



# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

[www.chapel-flock.com](http://www.chapel-flock.com)



Vol. 42 Issue 813

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## Worship Music

[This Is Christmas-  
Kutless](#)

[You Are I Am-  
Mercy Me](#)

[Move-Mercy Me](#)

## Prayer

Lord, I want to forgive those who have done so much wrong by speaking lies and nonsense about me. I don't understand why they have spoken those lies, but now people are listening to the garbage they have told about me. Rather than respond in anger and speak a bunch of negative words that won't help anyone, I choose today to speak words of kindness and blessing over those who have tried to hurt me. Lord, I ask You to bless them, change them, help them, and lead them into a higher way of life. In the meantime, I am asking You to use this hurtful situation to bring about needed changes in me. In Jesus' I ask it. 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.

["The Cross"](#)

Billy Graham

[" The Cure "](#)

Pastor Chuck Smith

## Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

[KLOVE](#)

## Bible Study Sites

[Chuck Smith  
Through The Bible](#)

[Bob Coy/Teachings](#)

[Mike MacIntosh](#)

[Jon Courson](#)

[Biblos.com](#)

[Billy Graham](#)

[Charles Stanley](#)

[David Wilkerson](#)

[Greg Laurie](#)

[Virtue for Women-  
Cathe Laurie](#)

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

(316) 247-3623

Or----

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

[chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net)

Psalm 120:1-7 (AMP)

1 IN MY distress I cried to the Lord, and He answered me.

2 Deliver me, O Lord, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues.

3 What shall be given to you? Or what more shall be done to you, you deceitful tongue?—

4 Sharp arrows of a [mighty] warrior, with [glowing] coals of the broom tree!

5 Woe is me that I sojourn with Meshech, that I dwell beside the tents of Kedar [as if among notoriously barbarous people]!

6 My life has too long had its dwelling with him who hates peace.

7 I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war.

This time let's turn in our Bibles to Psalm 120 to begin our Bible study this evening. Now you'll notice these psalms have a heading. The psalm, "A song of degrees." The word literally is ascents, A-S-C-E-N-T-S. And these are sort of the marching songs for the people of Israel as they would come thrice annually to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

There's a lot of things about the nation Israel that excite me. There are a lot of things that I wish that somehow we could incorporate in our worship of the Lord. This business of all of them gathering together three days out of the... well, actually there was the feast days were seven days, but three times out of the year. At the Feast of Passover, at the Feast of Pentecost, and at the Feast of Succoth or Tabernacles. This business of everybody gathering together and just having a great worship service and a great feasting time and a time of worshipping the Lord. This, to me, would be exciting when the nation, the whole nation, is gathering to acknowledge that God reigns over the nation. And just the worshipping of the Lord together. How exciting that must have been.

Now Jerusalem is situated, in a sense, in what is known as the Jerusalem Mountains. So no matter where you are coming from, you are ascending towards Jerusalem. Whether you come from the Galilee region or the Jordan region, and usually coming from Galilee they would come down the Jordan River and then from Jericho make their way up the twenty miles to Jerusalem. Or whether you're coming from the Sharon valley, the coastal plains, the area of Joppa or whatever, you're always coming up when you come to Jerusalem. You're coming from Beersheba, coming from Samaria, you're always ascending up to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is sort of on the mountain, and yet, it is surrounded by mountains. Mount Zion, Mount of Olives, Mount Scopus, and the mountains that surround the city itself, but yet from anywhere in the country, coming to worship you are ascending to the city, and so these were called the songs of the ascents.

These were sung by the pilgrims as they were coming to Jerusalem on these glorious feast days. Coming to worship the Lord. And so the songs that they were singing as they were coming. Now in the marching and so forth, there are certain cadences that they get into when they're marching, and sometimes they sing songs in cadence to go along with their marching. You know, the count off, one, two, three, four, you know. And it's always sort of fun, you know. "First they hire me, then they fire me, then by golly I left! I left. I left, right, left." You know, and going along in cadence. And so these were those kind of songs that they would sing in sort of a cadence as they were coming to Jerusalem to worship the Lord. Remembering many times the alien areas where they were living, those who were alien towards God and alien towards those who worship God. So remembering the enemies and the areas from which they have come, but they had anticipation. And in these next fifteen psalms, there is underneath that anticipation, I'm soon going to be standing there in the assembly, worshipping God. And that glorious anticipation of standing there in Jerusalem, within the gates of Jerusalem, worshipping the Lord with the assembled multitude.

