



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Worship Music

[Mary Did You Know-
Kenny Rogers/
Wynonna Judd](#)

[The Christmas Shoes-
Newsong](#)

[God Hears-Newsong](#)

Prayer

Lord, especially at this time of the year, I want to look beyond my own challenges and problems to see what I can do to meet the needs of brothers and sisters whose situations are more serious than mine. I don't want to be so self-focused on my own needs that I forget that there are others who are struggling more seriously than I am. In fact, even though I have been facing difficult times, I know that my life is much more blessed than some of my brothers and sisters who live in other parts of the world. Lord, please help me to always be grateful for what I have. Guide me as I seek to distribute a portion of my finances and make a difference in someone else's life. And please, Lord, multiply this seed that I am sowing by faith so that it comes back to meet the needs I am facing in my own life. In Jesus' name. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

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Billy Graham

[" The Cure "](#)

Pastor Chuck Smith

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Cathe Laurie](#)

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

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Or----

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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Psalm 111:1-10 (AMP)

1 PRAISE THE Lord! (Hallelujah!) I will praise and give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart in the council of the upright and in the congregation. 2 The works of the Lord are great, sought out by all those who have delight in them. 3 His work is honorable and glorious, and His righteousness endures forever. 4 He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious, merciful, and full of loving compassion. 5 He has given food and provision to those who reverently and worshipfully fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever and imprint it [on His mind]. 6 He has declared and shown to His people the power of His works in giving them the heritage of the nations [of Canaan]. 7 The works of His hands are [absolute] truth and justice [faithful and right]; and all His decrees and precepts are sure (fixed, established, and trustworthy). 8 They stand fast and are established forever and ever and are done in [absolute] truth and uprightness. 9 He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant to be forever; holy is His name, inspiring awe, reverence, and godly fear. 10 The reverent fear and worship of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom and skill [the preceding and the first essential, the prerequisite and the alphabet]; a good understanding, wisdom, and meaning have all those who do [the will of the Lord]. Their praise of Him endures forever.

Psalm 111 has twenty-two lines. It is known as an acrostic psalm; each line in this psalm begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And so the first line of the psalm in Hebrew begins with Aleph, the second line in Hebrew begins with Beyth, the third line begins with Giymel, and the fourth Daleth, and so forth through the Hebrew alphabet, each line. And this is true also of Psalm 112, another psalm of twenty-two lines. They are called acrostic because of the alphabet is used in a succeeding way throughout the psalm. It begins with Hallelujah.

Praise unto the LORD [Hallelujah]. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation. The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all of them that have pleasure therein. His work is honorable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion (Psa 111:1-4).

Again, how wrong it is to picture the God of the Old Testament as the God of judgment and wrath and all. Void of love. Here again the psalmist declares, "The Lord is gracious, full of compassion."

He hath given meat to them that reverence him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant. He hath showed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. The works of his hands are truth and judgment; and all of his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name (Psa 111:5-9).

Don't call me Reverend. There is nothing reverend about the name of Chuck or Smith. I refuse the title. It is used in the scripture only of the name of the Lord. To me it would be almost blasphemous to tag that title onto me or onto my name. In fact, I don't like any titles. But I always wonder about the person who tacks a Reverend on his signature when it is a title that is ascribed only to that holy name of Yahweh. That is the name that is reverend or to be revered.

But man in seeking the honor of man and the glory from man takes that title to himself because he wants man to give him prestige and glory and honor. And so somewhere along the line back in history, ministers began to take the tag of Reverend So-and-so. Reverend, and then their name. And then the Right Reverend. And then the Most Right Reverend. And then the Most Holy Right Reverend. And I'm sure that God looks down and says, (Raspberries). No, He doesn't say that, honey? No, He doesn't say that. But I'm sure He's disgusted with it, however He expresses His disgust. That men should seek to exalt their name. Oh God, help us. Let us exalt the name of Jesus. "God has given Him a name that is above all names: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess" (Philippians 2:9-11). But as far as man, we're all dust. We're all flesh. We're all corrupt. And titles by which men try to elevate themselves above others are a curse. They're a sign of pride, and Reverend is a sign of spiritual pride which is the worst kind ever. "Holy and reverend is His name." For any man to take the title of Reverend, there has got to be something wrong with his theology.

The fear of the LORD (Psa 111:10):

Or the reverence of the Lord. And actually the word fear is reverence. The reverence of Yahweh. "Holy and revered is His name. And the reverence of Yahweh,"

is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever (Psa 111:10).

