

DAVID'S EXHORTATION TO INDIVIDUAL WORSHIP

BIBLE TEXT : Psalm 103:1-22

LESSON 227 **Senior Course**

MEMORY VERSE: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Psalm 103:13).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Psalm 103:1-22

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul:
and all that is within me, *bless*
his holy name.

² Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits:

³ Who forgiveth all thine
iniquities; who healeth all thy
diseases;

⁴ Who redeemeth thy life from
destruction; who crowneth thee
with lovingkindness and tender
mercies;

⁵ Who satisfieth thy mouth with
good *things*; so that thy youth
is renewed like the eagle's.

⁶ The LORD executeth
righteousness and judgment
for all that are oppressed.

⁷ He made known his ways
unto Moses, his acts unto the
children of Israel.

⁸ The LORD *is* merciful and
gracious, slow to anger, and
plenteous in mercy.

⁹ He will not always chide:
neither will he keep *his anger*
for ever.

¹⁰ He hath not dealt with us
after our sins; nor rewarded us
according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as the heaven is high
above the earth, so great is his
mercy toward them that fear
him.

¹² As far as the east is from the
west, so far hath he removed
our transgressions from us.

¹³ Like as a father pitieth *his*
children, so the LORD pitieth
them that fear him.

¹⁴ For he knoweth our frame;
he remembereth that we *are*
dust.

¹⁵ As *for* man, his days *are* as
grass: as a flower of the field,

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Introductory Command to Bless God

1 The Psalmist spoke of the duty of giving glory to the Lord,
Psalm 103:1, 2;

Deuteronomy 8:10

¹⁰ When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt
bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath
given thee.

Deuteronomy 8:18

¹⁸ But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is*
he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may
establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers,
as *it is* this day.

Luke 19:40

⁴⁰ And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if
these should hold their peace, the stones would
immediately cry out.

2 Reasons are set forth stating why God is worthy of the praise
of men, Psalm 103:3-6;

Psalm 130:4

⁴ But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be
feared.

Matthew 1:21

²¹ And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his
name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their
sins.

Luke 9:56

⁵⁶ For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives,
but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

1 Peter 2:9

⁹ But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an
holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth
the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness
into his marvellous light:

II Unmerited Favors

1 God revealed Himself to Moses at Mount Sinai, and to all the
Children of Israel, through the Law, Psalm 103:7;

Deuteronomy 4:8-14

⁸ And what nation *is there* so great, that hath statutes
and judgments *so* righteous as all this law, which I set
before you this day?

⁹ Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently,
lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen,
and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy
life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

¹⁰ *Specially* the day that thou stookest before the LORD
thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather
me the people together, and I will make them hear my
words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that
they shall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach
their children.

¹¹ And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and
the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven,
with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

¹² And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the
fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no
similitude; only *ye heard* a voice.

¹³ And he declared unto you his covenant, which he
commanded you to perform, *even* ten commandments;
and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

¹⁴ And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach

so he flourisheth.

¹⁶ For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

¹⁷ But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

¹⁸ To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

¹⁹ The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

²⁰ Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

²¹ Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* his hosts; *ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

²² Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.

Daniel 2:22

²² He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what *is* in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

John 1:17

¹⁷ For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 1:1-3

¹ God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

³ Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

2 Mercy is a foremost attribute of God, as all have found who have come to Him in penitence, Psalm 103:8-12;

Psalms 108:4

⁴ For thy mercy *is* great above the heavens: and thy truth *reacheth* unto the clouds.

Lamentations 3:22-23

²² *It is of* the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

²³ *They are* new every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness.

Joel 2:12-14

¹² Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:

¹³ And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

¹⁴ Who knoweth *if* he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; *even* a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

Titus 3:5

⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

3 The life of man is very brief, but God knoweth our frame, Psalm 103:13-16;

Psalms 89:48

⁴⁸ What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

Isaiah 40:6-7

⁶ The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodness thereof *is* as the flower of the field:

⁷ The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass.

