

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this series about sharing from our quiet times you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. We are two teachers and every day during the past week we had a quiet time from 7 selected PSALMS in the Old Testament. Once a week we come together to share what we have learned from our quiet times. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Today's topic is A DISCIPLE SHARES WHAT HE LEARNS FROM THE PSALMS - PART 5.

(S) **SHARING FROM SELECTED CHAPTERS FROM THE PSALMS**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from Psalm 84, 90, 91, 92, 103, 104 AND 107. Now we will use our notes to share important truths and lessons from some of these Psalms and discuss some difficult passages.

**Sharing quiet times from Psalm 90.**

**A Psalm contrasting the everlasting God with temporary man.** This is the only Psalm of Moses we possess. Moses contrasts the everlasting God with temporary man. He is deeply impressed by the unimaginable distance between the everlasting God and temporary man.

First. Verse 1-2 describes God as everlasting. The mountains are for man the oldest created things thinkable and stand as a testimony of how old man's history on earth really is. And yet, before the mountains existed, God was there. God was God before he created the earth with everything on it. God is the everlasting God (1-2).

Second. Verse 3-6 describes man as temporary. God only needs to speak one word and man returns to the dust from which he was created (3). What is then a man's life in comparison with God? Even the longest period any man has ever lived, almost a thousand years, is for God as short as the day of yesterday (4). Man's mortality and short life is compared to the length of just one watch in the night, which is only a third part of the night (Jud 7:19) and even that time is spent sleeping (4)! The shortness of man's life on earth is compared with the flash-floods of a rainstorm, which sweeps down a mountain and sweeps a man's life away. It is compared with the grass growing on the roofs of houses in Israel. In the early morning, the grass springs up with new life, but by the evening, the sun has scorched it completely (6).

Third. Verse 7-11 describes man as condemned. Moses realises that man is not only very temporary, but he is also condemned. God's wrath rests on mankind and man is terrified by God's indignation. Even in his very short life on earth, man cannot live without realising that God is angry with his sin and will punish his sin (7). God sees everything man does. Even man's most secret sins, which no one else knows about, are brought into the light of his presence (8). All the days of man's life on earth pass by as quickly as a sigh (9). The average length of man's life on earth is seventy years. If he is very strong, he may become eighty years. But no one will live for a very long time, because his life quickly flies away. And the whole period of his life is filled with trouble and sorrow (10). Moses looks at the people of Israel and asks if there is anyone who really knows the power of God's wrath against sin? Who is really aware of the shortness of his life and of God's indignation against his sin? Who is living consciously and responsibly? (11).

Fourth. Verse 12-17 is Moses' prayer. Moses prays to the everlasting God to teach man to number his days aright so that he may gain a heart of wisdom. He prays that God may make people very conscious of the real condition of their life, that they are temporary and condemned, so that they will seek God and God's will and become wise by doing what pleases God. Real wisdom is to be aware of the shortness of life on earth and to consciously and persistently seek to know God and God's will (12). He prays that everything they do on earth in their short life may receive God's blessing, because without God's blessing, nothing will ever be established (13-17). I too am aware that my life is short and I need to consciously seek to become wise.

(T) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 91.**

**A song of praise about God's protection.**

First. Verse 1-8 describes the protection by God's invisible hand. God's protection is available for everyone who trusts God. In the days of the Judges, foreign nations regularly invaded Israel and plundered their crops and destroyed their houses. When these plunderers came, the Israelites withdrew into the mountains to shelter in caves or in high rock clefts (Jud 6:2). Likewise, when the people who trust God see their enemies coming, they withdraw into God as their Shelter. In this wicked world, God is the only One who can protect. Like a mighty tree casts a cool shadow on the weary traveller, so God casts his protecting Shadow over everyone who shelters under his presence (1). People who make God their Protector are those who do not trust in themselves or in other people, but trust in God (2). There are so many

dangers surrounding man! A small bird may be completely unaware that the bird-catcher is waiting to catch it in its collapsible net. Larger animals may not be able to see the hole dug in the path and covered with branches into which they may fall and so get killed (3). But God sees all these dangers and with his invisible hand he protects his people. He covers them with his presence as a bird covers her young with its feathers. And he will cover his fallen people with his faithful help as a soldier covers his fallen friend on the battlefield with his shield (4). The people of God, who enjoy God's protection, do not have to fear anything as they go through life, even in spite of the many dangers they have to face. They need not fear the terrors in the night: Wild animals or robbers which attack them, or the world of evil spirits who try to terrorise people. They need not fear the destroying arrows of the sun's rays (5). They need not fear the many sicknesses like pest that can kill so many just in one night or any sickness that is intensified by the heat of the day (6). However strong, demonic or contaminated the evil may be, the people of God need not fear! It will not come near them, because God protects them. They will only witness God's judgement on those who do not trust in him (7-8).