Now let me say this. I believe that there are many men who have taken the title of Reverend in sheer ignorance. I mean, I don't think that they are really trying to exalt themselves. Or every man that signs it Reverend Whoever is trying to exalt themselves and has a pride problem. And that I believe that there are some that just follow tradition and haven't even thought the thing through and haven't even gone to the scriptures. And thus, you know, I put it down not to a real pride problem. I just put it down to stupidity. So it would be wrong if you get a letter from Reverend Ike. What is so reverend about the name Ike, pray tell? Icky Ike. We better move on into Psalm 112.

Psalm 112:1-10 (AMP)

1 PRAISE THE Lord! (Hallelujah!) Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) is the man who fears (reveres and worships) the Lord, who delights greatly in His commandments. 2 His [spiritual] offspring shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed. 3 Prosperity and welfare are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever. 4 Light arises in the darkness for the upright, gracious, compassionate, and just [who are in right standing with God]. 5 It is well with the man who deals generously and lends, who conducts his affairs with justice. 6 He will not be moved forever; the [uncompromisingly] righteous (the upright, in right standing with God) shall be in everlasting remembrance. 7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is firmly fixed, trusting (leaning on and being confident) in the Lord. 8 His heart is established and steady, he will not be afraid while he waits to see his desire established upon his adversaries. 9 He has distributed freely [he has given to the poor and needy]; his righteousness (uprightness and right standing with God) endures forever; his horn shall be exalted in honor. 10 The wicked man will see it and be grieved and angered, he will gnash his teeth and disappear [in despair]; the desire of the wicked shall perish and come to nothing.

Psalm 112

Again, it begins with the Hebrew, Hallelujah.

Blessed is the man that reverences Jehovah (Psa 112:1).

Again, the man who reverences God. Not the man who reverences a guy standing in front, or a guy with a black robe, or whatever. But a guy who reverences God, that's the blessed man, that's the happy man.

that delights greatly in his commandments (Psa 112:1).

David said, "Whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate both day and night." David said, "O blessed or O happy is the man who delights in the law of the Lord, and in His law meditates day and night. For he'll be like a tree" (Psalm 1:1-3). All right, now here again, "Happy is the man who delights greatly in His commandments." This man,

His children will be mighty upon the earth: the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house (Psa 112:2-3):

And I do not believe that that necessarily refers to physical, monetary wealth, but really, the really rich and wealthy people are those people, the really rich home and wealthy home is that home where God is honored. They are the people who have the true riches. The riches of the kingdom. Riches that don't corrupt. Riches that don't fade away. Riches that can't be ripped off. Those glorious true riches of God's kingdom. "Wealth and riches shall be in his house."

and his righteousness endureth for ever. Unto the upright he rises as a light in the darkness (Psa 112:3-4):

Would be a better translation.

for he is gracious, he's full of compassion, and righteous (Psa 112:4).

That is, our righteousness in Christ.

A good man shows favor, and he lends: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD (Psa 112:5-7).

We're living in days of evil tidings. At any day, you can pick up the newspaper and read of all the evil that is going on in the world. And there are some people who live in constant fear of the evil tidings that might come. But the man who has put his trust in the Lord will not fear in the day of evil tidings, because his heart is fixed.

There are some people whose hearts aren't really fixed. It isn't a true commitment. It isn't a full commitment. They've made a partial commitment of their lives to God. Part of them serves the Lord; part of them serves the flesh. They love the Lord partly. And because of that, they are very unstable in their walk and they're fearful. But the man who has fixed his heart, trusting in the Lord, I know that come what may, the Lord is with me. I know that come what may, the Lord is going to protect me.

I know that the Lord is watching out over me. I know the Lord loves me. I may not understand what's happening in the circumstances surrounding my life. But I know that God loves me and I know that God's going to see me through. I know that God has allowed it for a purpose. I know that it would not have happened unless God had allowed it to happen. And because He allowed it to happen, He has a purpose in its happening, and thus He's going to bring good out of it. Though I may not see it now. And because I've fixed my heart and commitment to God, come what may, you don't fear for calamity that may fall tomorrow. You don't fear for what may come, because you know that whatever comes is brought to you by the hand of God.

I belong to Him. Satan cannot get to me except he come through the Lord. And therefore, trusting in the Lord, my heart is fixed on Him. I have great confidence in life.

His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, he shall see his desire upon his enemies. He hath dispersed, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor (Psa 112:8-9).

Now in contrast to this righteous man,

The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; the wicked will gnash with his teeth, and melt away (Psa 112:10):

See, the righteous will endure forever. But the wicked will gnash and melt away.

the desire of the wicked [rather than being granted] will perish (Psa 112:10).