According to Josephus there were, many times, well over a million people who would gather for these feasts to worship the Lord together. So the first of these psalms of ascents, the psalmist is looking forward to that time.

In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me. Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from the deceitful tongue. What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper. Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! (Psa 120:1-5)

In other words, he's coming now from these antagonistic areas, Mesech, Kedar, people who hate God. People who have been against those who worship the Lord. "I've been dwelling there, O God, I've cried unto Thee in my distress."

My soul hath long dwelt with him that hates peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war (Psa 120:6-7).

So the first psalm expresses that turmoil of living in a world that is antagonistic towards God. Much the kind of a world that you live in. And so many times living in the world, living amongst the ungodly, we can identify with the soul that is longing for that fellowship with God. The soul that is longing for that peace of God, and yet, all of the turmoil, all of the confusion, all of the lying and conniving and all that is going on in the world around him. And so the soul longing for God. And as he is coming towards Jerusalem, because you're always ascending upwards,

**Psalm 121:1-8 (AMP)**

**1 I WILL lift up my eyes to the hills [around Jerusalem, to sacred Mount Zion and Mount Moriah]—From whence shall my help come? 2 My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. 3 He will not allow your foot to slip or to be moved; He Who keeps you will not slumber. 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand [the side not carrying a shield]. 6 The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life. 8 The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.**

**Psalm 121**

**I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills (Psa 121:1),**

**For there is Jerusalem, there in the mountains of Jerusalem, up there in the hills. There is that city. There is where I'm going to stand before God.**

**from whence cometh my help (Psa 121:1).**

**Now this psalm is often misquoted. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," as though my help was coming from the hills. You know, "From whence cometh my help. I will lift up my eyes." And the idea, my help is coming from... the hills can't help you. "From whence cometh my help" is actually a question. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills." Towards Jerusalem, the place where I will stand before God. "From whence cometh my help?" and it is answered in the next verse.**

**My help cometh from Yahweh, which made the heaven and the earth (Psa 121:2).**

**It is many times important that we classify God with this kind of a classification, first of all, so that we will identify the God that we are talking about. As Francis Schaeffer said that we should not as Christians just refer to "God" because nobody knows who you are talking about. There are so many gods that people worship and serve. So we need to define when we say, "God," we need to say, "The only true and the living God, the Creator of the heaven and the earth." Now you're defining Him. That's the God that we worship. There are many who worship the god of pleasure, the god of power, the god of different things. The intellect. But the God that we worship is the only true, eternal God who has created the heaven and the earth, the living God. So, "From whence cometh my help? My help comes from Yahweh which made the heaven and the earth."**

**Now in the declaring of God as the creator of the heaven and the earth, it's not only valuable to identify when we're talking with people, but it's valuable for us to remember the power of the God that we serve. There are so many times that we become so overpowered by our problems that we neglect to realize the great power of God. I'm so overwhelmed. This problem is so big. What am I going to do? And I just get overwhelmed by my difficulties. Until I realize the greatness of the power of the God I serve. In the New Testament when the disciples had been beaten and told not to witness anymore in the name of Jesus, it said, "They came to their own company and they told them all of the things that happened when they were standing before the council." How they were beaten and warned not to preach or teach anymore in the name of Jesus. And so they prayed and they said, "O Lord, Thou art God. Thou hast created the heavens and the earth and everything that is in them" (Acts 4:23-24). Now it's good to start your prayer that way because many times if you'll just start your prayer that way and really think of what you're praying, all of a sudden your problem comes into the true perspective. I am seeing now my difficulty in the light of God's greatness and my difficulty suddenly isn't so difficult. I'm seeing it no longer in my own strength, in my own ability. I'm calling upon the One who has created the heaven and the earth and everything that is in them. God said to Jeremiah, "Behold, I am God. Is there anything too hard for Me?" (Jeremiah 32:27) In his next prayer, Jeremiah picked that up and he said, "O Lord, You're God. There's nothing too hard for You." The Lord who made the heaven and the earth. That's where my help comes from. And if God be for me, who can be against me?**