Hebrews 9:27

²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

James 4:14

¹⁴ Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

4 The secret of eternal life lies in the keeping of God's Word, Psalm 103:17, 18;

Isaiah 1:19

¹⁹ If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

John 8:31-32

³¹ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

³² And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 14:23

²³ Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

III The Universal King

1 David invited even the angels to join in this blessing to God whose kingdom ruleth over all, Psalm 103:19, 20;

1 Chronicles 29:11

¹¹ Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.

Isaiah 6:2

² Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

2 The heavenly host was called upon, and lastly the Psalmist exhorts himself again, to bless the Lord, Psalm 103:21, 22

NOTES:

There are times in the life of every man who serves the true and the living God, when the magnitude, majesty, and wondrous beauty of God seems to be suddenly presented anew to his soul in its overwhelming grandeur. The Psalmist seemed to be in such a state of inspiration when he penned the words of Psalm 103. The theme of the message is that the Lord God is high and eternal and the life of man is low and fleeting, yet God above takes knowledge of man and his ways. This thought caused the inspired writer to call upon every faculty at his command, as well as call upon the angels and the hosts of Heaven, to bring forth praise and blessing to God that was worthy of the incomparable Creator and King that He is.

Acceptable Praise

An evil man cannot render to God worthy praise out of an evil heart, for "of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Luke 6:45); but God's grace can change the wicked heart. The Psalmist once had an evil heart, but he prayed until he experienced the forgiveness for sins (**Psalm 32:5** ⁵ I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.); therefore he could, out of the abundance of his new heart, bring forth a praise that the Lord would welcome. How often this mighty king of Israel would stop in the press of business and give praise to his God! The act of praise from man to his Creator brings about a bond between the two that immeasurably strengthens the position of man. The secret of Christian strength today lies in the act of presenting heartfelt praise and blessings to the living God for His mercy and loving-kindness to the children of men. If men are not careful to give God praise, all His benefits are likely to be soon forgotten. The beautiful song admonishes the Christian to "count your blessings, name them one by one."

Forgiveness for Iniquities

The Psalmist brought forth his reasons, one by one, why men should give praise to God and worship Him. The forgiveness for iniquities is mentioned first because it is sin that keeps God's blessings from the life of man. Sin brings the penalty of death to the guilty, but God pardons the iniquities of all who will come to Him.

Divine Healing

The second reason for praising God is that He heals all manner

of diseases. If a physician of this world had this power, would not his name be heralded forth? and would not all who possibly could, have his skill demonstrated upon themselves? Yet the Lord is always the same, and has the same miraculous power today to heal all manner of diseases. The Son of God healed all who came to Him, and we read, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). Why are not all the sick people of the world flocking to Him? Their iniquities stand between them and God. When men are willing to repent of their sins, many times they find- the power of God present to heal their diseases also. God's promise to the Children of Israel was: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for ,I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).

Some men will try to say that the Psalmist, in Psalm 103, refers to the spiritual healing of the people, but Isaiah takes the same theme in his writings of the Messiah: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). The Spirit of God, through Matthew, states the fact that Jesus healed all who were physically sick, in direct fulfillment of the, prophecies (**Matthew 8:16-17** ¹⁶ When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick: ¹⁷ That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.). Herein can be seen that Jesus furnished an atonement not for sin only but for the healing of the body as well.

Disease originated with sin, and the same Blood that was shed for the remission of sin has power to eradicate disease. Why should men not trust God for their healing, and give Him praise when He does the work?

"Good Things"

"Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things." This phrase included much more than the daily food with which the children of men nourish themselves. The keynote of this passage was struck by Job, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23: 12). Natural food is necessary, and God has promised that His children should never lack the necessities of life. "He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure" (Isaiah 33:16). But there is a Heavenly Food that is more important to the soul. Natural bread sustains life, but the soul must secure its food from God. The Word of God is for that express purpose: it is food for the soul. Those who sit at Jesus' table will find bread enough and to spare: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

The Psalmist stated that the result of eating God's good things would be renewed youth. He chose the eagle for his comparison, possibly because he is such a long-lived bird. Eagles have been known to live to be 100 years old; and even at this age, it is said, the old feathers of the eagle will fall out and an almost entire new plumage will appear, thus making him appear young again. The soul of the man who puts his trust in God never becomes old. The body may fail and pass away, but the soul returns to God who gave it. On the resurrection morning the soul will be reunited with the resurrected, glorified body, to be ever with the Lord (**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and

with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.). The Christian's hope is an unailing hope.