So you have a psalm that deals with God's blessed man and then the final verse being a contrast to it with the wicked man. Psalm 1 has the same contrast. "O how happy is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But whose delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night. He'll be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth his fruit in its season; his leaf also shall not wither; whatsoever he does shall prosper" (Psalm 1:1-3). Now the wicked are not so. There's a contrast. "The wicked are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away" (Psalm 1:4). Again, you have much said about the righteous but then the contrast with the wicked. And this is poetry in the mind of the Hebrew. The poetry comes in the contrasting of the thought.

Now in our minds, we're geared for poetry coming in rhyme and in rhythm. So you get a rhythm going and it rhymes. And I particularly like the Robert Service type of poetry where you rhyme two lines and every third line is in the rhyme. And there are others, the first line, the first and third, no, the first and fourth lines rhyme and the two in between rhyme.

Longfellow's Ode to Life,

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,

'Life is but an empty dream!'

For the soul is dead that slumbers,

things are not what they seem.

No, it's every other one in his.

Life is real! Life is earnest!

And the grave is not thy goal;

'Dust thou art, to dust returneth,'

Was not spoken of thy soul.

But then Robert Service,

There are strange things done 'neath the midnight sun

By the men who toil for gold;

The arctic trails, all their secret tales

That make your blood run cold.

The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,

But the queerest they ever did see

Was the night in the marge of the Lake Lebarge

When I cremated Sam McGee.

So that constitutes poetry to us. There's the rhythm. There's the rhyme. But to the Hebrew, the poetry was in the thought. And it was either in a compounding of a thought or the contrasting of a thought. So you take a thought and you begin to compound it.

"The ways of the Lord are perfect. The ways of the Lord are to be sought out. The ways of the Lord." And you are compounding on the thought. Or, you take contrasting thought, "The way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked. The way of the godly, but the way of the ungodly." And so the contrasting of thought to the Hebrew mind is poetry. There's no rhyme, there's no rhythm. And so we wouldn't call it poetry ourselves. But to them, that is what constitutes poetry. Not the rhyming of a sentence or not the rhythm, but the thought itself. They find the beauty of poetry in the thought itself.

So after all of these things about the blessed man, then you get the contrast in the final verse, "But the wicked shall see it." And in contrast to the righteous, "he will be grieved. He'll gnash with his teeth; he'll melt away. He'll perish."

eyes. They carve ears. They carve feet and hands. Why? You carve hands in your little god? Because you have hands. Why do you carve a mouth? Because you have a mouth. Why do you carve ears? Because you have an ear. When we were over in New Guinea, the missionaries told us of a tribe of people who have a congenital hip dislocation. And this whole tribe of people, it's a congenital thing; they all have a deformity of their right leg which is shorter than their left through this congenital hip problem. And they said that all of the little gods that this particular tribe carved out have a deformed right leg. Because a man makes a god like himself, a projection of myself. It is known as the anthropomorphic concept of God. Widely recognized. Man makes gods like himself.

But then the psalmist observed that though a man has made a god like himself, he has actually made his god infinitely less than himself. Because though I may carve out eyes on my little god, the eyes on my little god can't see. Though I may carve feet on my little god, they can't walk. Though I may carve hands on it, it can't handle. Though I may carve ears on it, it can't hear. Though I may carve a mouth on it, it can't speak. So I've made a god like myself, but in reality, I have made my god less than myself. And the final observation of the psalmist is, they that have made them have become like the gods that they have made. Or a man becomes like his god. This is a truth of life that you cannot escape. You are becoming like your god, whatever your god is. A man becomes like his god. Now, if I have made my own god like myself but I've made my god less than myself, then by worshipping the god that I have made, I am degrading myself. I am becoming less than I was. Because I'm becoming like my god. And my god is less than me because I've made my god like myself, but actually less than myself. So my god is insensate. It can't feel, it can't see, it can't hear. I become insensate. I no longer can feel the presence of God. I can no longer feel the touch of God. I can no longer see the hand of God. I can no longer hear the voice of God. I'm becoming insensate just like the little god that I made. For a man becomes like his god. If your god is false, you're becoming false. If you're god is cruel, you're becoming cruel.

A man becomes like his god. That can be the greatest curse in all the world. Or it can be the greatest blessing in all the world. It's all relative as to who is your god. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we're going to be: but we know that, when He appears, we're going to be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (I John 3:2). You see, a man becomes like his god. "We, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed from glory to glory, into His same image" (II Corinthians 3:18). I'm becoming like my God everyday. And if I'm worshipping the true and the living God, how glorious it is as I am being transformed into His image daily as I worship Him. Man becomes like his god.