Second. Verse 9-13 describes the protection by God's angels. People who make God their dwelling and refuge will experience that nothing that does not have God's permission will harm them and that no lasting disaster will come near them (9-10). God commands his angels to guard them in all their ways on earth. His angels will see to it that they do not strike their feet, protected only by sandals, against the many rocks on the road. When they accidentally tread on a snake, they will be able to trample it instead of running from it. And when they are attacked by a lion or dragon on their way, they will be able to conquer it (11-13).

Third. Verse 14-16 describes the protection God himself promises to his people. The people of God are those who love him and acknowledge his name without fear for people and without feeling ashamed of being believers! God promises that he will rescue them from danger, protect them from attacks, answer their prayers, be with them in all difficulties, give them honour in the presence of people and give them a long life on earth. God will do these things to everyone who has stopped to trust in his own wisdom and strength, but has submitted to God's wisdom and powerful protection. Anyone who says to God, "Lord, I cannot do this. Please you do this!" will experience God's saving and protecting grace.

**(S) Sharing quiet times from Psalm 92.**

**A song of praise about God making the righteous flourish.**

First. Verse 1-5 is a call to praise God. The writer praises God with song and music instruments, because he himself has experienced what God does to the wicked and to the righteous. People who praise God experience his goodness and blessings (1-3). The writer praises God for God's love and faithfulness and wonderful deeds that he experiences. These cause him to sing and have joy (4). The writer is deeply impressed by the greatness of God's works in nature and in history. He stands in awe when he considers how profound God's thoughts are as expressed in God's Word. He cannot stop to be amazed at how deep, rich, wise, merciful, holy, just, faithful and loving are all God's thoughts expressed in his eternal plan of salvation (5).

Second. Verse 6-9 is a description of what God does to the wicked. But not everyone knows or experiences God's goodness and God's wisdom in ruling this world. Many people do not recognise God's deeds in nature and history or understand God's thoughts in his Word. They either ascribe good things in life to their idols or evil spirits or ascribe evil things to the living God (6). Although the question why the wicked flourish while the righteous suffer may baffle people in general, it is clear to the people of God. They know that although the wicked may flourish like the green grass, it is only to enhance their misery when they are finally destroyed (7). God is on the throne of the universe. He is exalted forever. He will only tolerate the wicked on earth as long as he wants, and then their end will come suddenly and certainly. Thus God reveals his righteous justice on the wicked (8).

Third. Verse 10-15 is a description of what God does to the righteous. The writer personally experienced God's goodness and wisdom in ruling this world. The righteous receive new and hitherto unknown *strength*, symbolised by the horn of the wild ox (Job 39:9-12). They receive *stimulation and motivation*, symbolised by the oil that is poured over them (10). While in the past, the righteous saw and heard the terrifying destruction of their enemies, they now see how God defeats those who oppose them and their ears hear how the wicked people flee in defeat from them (11). Although it may appear to ordinary people as if the wicked flourish and rule on earth, it is all appearance! In reality it is the righteous who flourish. God makes the righteous like a palm tree and like a cedar tree. The palm tree is the most famous tree on the plains and even in the deserts, because even in the harshest conditions of the scorching sun, it stays green and pushes its roots to the deep waters under the ground. The cedar tree is the most famous tree on the high mountains, because even in snowstorms and storm winds it pushes its stem very high into the air and spreads its branches wide (12). The secret of their strength and flourishing life is that they draw their life sap from fellowship with the living God. The righteous are those who stand in the right relationship to God by trusting and revering him. They live their lives according to God's righteous revelation and righteous demands. Their righteousness is practised and flourishes in all the places where God is worshipped (13). The righteous will still stay fresh and green in old age and nothing can stop them from bearing fruit throughout their whole life on earth (14). The righteous will always sing and proclaim God's

righteousness and holiness and justice (15). It is my earnest desire and goal of life to bear fruit even when I have grown old!

**(T) Sharing quiet times from Psalm 103.**

**A Prayer praising God's benefits.** God had healed king David from a serious sickness and this caused him to think of all God's benefits. He praises God for all his benefits and calls the whole universe to praise God for all his works.

First. Verse 1-5 describes God's benefits to David. God had healed him from a deadly disease and thus had redeemed him from the grave. By giving him back his life, God had crowned his head with love and compassion as a many coloured turban, which people put on when they go to a feast (4). God had satisfied David's desire to live and to be completely restored to his former strength. God had renewed his youthful strength and appearance just like an eagle renews his feathers every year (5). David's sickness had in this case been a revelation of God's anger against some sin in David's life. So David realised that God not only healed his sickness, but also forgave his sin. Therefore, he exhorts his own soul to praise God and never to forget any of God's benefits.