**He will not allow your foot to be moved (Psa 121:3):**

**Now you're walking up a rocky, slippery path. The rockiest place in the world, I think, is Israel. And rocks and gravel on the path can be very slippery. But, "He will not allow your foot to be moved." he that keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep (Psa 121:3-4).**

**God is my help. My help comes from the Lord, who made the heaven and the earth. And He's always on duty. He'll never slumber; He'll never sleep.**

**The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand (Psa 121:5). Of course, coming from the Jordan Valley, extremely hot in that burning sun. The Lord becomes the shade. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul (Psa 121:6-7).**

**What a glorious promise. If you are looking to the Lord for your help, He will preserve you from all evil. The Lord will preserve your soul.**

**The LORD shall preserve thy going out, thy coming in from this time forth, even for evermore (Psa 121:8).**

**Isn't that a glorious promise to us? God will not allow my foot to be moved. He's watching over me night and day. He will preserve me.**

**Psalm 122:1-9 (AMP)**

**1 I WAS glad when they said to me, Let us go to the house of the Lord!**

**2 Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!—**

**3 Jerusalem, which is built as a city that is compacted together—**

**4 To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord, as was decreed and as a testimony for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord.**

**5 For there the thrones of judgment were set, the thrones of the house of David.**

**6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May they prosper who love you [the Holy City]!**

**7 May peace be within your walls and prosperity within your palaces!**

**8 For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, Peace be within you!**

**9 For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek, inquire for, and require your good.**

Psalm 122 continues. The idea is I'm traveling now towards Jerusalem. I'm with probably a company of fifty, a hundred people. They always got together for these trips to Jerusalem. That is why, actually, when Jesus was twelve years old, when his parents left Jerusalem, they left with a big company of people going back up towards Nazareth. And that's why they could get out a whole day's journey without missing Him. You know, He's probably with His cousins or you know, with part of the crowd. And it wasn't until dinnertime that they began to look around and couldn't find Him. And then is when they had to retrace their steps back to Jerusalem, because they would always travel with a big company.

And how glorious that must have been, coming towards Jerusalem with a large company of people. Of course, let us say that we here... say it was the big conclave that's going to be in San Bernardino. And we all decided you know, "Well, let's go and let's worship the Lord in San Bernardino. Or up at the conference center." So we get the idea of going up, but we didn't have cars. We're going to have to walk. So we all have our provisions. We start out together. We're singing as we're going down the road. The children are throwing rocks and taking sticks and beating trees and this kind of stuff, you know. And it's a big kind of an occasion going to worship the Lord.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go to the house of the LORD (Psa 122:1).

Someone suggested, "Well, let's go up this year. Come on, let's go up to the house of the Lord." All right. "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'"

For our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem (Psa 122:2).

The anticipation. Now there is something about Jerusalem, once your feet have stood within the gates, you always want to go back and stand again. There's something magnetic about that place. Once having stood there, there's always a yearning to go back.

Every year after our visit to Israel, Kay and I come home and we're trying to get over jet lag and we'll say, "Well, this is our last year. You know, this will be it. It's just, you know." But my, as the time approaches to leave again, we get so excited. We're all planning and getting things all set and ready to go, and we're eager and raring to go again. There's just something about the place; you just love to go back again and again. "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Glorious anticipation.

For Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up (Psa 122:3-4),

And that is, the people. All the word compact together means that all the people gather together within it in a compact type of a group. "Whither the tribes go up."

the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD (Psa 122:4).

So all of the people gathering together to give thanks to the Lord.

For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David (Psa 122:5).

Jerusalem is the capital. Jerusalem is the center.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee (Psa 122:6).

We had a fellow come in this past week who God has given the gift of giving. And he said, "I like to give where I know that God is going to bless me." And so a while back, he gave money designated to be distributed to the poor. Because the scriptures said, "He who lends to the poor lends to the Lord" (Proverbs 19:17). He said, "I like to just lend some money to the Lord." So he said, "Just distribute this to the poor, because I know God's interested in the poor and God's going to bless me."