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Now the New Testament tells us, "We are now the sons of God. It does not yet appear what we're going to be. We know when He appears, we'll be like Him." So you have actually in one side of it, man making a god like himself, infinitely less than himself; and thus, man being degraded as he worships his god. On the other hand, you have God making a man more than himself. More than man could ever be in himself. And thus, the worship of the true and the living God is always an elevating experience as God is conforming you into His image. Making you like Him.

Now I've either made a god like me, or God is making me like Him. You're in one of the two. You're either on the path down or the path up. Every man has a god. Don't believe a man who says, "I'm an atheist," because a god is only a title, and it is the title of what is the master passion of that person's life. What's the guiding principle of his life? Watch him for a while and you can see. Maybe the guiding passion of his life is pleasure and his whole life is lived for pleasure. Molech is his god. Maybe his whole life is lived for power and he's trying to control things, money, possessions and all. And Mammon is his god. Maybe he's trying to develop his intellect and the expansion of his consciousness and his understanding and all and he's made this the chief goal of life. Then Baal is his god. Every man has a god. Some of them are rather worthless gods, but gods indeed. And how good it is to worship and serve the true and the living God. Not one that I've created in my own mind. Not a concept that I have created. But to take the revelation of God of Himself to us and to worship the true and the living God. So interesting observations from the psalmist here concerning the heathen and their gods.

O Israel, trust thou in Jehovah: for he is your help and your shield. O house of Aaron, trust in Jehovah: he is your help and your shield. Ye that reverence Jehovah, trust in Jehovah: for he is their help and their shield. Jehovah hath been mindful (Psa 115:9-12) And, of course, here again compounding, "O Israel, Aaron and ye that fear the Lord." It's a compounding of the idea, Hebrew poetry. The Lord hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great (Psa 115:12-13).

Same compounding with the blessings now.....The LORD shall increase you more and more, and your children. Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth. The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men (Psa 115:14-16). The heavens were the Lord's, but God gave the earth to man. But man blew it and gave it to Satan. And Satan now possesses the earth. But Jesus came to redeem the earth back to God, and before long He's going to take and claim that which He purchased. And I can hardly wait.

The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence (Psa 115:17). Now this is one of the proof text for soul sleep, but I don't have time to go into it tonight. We'll go into it when we get to Ecclesiastes, where the scripture definitely teaches is that there is a consciousness. This is the psalmist expressing a thought of his own mind, and it is much like Job where God said, "What do you, you know, what are you talking about death? You haven't been beyond the gates of hell. You don't know what's there. And talking out of your head." And so here the psalmist is speaking of things which are not in keeping with the whole body of scripture which tells us that

of the state of the dead, and especially the words of Christ. But we will bless the LORD from this time forth for evermore. Hallelujah (Psa 115:18). May the Lord be with you now and fill you with His love. May He guide you through this week. Entering into that time of the year where pressures always increase as we prepare to celebrate the pagan holiday of Saturnalia in our own Christianized form. May God protect you from the crass commercialism and keep you out of the hype of man. That you lose not sight of God and the things of the Spirit. But may more and more we become spiritually minded. And may we walk in the Spirit that we will not be guilty of fulfilling the desires of our own flesh. May the Lord be with you now and bless and keep you in the love of Jesus Christ.

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Psalm 116:1-19 (AMP)

1 I LOVE the Lord, because He has heard [and now hears] my voice and my supplications. 2 Because He has inclined His ear to me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live. 3 The cords and sorrows of death were around me, and the terrors of Sheol (the place of the dead) had laid hold of me; I suffered anguish and grief (trouble and sorrow). 4 Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech You, save my life and deliver me! 5 Gracious is the Lord, and [rigidly] righteous; yes, our God is merciful. 6 The Lord preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He helped and saved me. 7 Return to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. 8 For You have delivered my life from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling and falling. 9 I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. 10 I believed (trusted in, relied on, and clung to my God), and therefore have I spoken [even when I said], I am greatly afflicted. 11 I said in my haste, All men are deceitful and liars. 12 What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? [How can I repay Him for all His bountiful dealings?] 13 I will lift up the cup of salvation and deliverance and call on the name of the Lord. 14 I will pay my vows to the Lord, yes, in the presence of all His people. 15 Precious (important and no light matter) in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints (His loving ones). 16 O Lord, truly I am Your servant; I am Your servant, the son of Your handmaid; You have loosed my bonds. 17 I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord. 18 I will pay my vows to the Lord, yes, in the presence of all His people, 19 In the courts of the Lord's house—in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord! (Hallelujah!)