Second. Verse 6-18 describes God's benefits to all people. David thinks of God's benefits to the Israelites in their past and present history. God did what was right and just to people oppressed by sickness or sin (6). In the past, God had made his ways known to Moses and his deeds to Israel. Once God promised that his Presence would go with his people so that all nations would know who God's people were. This was God's way (Ex 33:13-16). At another time God passed by Moses and proclaimed, "The Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin". These were God's deeds (Ex 34:6-7)(8). Many times, Israel experienced that God was angry with them because of their sin. According to Isaiah 57:15-17, they experienced that God hid his face and punished people for their sin, greed and persistence in their wilful ways. But when people repented and became contrite and lowly in spirit, God revived their spirit again (9). God is holy and must punish sin, but God is also love and does not delight in punishing sinners. When sinners repent, God immediately forgives (Jer 3:5-12-13). God does not treat people according to what their sins deserve. Their sins deserve eternal condemnation in hell, and yet, when they repent, God forgives. As James 2:13 says, God's mercy triumphs over God's judgement! (10). God's ability to forgive is greater than anything man can imagine. God's love for those who trust and revere him is higher than the furthest stars in the universe (11)! Just like the distance between the east and the west is endless and can never catch up with one another, so sins that are forgiven can never again catch up with the person who has been forgiven (12)! Then David changes the picture from God as the almighty Creator to God as the Father of his children on earth. It is as if God descends from the highest heaven on to the earth to be in the midst of his children on earth and embrace them with his compassion (13). As every good father takes into account the weakness of his own children, God takes into account the frailty and mortality of his children. He treats them according to their personality and ability (14-16). God's love for those who trust and revere him is from everlasting to everlasting. And God's righteousness is even for their children and their grandchildren, for everyone who responds to the grace of God's covenant by obeying the demands of God's covenant (17-18).

Third. Verse 19-22 describes the appropriate response of the universe to all God's benefits. The revelation of God's grace and many benefits are so great, because God is the King of the whole universe! The whole universe is his throne room, and he is surrounded by uncountable numbers of angels and other mighty servants. From heaven, God rules over all and everything on earth (19). Therefore, David calls all the inhabitants of heaven as well as the whole created universe to praise God for all his benefits and for all his mighty works! I too want to consider all God's benefits in my life and praise him!

**(S) Sharing quiet times from Psalm 107.**

**A Psalm of thanksgiving of a person returning from exile.** This Psalm consists of four different scenes showing the goodness and enduring love of God for his people as they returned from Babylon to Israel.

The first scene is of people who had lost the way (4-9). They had no fixed place to live and so they wandered around in the desert wastelands. There, in utter loneliness, they faced the dangers of the Bedouin-life. Often they had no food to eat or water to drink. They were exhausted and their life was ebbing away quickly. In their trouble, they cried out to the God of the Bible and he delivered them from their distress. He showed them the way, which they could not find by themselves, and he led them to a place where they settled in safety. There the Lord satisfied their hunger and thirst.

The second scene is of people who rebelled against God (10-16). They rejected God's Word as their rule of conduct. They despise God's counsel and turned away from the purpose he planned for them. As a consequence, they suffered. Nothing succeeded and they became desperate. Other people, whose favour they had sought before, refused to help them. This happened to Israel. Many Israelites went into exile and suffered the iron chains of slavery in Babylon. In their trouble, they cried to the God of the Bible and he saved them from their distress. He broke the chains of their slavery and brought them out of the dungeon of Babylon.

The third scene is of people who gave way to all kinds of sin (17-22). They indulged in rebellious ways and in iniquity. They were wise in their own eyes and everyone did as he saw fit (Jud 21:25). They made their way crooked and twisted the words and ways of God. As a consequence, they suffered. They become fools in the eyes of God and other people. And their bodies become sick to the point that they could not eat. They almost die. In their trouble, they cried to the God of the Bible and he delivered them from their distress. God spoke one word and they were healed of their sickness and rescued from the grave.

The fourth scene is of people whose circumstances brought them in danger (23-32). They were merchants travelling by ships to places across the ocean. From their puny ships, they saw the mighty works of God when the mighty waves tossed them up and down. Their courage melted away and they were at their wits end. In their trouble, they cry to the God of the Bible and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm so that the sea became calm. And he guided them to their destination. Because of all these wonderful experiences of being saved by God, it is the duty of the people of God to give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds of deliverance. They must exalt the God of the Bible in the places where all the people meet and praise him in front of the leaders.

**(T) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Every day have a quiet time from one Psalm. The selected Psalms are Psalm 115, 119, 139, 141, 143, 145 and 146. Record the meditations of all your quiet times in a notebook. Once a week meet with a friend or with a house fellowship or discipleship group and share your discoveries, lessons and blessings.

Second. See the workbooks “Go and preach God’s kingdom” and Internet on [www.dota.net](http://www.dota.net)

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to “Discipleship training on the air”.