Well, he came back and he said, "Well, God has blessed me because I distributed to the poor." He said, "Now I want to give again where I know that God will bless. And God said that He would bless those that bless Israel. And so I want to give a gift just for the nation of Israel. Let it come from the church and I want you to take it over with you when you go." So we'll be taking a gift to Israel when we go over in January. We're going to give it to Prime Minister Begin and just tell him it's from the Christians at Calvary Chapel because we're praying for the peace of Jerusalem and we love them for preserving the Bible for us and for bringing us our Savior. And we're just going to give it in the name of the Lord to the nation. And if you'd like to contribute to that fund, you can just designate it. "They shall prosper," it says, "that love thee."

He said, "God has so blessed me for giving to the poor, loaning to Him for the poor. Now I want to give into something else that God has declared Himself for." So he gave me a check for \$450,000 that I'll be taking over. He says, "My accountant says this is what I need to write off for the end of the year." So loaning to the poor pays pretty good interest.

Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee (Psa 122:7-8).

He tells us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and then he offers sort of a prayer, "Peace be within thy walls. For the companions' sake, I will now say, 'Peace be within thee.'"

Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good (Psa 122:9).

Still in the anticipation of gathering in Jerusalem to worship the Lord.



Psalm 123:1-4 (AMP)

1 UNTO YOU do I lift up my eyes, O You Who are enthroned in heaven.

2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, and as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until He has mercy and loving-kindness for us.

3 Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on and loving-kindness for us, for we are exceedingly satiated with contempt.

4 Our life is exceedingly filled with the scorning and scoffing of those who are at ease and with the contempt of the proud (irresponsible tyrants who disregard God's law).

Psalm 123:

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of a servant look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt (Psa 123:1-3).

That is, the people around are just contemptuous towards us.

Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud (Psa 123:4).

So Lord, we're going to lift up our eyes to You who dwell in heaven. Our eyes are going to be fixed on Thee, not upon those around us who are giving us such a hard time.

How important it is when we're going through trials to fix our eyes upon the Lord. So many times we get our eyes upon people and we get in these interpersonal conflicts with people and we're watching to see what he's going to do next. Just waiting. Best to just get your eyes fixed on the Lord. And so he said, "As the servant watches his master's hand."

Now the servant was constantly watching, especially at a dinner or whatever, when the guests were there, the servant the whole time would watch his master's hand. For the master would give certain signals with his hand, expecting the servant to pick up on those signals. It was the duty of the servant if things are getting out of order, if the wine is getting low or something, the master would just give a signal with his hand and the servant knew exactly what he was saying. And thus, the whole time the servant's eyes would be glued upon the master's hands waiting for a signal. Because if the master should signal and the servant is off someplace else and his mind someplace else, and he's not on his toes, then he's really in trouble. Constantly watching.

And the same with the maidservants. Watching the mistress, watching the hand continually, because it was with the hand that they gave their beckons, their signals. Not wanting to speak to the servants or directions were given to them by hand movements. And so, "Even as a servant keeps his eye on his master's hand, Lord, I'm going to keep my eyes glued on You." That's a good policy. Just keep your eyes glued on the Lord. The junk that you don't see is not going to hurt you.

**Psalm 124:1-8 (AMP)**

- 1 IF IT had not been the Lord Who was on our side—now may Israel say—**
- 2 If it had not been the Lord Who was on our side when men rose up against us,**
- 3 Then they would have quickly swallowed us up alive when their wrath was kindled against us;**
- 4 Then the waters would have overwhelmed us and swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us;**
- 5 Then the proud waters would have gone over us.**
- 6 Blessed be the Lord, Who has not given us as prey to their teeth!**
- 7 We are like a bird escaped from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped!**
- 8 Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.**

**Psalm 124:**

**If it had not been the LORD who was on our side (Psa 124:1),**

**And, of course, I think we could all write our own psalm from this point on. If God hadn't been with me, let me tell you, you know. "If it had not been that the LORD was on our side,"**

**now may Israel say; If it had not been that the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they would have swallowed us up quickly, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, and the stream had gone over our soul: and the proud waters would have gone over our soul (Psa 124:1-5).**