Psalm 116 . A song of gratitude to God for deliverance from death and temptation, and for repeated answers to prayer. One of the best psalms.

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Psalm 117:1-2 (AMP)

1 O PRAISE the Lord, all you nations! Praise Him, all you people! 2 For His mercy and loving-kindness are great toward us, and the truth and faithfulness of the Lord endure forever. Praise the Lord! (Hallelujah!)

Beginning with Psalm 113, you have what are known as the Hallel psalms, meaning the psalms of praise. Hallel meaning praise in Hebrew, and hallelujah, the hallelujah praise to Yahweh. So these are the psalms of praise, 113 through 118. And they are the songs that were traditionally sung at their holidays or at the feast days. The Feast of Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Feast of Pentecost, there were traditional psalms that were sung for each of these feasts. And so as we get into these psalms, 113 through 118, these are no doubt psalms that Jesus sang with His disciples. And it's only a shame that cassettes were invented so late. I think it would be absolutely classic to be able to hear Jesus singing with His disciples these Hallel songs. Now we do read on the night that Jesus was betrayed, when He celebrated the Passover supper with the disciples, it said, "And after they had sung a psalm, they went out to the Mount of Olives" (Matthew 26:30). The psalm that they sang was probably Psalm 118, because that is the traditional psalm that is sung at the conclusion of the Passover feast. That, of course, is very interesting because Psalm 118 is a prophetic psalm of Jesus Christ that was to have its fulfillment that very day, or actually did have its fulfillment that week, just before this took place. And thus, as Jesus was talking to them just before the Passover of the one-hundred-and-eighteenth psalm, it was one that was very uppermost in their mind, because this is one that was always sung at the Passover feast. So it is interesting as you read it to imagine and picture Jesus singing this particular psalm with His disciples. Tonight we begin with Psalm 117, which is the shortest of all the psalms. It is a psalm in which there is celebrated the universal reign of Jesus Christ, who shall come to reign over all the earth. O Praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people (Psa 117:1). So this is the calling forth of universal praise unto Him. Let everyone; it's not just for the nation Israel now, it's for the world, for all people, and the reason for our praise. For his merciful kindness is great towards us (Psa 117:2): Oh, how thankful I am for the kindness with which the Lord deals with me when I am so often wrong. The merciful kindness with which He deals with me. How often I find myself praising the Lord for His merciful kindness, for He has not rewarded us according to our iniquities. But, "As high as the heaven is above the earth, so high is His mercy over them that reverence Him" (Psalm 103:11). Oh, the merciful kindness with which God deals with me in my weaknesses, in my flaws, in my faults. "His merciful kindness is great towards us."and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD (Psa 117:2). So the Hallel psalm, beautiful little psalm calling forth for universal praise unto Him.

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Psalm 118:1-29 (AMP)

1 O GIVE thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever! 2 Let Israel now say that His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever. 3 Let the house of Aaron [the priesthood] now say that His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever. 4 Let those now who reverently and worshipfully fear the Lord say that His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever. 5 Out of my distress I called upon the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free and in a large place. 6 The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? 7 The Lord is on my side and takes my part, He is among those who help me; therefore shall I see my desire established upon those who hate me. 8 It is better to trust and take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in man. 9 It is better to trust and take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. 10 All nations (the surrounding tribes) compassed me about, but in the name of the Lord I will cut them off! 11 They compassed me about, yes, they surrounded me on every side; but in the name of the Lord I will cut them off! 12 They swarmed about me like bees, they blaze up and are extinguished like a fire of thorns; in the name of the Lord I will cut them off! 13 You [my adversary] thrust sorely at me that I might fall, but the Lord helped me. 14 The Lord is my Strength and Song; and He has become my Salvation. 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents and private dwellings

of the [uncompromisingly] righteous: the right hand of the Lord does valiantly and achieves strength! 16 The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly and achieves strength! 17 I shall not die but live, and shall declare the works and recount the illustrious acts of the Lord. 18 The Lord has chastened me sorely, but He has not given me over to death. 19 Open to me the [temple] gates of righteousness; I will enter through them, and I will confess and praise the Lord. 20 This is the gate of the Lord; the [uncompromisingly] righteous shall enter through it. 21 I will confess, praise, and give thanks to You, for You have heard and answered me; and You have become my Salvation and Deliverer. 22 The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. 23 This is from the Lord and is His doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day which the Lord has brought about; we will rejoice and be glad in it. 25 Save now, we beseech You, O Lord; send now prosperity, O Lord, we beseech You, and give to us success! 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord [you who come into His sanctuary under His guardianship]. 27 The Lord is God, Who has shown and given us light [He has illuminated us with grace, freedom, and joy]. Decorate the festival with leafy boughs and bind the sacrifices to be offered with thick cords [all over the priest's court, right up] to the horns of the altar. 28 You are my God, and I will confess, praise, and give thanks to You; You are my God, I will extol You. 29 O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever.

