be quieted as a child is quieted at its mother's breast. Contentment and humility are very much related. The psalm closes with an admonition to hope in the Lord always.

PSALM 132

The ark of the covenant and David are the subjects of this psalm. Remembrance is made of the search for a permanent place for the ark to remain. David made a vow to provide for such a place. He fulfilled that vow. In addition to this, the psalm makes reference to the promise which God made to David and Israel about the everlasting kingdom.

PSALM 133

This psalm speaks of the goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity. This does not mean that all men everywhere are to consider one another as being brothers in Christ, nor does it mean that all who profess to be Christians are to be fellowshiped. Unity in fellowship is always predicated upon unity in truth. If brethren do not follow the prescribed principles and practices of New Testament work and worship, then unity of truth is not attained and subsequent unity of fellowship cannot be shared.

PSALM 134

This short psalm is a psalm of praise and a request for the Lord to bless those who stand by night in the house of the Lord.

PSALM 135

This psalm is another praise unto the Lord. The psalm opens with an exhortation to praise God. It then speaks about the greatness of the Lord and the deliverance which the Lord has so often provided. The Lord will vindicate his people and not those who are engaged in idolatry as many of the surrounding nations were. The psalm concludes with an exhortation for Israel to praise the Lord.

PSALM 136

This psalm is a praise given unto God for his eternal mercies. Reference is made to his past and present blessings manifested to Israel. The writer encourages thanksgiving to be given unto the Lord. He then praises God as the creator, as the deliverer of Israel, and praises God for his steadfast love. He closes with further thanksgiving.

PSALM 137

The children of Israel who were in exile in Babylon are presented in this psalm as mourning because they are no longer in their own land. Their present plight is discussed as well as their remembrance of Zion and their cry for vengeance.

PSALM 138

This is yet another psalm of praise unto the Lord. The psalmist states that he will praise the Lord with his whole heart and before all people. He acknowledges the faithfulness of God. He states that all men shall praise the Lord. He concludes with an expression of confidence in the faithfulness of the Lord.

PSALM 139

This psalm extols the greatness of God. It is the prayer of a believing heart. God is represented as being all-knowing and all-present. He is the God of the creation. In view of his vast greatness, the psalmist concludes by praying for the wicked and for himself as well.

PSALM 140

This is another prayer for deliverance. The psalmist prays for protection against his enemies. He petitions for deliverance from the wicked. He cries unto God for him to hear his prayer. He requests that God might judge the wicked, and then he closes by expressing confidence that the Lord will execute justice.

PSALM 141

This psalm is a prayer for help in times of trouble. An appeal is made to God. The writer prays for an upright heart and the judgment of the wicked. He concludes the psalm by stating that his eyes are ever upon the Lord and that in God he sought for refuge.

PSALM 142

This is yet another prayer for deliverance. An appeal is made to the Lord concerning the plight of the petitioner. He prays for deliverance from his "prison" and again expresses the sentiment that God was his refuge.

PSALM 143

This psalm is the prayer of a soul in distress. The psalmist complains about his current troubles and prays for deliverance from them. Notice is remembrance of the days of old and his meditation upon the works of the Lord. He request's that the Lord might teach him of his will. Note that the psalmist asks's that the Lord might quicken him for his (i.e. the Lord's) name's sake.

PSALM 144

In this psalm further praise is given unto God. God is praised because of his greatness. A request is made for help and deliverance and the prosperity of the righteous. The psalmist closes by saying "happy is that people, whose God is the Lord".

PSALM 145

In this psalm the greatness, graciousness, and the goodness of the Lord are those attributes of God which dictate that God is due the praise which he receives from mankind. All men are to praise the Lord.

PSALM 146

This psalm speaks about the blessedness of trusting in the Lord. The vanity of trusting in men is mentioned in the opening verses. In the latter part of the chapter it is contrasted with the wisdom of trusting in God. When man dies his plans perish, when God promises he will always be there to keep his word.

PSALM 147

God is depicted as being great in grace and might in this psalm. He is the God of and the power of Israel. His might is shown in past historical events. He is pictured to be the God that sustains life. Israel is exhorted to praise God continually. God dealt with no other nation the way he dealt with Israel. Only they were his chosen people.

PSALM 148

In this psalm all of creation is to praise God. The heavens are to praise the Lord; the earth is to praise the Lord, and all mankind is to praise the Lord.

PSALM 149

This psalm teaches us that God takes pleasure in his people (vs.4). The psalm is an exhortation to sing a new song unto God, a song of stronger dedication and zeal for commitment to serve God. The latter part of the psalm contains a reference to the wrath of God which will be brought upon the wicked of all the nations.

PSALM 150

This, the last of the psalms, concludes the book by encouraging everything that has breath to give praise unto the Lord (vs.6). All of God's creation is to praise him. This does not mean, of course, that everything can sin; but it is a reference to the fact that all of God's creation "sings" (figuratively) of the greatness of God.