**Oh, if it hadn't been for God's help. If it hadn't been for God's strength. If it hadn't been for God's sustaining power, how many times we would have gone under. We'd have never made it this far if it had not been.**

**Paul the apostle said, "Who hath delivered us from so great a death, who doth now deliver us, and I am confident He shall yet deliver us" (I Corinthians 1:10). You see, the past help of God is a prophecy of the future. The fact that God has helped me, the fact that God is helping me is my assurance that He's going to help me. And if it had not been that God was helping me, I wouldn't be here now.**

**And so he breaks forth into the blessing.**

**Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, we are escaped. Our help is in the name of Yahweh, who made heaven and earth (Psa 124:6-8).**

**And again, the idea, God has made the heaven and the earth. The name of Yahweh, the name of our God, Yahweh, the maker of heaven and earth. And our help is in the name of the Lord. There's tremendous power in the name of Jesus.**

**Peter was walking into the temple, the hour of prayer. And there was a man who was lame and begging. And you go to Israel today and you find out that severely handicapped people: blind, lame, and all, the lepers; they still are around the gates begging. A lot of beggars. And here was a man born lame, begging. And Peter said, "Hey fellow, look over here." And he turned, held out his hand expecting to receive something. Peter said, "I don't have any silver and gold, but I'll be glad to share what I do have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Power in the name of Jesus. And the man stood, he walked, he leaped. He ran through the temple, walking, leaping, praising God, because of the power of the name of Jesus.**

**There is a proverb that says, "The name of Yahweh is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10). How many times I have retreated into the safety of the name of Jesus. When threatened, when in danger, just the breathing out, "Oh Jesus." In the name of Jesus. Jesus said, "Henceforth you've asked nothing in My name. Ask, that you might receive, that your joy might be full" (John 16:24). "You shall ask anything in My name, I will do it, that the Father might be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13). The power of the name of Jesus, maker of heaven and earth.**

**Jesus, of course, you know, is Yahweh Shua or Yashua. It is that name of God compounded with the Hebrew word salvation. And thus you get, Jehovah or Yahweh is salvation.**

**Psalm 125:1-5 (AMP)**

**1** THOSE WHO trust in, lean on, and confidently hope in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides and stands fast forever. **2** As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from this time forth and forever. **3** For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest upon the land of the [uncompromisingly] righteous, lest the righteous (God's people) stretch forth their hands to iniquity and apostasy. **4** Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, and to those who are right [with You and all people] in their hearts. **5** As for such as turn aside to their crooked ways [of indifference to God], the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. Peace be upon Israel!

**Psalm 125. We're still ascending towards Jerusalem.**

**They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion (Psa 125:1),**

**The mount upon which Jerusalem was built.**

**which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever (Psa 125:1).**

**Now the Mount of Olives won't abide forever. Zion will, but the Mount of Olives is soon going to be split by a tremendous earthquake. Right in the middle, a new valley will be formed out of Jerusalem. Now you have the valley of Hinnom, in which the valley of Kidron, and the Tyropean and the Hinnom valley merged in the valley of Hinnom, goes on out of Jerusalem. But there's going to be a new valley going out of Jerusalem when the Mount of Olives splits right in the middle and a new valley forms out of the city. This, of course, will take place when Jesus returns and puts His foot upon the top of the Mount of Olives.**

**The geologists have discovered a major earth fault right through the center of the Mount of Olives. It doesn't really mean anything to me. The Lord can split it without an earth fault. It shall be split. Actually, it will open up a hole, it will open up an underground river and a new river will come gushing forth out of Jerusalem, flowing into this valley and going clear on down to the Dead Sea. And the fresh waters of this new river that is formed will actually heal the waters of the Dead Sea so that they'll be able to have fish living in the Dead Sea. And it will become a center of the fishing industry. The mount of Zion abides.**

**As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people (Psa 125:2)**

**So you stand there in Jerusalem, you look and you see the Mount Zion on the south. You see Scopus over towards the north. You see the Mount of Olives on towards the east. Golgotha, Calvary towards the west. As the mountains surround the little city of Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people.**