Psalm 118; As we get into Psalm 118, the last of the Hallel psalms. O give thanks unto the LORD (Psa 118:1); Again, the exhortation, praise and thanks, "O give thanks unto the Lord." for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever (Psa 118:1). Again, the cause of thanksgiving is the goodness of God and the mercy of God. How often in the psalms we are called upon to give thanks to the Lord for His goodness and for His mercy. Let Israel now say, his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, let his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the LORD say, his mercy endureth for ever. Now I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what man can do unto me? (Psa 118:2-6) Paul the apostle, in Romans the eighth chapter, takes up much the same thing as he declares, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who has justified. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who has died, yea rather, is risen again, and he's even at the right hand of the Father, making intercession" (Romans 8:33-34). Paul exclaims, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)

Now growing up as a child and growing up in church, somehow I did not always receive the concept that God was for me. I felt that God was against me many times. That He was just sort of waiting for me to make a mistake so He could punish me. That He was ready to cancel me out of the kingdom. In fact, I felt that I was cancelled out of the kingdom all the time. And I could hardly wait for Sunday night to come around so I could go forward and get saved again and get back into the kingdom, because I really wanted to be a Christian. I really didn't want to go to hell. And in my heart I really loved the Lord and my spirit indeed was willing to serve the Lord, but my flesh was weak. And somehow a concept developed in my mind that God was against me.

Oh, what Romans 8 did for my own personal Christian experience is hard to describe. When I discovered that God wasn't against me but that God was for me. And that God wasn't laying anything to my charge. God wasn't charging my account with all of my failures and all of my weaknesses and failings. That God had stamped irrevocably on my account, "Justified!" He wasn't finding fault, nor was Jesus Christ condemning me. Far be it from condemning me, He was interceding for me.

Now if I were good and perfect, He wouldn't have to intercede. I could stand before God in my own perfection. And I could say, "Here I am, Lord, perfect little me." The fact that He is interceding takes into account my weaknesses and my failures. The necessity for intercession. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who has died, yea, rather, is risen again and even at the right hand of the Father making intercession. What shall we say to these things? Oh, if God be for us, who can be against us?" So here the psalmist, "The Lord is on my side." How comforting that is. How reassuring that is. God is for me. God is for my part. God is on my side. Therefore, I will not fear what man shall do.

Now, man condemns me. Man finds fault with me. I often find fault with myself and condemn myself. But I need not fear what man will do because the Lord is on my side. The LORD taketh the part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me (Psa 118:7). In other words, God is for me. He takes the part with those that help me. He becomes a part of those that are helping me. And therefore, we shall surely have victory over the enemy. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man (Psa 118:8).

Now as I read that, I immediately, in my heart that strikes a responsive kind of an accord. I say, "Yeah, that's sure true." Man has let me down so many times. The Lord has never let me down. Yes, that's so true. It's better to put my trust in the Lord than my confidence in man. And yet when I'm in trouble, I'm always looking for the help of man, the arm of flesh. And yet I realize that it's better to put my trust in the Lord than my confidence in man. How many times have I been discouraged and defeated though I had the promises of God. And then some man comes along, he says, "Oh, I'll take care of that for you." Oh, all right, praise the Lord. Glory to God! You know, it's all taken care of." And I've put my confidence now in the word of some man that he's going to take care of it. There are certain people who have a penchant for making great promises that they are really not capable of fulfilling. Now there are some who are just pathological liars and they'll make all kinds of promises and they, you know, they didn't even know they made the promise. I mean, it's just quirk of their own nature. But there are other people who have sort of a quirk that they do make promises that when they make them, they really intend to fulfill them. But they just don't have the capacity to fulfill them. We've all met these kind of people, too. And it's amazing how many people and how many times we put our confidence in man and have been let down.

