

Day 346 - TUESDAY: January 23rd

Psalms 103:1-22 NKJV

A Psalm Of David. Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD executes righteousness And justice for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, And its place remembers it no more. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them. The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His,

who do His pleasure. Bless the LORD, all His works, In all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!

Psalms 109:1-31 NKJV

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. Do not keep silent, O God of my praise! For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful Have opened against me; They have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, And fought against me without a cause. In return for my love they are my accusers, But I give myself to prayer. Thus they have rewarded me evil for good, And hatred for my love. Set a wicked man over him, And let an accuser stand at his right hand. When he is judged, let him be found guilty, And let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few, And let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, And his wife a widow. Let his children continually be vagabonds, and beg; Let them seek their bread also from their desolate places. Let the creditor seize all that he has, And let strangers plunder his labor. Let there be none to extend mercy to him, Nor let there be any to favor his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off, And in the generation following let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them be continually before the LORD, That He may cut off the memory of them from the earth; Because he did not remember to show mercy, But persecuted the poor and needy man, That he might even slay the broken in heart. As he loved cursing, so let it come to him; As he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment, So let it enter his body like water, And like oil into his bones. Let it be to him like the garment which

covers him, And for a belt with which he girds himself continually. Let this be the LORD's reward to my accusers, And to those who speak evil against my person. But You, O GOD the Lord, Deal with me for Your name's sake; Because Your mercy is good, deliver me. For I am poor and needy, And my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like a shadow when it lengthens; I am shaken off like a locust. My knees are weak through fasting, And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness. I also have become a reproach to them; When they look at me, they shake their heads. Help me, O LORD my God! Oh, save me according to Your mercy, That they may know that this is Your hand—That You, LORD, have done it! Let them curse, but You bless; When they arise, let them be ashamed, But let Your servant rejoice. Let my accusers be clothed with shame, And let them cover themselves with their own disgrace as with a mantle. I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; Yes, I will praise Him among the multitude. For He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, To save him from those who condemn him.

Psalms 110:1-7 NKJV

A Psalm of David. The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. The LORD has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

Daily Deep Dive:

Psalm 103:

The UCG reading program states: "Psalm 103, attributed in the superscription to David, is a psalm of praise for the wonderful goodness of God directed toward His people. David begins by talking with himself, demanding that his whole being "bless" the Lord (verses 1-2). This is in response to all of God's wonderful benefits—the blessings He gives us. We cannot of course bless God in kind. A "blessing" from a human being directed to God is a word of heartfelt praise or thanksgiving or an expressed wish to see all of God's purposes fulfilled, implying cheerful and committed cooperation with Him—submitting oneself fully to His will. Note that the psalm begins and ends with the same formula (verses 1, 22)—as does the next psalm (Psalm 104:1, Psalm 104:35).

In Psalm 103:3-5, David calls attention to six personal blessings from the Lord: forgiveness, healing, redemption, lovingkindness, satisfaction and renewal. With "you" and "your" in these verses, David was still speaking to himself, but clearly these statements apply to all of God's people. That is, each of us reading or singing along with the psalm could say the same things to ourselves. A seventh blessing—relief from oppression—is listed in verse 6 as applying to "all" (thus expanding the divine blessings out to others).

At the top of his list, David thanks God that He has the power and desire to forgive the perverse crookedness of our human nature that manifests itself in various iniquities (verse 3a). Next we are told that God "heals all your diseases" (verse 3b)—just as God

"forgives all your iniquities" in the previous clause. Some, realizing that godly people sometimes must suffer ongoing infirmity despite repeated prayers (as even the apostle Paul had to), think God healing "all" our diseases here does not mean that He heals every single one. Rather, they interpret these words as meaning merely that all diseases we have *that are healed* are healed by God—that is, whenever we are healed, God is the One who heals us. This is problematic, however, as it would indicate the same meaning for the previous parallel clause—that all iniquities we have *that are forgiven* are forgiven by God (thus meaning that God is the One who does whatever forgiving is done and not all of our sins are necessarily forgiven). Yet the statement about forgiveness seems more clearly to mean that God forgives every one of our sins—which indicates that the healing clause means that God heals every one of our diseases. In fact, as an inspired scriptural proclamation about God's nature, this would seem to be a divine promise. How then are we to reconcile this with faithful Christians who are not healed?