**from henceforth even for ever (Psa 125:2).**

**Surrounded by God. Paul the apostle, when he was talking to the Epicurean philosophers there at the Areopagus on Mars Hill in Greece, in Athens, he said, "I perceive you men are very spiritual." He said, "As I've been going through your city, I've observed the number of idols that you have. Your places of worship. All of the different gods." For the Greeks had deified everything they could think of. You know, the sun, the moon, the planets, they were all deities. And then having run out of stars and planets and constellations to deify, they began to deify even emotions. So they had the god of love, the god of hate, the god of fear, the god of joy, the god of sorrow, the god of grief, and the various gods. They had deified just about anything you could think of.**

**Now one fellow got an idea, "Maybe we're missing a god. Maybe we haven't thought of him." So he built an altar and he put the inscription over, "To the Unknown God." "Whoever you may be, wherever you might be. We don't want you to feel offended and that you've been slighted. So here, we've got an altar to worship the unknown God."**

**So Paul said, "I perceive you're very religious. I've seen all of your altars as I've walked through your city." He said, "And one caught my attention. For it was inscribed, 'To the Unknown God.'" He said, "I'd like to tell you about this God. He's the One who made the heaven and the earth and everything that is in them. And in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28) In other words, I am surrounded by Him. I am living in His midst. I live, I move, I have my being in Him.**

**When Daniel was brought before Belshazzar at this feast, after the writing appeared on the walls, he said, "Belshazzar, God gave to your grandfather this glorious kingdom of Babylon. But he was lifted up with pride. And so God allowed him a period of madness until he realized that it was God who ruled and reigned." And he said, "But this God, the very God in whose hand your breath is, you have not glorified." Surrounded by God. My very breath depended upon Him. So as the mountains are around about Jerusalem, so God is around about His people. You're surrounded by God. He encompasses us. As the one-hundred-and-thirty-ninth psalm said, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. You know every time I sit down, every time I stand up." He said, "You have gone before me. You're behind me, and Your hand is upon me." "Thou has beset me before and behind, and Thine hand is upon me" (Psalm 139:5). Surrounded by God.**

**I never come to any place in my life but God has not preceded me there. I can look back and see the hand of God, as He was on my life even in the past, even when I wasn't interested. Surrounded by God. Your life is encompassed by Him. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel (Psa 125:3-5). So, again, the remembrance of the troubles from the cities from whence they were coming. Looking forward again to that time of coming into the consciousness of God's presence**

**Psalm 126:1-6 (AMP)**

**1** WHEN THE Lord brought back the captives [who returned] to Zion, we were like those who dream [it seemed so unreal]. **2** Then were our mouths filled with laughter, and our tongues with singing. Then they said among the nations, The Lord has done great things for them. **3** The Lord has done great things for us! We are glad! **4** Turn to freedom our captivity and restore our fortunes, O Lord, as the streams in the South (the Negeb) [are restored by the torrents]. **5** They who sow in tears shall reap in joy and singing. **6** He who goes forth bearing seed and weeping [at needing his precious supply of grain for sowing] shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

**Psalm 126:**

When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion (Psa 126:1), Or when the Lord actually freed Zion from her captivity, we were like those who dream (Psa 126:1).

How many times when we see the glorious work of God, it's just like being... it's just like a dream. It's just hard to comprehend. As the children were singing tonight, I was like one who was dreaming. I pastored little churches for so many years, when you dreamed of having a children's choir. And all of the efforts and time and all that we've put in in trying to develop something, and then to just see God do it. You're just sitting there; you're like one who's dreaming. I look at what God has done here, and it's like a dream. There's something that the reality has not yet sunk in. It's funny how that so often in my dreams I dream that I'm back pastoring one of the churches that I've pastored in years gone by and still struggling, and that whole struggle. And I dream that I'm... Man, when I wake up, I think, "Oh no, this is the dream, you know. This can't be real." God's glorious work that we see.

And so the psalmist, "When God worked, delivered Zion, we were just like those that dream." So excited in what God was doing. It just... the reality of it just hardly seem to register.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD has done great things for them (Psa 126:2).

Oh, how neat it is to just have that kind of joy and freedom to just be able to laugh over the good things that God does.

The LORD has done great things for us; whereof we are glad (Psa 126:3).

