

THE SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY OF THE RIGHTEOUS

BIBLE TEXT : Psalm 92:1-15

LESSON 307 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God " (Psalm 92:13)

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:

I The Duty and Advantages of Praising God

1. It is a good thing to praise God, Psalm 92:1-3;

Psalm 33:2

² Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings.

Psalm 89:1

¹ I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 147:1

¹ Praise ye the LORD: for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; *and* praise is comely.

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.*

2. The grandeur of God's works is shown, Psalm 92:4, 5;

Psalm 139:17

¹⁷ How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

Isaiah 28:29

²⁹ This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, *which is* wonderful in counsel, *and* excellent in working.

Romans 11:33

³³ O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Romans 11:34

³⁴ For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

3. The brutish man and the foolish man fail to understand the final punishment of the wicked, Psalm 92:6-9;

Psalm 94:8

⁸ Understand, ye brutish among the people: *and ye fools,* when will ye be wise?

Psalm 68:1

¹ Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.

Jeremiah 12:1-3

¹ Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

² Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou *art* near in their mouth, and far from their reins.

³ But thou, O LORD, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter.

Malachi 3:15

¹⁵ And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, *they that* tempt God are even delivered.

4. The blessings of the righteous are shown, Psalm 92:10-14;

Psalm 23:5

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Psalm 89:24

²⁴ But my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and

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.

in my name shall his horn be exalted.

Psalm 135:1-3

¹ Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise *him*, O ye servants of the LORD.

² Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God,

³ Praise the LORD; for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant.

Isaiah 65:22

²² They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

Hosea 14:5

⁵ I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

Hosea 14:6

⁶ His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

5. All God's acts of mercy and judgment are founded on and guaranteed by His divine perfections, Psalm 92:15;

Deuteronomy 32:4

⁴ *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*

Romans 9:14

¹⁴ What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

NOTES:

A Day of Thanksgiving

We are thankful that the Government of Nigeria sets aside one day of each year as a day of thanksgiving. On this day, especially, all the people of the nation are urged to give thanks and praise God for His mercies and blessings during the past year. As a nation, we have much to be thankful for. As individuals, we have much to be thankful for. The Lord seemed to bring our Country, Nigeria, into view at a time when there was a need in the world for a place of refuge for the people of God who had no religious liberty in their own lands.

In this nation of ours, everyone is guaranteed by the right, by our nation's constitution, to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. No many other nations have ever enjoyed such full religious freedom as that which is our privilege to enjoy. No other people on earth have more right to praise God than the people of Nigeria and Africa.

Many are not thankful for the right that is constitutionally theirs today; and instead of praising and worshiping God, they are making Thanksgiving Day a day of feasting and revelry, drunkenness and rioting. Shame on a nation which God has so wonderfully blessed but where His mercies are trampled under foot! Destruction is ahead for such an ungrateful people unless they repent.

Breadbaskets of Nigeria

When we look out over our wide fields of ripened grain, often called the breadbaskets of Nigeria, we say, with David: "He [God] watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth" (Psalm 104:13, 14).

The joyful heart does not praise God once a year only, on Thanksgiving Day; but, with the Psalmist, every morning he shows forth God's loving-kindness and every night His faithfulness. In fact, the child of God has a constant incense of praise arising from the altar of his heart. It makes one feel good

to praise the Lord. Many spiritual blessings are obtained, and many spiritual battles are won, by praising the Lord.

Perhaps the Psalmist had been praising the Lord in prayer. He was so happy that he picked up his instrument of ten strings, and as his fingers struck the chords, such exuberant joy came into his soul that he wanted a greater instrument to use in giving vent to his feelings. So he laid down the instrument of ten strings and walked over to his harp, and there his soul mounted higher and higher in spiritual exultation, until his voice picked up the melody and sang praises unto the name of the Most High.

Great Works

"O LORD, how great are thy works!" David, one of the Psalmists, continually marvelled at, and wrote often about, the handiwork of God. He said the heavens declare God's glory; the sun, moon, and stars reveal His power. David remembered the goodness of God to Israel: that the Red Sea fled at His presence, and that the Jordan River was rolled back before the Children of Israel. Their God had power to do wonderful things.