Merciful Acts

After David had enumerated a few of the personal blessings that he had received from God, he took note of the blessings that other people had received. It seemed marvelous to him that God executed righteousness and judgment for all who are oppressed. This is very different from the children of men, for the strong seem to glory in suppressing the weak. This was true in David's day, and many times he championed the cause of the oppressed against the oppressor. The thought that God was allied with the oppressed brought great rejoicing to David's heart. The Christians of **all** ages have had similar reason to bless God. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (I Corinthians 1:27). The mighty men of earthly standard are often too proud to listen to the call of the Gospel, and in their independence they feel no need of help from God. The oppressed realize they need a defender, and find one in the God of Heaven. Is not that a compelling reason why men should worship and praise God?

The Love of God

The Psalmist went on to explain that God's righteousness, judgment, and revelation spring from four other attributes: "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." Men often find it hard to understand, these attributes of God. Some will say, "If the Lord rules the universe and has the power that He is represented as having, why is all this sin and wickedness in the world?" God has always done something about sin, and He will do more. God tolerates sin in the world only that the sinner might have time to repent. Could any man survive if God brought immediate judgment upon every sin and disobedience? All people are born in sin and must have a change of heart to live above sin. God's grace, long-suffering, and mercy bridge the gap between the time of man's accountability and his repentance.

It is with tenderest love that God looks down upon the souls of men. The nearest comparison that we have is the love of a father for his children. Just as the father teaches wisdom to his son, just as the father bears with the son who has transgressed his command and forgives gladly when the son repents, just as the father ministers to his son in sickness, so the Heavenly Father administers to all the needs of those who fear Him. God knows the frame of men and remembers that they are dust. He remembers that mortal life is of a very transitory nature. The Psalmist likens our life in God's sight to the flowers of the field. One day the flower is in full bloom, the next day it may be withered and gone; so is the life of man in the sight of God, but the soul lives throughout eternity.

What hope would men have if it were not for the love of God, whose mercies are from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him? There is nothing about man that merits God's love; yet to those who will turn to Him He does not deal the punishment that is justly due for their sins. Mercy rejoices against judgment in the same measure that Heaven is above the earth. When God removes the transgressions of a man they are gone forever — "as far as the east is from the west." God's mercy Is better than life; because, life passes away, but God's mercy endures forever. With these highest thoughts burning in his heart, is it any wonder that David called upon men to worship his God? All men would surely take up the same refrain of praise and blessing to God if they would let these words enter into their hearts.

Labor of Love

Probably the joy of David's heart knew no bounds as he included the messengers of God in his admonition to praise God; not because they needed any encouragement in their labor of love, but that they might show the world that God is worthy of such praise. The praise of all the men of the world, and the praise of all the inhabitants of Heaven would not excuse David from his duty of praise. He closed the Psalm as he opened it, "Bless the LORD, O my soul"; and his praise to God rang out to the end of his life. It is a marvelous thing to have a heart that can render acceptable praise to God; and there is nothing that will bring a blessing upon the life of a man as quickly as heartfelt praise and gratitude to God for His infinite goodness and mercy.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What are the foremost reasons the Psalmist gives for blessing the Lord?
- 2 What is meant by the phrase, "Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things"?
- 3 What is the result of feasting on God's "good things"?
- 4 How does the Lord reward the oppressed if they put their trust in Him?
- 5 In what way did the Lord make Himself known to Moses and the Children of Israel?
- 6 Describe one of the ways in which the Lord shows mercy to the Children of men.
- 7 What becomes of a man's sins when he repents of them?
- 8 How does the Psalmist describe the shortness of man's life upon earth? 9 Who receives the mercy of God?