

REASONS FOR BEING THANKFUL

BIBLE TEXT : Psalm 92:1-15

LESSON 307 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people" (Psalm 35:18).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Psalm 92:1-15

¹ *It is a good thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:

² To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,

³ Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

⁴ For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

⁵ O LORD, how great are thy works! *and* thy thoughts are very deep.

⁶ A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

⁷ When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; *it is* that they shall be destroyed for ever:

⁸ But thou, LORD, *art most* high for evermore.

⁹ For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

¹⁰ But my horn shalt thou exalt like *the horn of* an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

¹¹ Mine eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies, *and* mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.

¹² The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

¹³ Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

¹⁴ They shall still bring forth fruit in

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Thanks and Praise

As Thanksgiving Day is here again, every Christian lifts his heart to God in praise and gratitude for past blessings. However, not only on this holiday but every day of the year the child of God gives thanks unto Him. The first two verses of this Psalm tell us three things to do: first, give thanks unto the Lord; second, sing praises; and third, show forth His loving-kindness. We are instructed to do this every morning and evening.

In Prayer

Let us see how many ways there are by which we may praise the Lord. One way is in prayer. When we kneel at our bedside, or in the closet, or at the altar of prayer in the house of God, and begin to praise Him for His goodness. He meets us in prayer and pours new blessings down upon our soul. Also, as we go about our duties and silently praise God in our heart, He often floods our soul with joy and love.

A testimony meeting is an opportunity to praise the Lord; and young people's meeting is a very good time for children and young people to give their testimony. "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Psalm 107:2). If children begin young, it will be easier in years to come to stand up in large congregations and tell what God has done for them. As she lay on her bed a young child on the campground many years ago thought of her future life. As she pondered how her life could be spent in a profitable way, and as she prayed, it seemed that the greatest ambition to which she might attain in life was to be a street worker. God prepared her for that place, and today she enjoys the opportunity she now has to give her testimony on the street corner.

In Song

Another way to give thanks unto the Lord is by singing songs. If it is difficult for you to sing, sing anyway. Some children may have the opportunity to take voice-training and become better singers. As they grow older, perhaps their voices will be used to glorify God in public services, as well as to cheer sick people. In many places in the Bible we find that singing had a great part in the worship of the Lord. Truly, "it is a good thing to . . . sing praises unto thy name, O most High" (Psalm 92:1).

In Music

The third verse tells us of another way by which the Christian may show forth the loving-kindness of the Lord: "Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound." Today we may also praise God upon instruments of four strings — the violin, viola, cello, and bass viol. The piano and harp, which have a great many strings, are also used in the worship of the Lord. We do not know the various instruments which made up the 4000-piece orchestra of King David (**1 Chronicles 23:5** ⁵ **Moreover four thousand were porters; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith.**), but a variety of instruments which were used in the days of long ago are listed in

old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

¹⁵ To shew that the LORD *is* upright: *he is* my rock, and *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

the Bible: the trumpet, psalter, cornets, cymbal, dulcimer, flute, pipe, sackbut, tabret, timbrel, and the organ, in addition to the stringed instruments already mentioned.

Fleeting Joys

The Psalmist makes a comparison between the wicked and the righteous. No doubt, he is showing the reasons the righteous have for praising the Lord. Perhaps some boys and girls think that the young people who attend the shows, dances, ball games, skating rinks, and other places of amusement are having a happier time than those who attend church, Sunday School, chorus and orchestra rehearsals, and study music in order to prepare themselves for the Lord's work. But let us see what this lesson teaches us.

We see pictured two stately trees, a cedar and a palm. Below each tree is a bit of green grass which soon withers as the hot sun beats down. But the roots of the two trees go deeper and deeper into the earth for water, and they remain fresh and green.

The life of the sinner is as the grass: "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass," (James 1:11). "The wicked spring as the grass, and . . . shall be destroyed for ever" (Psalm 92:7). So we see that although the wicked seem happy at times, yet those who forget God and live sinful lives, seeking only their own pleasure, shall some day be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God (**Psalm 9:17** ¹⁷ **The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.**). Evil-doers and workers of iniquity "shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb" (Psalm 37:1, 2).

Palms and Cedars

Now let us see what is said of the Christian: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon" (Psalm 92:12). In what way do the righteous compare with the palm and cedar trees? Both these trees are known for their beauty. Of course, one does not need to be physically beautiful in order to be loved and have friends. If the beauty of Jesus is seen in the life of the Christian, he may be unpopular with sinners but among Christians he will find many friends, for God's people like to be with those who are kind, thoughtful, and clean in their speech, honest and straightforward in their manner.

A cedar is also known for its fragrance. When Jesus, the sweet Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys (**Song of Songs 2:1** ¹ **I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys**), comes into one's heart, don't you believe He brings a sweetness into one's life? We sing a song:

**"Jesus, Rose of Sharon, bloom within my heart;
Beauties of Thy truth and holiness impart,
That where'er I go
My life may shed abroad
Fragrance of the knowledge of the love of
God."**

A palm leaf is often waved or carried as a symbol of victory, rejoicing, and triumph. We know that palm branches were strewn in the way when Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. A genuine Christian is triumphant through the Blood of Jesus. Some day he will join with that great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, kindreds, people and tongues — clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands (**Revelation 7:9** ⁹ **After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;**).

The date palm has supplied daily food for millions in the East.

The seeds are made into food for camels; and the fibres of the leaf-stems are woven into ropes and rigging. The tall trunk is valuable timber; and many articles are made from the leaves.

Fruitful

A Christian also bears fruit and likes to be useful and helpful. Jesus is pleased when we bear much fruit. We remember learning of the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (**Galatians 5:22** ²² **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,**)). When others see the love of Jesus shining from our life, and when they see how peaceful we are even when things go wrong, they will know that we have Jesus in our heart. Another way to "bear fruit" is to bring sinners to Jesus. Ask Him in the morning before you go to school to help you speak a word for Him; ask Him to give you an opportunity to invite a boy or a girl to your Sunday School.

Sons of God

The cedar and palm trees are also used as symbols of nobility. To be noble means to be "highborn," or of "high birth" or "exalted rank." One is born into the family of God when he is born again. So, is he not given dignity by becoming a child of the King? Christians are "the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:16, 17). That places the Christian in the Royal Family; and although sinners may not realize it, he actually has an exalted rank or station, even in this world of sin. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be" (I John 3:2).

The Righteous Lord

"The LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him" (Psalm 92:15). Does it fill your heart with praises and your mouth with songs just to think that some day the righteous Lord will take His own to that beautiful place called Heaven? Everyone has an opportunity to prepare for Heaven, but those who have done wickedly and have not repented of their sins shall be sent into eternal destruction by this same Lord in whom there is no unrighteousness.

Let us purpose in our hearts to go deeper and deeper into God's Word and in prayer. If the "roots" of our salvation go down deep into God's love, we shall be "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season" (Psalm 1:3). Then we can praise the Lord, not only on Thanksgiving Day, but on every day of the year.

QUESTIONS

1. How often should we give thanks unto the Lord?
2. Name at least five ways in which to praise the Lord.
3. Name at least twelve reasons for being thankful unto Him.
4. With what are the wicked contrasted?
5. How do the righteous compare with the cedar and palm trees?
6. Compare the end of the wicked with that of the righteous.
7. Who enjoys life the most — a Christian or a sinner? Why?