Better to put your trust in the LORD than your confidence in princes. Now all nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I'll destroy them (Psa 118:9-10). And then he just sort of amplifies on that. They compassed me about; yes, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees (Psa 118:11-12); Swarm of bees. they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me. The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation (Psa 118:12-14).

I love that verse. "The LORD is my strength." I've learned to rely upon His strength. It doesn't say the Lord will give me strength. It says, "The Lord is my strength." He's my song. How many times I find myself whistling or humming, or even singing when I'm not even aware of it. And when I become aware of it, I realize it's a song of worship or praise unto the Lord. And it's just thrilling to realize that it's just so woven into the warp and the woof of my own being that it's just a part of even the subconscious of my own life. The Lord is my song. "I have no song to sing but that of Christ my King. To Him my praise I'll bring forevermore. I have no other..." Let's see. "I have no delight in other songs, my melody of love to Him belongs." And how glorious when we sing our praises unto Him. He's become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous (Psa 118:15): Or in the tents of the righteous. So, you don't live in tents anymore. So, in the houses of the righteous.

There should be the voice of rejoicing in your home. I think that music has a tremendous influence and part in our lives. And I do feel that it is important that we surround ourselves in a spiritual environment. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. If you sow to the flesh, you're going to reap of the flesh; if you sow to the Spirit, you'll reap of the Spirit" (Galatians 6:7-8). I think that it's valuable to have good music around the house. If you have a record player, I think that you should have the praise albums and just good, Christ-centered music. Keep it in the atmosphere of your home, because it's planting into your spirit constantly. And what you sow, you're going to reap. If you're constantly listening to, "My baby left me, and is gone," and all this kind of stuff of the flesh, then you're going to be reaping that kind of stuff. But if we're sowing to the Spirit, it just has, it's just planting it into our hearts and into our lives. It's important that we do it.

The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly (Psa 118:16). The right hand of the Lord... I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death (Psa 118:17-18).

We are told in the scriptures we're "not to despise the chastening of the Lord, for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth" (Proverbs 3:11-12). Now there is a vast difference between correction and punishment. God has ordained punishment upon the wicked, but He has ordained correction for His children. The correction comes in the form of chastisement. "It was good for me that I was afflicted" (Psalm 119:71), we'll read in the next psalm, 119. Good that God corrected me. It's a sign that I am His child. It's a sign that He does care about me. The chastening of the Lord. It is not penal. It is for the purpose of correction.

Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation (Psa 118:19-21).

Now I do not know but what the prophetic part of this psalm may begin with the nineteenth verse, "Open to me the gates of righteousness. I will go into them, and will praise the Lord." For there is in scripture other prophecies that relate to the east gate and the entering in of the Lord into the east gate. When Jesus made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, He no doubt entered from the east gate, because He came down from the descent of the Mount of Olives and went into the temple precincts. And the gate that went from the Mount of Olives to the temple mount was the east gate. It was the one that entered right into the temple mount. So no doubt the gate through which Jesus entered when He went in on this triumphant entry. And in the forty-third chapter of Ezekiel, he said, "I was taken by the Spirit to the gate that is toward the east and it was shut. No people were going in or out by it." For the Lord, He went in and out by this gate and therefore it is shut and actually it won't be open until the Messiah comes again, and He will enter in through the east gate and He will eat bread with His people there in the porch of that gate. So the reference here to the gate could be the reference to the triumphant entry by which He came in to the temple mount through the east gate. There is another Psalm, twenty-seven, about the opening of the gates and the King of glory shall come in. "Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Psalm 24:8). And the psalm of opening the gates in Psalm 27 which, again, seems to be sort of a prophetic. It's not twenty-seven either, but seems to be a prophetic type of a psalm. I'll take just a moment and see if I can find which psalm that is for you—twenty-four? Yes, it surely is. "Lift up your head, O ye gates, and be ye lifted, ye everlasting doors. The King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty. The Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates. Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors. The King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory." So the gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter, no doubt a reference to the east gate. Now when we come again with Jesus Christ in His coming in power and glory, according to the scripture He will set His foot on that day on the Mount of Olives. And the Mount of Olives will split with a big valley that will be formed by the splitting of the Mount of Olives. And Jesus will come on in through the east gate into the city or into the city of Jerusalem, the old city of Jerusalem, the temple mount. And we will be coming with Him when He comes. So the gate will be open and the righteous shall enter in. So inasmuch as we go then into, The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner (Psa 118:22). This is, of course, a prophecy of the rejection of Jesus Christ by Israel, the builders; the stone that was refused by the builders. Christ came according to the promise of God to the nation Israel to be the Messiah, not to be the Messiah, as the Messiah. And they refused Him. But the same has become the head of the corner, or the chief cornerstone. The chief cornerstone now upon which the church is built. "Upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). This scripture is referred to in the New Testament. It is referred to by Jesus Himself the day after He was rejected by the rulers. In Matthew 21 Jesus spake to them a parable about the householder who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, build a winepress or pit for the winepress in it. Turned it over to the servants as he went to a far country. And how that when he sought to gather the fruit, sent servants back to receive the fruit, how that they beat some, how they mistreated others, how they killed some. And finally, he said, "I will send my only son. Surely they will respect him." But when they saw his son, they said, "Oh, here's the heir. Let's kill him and then the vineyard will be ours." And Jesus said, "What will that lord do when he comes?" And the Pharisees answered, He will utterly destroy those wretches. And Jesus said, "That is true. Have you never read, 'The stone which was set at nought by the builders, the same has become the headstone of the corner or the chief cornerstone.'" And He said, "Whosoever falls upon this stone will be broken, but upon whomsoever this stone shall fall shall be crushed into powder."