Then the prayer.

Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. For they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Psa 126:4-6).

I think that herein is speaking of really the ministry in a sense. Jesus when He spoke of the sower going forth planting the seed, some fell on the wayside, some among the rocks and some among the thorns, others on good ground. Jesus likened the field that was being sown as the world; the seed is the Word of God. And I think that the reference here is much the same as similitude, as we see being the Word of God, and "they that go forth weeping, bearing the precious seed, shall doubtless come again. Those that sow in tears shall reap in joy." I think that the attitude with which we go forth is so important.

Paul the apostle said, "For we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the glory may be to God, and not of us" (II Corinthians 4:7). The glorious treasure of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the glorious treasure of the Word of God, it's in this earthen vessel. Jesus Christ dwelling in me, the most valuable thing in the universe in this cheap, common clay pot. Earthen vessel is a clay pot. It's a pot made out of earth, out of clay. So God has taken the glorious treasure and He has put it in this common old clay pot. Now anytime I think that this pot is important, then I'm a crackpot. God did the ridiculous. In order that we would not glory in the pot, in the vessel, but that we would glory in the contents. Now God wants me to pour forth His love to the needy world around me in such a way that they are captivated by Him, not by me. That they're drawn to Him, not to me. So my attitude in going forth is so important. For if I go forth in a haughty attitude, "Well, here I am, you lucky people, you know." And you go forth with this haughty air, God will put you down. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and he that exalteth himself shall be abased" (Luke 14:11). And God has interesting ways of abasing a person. Just really letting you fall right on your face in front of everybody. You know, just when you're trying to show how graceful and how marvelous you are, zoom... right on your nose.

In going forth it should always be with that sense of awe. "Oh God, I am nothing. But what a glorious treasure I have to share with the world. What a privilege to be a servant of God and to be the instrument through which God works." Never, "Oh God, I understand why You chose me. You've made a good deal when You got me, Lord." I heard of this church that had just called a new minister fresh out of seminary and he had graduated magna cum laude and he really thought that he had it all together. And so his first Sunday morning, he came in dressed impeccably, cuff at the right length and his sermon was just homiletically perfect, and you know, just everything was just, I mean, he was the epitome of perfection. Came in with that, "Folks, I've got it together" kind of an attitude, you know. And, "How fortunate you are that you called me to be the pastor of your church." But as he tried to deliver his message, he got confused. He got mixed up. He lost his place. He couldn't get it together. The thing just fell apart and was in shambles. And finally he just stood there, and he was just so confused he couldn't say anything. And he just broke down and he started to weep. And he turned and left just broken, when a dear little saint down towards the front turned to her friend and said, "If he had come in like he went out, he would have gone out like he came in." That's pretty much what this psalm says. "He who sows in tears will reap in joy." Going forth weeping, bearing the precious fruit, you'll doubtless come again bringing the harvest, the sheaves with you. Our attitudes--so important.

**Psalms 127:1-5 (AMP)**

**1 EXCEPT THE Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; except the Lord keeps the city, the watchman wakes but in vain. 2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to take rest late, to eat the bread of [anxious] toil—for He gives [blessings] to His beloved in sleep. 3 Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. 4 As arrows are in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. 5 Happy, blessed, and fortunate is the man whose quiver is filled with them! They will not be put to shame when they speak with their adversaries [in gatherings] at the [city's] gate.**

**Psalms 127 is a psalm that is important for all of us to really get implanted deep in our hearts.**

**Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it (Psa 127:1):**

**I spent far too many years laboring in vain, trying to build the Lord's house. Trying to build the Lord's church. I used every gimmick that came down the pike, and there's a lot of them. There are people that are cranking out programs every day, sending them out to churches. And you can buy all kinds of programs: church growth programs, and financial programs. And we get letters all the time of some new program that they've devised for church growth or whatever. They'll come out for a fee and do a demographics on your community and determine just what kind of a program you should enter into to attract the community that you're in, and a sociological demographic. They've got everything all figured out. It's just like if you're trying to merchandise peanuts in an area. They'll come out and they'll take a survey of the people and find out just how to package the peanuts to sell them best, you know. Will they go best in the little cellophane wrap or a little box? Or do you need a can? And the colors and everything else. They've got the whole thing doped out. Well, they got them doped out for churches, too.**