First we must recognize that there are conditions that must be met for healing—just as there are for forgiveness. Forgiveness requires repentance and faith—and so does divine healing (especially in cases where the sickness or disease is a result of the afflicted person's sins). But even when these conditions are met, God is not obligated to instantly and immediately remove affliction. Yet Psalm 103:3 would indicate that He *has* obligated Himself to heal the faithful *at some point*. He may choose to instantly intervene and heal—or, for His great and inscrutable purposes, He may decide to delay healing until much later. In fact, He may in some cases choose to delay healing until after a person has died—when, in the ultimate healing, He will return

believers to life in the resurrection from the dead. In this, God still proves Himself faithful to the promise of Psalm 103. Indeed, faithful believers brought up in the resurrection will experience perfect wellness and be impervious to illness for eternity to come. We find a further parallel in the benefit that follows. God "redeems your life from destruction" (verse 4a)—"from the pit" (NIV)—pulling us from dire circumstances and ultimately from the grave. This, of course, does not mean that we won't suffer adversity or death. David suffered both. God's own perfect Son, Jesus Christ, suffered intensely and died in His human life at a young age. So, while the promise of Psalm 103:4 is in part for our lives today—as God keeps us from various calamities throughout our lives and lets us endure others before rescuing us—the ultimate fulfillment of the verse will not come until our future resurrection in God's Kingdom. Even so, in verse 3 God delivers us from physical ailments throughout our lives today, but He will not remove all illness from us for eternity to come until that same resurrection. The same applies to being crowned with lovingkindness and tender mercies (verse 4b). On one level, David may have been speaking to himself of God having literally crowned him as the king of Israel—along with the advantages and privileges that brought. Yet he may also have been thinking of God more generally and figuratively heaping blessings and care upon his head (compare Genesis 49:26). The word for "lovingkindness" in Psalm 103:4 is *hesed*, meaning loyal steadfast love or covenant faithfulness, while tender mercies here refers to deep compassion and parental care (compare verse 13). Being the objects of God's grace or favor "crowns" His people above all creation. And ultimately, they will be crowned as literal kings to rule in His Kingdom (Revelation 5:10).

That God "satisfies your mouth with good things" (Psalm 103:5) includes more than providing food. "The word translated 'mouth' is a bit of a puzzle since it is usually translated 'ornaments' or 'jewelry,' words that hardly fit this context" (Wiersbe, *Be Exultant*, note on verses 1-6). The NIV follows the Greek Septuagint translation in rendering the word as "desires" (*Expositor's Bible Commentary*, footnote on verse 5). "Some students interpret the word to mean 'duration' or 'years' (see NASB [compare NRSV]). No matter how old we become, God can satisfy the needs of our lives and the spiritual desires of our hearts" (Wiersbe, note on verses 1-6). To be *renewed like the eagle* (verse 5) pictures having the strength to soar, to keep on (compare Isaiah 40:31). Both elements of Psalm 103:5 will find ultimate fulfillment in the Kingdom of God—as will God's righteous and just intervention for the oppressed of verse 6.

David uses the past national experience of Israel to illustrate God's blessings on His people—particularly His forgiveness, mercy and love. This was explained to Moses and demonstrated to the Israelites in how God dealt with them (verses 7-8, 17-18; compare Exodus 34:6-7). Though the Israelites, as we all do, deserved death for sin, God nevertheless continues to work with His people. His punishments against Israel's constant rebellion were not without end but were intended to help rehabilitate the people, not to justly destroy them (Psalm 103:9-10). God is here praised for His willingness to temper His righteous anger with His vast mercy and care for His people as His little, weak children (verses 11-14). Whereas God's anger is brief—required only during the fleeting physical existence of man—his "mercy" or loyal love is forever and will serve to perpetuate those who honor their commitment to follow Him (verses 15-18).

God's benefits extend to all within His dominion. "And His kingdom rules over all" (verse 19)—so that all creation (in both the spiritual and physical realms) should praise God along with David, as the psalm calls for in the threefold address: "Bless...Bless...Bless..." (verses 20-22a), followed by the final repetition of the psalm's opening line. This also serves to introduce the praise of God for His creation in the next psalm."

[END]

Psalm 109:

The UCG reading program states: "In Psalm 109, often referred to as an imprecatory (cursing) psalm of lament, David calls on God to judge and punish his wicked enemies who have attacked him with lies and hateful accusations (verses 1-4). Their fabrications are baseless, "without a cause" (verse 3), and they have betrayed David, returning, he says, "evil for good, and hatred for my love" (verse 5).

In its opening and closing, David refers to his enemies in the plural. Yet in verses 6-19, the psalm refers to a singular individual. Some take these verses to be David's quoting of his enemies regarding himself, yet it more likely seems that David is the one speaking here--referring to a primary antagonist, evidently one holding an office of responsibility (see verse 8).