PSALMS: A REVIEW

It is impractical to even attempt to provide a thorough review of every major thought that is portrayed within the book of Psalms, but a brief listing of a few of them will show us the importance and the magnitude of the devotional impact that the book provides. Within the book the following subjects are taught: 1) the greatness of God [The greatness of God is seen in every aspect of the Bible and of God's creation. Because of the greatness of God all of mankind is to serve him. See the writer's article in the April 16, 1981 issue of the Gospel Advocate entitled THE WHISPER OF GOD.]; 2) man is dependent upon God. [This subject is stressed throughout the entire Bible. Because man sinned he needs God to obtain salvation. (Jer.10:23) Man is not an independent being. He is not self-made, but rather made in the image of God. Because of that simple, yet all important, fact; man needs God (Prov.3:3-6).]; 3) man sins (Rom.3:23); 4) man can acknowledge that sin to God, and indeed must do so in order to obtain the forgiveness of God; 5) God is a great provider. [For your own study some time, sit down with a concordance and go through all of the passages that refer to God as a shield, defense, refuge, buckler, et al. From these passages we learn a great deal about God's providing power.]; 6) God is willing to forgive all sins which have been repented of and confessed; 7) man must give thanksgiving to God. [Philippians 4 teaches us the necessity of going to God in prayer and thanking him for all things. God, according to James 1:17, is the giver of every good and perfect gift. We should, therefore, always be willing to give thanks unto the Lord.]; 8) the writers of the Psalms often made references to the coming of the Messiah. [This is in itself a most rewarding study. Read through the book of Psalms sometime and writer down every reference to the Christ that is made.]; 9) the judgment of God. [God, though he is great in the love which he manifests to mankind, is nonetheless a God of wrath and judgment. Many times within the book of Psalms we note references to his wrath which shall be brought upon those who are disobedient (cf. II Thess.1:7ff). This aspect of God is often sorely neglected, but it is just as much a part of the Bible as those passages which teach that God is love, justice, mercy, et al.]. There are many other important lessons that are taught within the book of Psalms, but suffice just one more to be mentioned. The subject of prayer is often overlooked today. Many treat the topic superficially and many others do not understand it. As a result, prayer is sorely misused and misunderstood. We often are aware that prayer is commanded (I Thess.5:17, Philippians 4:4ff), but so many times we do not know how to pray. From the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles we learn a lot about the life of and character of king David; but from the book of Psalms we learn something that is not quite brought to full light in the aforementioned books of history, and that is the prayer life of David. It is my contention that we learn more about the inner man of David from the book of Psalms than we do from the historical books of his life, for in the book of Psalms we see his soul laid bare before God. We note his confession of sins, his weaknesses, his desires, his fears, and a host of other human elements...but within the book we also note his strengths. David had an unyielding trust in his Lord. He knew that God would deliver him and as a result his prayers were prayers of confidence. He did not pray hoping against hope for God to deliver him from some distressing situation, but he prayed with the full assurance that God would deliver him from each and every



trouble that David had. These prayers are examples of how one man really went to God with his woes. I Peter 5:8 encourages us to go to God with all of our cares because he cares for us...David did just that...and so should we. God is not some immovable stone idol that heathen worship. God is a God that is concerned with you and me. He is a loving God that is willing and ready to assist in any way...but we never tell him our concerns. Read through the book of Psalms once just to write down and list all of the 1) sins which David confessed, 2) all of the prayers in which David thanked God for something, 3) all of the requests for deliverance which David uttered, and 4) the number of times that David expressed confidence that God would deliver him. It is important for us to see how the books of the Bible apply to us today. They are not just books of biography and history. They are books of continuing relevance by which man can come to a knowledge of what he needs to do to be saved eternally by the blood of Jesus the Christ the son of the living God.

## PROVERBS

The book of proverbs, like the previous book of Psalms, is rich in wisdom and practical information for man today. Proverbs, written to a large extent by Solomon the son of David, does not have any one major theme with the exception of the general theme of the attainment of wisdom. That general theme is, however, applied to just about every pursuit that one can imagine. Within the book it is applied to knowledge, immorality, purity, business, domestic affairs, et al. The book is written in a style which is distinctly Jewish. The writer often states a fact in the beginning of the verse and then repeats that same thought in different words in the concluding portion of the same verse. Often times the author will state something in the beginning of his thoughts and then contrast that facet of the subject by stating the opposite in the final section. Because of the immense amount of subject matter within each chapter it will be necessary to discuss only a few of the topics in each chapter, and that only sparingly.

### CHAPTER ONE

Within the first chapter of the book of proverbs we are given the title, the author, the purpose (vs.2-6), and the major theme (knowledge, wisdom and instruction-Vs.7). The chapter also deals with warnings against violence and wicked ways. In the last section of the chapter wisdom is personified and depicted as addressing the reader. This method of teaching will be used time and again within the book. The last section has wisdom telling us the consequences of neglecting her.

### CHAPTER TWO

The second chapter talks about the rewards of seeking wisdom and just how wisdom is obtained. After it is obtained, man must always walk in wisdom. Note that reference is made to a "strange woman". This does not indicate any specific person, but it is a reference to all who are foolish in their ways. The book of Proverbs often uses the imagery of the harlot and the whore as the epitome of sinfulness and foolishness. Such is to be avoided at all costs. With regard to the attainment of wisdom it is essential to mention that wisdom is gotten by a twofold method: 1) man seeks wisdom with all his might, and 2) God grants wisdom (James 1:5ff). These two thoughts are not to be taken as being contradictory, but rather supplementary and complementary. God does not grant wisdom to anyone, but only to those who seek wisdom. In the books of Kings we noted that Solomon prayed for wisdom and God subsequently gave it to him. Wisdom is not, however, just a thunderbolt which comes down to man and all of a sudden he has wisdom. Man's part is seeking after that wisdom. It must be understood that wisdom is not just knowledge, even though knowledge is involved. Wisdom is properly understood as the proper application and usage of knowledge. It is up to mankind to seek for knowledge (vs.1-6). God does not miraculously tell us the things that we need to know. We have to look diligently for them (Matthew 5:6, Hebrews 11:6) and really apply ourselves in order to gather and collect knowledge. But the knowledge does not necessarily make us wise. Many of us have known or heard of men and women who were smart but who did not have any "horse sense". The proper application of acquired knowledge is wisdom and that element is provided by God to those who truly seek it.