We serve the same God as the Israelites served. He is a God of power. Our God can transform lives. He can pardon a sinner's transgressions, clean up his life, and take him out of the kingdom of Satan and put him into the Kingdom of our Christ. It takes divine power to change the heart of a sinner and make him a Christian. No other power or influence can do that.

Do not allow this Thanksgiving Day to pass without lifting your voice in praise to this wonderful God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the many blessings He has bestowed upon you during the past year. He has given you His protection through many dangers, seen and unseen, that have crossed your path. He has given you health, food, and clothing. Your breath has been given you, and you have been held in the hollow of His hand. He could have snuffed out your life as a candle is extinguished, at any moment. But He has given you innumerable blessings instead. "Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Deep Thoughts

"Thy thoughts are very deep." Man's thoughts are very shallow. Some people think that because man has been able to harness some of the powers of the universe and make an atomic bomb, his thoughts go very deep. But the so-called discoveries of man are only the bringing to light of a very few of the hidden mysteries of God. God created all things. Man discovers only that which God has already created.

Paul the Apostle exclaimed, after expounding the mysteries of grace: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33). Paul explained that through unbelief Israel was cut off, and that now through faith the Gentiles were grafted in. The fact overwhelmed him when he meditated on the depth of God's thoughts.

The Psalmist also was impressed with the depth of God's wisdom. He saw that the brutish man and the foolish man did not understand God's favour toward man; they did not comprehend that it is not to be measured by outward prosperity alone. The wicked may flourish as a green bay tree, but if he leaves God out of his plans the day will come when he will perish forever. Are you leaving God out of your plans today?

Flourishing Like Trees

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree." We can easily see, by this, that the hope of the righteous is very different from that of the wicked who are likened to grass, which is soon cut

down and withered. The palm tree speaks of grandeur and perpetual fruit bearing. It successfully carries a heavy load of nourishing fruit. There are no seasons of the year when its entire crop of fruit is cast off, when it might have rest from the duties of the fruit-bearing season. It bears fruit continuously. This is much like the life of a Christian. He bears fruit always. There is no time when he is exempt from that privileged duty. And the heavier the load that he carries in service to God and man, the more he flourishes spiritually.

"He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon." The cedar gives us an impression of majesty, stability, and durability. Cedar wood is not destroyed by worms, but lasts for years. Righteous men are planted by faith into the Kingdom of God. They are watered and nourished by the Word. They are rooted and grounded in love. They are strong and stalwart, like the palm trees and the cedars. They bear fruit continuously and are useful in many different ways. And in addition to all that, "they shall still bring forth fruit in old age." What a comfort to us all!

Simeon and Anna, though aged, were still worshiping in the Temple courts when the infant Jesus was brought there by His parents. Simeon had lived a devout and holy life. He had lived and walked with God for a long time. He had been a fruit-bearing branch of the True Vine for many years, and now that his eyes had seen the Messiah he was ready to depart in peace. Anna, too, served God with fastings and prayers night and day. When she saw Christ she gave testimony to those who looked for redemption in Israel. Simeon and Anna were like palm trees, like cedars in Lebanon; they bore fruit in their old age, as well as in their youth. We all know of devout men and women who have lived fruitful lives for God and who have served Him up to the very hour of death. Some have closed their prayer for a lost world, and were transported immediately to Heaven. Do we want to be like these? We can if we will!

Bountiful Earth

At this Thanksgiving season let us remember God's bountiful hand that has been outstretched toward us this past year, and sing praises unto His name. For we can say, with David: "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness: and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing." (Psalm 65:9-13).

QUESTIONS

1. Why do we celebrate Thanksgiving?
2. How should we celebrate it? and why?
3. How do the brutish and foolish men look at the prosperity of the wicked?
4. How does God look at the wicked man's prosperity?
5. To what trees are the righteous compared?
6. State some qualities of those trees.
7. What does it say the righteous shall do in old age?
8. Name some righteous people who have borne fruit in old age.