In very strong language, David calls on God to settle accounts (verses 6-20). *The Nelson Study Bible* states: "Here the psalm takes a decidedly negative tone. The description of the wife of the enemy becoming an impoverished widow and the children becoming beggars [verses 9-12] seems particularly harsh. However, the psalmist directs these strong requests to the Lord; he does not actually take the sword into his own hand. He may feel compelled to vent his anger in words, but the psalmist

understands that vengeance itself belongs to the Lord" (note on verses 6-8).

Still, we might wonder why David would pray for calamity on innocent family members. Of course, they may not have been innocent at all. We do not know the exact circumstances here. It may be that the children mentioned were older--and that David understood them and the wife to be fully supportive of the wicked man's attacks on him. They may even have been participants in slandering him. The enemy's parents may also have been involved (see verse 14).

Moreover we should consider, as the *Zondervan NIV Study Bible* says, that "the close identity of a man with his children and of children with their parents, resulting from the tightly bonded unity of the three- or four-generation households of that ancient society, is alien to the modern reader, whose sense of self is highly individualistic.... That deep, profoundly human bond accounts [along with passed down behavior and consequences] for the ancient legal principle of 'punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation' (see Exodus 20:5...)" (note on Psalm 109:12). Furthermore, since it was considered that "a man lived on in his children...the focus of judgment [when mentioning the cutting off of descendants] remains on the false accuser (see Psalm 21:10; Psalm 37:28)" (note on 109:13).

It also seems that the curses David calls for are ones his accusers have pronounced against him--that he is merely praying for their curses against him to be turned back on themselves (compare verses 17-20). The psalm thus forms an "appeal for judicial redress--that the Lord will deal with them in accordance

with their malicious intent against him, matching punishment with crime" (*Zondervan*, note on verses 6-15).

Indeed, we must also remember that David was Israel's king and judge as well as an inspired prophet of God. His song here, though no doubt personally heartfelt, was more importantly a declaration of God's judgment rather than a model for us on how to pray about enemies. This is what God's law decreed concerning false accusers: "If the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, *then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother*; so you shall put away the evil from among you. And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Deuteronomy 19:18-21).

As for how we are to pray about our enemies, Jesus gave us this instruction: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Luke 6:27-28). Of course, this does not preclude asking God to deal with them with "tough love" if they persist in harm--as this would ultimately be for their own good.

Demonstrating Psalm 109's prophetic aspect, the apostle Peter later cited the end of verse 8, "Let another take his office," in regard to selecting a replacement for Judas Iscariot among the 12 apostles after his betrayal of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:20). This does not necessarily mean that all of Psalm 109 is applicable to Judas. For instance, we have no other evidence that he had a wife and children--though it is possible that he did. The important point is that the judgment decreed on a betrayer of God's anointed king would, in an even greater sense, fit Judas. Judas betrayed Jesus,

the King of Kings, returning evil for the love that Christ had shown him.

Psalm 109:14-15 should not be understood as a prayer for removing all possibility of repentance and forgiveness for David's enemy and the enemy's family. Rather, David is asking that God not forget what they did to him so as to ensure their punishment. Yet David himself would have accepted an enemy's repentance--just as God accepted David's own repentance. Some, it should be noted, see the verses here as indicating that Judas cannot be forgiven for his sin upon repentance in the second resurrection. These verses indicate no such thing.

Finally, David describes the effect of the enemies' attacks on him (verses 22-25)--foreshadowing what Jesus Himself would experience. And he prays for God to powerfully intervene in a way that would make it clear to the enemies that God was doing so (verses 26-27). David closes with praise, confident in God's coming intervention on his behalf (verse 31)--just as God will intervene for all of His people suffering such assaults and persecution from others." [END]

Psalm 110:

The UCG reading program states: "Psalm 110 is a royal psalm of David that affirms the divinity of the Messiah. Note that the psalm begins in verse 1 with "the LORD"--i.e., YHWH (He Is Who He Is, the Eternal God)--giving subordinate regal rule at His right hand to another whom David refers to as "my Lord" (Adoni, meaning "Master"). David was the king of Israel. Who, if not God, was over him as his Lord?

Prior to Jesus' day, the Jews viewed this psalm as messianic. They saw David here looking to the future Messiah or Christ, the anointed King who would establish the Kingdom of God over all

nations. Yet other passages showed that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, which was seemingly problematic for Psalm 110. Jesus used these points in confounding the Pharisees. Note this exchange from Matthew 22 (which gives evidence of the Jewish messianic interpretation of Psalm 110 and confirms David as the psalm's author):

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, 'What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?'

"They said to Him, 'The Son of David.'

"He said to them, 'How then does David call Him 'Lord,' saying [in Psalm 110:1]: 'The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?' And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare to question Him anymore" (verses 41-46; compare Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44).