**And I worked every program that I could trying to build the church of Jesus Christ... all to no avail. I was laboring in vain. Except the Lord build the house, you're spinning your wheels. It's just a lot of futile effort. except the LORD keep the city, the watchman wakes up in vain (Psa 127:1). Unless God keeps our house. Unless the Lord build our house, you know, you're just worrying in vain. You can't do anything. We've got to just trust the Lord. It is vain for you to rise up early, and to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows (Psa 127:2): Now, not to rise up early to work, but to eat the bread of sorrows. for so he giveth his beloved sleep (Psa 127:2). You know, a lot of people pound the pillow all night long worried about things. It's vain to spend the night worrying.**

**Now the psalmist begins to talk about the family and the family ties and the strength of the nation is in the strength of the family. And recognizing that this principle is true, he turns now his attention towards the family and declares,**

**Lo, children are a heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward (Psa 127:3).**

**Years ago we were living in Tucson, Arizona, and we had a captain in the Air Force that was living next door to us. And they were a very friendly couple, Jim and Jan and their three daughters. And because our driveways were adjacent to each other, according to the sociological books, you have a... if your driveway is adjacent to your neighbor's driveway, then you'll get acquainted with that neighbor. It's sociologically compatible homes. And it's interesting in the demographics, sociological demographics, according to where your driveway is and where your house is in the block and so forth, they can show you which houses you'll be friends of the neighbors around. It's a crazy deal and they've worked it all out. But we had sociologically compatible driveways and so we got acquainted with them. And through our acquaintance, Jan came to receive Jesus Christ. And ultimately, Jim accepted the Lord. Shortly after Jim accepted the Lord, he was transferred to Alaska. He was a pilot of the B29s and I got a letter from Jim, which I will treasure and prize as long as I live. Jim had been a professor at Cornell University prior to being recalled into the Air Force. And he wrote in his letter of his agnosticism that he had had, of his attitudes towards his three daughters. He said, "I used to say that children were the scourge of the earth." And he said, "I hated being tied down in marriage. And I hated being tied down by my girls. I couldn't wait to get away. I love the missions where I would fly off overseas and all and I could just get away from them for a while." He said, "But since receiving Jesus Christ, since your sharing His love with me and my finding out how glorious it is to know the Lord and follow Him," he said, "you know, I'm so lonely for my family I can hardly wait for them to get things packed and get up here with me." He said, "I have such a love for my little girls. They're such a blessing, they're such a heritage, you know." And oh the way the Lord can turn things around in a person's life. Giving us the true sense of value for children are a heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is His reward.**

**As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of his youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them (Psa 127:4,5):**

**So the quiver full of children.**

**they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate (Psa 127:5).**

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

**Psalm 128:1-6 (AMP)**

**1 BLESSED (HAPPY, fortunate, to be envied) is everyone who fears, reveres, and worships the Lord, who walks in His ways and lives according to His commandments.**

**2 For you shall eat [the fruit] of the labor of your hands; happy (blessed, fortunate, enviable) shall you be, and it shall be well with you.**

**3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the innermost parts of your house; your children shall be like olive plants round about your table.**

**4 Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who reverently and worshipfully fears the Lord.**

**5 May the Lord bless you out of Zion [His sanctuary], and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life;**

**6 Yes, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!**

**Psalm 128**

Continuing to deal with the family and all, the next psalm.

**Blessed is every one that feareth [or reverences] the LORD; and walks in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labor of your hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee (Psa 128:1-2).**

**Who is that? The man who reverences the Lord and walks in the ways of the Lord. You'll eat the fruit of your own labor. You'll be happy. It will be well with you.**

**Your wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of your house: and your children like olive plants round about the table (Psa 128:3).**

**So all these little olive skin kids sitting around the table, you know. I love it. Ten little faces, big smiles.**

**Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that reverences the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion (Psa 128:4-5):**

**Now we're still coming towards Jerusalem and we're still looking forward to getting there.**

**and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel (Psa 128:5,6).**

**So you get to see your grandkids and that's neat.**

**( Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 838-839)**

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