So Jesus made reference to this psalm, making the application to Himself; making the application to the rejection of Him by the Jewish leaders. And yet the vineyard, He said, He will take away. He'll destroy these people, set them aside and He will give the vineyard unto others. And so to nations, He said, who will bring forth fruit. So the glorious Gospel and the church coming from actually among the Gentile nations. The Lord has created the church for the purpose that we might bring forth fruit unto Him.

So then Peter makes reference to it in the fourth chapter of the book of Acts when he was called before the council for the healing of the lame man and asked by what name he did it, he said, "By the name of Jesus does this man stand here before you whole. And He is the stone which was set of nought by you builders. But the same has become the chief cornerstone. Neither is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." And then Peter in his first epistle, chapter 2 makes the final reference to this stone that was set of nought by the builders.

Now there is an interesting story that is told of the building of Solomon's temple. It is declared that all of the stones for Solomon's temple were cut and quarried and carved away from the temple site. But each stone was perfectly hewn out and marked for the place in which it went into the wall. Now Solomon's quarries were up on the sort of northwest side of the city of Jerusalem near what is presently the Herod's Gate. And you can go into those quarries today and see where these stones, these massive stones were cut out for Solomon's temple. Also you can see the quarry, the area of the quarry for the temple that is now an Arab bus station and you can see where the stone was quarried out there.

Now according to the story, a stone was sent for the temple that was not marked and the builders didn't have any idea where it went. They concluded that it was just sent by mistake from the quarry. You see, the temple was put together without the sound of a hammer or a trowel. Every stone was cut away from the site and brought. And each stone just was fit in perfectly without even mortar. Just interlocking stones without the use of mortar. And so this one stone, they didn't know where it went; it didn't seem to fall in the sequence of their building. They cast it aside in the bushes and a few years later as they were completing the temple, they sent the message to the quarry, "We're all set for dedication. Where is the chief cornerstone?" And they sent back the message, "We've already sent it a long time ago. What did you do with it?" And the messages went back and forth from the quarry to the builders and finally, someone found over in the bushes, overgrown with shrubs the chief cornerstone which had been rejected by the builders but now was brought out and put in its place, the chief cornerstone of the building. That's the story that is told of the building of Solomon's temple. Whether or not that is so is not really a provable thing. But at any rate, here is the prophecy, and whether or not this related to the incident then, it does relate to Jesus Christ.

This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes (Psa 118:23).

Jesus quoted this to the Pharisees.

Now referring to the day of His triumphant entry.

This is the day that the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it (Psa 118:24).

And as He began His descent towards Jerusalem, the multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise the Lord saying, "Hosanna," or

Save now, O LORD. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD (Psa 118:25-26).

So this whole portion has to do with the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, plus the stone being rejected as He came into Jerusalem was rejected by the Jews, the official coming of the Messiah, the official rejection of the Messiah here prophesied in Psalm 118.

God is the LORD, which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar (Psa 118:27).

And Jesus who came to be the Messiah became the sacrifice for us.

Thou art my God, I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good (Psa 118:28-29):

Now this being the traditional psalm that they sang at the Passover feast, it is interesting that as Jesus sang it with His disciples, they were actually already singing a psalm that had had its fulfillment a few days earlier. For a few days earlier they were crying, "Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." A few days earlier, the stone was rejected by the builders. And so they were singing of that the night before His crucifixion. "Bind the sacrifice with cords to the altar." Very interesting indeed.

(Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries,1979-1986)

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