It was unheard of that a forefather would call a descendant "Lord" (i.e., Master). Moreover, how could David, as the founding father of his dynasty, refer to a king to follow in his stead as his Lord? Some have proposed that David was referring to Solomon when he became king in David's place while David was still alive. Yet this seems rather unlikely--for why then would the religious teachers of Christ's day have been confounded? Indeed, David shortly before his death still issued commands to Solomon. So Solomon was not David's Lord.

Following Jesus and the emergence of Christianity, a new Jewish explanation came about--that the David ("of David") in the psalm's title meant not by David but regarding David and that the psalm was written by one of David's subjects. Yet this was obviously not the traditional understanding in Jesus' day, as His exchange with

the Pharisees makes clear. They considered David the author, as Jesus affirmed. It is interesting that in the titles of the preceding psalms (108 and 109) was and still is understood in Jewish interpretation to mean that David wrote these.

The apparent dilemma of having David as the author is resolved if we understand that the messianic descendant of David is also Himself divine. Yet the wording of Psalm 110:1 does not seem to merely say that a future messianic King would one day be David's Lord. David, rather, appears to say that this One was already his personal Lord--that is, One he already served. This truly makes sense only if David recognized two divine beings existing at that time--one subordinate to the other. So here we have an Old Testament revelation of the existence of God and the Word--later known as God the Father and God the Son (Jesus Christ). While this was not generally understood by the Israelites, it should not surprise us to see that God's specially inspired prophets glimpsed this important truth.

The apostle Peter quoted Psalm 110:1 as applying to Jesus as the subordinate "Lord" at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34-36). The verse is also quoted in Hebrews 1:13, which shows that this position was given to Jesus and not to the angels.

Whereas Psalm 110:1 describes both Lords from a third-person perspective, verses 2-3 are written in second person--with David using the words "You" and "Your" in addressing the messianic King directly. Depending on the context, the name YHWH (represented here as "LORD") could refer to God the Father or to the One who became the Messiah, Jesus Christ--or to both. In keeping with verse 1, the use of "LORD" in verse 2 still clearly refers to the Father. The "You" and "Your" with the "rod of...strength" or "mighty scepter" (NIV) in verses 2-3 must

refer to the Messiah. Note God making "Your [the Messiah's] enemies" a footstool (subservient) in verse 1 and the mention again of "Your [the Messiah's] enemies" in verse 2.

David in verse 3 tells his messianic Lord that His people will be "volunteers" when the Lord comes in power. The wording here is "lit[erally] 'freewill offerings,' i.e., they will offer themselves as dedicated warriors to support [the Messiah] on the battlefield.... Accordingly, Paul speaks of Christ's followers offering their bodies 'as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) and of himself as a 'drink offering' (Philippians 2:17)" (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on Psalm 110:3). The latter part of verse 3 apparently depicts the Messiah "as clothed in royal majesty and glory and perpetually preserving the bloom of youth even as the 'womb of the dawn' gives birth each morning to the dew" (same note).

Verse 4 is either another third-person description of a divine conversation or a continuation of the second-person address to the Messiah. God is quoted as telling the divine Messiah, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Melchizedek (meaning "King of Righteousness") was in Abraham's day the King of Salem (meaning King of "Peace") and priest of God Most High (see Genesis 14:18-20). He was evidently a preincarnate manifestation of Jesus Christ (see ["A Mystery Solved: The Identity of Melchizedek"](#) in our free booklet [Who Is God?](#)). Unlike the later Aaronic priesthood, His priesthood was not established on the basis of His descent within a priestly tribe. Rather, it was by direct divine appointment. Jesus would continue in this priestly role on the same basis. Discussion over this point, citing Psalm 110:4, can be found in Hebrews 5:5-11 and 6:20-7:28.

The declaration in Psalm 110 of the Messiah as a priest was a source of confusion for many of the Jews of Christ's day, leading some to mistakenly think that besides a Davidic Messiah of the line of Judah, there would also be a Messiah of the line of Aaron, who was from the tribe of Levi (and, outside the scope of this discussion, some also believed in a Messiah of the tribe of Joseph). Yet the one Messiah was to be both King and Priest. Note next the opening words of Psalm 110:5: "The Lord is at Your right hand." The Lord (Adonai) at the beginning of the verse is evidently the Messianic King, Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of the Father (see Acts 5:31; Acts 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; Colossians 3:1). For recall from verse 1 the Father's appointment of the Lord (Jesus) to sit at His right hand. Therefore, verses 4-7 must constitute an address to God the Father about the future rule of the messianic Lord--thus reciting back to God, in hope and trust, what God has revealed. Jesus will execute divine judgment throughout the world and achieve victory." [END]